



BUILDING OUR INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY – GREEN PAPER JANUARY 2017

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSOCIATION FOR UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (EAUC): Response on behalf of our Members (United Kingdom and Ireland)**

### **About the EAUC**

Our passion is to create a world with sustainability at its heart. That's our vision. We exist to lead and empower the post-16 education sector to make sustainability 'just good business'.

The membership of the EAUC comprises higher and further educational institutions, with members in each of the four countries in the UK and Ireland. Devolved governmental responsibilities include education, skills, economic development and environment, reflected through our network of regional and country chapters.

The combined budget of our members is some £25 billion, with responsibility for the education and training of over 2 million students supported by half a billion staff. Our member institutions connect deeply with business, industry, health and civic bodies at local levels, with reach internationally via their research, innovation and student mobility.

### **We believe**

- That UK and Irish education should be a global leader in sustainability
- That educational institutions have a responsibility as anchors in their communities to be agents of change
- That education has a unique opportunity to transform lives and communities
- That education is at the heart of global sustainability
- That every student should have access to sustainability education
- That education should reflect best practice in operational sustainability
- In being flexible and adaptable to find solutions for a resilient future
- In the value of international collaboration

### **Our values**

- Pioneering - driving sustainability through innovation
- Independence - our own unique voice
- Collaboration - together we go further
- Role Model - leading by example
- Empowering - supporting and inspiring our members

## EAUC's Approach to the Consultation

We have focused our response to the Green Paper on the importance of driving **sustainable growth** and Britain's **success over the long-term** that **works for everyone**, with an emphasis on those efforts and initiatives that underpin the creation of a **resilient economy** that is **agile** and **fit for the future**.

### *Responses to Questions for Consultation*

*1. Does this document identify the right areas of focus: extending our strengths; closing the gaps; and making the UK one of the most competitive places to start or grow a business?*

The proposed modern Industrial Strategy is a powerful statement of ambition for Britain's future that is inclusive and, in the words of the Prime Minister "focused on long-term, sustainable success". EAUC applauds this ambition and vision, in particular the overt recognition of **sustainability as key to a future fit economy**. However, we consider that failing to reference the **Sustainable Development Goals** and the importance of **Education for Sustainable Development** is an oversight that the final version of the strategy must remedy.

With respect to focusing on our strengths, we agree that this is not about picking winners, rather it serves to highlight our competitive strengths. The **'green economy'** is however underplayed as a key UK asset and further commentary needs to be included.

There is an opportunity to better reflect sustainable business models, that include **social enterprise** as well as new collaborative models of entrepreneurial activity in the strategy.

The importance of **place**, while noted, needs to be further emphasised in terms of those **'anchor' institutions**, such as universities as does the criticality of investment in enabling infrastructure and skilled people required to support an **innovation ecosystem**. The latter is central to the aim to address regional disparities.

While we support the attention given to young people and the skills agenda, we consider this is insufficient to close the gap and further consideration needs to be given to **upskilling those in work** and those seeking employment and/or involved in business start-ups. We call you to identify a **'50-year Curriculum'** that focuses on through-life learning. We would include here enterprise/entrepreneurial skills as well as those related to the circular economy.

Links must be built between government, educational institutions and industry partners to enable skilled apprentices, students and employees to transition into/through industry, either by starting their own enterprise or by joining existing organisations. This applies to both STEM subjects (especially those where a specific vocation does not tend to lead on directly from a qualification) and also the multitude of non-STEM subjects where technical skills are developed.

The word **'culture'** does not feature in this section, but the areas of focus must work together to create a culture in government, industry and wider society where the pillars are understood, supported and celebrated, through communication and demonstrable benefits. It is a change in culture which will enable the strategy's aspirations to be realised.

*2. Are the ten pillars suggested the right ones to tackle low productivity and unbalanced growth? If not, which areas are missing?*

We are content with the 10 pillars as an approach, recognising the **interconnectivity** of the pillars. As such, they may be more powerfully expressed as an interactive **network of networks**. However, we consider the fact that the word 'sustainable' appears just five times, and 'sustainability' just the once – with no mention of the Sustainable Development Goals significantly underplays the importance of **strategic sustainability** in enabling success (**resilience and agility**) in economic and geo-political situations characterised by high degrees of ambiguity.

There is an opportunity to better reflect sustainable business models, that include **social enterprise** as well as new collaborative models of entrepreneurial activity in the strategy.

Commercial awareness as well as business and entrepreneurial skills and understanding must be developed alongside technical skills. They are the other piece of the puzzle, enabling skilled people to be productive in an industrial context, but are often overlooked, for instance within the academic culture in STEM degree-level education. In particular, developing an understanding of **key sustainability challenges and incentives** for businesses (e.g. resource scarcity, legal/financial implications of emissions, insecure supply chains with illegal workers).

*3. Are the right central government and local institutions in place to deliver an effective industrial strategy? If not, how should they be reformed? Are the types of measures to strengthen local institutions set out here and below the right ones?*

We recognise the importance of **partnership** between government and business/industry. However, the draft strategy significantly underplays and undervalues the **enabling capital locked into universities and colleges**. As such we want to see the innovation ecosystem, locally rooted but globally connected, feature more prominently the key roles that higher and further educational institutions can play. Recognising the failure to date of some institutions/courses to deliver students into the workforce that are 'fit for the future'; we ask that **Education for Sustainable Development** is identified as essential curriculum. Similarly, we note the powerful influence of financial flows and funding in driving desired behaviours around employability, industry partnerships and enterprise/entrepreneurial education. The current arrangement with Local Enterprise Partnerships appear too weak around the **local skills strategy**, and as such further attention needs to be given to how to drive place-based and sector-based skills and education. And there is a place here for the

government to state its expectations of UK graduates in terms of **graduate attributes** – highlighting the distinctiveness of their higher education experience – in particular, that all graduates will appreciate **Education for Sustainable Development**. Furthermore, the **career paths** of these graduates must be mapped out so they understand how and where they can work in or with UK industry and do not feel pushed to move overseas by lack of clear opportunities, funding or government support.

Rather than think about a missing part to the jigsaw, **draw together the existing pieces to create the innovation landscape picture**. Urge universities and colleges to connect their business and outreach teams with industry, to open up their incubation and innovation hubs to the community, to connect deeply with economic development teams and civic society.

*4. Are there important lessons we can learn from the industrial policies of other countries which are not reflected in these ten pillars?*

We encourage the team to deepen their knowledge of what works in other countries and territories, recognising the unique aspects of the UK landscape and culture. What is clear to EAUC is the importance of **global citizenship** and the central role **student mobility** plays in this regard. As such, encouraging the free movement of international students to the UK as well as supporting the outward movement of UK students to other countries needs to be recognised in the context of Britain's success for the long-term. In this way, we secure access to the best minds in the world and create the **UK as an ideopolis** where innovation becomes second nature.

*5. What should be the priority areas for science, research and innovation investment?*

EAUC, like the government, is not in a position to 'pick winners'. However, we do call upon **prioritisation of world-leading science, research and innovation** to be supported wherever it is found – and not simply focus funding on a very small number of so-called 'research intensive' institutions. We also note that the importance of the **creative industries** to innovation is **significantly underplayed**, and as such should feature more prominently in the final version. Creative industries, along with other non-STEM areas such as social sciences, can hugely impact business and societal reception of industry and developments contained within industrial strategy.

We note the importance given in the draft strategy to 'long-term sustainable success' and this relies upon investment in **state-of-the-art equipment and infrastructure** in support of research. Given the increasing sophistication of such kit, and the importance of trained people in supporting its use, we ask that further consideration is given to how universities, colleges and research institutions can **share special facilities** – with each other, with industry and other partners such as in medical/healthcare settings. As such **capital investment should focus on sustainable solutions** through procurement and other means, for example in grant funding of scientific services and in place-based innovation ecosystems.

*6. Which challenge areas should the Industrial Challenge Strategy Fund focus on to drive maximum economic impact?*

We consider that **sustainable solutions** are a key theme for the fund across all sectors with all relevant actors included in a partnership/network.

In considering social, environmental and economic sustainability, solutions can be more aware of the challenges facing our global society and hence better future proofed.

*7. What else can the UK do to create an environment that supports the commercialisation of ideas?*

We consider that all students in further and higher education need to be skilled in matters related to **Education for Sustainable Development** as well as **enterprise/entrepreneurial education**. We also consider that there is more to do with respect to the importance of **Social Enterprise** as well as supporting graduates to work in and with **Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)**.

We are aware of a scheme led by one of our members that served to support **graduates undertake a paid internship with SMEs**. Around 1,200 student placements were supported in 2013-14, with some 70% of graduates retained on permanent contracts. That is, the SME went on to **create a graduate-level job** when it had previously been less than confident in its ability to absorb graduate talent. Further, the scheme served to **secure graduate talent in the region** when typically they leave to head for London and the South-East. A programme/initiative that further developed this scheme could address several of the aims of the strategy.

There is an opportunity to better reflect sustainable business models, that include **social enterprise** as well as new collaborative models of entrepreneurial activity in the strategy.

Recognising a landscape for sustainable growth based on **nationally identified sectors**, operating in **clusters** of activity defined locally and networked via universities and Local Economic Partnerships, underpins the paradigm expressed through the Witty Review. While it is relatively easy to see how large corporates might engage directly in such a model, it is less obvious how we might ensure the **Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)** can be engaged. It is however essential that SMEs are fully leveraged given their material contribution to growth in the UK and their role in the supply chain. SME's are the engines of growth and innovation for the country. According to the Federation of Small Business, based on 2012 figures from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, SME's account for 99.9% of all private sector businesses in the UK, 59.1% of private sector employment and 48.8% of private sector turnover. They therefore play an important role in the **UK's economic health and resilience** with many advances in innovation stemming from the SME community rather than large corporate entities.

In examining the economic geography of the UK, it is clear that there could be an instance or number of instances where a **cluster** was without a corporate lead, for whatever reason, then an alternative model involving a group of **SME's focussed around a university/college** with an enterprise or business-facing mission or indeed other suitable university partner could offer a viable solution to augment the above model. Alone, SME's lack the power and influence of a major corporate. However, if relevant groups of SME's are brought together as a collective, under one umbrella, then their combined impact affords enough critical mass to act as a '**clustered corporate**' across many areas of focus including supply chains. If you add to this the creation of a neutral space containing all those interested in economic development (LEPs and Local Authorities) and wealth creation more generally (private sector groups, entrepreneurs and investors) as well as the 'clustered corporate' (SMEs) concept with the harnessing of the knowledge base it creates a very powerful model.

*8. How can we best support the next generation of research leaders and entrepreneurs?*

Education, education, education – alongside experiential learning and real world experience through case study and problem-based learning. We also need to support research careers, beyond the current short-term contract killer approach as well as enabling entrepreneurs to move in and out of paid employment/consultancy as their innovation moves into profit.

We consider that all students in further and higher education need to be skilled in matters related to **Education for Sustainable Development** as well as **enterprise/entrepreneurial education**. We also consider that there is more to do with respect to the importance of **Social Enterprise** as well as supporting graduates to work in and with **Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises** (SMEs). Training and **first-hand experience** in business and entrepreneurship needs to happen alongside technical skills training, so that students (at all levels) can understand how technical skills fit into a business context and maximise their contribution to industry. In order to 'hit the ground running' and to be attractive to businesses, students should already have **commercial awareness** upon graduation.

There is an opportunity to better reflect sustainable business models, that include **social enterprise** as well as new collaborative models of entrepreneurial activity in the strategy.

*9. How can we best support research and innovation strengths in local areas?*

EAUC is concerned with supporting its member higher and further education institutions in developing and securing sustainable solutions. As such, we recognise the importance of **networks and partnerships** and a focus on knowledge sharing and knowledge exchange at sectoral levels.

We note the importance given in the draft strategy to 'long-term sustainable success' and this relies upon investment in **state-of-the-art equipment and infrastructure** in support of research. Given the increasing sophistication of such kit, and the importance of trained people in supporting its use, we ask that further consideration is given to how universities,

colleges and research institutions can **share special facilities** – with each other, with industry and other partners such as in medical/healthcare settings. As such **capital investment should focus on sustainable solutions** through procurement and other means, for example in grant funding of scientific services and in place-based innovation ecosystems.

There is an opportunity to operate facilities on all scales, from workshops to laboratories to buildings and estates, with a sustainable **'living lab'** philosophy, so that the facilities themselves are an active demonstration of best practice in the industry and can be studied and influenced by occupants. Government funding should consider these opportunities when awarding funding for development/renovation/upgrading equipment of any facility, so that the employees/students experience best practice first hand. For instance this could include green energy provision, traceable and responsible supply chains and low carbon building design.

*10. What more can we do to improve basic skills? How can we make a success of the new transition year? Should we change the way that those resitting basic qualifications study, to focus more on basic skills excellence?*

We consider that all students in further and higher education need to be skilled in matters related to **Education for Sustainable Development** as well as **enterprise/entrepreneurial education**.

Financial and logistical constraints can be a **barrier** to accessing upskilling activities, as well as lack of confidence, which can cause a divergence between groups within society with different levels of education and socio-economic factors. In order to make education/training more accessible to all provision must be made for the cost of the training itself, as well as **related costs** such as childcare and travel. These provisions are essential for **social sustainability** within our own society, working towards a fairer society with lower levels of **inequality** and where more people have the skills and confidence to contribute to sectors such as industry.

*11. Do you agree with the different elements of the vision for the new technical education system set out here? Are there further lessons from other countries' systems?*

We encourage the team to deepen their knowledge of what works in other countries and territories, recognising the unique aspects of the UK landscape and culture. What is clear to EAUC is the importance of **global citizenship** and the central role **student mobility** plays in this regard.

We think there needs to be more discussion about training around **commercial awareness and entrepreneurship skills** alongside technical skills, to demonstrate to students how technical expertise contributes to innovation and more broadly, how technical skills are used in industry.

We also think that there needs to be a focus on **technical skills for sustainability** – to support sustainable business and careers, contributing to sustainable, future-proofed business development in the UK.

*12. How can we make the application process for further education colleges and apprenticeships clearer and simpler, drawing lessons from the higher education sector?*

EAUC is concerned with **sustainable solutions**. As such, a move to a **post-qualification based admissions process** would support informed decisions by students rather than the wasteful ‘clearing’ process undertaken by universities – often at the expense of students making an informed choice to pursue technical/vocational education at a further education college or other type of institution.

*13. What skills shortages do we have or expect to have, in particular sectors or local areas, and how can we link the skills needs of industry to skills provision by educational institutions in local areas?*

We consider that all students in further and higher education need to be skilled in matters related to **Education for Sustainable Development** as well as **enterprise/entrepreneurial education**.

While we support the attention given to young people and the skills agenda, we consider this is insufficient to close the gap and further consideration needs to be given to **upskilling those in work** and those seeking employment and/or involved in business start-ups. We call you to identify a **‘50-year Curriculum’** that focuses on through-life learning.

We consider the introduction of **‘just in time’ skills training** and **micro-credentialing** would support a no skills shortage approach, rather than trying to ‘pick winners’ in the every evolving skills arena. Currently, less than 2% of staff development budgets in business are spent with universities and colleges, as such we need to both enable those institutions that are working in this domain to reach further as well as offer something akin to a **‘cloud-based’ education offer for businesses**.

Through EAUC’s direct work with business, on behalf of its members, it is clear that more are focusing on the circular economy and the importance of ‘green skills’. EAUC consider including **Education for Sustainable Development** as well as **enterprise/entrepreneurial education** would address this current deficit.

We understand the focus on STEM subjects, but think that **cross-disciplinary working** between STEM and other areas, such as **creative industries**, is also essential. There are also a multitude of technical skills taught outside the STEM subjects which also need to be considered.



*14. How can we enable and encourage people to retrain and upskill throughout their working lives, particularly in places where industries are changing or declining? Are there particular sectors where this could be appropriate?*

While we support the attention given to young people and the skills agenda, we consider this is insufficient to close the gap and further consideration needs to be given to **upskilling those in work** and those seeking employment and/or involved in business start-ups. We call you to identify a **'50-year Curriculum'** that focuses on through-life learning.

We think consideration must be given to **constraints**, such as financial and logistical constraints, and lack of confidence, which limit access to training. Incentives such as mapped potential career paths would also be useful.

*15. Are there further actions we could take to support private investment in infrastructure?*

We note the importance given in the draft strategy to 'long-term sustainable success' and this relies upon investment in **state-of-the-art equipment and infrastructure** in support of research. Given the increasing sophistication of such kit, and the importance of trained people in supporting its use, we ask that further consideration is given to how universities, colleges and research institutions can **share special facilities** – with each other, with industry and other partners such as in medical/healthcare settings. As such **capital investment should focus on sustainable solutions** through procurement and other means, for example in grant funding of scientific services and in place-based innovation ecosystems.

There is an opportunity here to **review how VAT is applied** where capital equipment is shared among partners.

*16. How can local infrastructure needs be incorporated within national UK infrastructure policy most effectively?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions**. As such, we cannot support the replication of national resources at a local level. Rather, we call for access to such national resources to be the focus of a solution, this may be digital or may include transport/subsistence costs as allowable research expenses to support access.

*17. What further actions can we take to improve the performance of infrastructure towards international benchmarks? How can government work with industry to ensure we have the skills and supply chain needed to deliver strategic infrastructure in the UK?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

We think it is great that there is a reference to **resilient infrastructure** in the context of potential challenges we may face such as climate change. It seems a missed opportunity not

to also explicitly consider how resilient industries may also be developed, in light of these challenges.

*18. What are the most important causes of lower rates of fixed capital investment in the UK compared to other countries, and how can they be addressed?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*19. What are the most important factors which constrain quoted companies and fund managers from making longer term investment decisions, and how can we best address these factors?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*20. Given public sector investment already accounts for a large share of equity deals in some regions, how can we best catalyse uptake of equity capital outside the South East?*

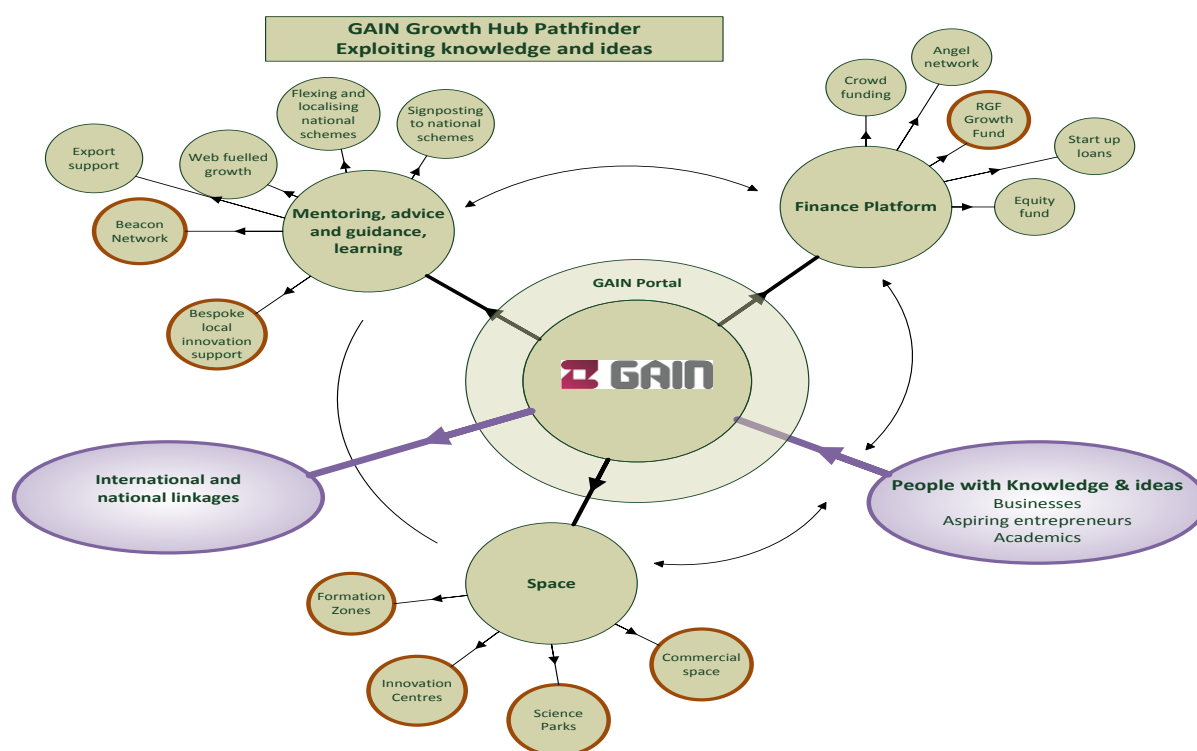
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Alone, SME's lack the power and influence of a major corporate. However, if relevant groups of SME's are brought together as a collective, under one umbrella, then their combined impact affords enough critical mass to act as a '**clustered corporate**' across many areas of focus including supply chains. If you add to this the creation of a neutral space containing all those interested in economic development (LEPs and Local Authorities) and wealth creation more generally (private sector groups, entrepreneurs and investors) as well as the 'clustered corporate' (SMEs) concept with the harnessing of the knowledge base it creates a very powerful model.

One of EAUC's university members has experience of drawing all the local innovation assets under one 'entity' formed as a network of networks in a large geographically dispersed and predominantly rural area - based around the knowledge base and those interested in exploiting it. In the illustration below SME's relating to a particular area of the Industrial Strategy could come together under a GAIN-type arrangement and collectively operate as a 'corporate' in terms of their combined critical mass. Indeed one of the main advantages of this approach is the diversity that an SME collective of this kind could bring in terms of expertise; innovation and economic resilience; this would not rule out bringing in large corporates.

In the centre of the model (the hub) shown below is the GAIN community which involves all partners; around the hub are some of the activities that support the community or cluster. This is supported physically by assets and access to the R&D facilities in the knowledge base as well as virtually through a portal for access to inspiration, advice, facilities, expertise,

guidance, funding (e.g. Regional Growth Fund; City Deals) and other areas of support. This could therefore potentially be applied to SME's operating in areas relevant to the Industrial strategy and indeed to new horizons. Bringing them together under GAIN-type arrangements to work with Universities, Local Authorities, Business networks and LEPs in order to strengthen the UK's economic position and drive economic growth. This could therefore potentially be applied to SME's operating in areas relevant to the Industrial Strategy and indeed to new horizons. Bringing them together under GAIN-type arrangements to work with Universities, Local Authorities, Business networks and LEPs in order to strengthen the UK's economic position and drive economic growth.



21. How can we drive the adoption of new funding opportunities like crowdfunding across the country?

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

22. What are the barriers faced by those businesses that have the potential to scale-up and achieve greater growth, and how can we address these barriers? Where are the outstanding examples of business networks for fast growing firms which we could learn from or spread?

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*23. Are there further steps that the Government can take to support innovation through public procurement?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

One of EAUC's university members has experience of driving up **local procurement** through enabling SMEs to secure contracts and upskilling local businesses to tender for work.

A number of UK universities and colleges use **environmental rating systems** for new builds and refurbishments such as BREEAM and SKA, which specify environmental standards for a range of procured products used in the project, for instance, certified timber or recycled carpet. Through the use of this system, suppliers must provide products which meet rigorous standards, incentivising innovation of sustainable products. This model could be replicated to innovate both in sustainability and other aspects of industrial developments.

*24. What further steps can be taken to use public procurement to drive the industrial strategy in areas where government is the main client, such as healthcare and defence? Do we have the right institutions and policies in place in these sectors to exploit government's purchasing power to drive economic growth?*

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A number of UK universities and colleges use **environmental rating systems** for new builds and refurbishments such as BREEAM and SKA, which specify environmental standards for a range of procured products used in the project, for instance, certified timber or recycled carpet. Through the use of this system, suppliers must provide products which meet rigorous standards, incentivising innovation of sustainable products. This model could be replicated to innovate both in sustainability and other aspects of industrial developments.

*25. What can the Government do to improve our support for firms wanting to start exporting? What can the Government do to improve support for firms in increasing their exports?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*26. What can we learn from other countries to improve our support for inward investment and how we measure its success? Should we put more emphasis on measuring the impact of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on growth?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*27. What are the most important steps the Government should take to limit energy costs over the long-term?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

A number of steps should be taken to ensure that **energy supply** is reliable and consumption is limited, such as:

- Supporting **low carbon solutions** and businesses innovating and delivering in this area
- Requiring that new builds and refurbishments **meet standards for energy consumption** during the project and in use, and that all options for local generation of energy on site are explored
- Investing in, and incentivising, more efficient and **low carbon infrastructure** such as travel and IT infrastructure

*28. How can we move towards a position in which energy is supplied by competitive markets without the requirement for on-going subsidy?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*29. How can the Government, business and researchers work together to develop the competitive opportunities from innovation in energy and our existing industrial strengths?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

**Scholarships** at all levels with joint funding and industrial placements would support the development of innovative, industry-focussed solutions. This would need to be balanced with academic study which is not specifically industry focussed so that more speculative/basic research can reveal directions and possibilities not yet considered.

*30. How can the Government support businesses in realising cost savings through greater resource and energy efficiency?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

A number of UK universities and colleges use **environmental rating systems** for new builds and refurbishments such as BREEAM and SKA, which specify environmental standards for a range of procured products used in the project, for instance, certified timber or recycled

carpet. Through the use of this system, suppliers must provide products which meet rigorous standards, incentivising innovation of sustainable products. This model could be replicated to innovate both in sustainability and other aspects of industrial developments.

*31. How can the Government and industry help sectors come together to identify the opportunities for a 'sector deal' to address – especially where industries are fragmented or not well defined?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*32. How can the Government ensure that 'sector deals' promote competition and incorporate the interests of new entrants?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*33. How can the Government and industry collaborate to enable growth in new sectors of the future that emerge around new technologies and new business models?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

There is an opportunity to better reflect sustainable business models, that include **social enterprise** as well as new collaborative models of entrepreneurial activity in the strategy.

*34. Do you agree the principles set out above are the right ones? If not what is missing?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

*35. What are the most important new approaches to raising skill levels in areas where they are lower? Where could investments in connectivity or innovation do most to help encourage growth across the country?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

Looking to local further and higher educational institutions may offer solutions – many have **volunteering** programmes full of highly skilled students willing to volunteer their time to work in local programmes including education. If not local, **online connectivity** could be explored as a way to make connections over longer distances.

*36. Recognising the need for local initiative and leadership, how should we best work with local areas to create and strengthen key local institutions?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) need to be encouraged to develop strategic-level engagement with universities and colleges and this should be championed. While many LEP Boards have a Vice-Chancellor/Principal as a member, typically the Board position is restricted to the skills strategy or is not considered to be a full 'business' position.

*37. What are the most important institutions which we need to upgrade or support to back growth in particular areas?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

The **role of universities and colleges is key to sustainable growth** and long-term prosperity and social inclusion has been under-valued in the draft Industrial Strategy and this needs to be remedied in future iterations.

Many of these institutions have initiatives such as **Widening Participation** which uses a variety of means to encourage applications from under-represented groups and those who otherwise might not have considered applying.

*38. Are there institutions missing in certain areas which we could help create or strengthen to support local growth?*

EAUC is focused on **sustainable solutions** and urges the team to seek approaches that address the long-term.

Rather than think about a missing part to the jigsaw, **draw together the existing pieces to create the innovation landscape picture**. Urge universities and colleges to connect their business and outreach teams with industry, to open up their incubation and innovation hubs to the community, to connect deeply with economic development teams and civic society.

Also, connections should be encouraged **between** areas within universities and colleges such as academics and students connecting with business and outreach teams, as well as across disciplines, (both within the same institution, and other institutions).