

Placement Case Study

Newcastle Science City Commercialisation Research



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Newcastle Science City (NSC) aims to capitalise on the world-class scientific research being conducted in Newcastle for the economic and social benefit of the City and the region, and to create an environment that enables science and business to work together effectively.

NSC interviewed and appointed three international MSc students onto the NWE scheme in October 2008. The team were required to research possible new product and service opportunities, in three distinct technology themes, and to plan the best route to market and the most productive way for NSC to support such new businesses.

Sadaf, Fangming and Emeka prepared a placement work plan allowing them to work towards a written report and, if possible, a viable business plan. The placement focus was on information gathering and analysis but also involved several research interviews with members of University staff from the academic faculties and central services.

The three students found the placements to be highly beneficial with the ability to learn about the commercial side of Science being highlighted as a key learning outcome for each. Team work and time management were also developed and each student felt they further enhanced their analytical skills. Sadaf, Fangming and Emeka found the placements to be an excellent complement to their degree courses and one which they feel will *'give them the edge to stand out'* compared to other graduates.

While Sadaf commented that *'the NWE placement has been one of the best parts of my Master's education'*, Emeka now intends to *'pursue a career in commercialization of technology'* because of the experience he had on his NSC placement. With Fangming keen to take his experience of the business world back to China upon graduation, he feels the placement has made him *'aware of how to build a bridge between the science and business environments.'*

The three placements have also proved to be a big success for NSC. They plan to use the information provided by each student to further investigate and progress the products that have been identified as viable to spin-out commercially. NSC are keen to continue their involvement with Newcastle Work Experience placements after the research undertaken by Sadaf, Fangming and Emeka proved to be hugely valuable.

Dr Gary Nestor, Business Development Manager, Newcastle Science City said: *"These students have brought a new dynamic to our work...In turn we have enabled the students to have close contact with the highest level of scientific research in the University and giving them practical business knowledge."*