

**Moira Forsyth -
Innovation & Enterprise
Services**

**Rural Innovation Through
Knowledge Transfer**

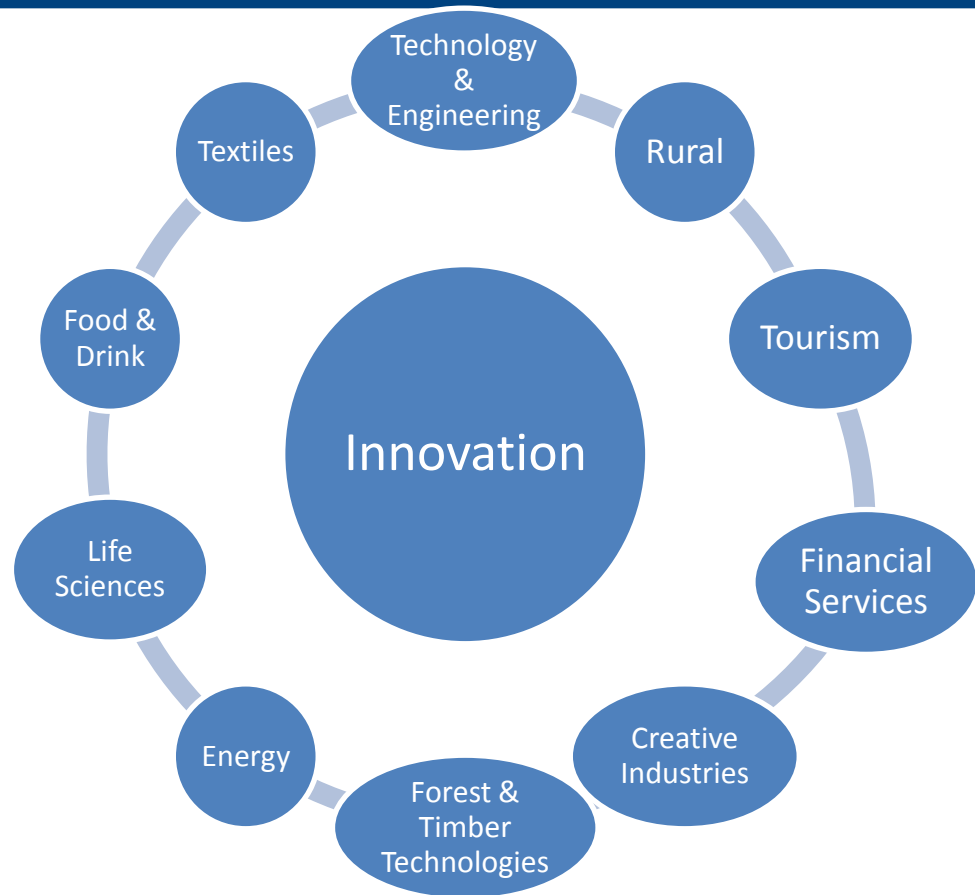


Why Innovation?

Scottish Government Economic Strategy:

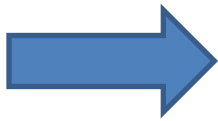
“Strengthening levels of innovation and commercialisation, including **improving the links between our universities and private sector companies**”

“Solidarity, **Cohesion**, and Sustainability”



Why Rural Innovation?

- Over 85% of Scotland's rural businesses are small or micro.
- Highly dispersed business base = lack of networking
- Markets are limited in scale and there is limited competition.
- Less knowledge intense industry = high % land-based businesses
- Lack of regionally-based HEIs
- Fewer regionally-produced graduates.
- Two-tiered Innovation System.



Low levels of innovation

Few high growth businesses

Lack of engagement with the knowledge base.

What do we do?



How do we do it?

- 2 x Business Development Executives **based in rural areas.**
- Work with partners
- Identify **gap in the knowledge/resources**
- Search the knowledge base
- Make the academic match
- Find the best route to support
- Paperwork
- Facilitate the relationship
- **Follow up and refer on**

OBJECTIVES 2013 - 2015

Hard Targets

250 new leads (new enquiries).
42 funded research projects.

107 academic searches.
22 Development Projects

Soft Targets

Cultural Change – Engaging with universities.

Confidence to innovate and take risks.

Switch Universities on to Opportunities in Rural Areas.

What have we achieved April 2013 – Mar 2014?

	Achieved	Target	+/-
Number of Enquiries	181	134	+47
Number of Academic Searches	82	63	+19
Number of Collaborative Discussions	69	63	+6
Number of Research Projects	18	20	-2

Annandale Distillery



Why Does it Work?

- Don't mention academia/universities
- Be based in the area – not a major city
- Speak their language.
- Hand hold.
- Refer on!

What next?

- Funding ends March 2015
- Now looking at a 6-year project
- 2 x additional resources
 - 1 x more general rural businesses
 - 1 x agri-tech and agri-tourism focus
- Look closer at “big ticket” research and get that out to businesses

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