

College Strategy 2015-20 Workshops

The key themes emerging from the October and November workshops were as follows. Those additional themes emerging only at the November workshops are asterisked.

- Excellence: Ensure that the College gets even better at what it does and is not left behind by competitors.
- Agility: The College needs to be as agile as possible in seizing opportunities in line with its strategy. Appropriate internal governance and resource allocation structures are needed.
- Multidisciplinarity: Barriers to multidisciplinary research should be removed, while maintaining strengths in core disciplines. Multidisciplinary working should be rewarded and an enabling environment fostered. A multidisciplinary approach to education is also required.
- Bold thinking: The College should be more bold in its vision and look beyond the five-year Strategy period. More 'thinking space' should be created for staff and students (e.g. providing more administrative support, or building wet and dry hackspaces).
- Time/space to develop*: As well as 'thinking space', more time and space is needed for staff and students to pursue activities outside their academic interests and/or broaden their skillset.
- Flexibility/sharing of space*: Space on campus should be used flexibly. Academic and social space should also be shared in order to encourage interaction/collaboration across disciplines and community groups (i.e. students and staff). 'Pop-up' institutes with a finite lifetime (e.g. three years) could be set up to address particular scientific challenges.
- Influence: The College is not capitalising on its links with government. Influence at all levels in political and corporate arenas should be increased, thereby directing future funding areas.
- Big projects: The College has the appetite and capacity for big projects (i.e. those worth £100m+) and should be influencing what these projects are. A team of academics and support staff should be established in order to enable a rapid and co-ordinated approach to large bids.
- Responsible innovation: The EPSRC defines this as 'a process that seeks to promote creativity and opportunities for science and innovation that are socially desirable and undertaken in the public interest'. The College should ensure that it works within this framework.
- Location: the College's London location is a strength but can also be seen as a weakness/threat due to high/rising costs.
- Communication: The College should examine how it communicates across the entire community. This would aid brand identity and build on institutional loyalty.
- Engagement with the local community*: The College should work more with partners in the vicinity of its campuses in order to benefit the local community as well as itself.
- Imperial West: The College needs to ensure that a clear vision for Imperial West is articulated to assist success of the project. The College should ensure that Imperial West offers an appealing environment to staff, students and partners. Affordable student accommodation and staff housing should be considered, as well as other facilities (e.g. a Union) for those living in the area.
- Education and the student experience*: Education should not be viewed as secondary to research. More value should be placed on the student experience especially as significant income for the College is generated from (overseas) students. The future impact (e.g. alumni support) of the student experience should not be underestimated.
- Attracting and retaining staff and students and maintaining alumni links: In particular, it is important that a wider range of staff contributions is recognised and rewarded. The College should engage more with alumni. Benefits to the College could extend further than donations (e.g. student placement or mentoring offers) but benefits to alumni should also be ensured.
- Distinctiveness: The College's unique attributes should be emphasised in the Strategy.