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Northumbria announces innovative partnership with Unilever

Northumbria University, Newcastle, has today announced a formal partnership with Unilever, one of the world's largest fast-moving consumer goods companies.

The move follows a decade of collaboration between Unilever and Northumbria School of Design and corresponds with the launch of the University's design-led open innovation centre INNOVATE, based in Gateshead's Northern Design Centre. Under the partnership, academics and students from Northumbria School of Design are working at INNOVATE to

help Unilever establish new and exciting ways of meeting their sustainability targets around packaging, water-use and energy.

Key projects will focus on areas including new packaging technology and innovation, with much of the new work centred on ground-breaking research by Professor Raymond Oliver, from Northumbria School of Design. With more than 2 billion customers around the world using a Unilever product every day designing for behavioural change will also make a significant difference.

Lucy Winskell OBE, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business & Engagement) at Northumbria University, said: “We have a strong track record of collaboration with Unilever and we are delighted to be strengthening the relationship through INNOVATE. It is an incredibly exciting opportunity to help Unilever hit its sustainability targets and make a genuine difference on a global scale, for our pioneering research to have positive impact and for our students to gain real world experience at the highest level.

“The success of our partnership model developed with Unilever is an approach we can replicate with other businesses. At a regional level INNOVATE also supports the North East LEP Strategic Economic Plan. It works because it is extremely easy for partners to access a unique cross-faculty resource of research-engaged academics and talented students to solve problems and deliver solutions. With INNOVATE multidisciplinary knowledge is available through one door and under one roof.”

Paul Howells, Unilever’s Vice President R&D for Packaging, added: “For a business like Unilever, tapping into the latest academic thinking and research is clearly invaluable. We are working with Northumbria because we believe they bring something unique and special which can help us to achieve our long-term goals, particularly associated with sustainability. The university already has extremely strong design, technology and business capabilities – bringing this together under one roof, as INNOVATE has done, makes for a very attractive proposition.

“The partnership also gives us the opportunity to work with very capable young people who may decide that Unilever is the sort of organisation they would like to work with, and vice versa. An organisation like Unilever is only as good as the talent it attracts, so this is a nice additional benefit.”

For more information about engaging with Innovate please contact 0191 243

7570.

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focussed, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

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