As the UK reappraises its strategy in light of the referendum vote to exit the EU, Prime Minister Teresa May has said that she wants Britain to be the ‘global go-to place for scientists, innovators and tech investors’. She has challenged business and government to ‘do things differently’ and adopt ‘new ways of thinking’. Imperial is well placed to help make this happen as a convenor, industrial collaborator and agent of change.

It is more important than ever for universities like Imperial to work with industry to inform national and international policy agendas. A central component of Imperial’s strategy is to strengthen our collaborations with industrial partners in order to address complex research challenges in science, engineering, medicine and business. Together our discoveries benefit society, add economic value, and inform decision makers to influence policy.

Imperial Business Partners (IBP) is an outstanding community of corporate partners. In 2015/16 IBP was able to create value by leveraging Imperial’s expertise in multidisciplinary research areas such as climate science, materials science, design and data science. IBP members benefitted from inspiring invited speakers as well as tailored insights into business and scientific challenges through consultancy workshops. IBP also intensified its start-up showcases and student entrepreneurship programme. We published our first thought-leadership white-paper and we are broadening our impact with the launch of IBP FinTech in 2016/17.

Our goal is to be the university partner of choice for industry. We will be bold and ambitious in our strategy for corporate engagement and we will work with our partners to develop new ways to collaborate in the rapidly changing world.”
Overview of academic year

- 40 Imperial Academics Involved
- 4 Deep Dive Workshops
- 20 Start-ups Showcased
- 5 Executive Insight Dinners
- 1 White Paper on Climate Change
- 200 Corporate Guests
- 6 Members using their Consultancy Allowance
Executive Insight Events 2015-2016

The Future of Travel
Guest talk from Jonathan Firth, Executive Vice President of Spaceport & Program Development, Virgin Galactic.

Design Thinking
Guest talk from David Webster, Partner and Executive Portfolio Manager, IDEO. In collaboration with Advanced Hackspace and the Dyson School of Engineering.

Climate change and business
A research workshop followed by a public panel debate led by Sir David King. In collaboration with the Grantham Institute for Climate Change and Imperial Business School.

Enterprise & Innovation
Showcase of early stage, commercial technologies developed by students and staff at Imperial. Guest talk by Sara Murray, OBE, founder of Buddi and Confused.com. In collaboration with Imperial Enterprise Lab.

Data Science Frontiers
Showcase of data visualisation research and a guest talk by Martin Boddy, CEO of Jaywing. In collaboration with the Data Science Institute and the Centre for Advanced Business Analytics.

TF: 2036
One day conference exploring The Future of Materials Science, Additive Manufacturing and Design. Led by Imperial Tech Foresight, powered by IBP.
Jonathan Firth
The Future of Travel
Senior Vice President of Spaceport and Program Development, Virgin Galactic
29th September 2015

With the UK Spaceport authority aiming to control 10% of the global market of commercial space travel (an estimated figure of £40bn by 2030) how daring a proposal is regular personal spaceflight?

Jonathan Firth joined us to unpack the assumptions Virgin Galactic have made to make their proposals a reality. With a future leaning heavily on ambient technology, virtual reality and augmented reality, Firth predicted that destinations would know us, the sharing economy – where access trumps ownership – would continue to bloom and the experience of travel itself would be transformed much more rapidly than the vehicles that take us from A to B.

Unlike the Concordes of past eras, high-standard supersonic point-to-point travel would become an everyday life essential rather than the luxury it has historically been.

Dave Webster
Design Thinking
Partner, IDEO
17th November 2015

Is technology making our lives better? What is its long-term effect? How can humans help young technologies make good choices?

The second IBP dinner of the year dived headlong into the duplicitous nature of the new hi-tech tools that are emerging daily.

Dave Webster, partner at IDEO, used examples from his firm’s work – the design of a new, intuitive voter system in Los Angeles, instruments to suppress tremors in Parkinson’s sufferers and a genomes app store developed in collaboration with Genentech to name just a few – to explore how the juvenile technologies amongst us may be encouraged to grow in a positive direction.

Dave introduced three tenants of good design, which could curb young tech’s negative potential: 1. Empathy for those you design for, 2. Daring, or a lack of social inhibition and 3. A robust sense of play.

Sir David King
Climate Change
FRS Hon F Renng, F CO Special Representative for Climate Change
2nd February 2016

Sir David King joined Josué Tanaka (EBRD), Jeff Seabright (Unilever) and Neil Thorns (The Climate Coalition) at a panel discussion in collaboration with the Grantham Institute to discuss the successes and pitfalls of COP21 and the resulting Paris Agreement. The group turned over the key infrastructure and financing projects that would be key to maintaining the momentum of the climate change agenda.

The panel discussion was preceded by a research workshop exploring the implications of COP21 in more depth, which IBP members were also invited able to attend.
Are entrepreneurs natured or nurtured?

Serial entrepreneur Sara Murray helped IBP members shed light on the question at this executive insights dinner. Speaking about the journey from her first venture, the comparison site Confused.com, to the most recent Buddi device, a small-scale GPRS tracker adopted by the Justice and Healthcare systems, she contemplated what had possessed her to persistently establish new ventures even when success looked unlikely.

Entrepreneurial mind-sets are a crucial driving force in companies who pivot on their R&D offerings and the evening unpacked the mechanisms companies need to adopt to support them within a corporate environment.

In the marketing world of the 1970s where content was king and only a limited number of media channels existed, creativity was a highly-prized commodity. As the 1990s fragmented the dominant channels and media planning became a high priority and a plethora of new outlets for advertising started to appear. Skipping ahead to 2005, when Google first implemented personalised search and YouTube and Facebook launched, original content again became a signal of quality. These events have produced an environment where modern companies need to produce high-quality content in equally high volume.

Martin Boddy, CEO of the marketing agency Jaywing Plc, joined us for this executive dinner to explain how his company is exploiting the explosion in big data. He spoke about their collaboration with the Data Science Institute – one of Imperial’s six global institutes. The DSI helped them to extract and model real emotional responses to encourage creative marketing professionals to make bolder creative choices.
MATERIALS CAN BE PRECISELY TUNED TO SPECIFY LIFESPAN

“Long-lived materials are not always desirable on economic, environmental or resource grounds. In the next decades, advances in responsive, meta-stable and nanostructured materials will make tunable longevity an increasingly attainable design goal. Isn’t it time to start thinking instead in terms of precisely tunable material lifespans?”

Prof. Mary Ryan, Shell–RAEng Research Chair, Imperial College London, 2016

The annual Tech Foresight conference, held exclusively for IBP members, this year explored how advances in manufacturing, material science and product engineering could reshape industry, commerce and society as a whole.

Welcomed by President Alice Gast, 200 delegates heard predictions from four academic experts anticipating computers that are able to take on creative roles, materials with enhanced survival and degradation properties and the increased availability of 3D printing alongside the cultural implications that may follow these innovations.

The interactive day included “Deep Dive” workshops focusing on the business implications of technology developments, expert Q&A sessions, live demonstrations and a showcase of our own student entrepreneurs. Delegates voted BioNet Agriculture the winner of the IBP Imperial Start-Up of the Year 2016. BioNet is an edible wrapping for hay, straw and silage bales with nutritional content for livestock.
Members Benefits

Insights & Events
- Quarterly Executive Insight Dinners
- Bespoke Innovation Workshops
- Delegate spaces at selected Imperial & partners conferences
- Member invitation and reserved seating at Imperial College London public lectures

Innovation & Foresight
- Up to 3 days of free consulting with Imperial academics
- 10 delegate places per member organisation at the IBP Imperial Tech Foresight conference
- Annual Tech Start-up showcase
- Technology forecasting with Imperial Tech Foresight

Expertise & Facilities
- Academic expertise across Science and Technology
- Access to student talent
- Demo sessions at the Data Observatory in the Data Science Institute
- 10% discount on all Executive Education open enrolments

2016/17 Programme

Decision Making Webinar
7th September 2016
The first in a series of webinars exploring decision making under uncertain conditions. Dr. Katharina Hauck presents a case study of her work with the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Productivity & Innovation
5th October 2016
WEF academics revisit their talks on the Future of Imaging at the first members only dinner of the programme. Keynotes by Jonathan Haskel, Business School Chair in Economics, and Tom Aldred, Senior Economist HM Treasury.

Global Innovation Summit
29th November 2016
Accelerating global prosperity by fostering innovation ecosystems. With an exclusive Gala Dinner themed “Envisioning our Urban Future”. Keynote from David Stokes, CEO, IBM UK and Rajesh Agarwal, Deputy Mayor of London for Business. In partnership with the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils.

High Performance Computing
23rd February 2017
The future of simulation, design, optimisation and prediction for the digital economy with visionary perspectives of the future of HPC from world experts. With guest speaker, John Graham-Cumming, CTO, Cloudflare. In partnership with Imperial Tech Foresight.

IBP Women in Stem Roundtable
7th March 2017
A corporate-led panel discussion addressing the obstacles facing women in STEM subjects and their professions.

Innovation & Entrepreneurship
23rd February 2017
A members only showcase of the best early stage commercial technologies developed by students and staff at Imperial with a buffet reception. In collaboration with Enterprise Lab.

The Future of Health
30th March 2017
An exploration of new business models developed to reduce the pressures being placed on the world’s healthcare systems. An IBP breakfast presentation and keynote speech followed by a day long event at Imperial Business School.

Finance & Climate Change
May 2017
Understanding the challenges of natural resource management posed by Climate Change. In partnership with the Grantham Research Institute & IC Business School.

Tech Foresight: 2037
June 2017
Join us to celebrate 5 years of technology foresighting. In collaboration with Imperial Tech Foresight.
Inspiring Insights from Imperial Business Partners

The IBP programme combines academic excellence and business innovation to generate powerful debates and inspirational discussions. By bringing together world-class research minds with business strategists and policy makers at the top of their game, we take a unique approach to problem solving. At the same time, our members access a range of specialist services through their relationship with IBP, including professional development, mentoring and consultancy services. Our work benefits anyone operating within research-driven industry and covers anything from strategic issues to the impact of science and technology on business, policy and society.

Members:
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LG
NATIONAL GRID
RIO TINTO
SHELL
SYNGENTA
TATA

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