

# On overcoming the barriers to regional engagement:

*Reflections from the University of Lincoln*

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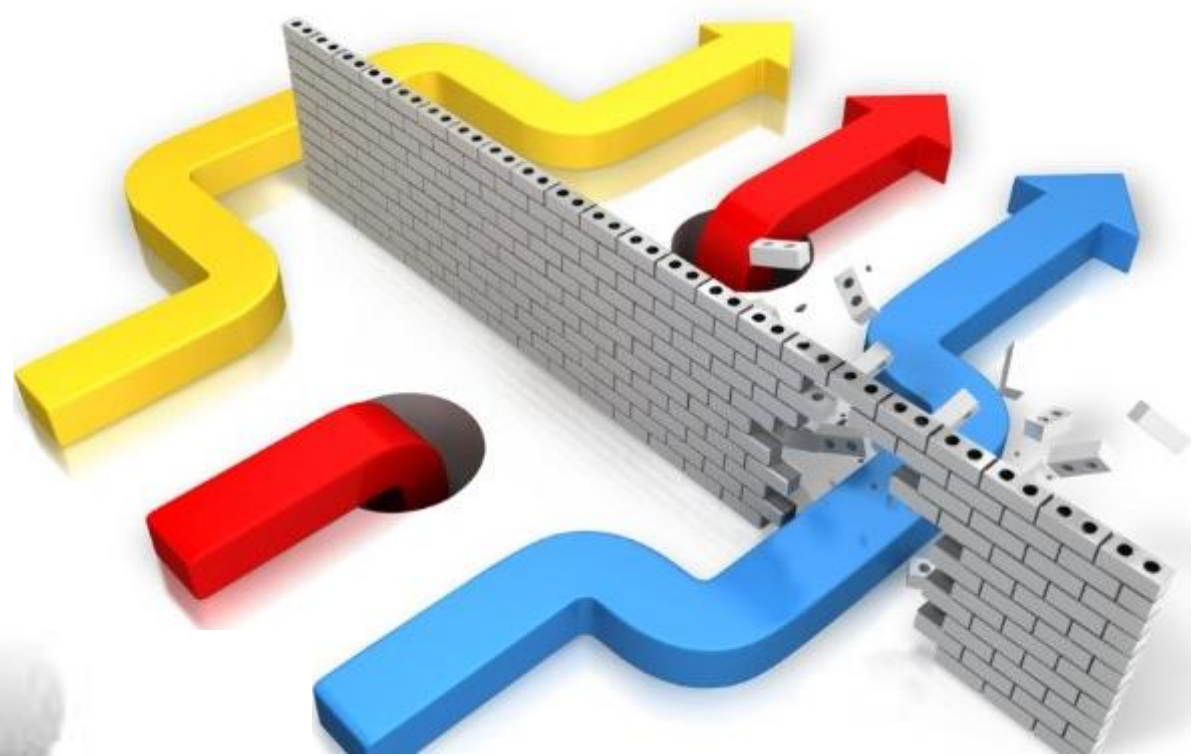


**The Role of  
Universities in  
Innovation and  
Regional Development**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
LINCOLN**

LINCOLN INTERNATIONAL  
BUSINESS SCHOOL



# University of Lincoln

- *Interesting Case*
  - a) **Rapid development** from a branch campus to a full-range, multi-disciplinary university **in 20 years**
  - a) Focused to **respond to regional economic needs** through national and international collaboration

*'best thing to happen to Lincoln since the Romans'*



# Study Approach

**Twin Objective** of examining the

- *role of the University of Lincoln in its local region*
- *barriers involved in engagement*



## **Explorative Case study**

1. Interviews (staff of the University, Industry partners, the County Council, Graduates of the university)
2. Secondary data (policy documents, strategies, reports, websites)

# Findings - *engagement*

## - Contributions to regional development through various **collaborations**

### 1. Local Support

- Business Incubator, Sparkhouse
  - Supporting over 230 new and growing businesses and creating 230 new jobs
  - Training for SME's



### 2. Industry collaboration

- Siemens (University has helped to embed the company through supply of local graduates while developing research collaboration)
  - led to establishing the first purpose-built engineering school in the UK in 25 years.

**SIEMENS**



# Findings - *engagement 2*

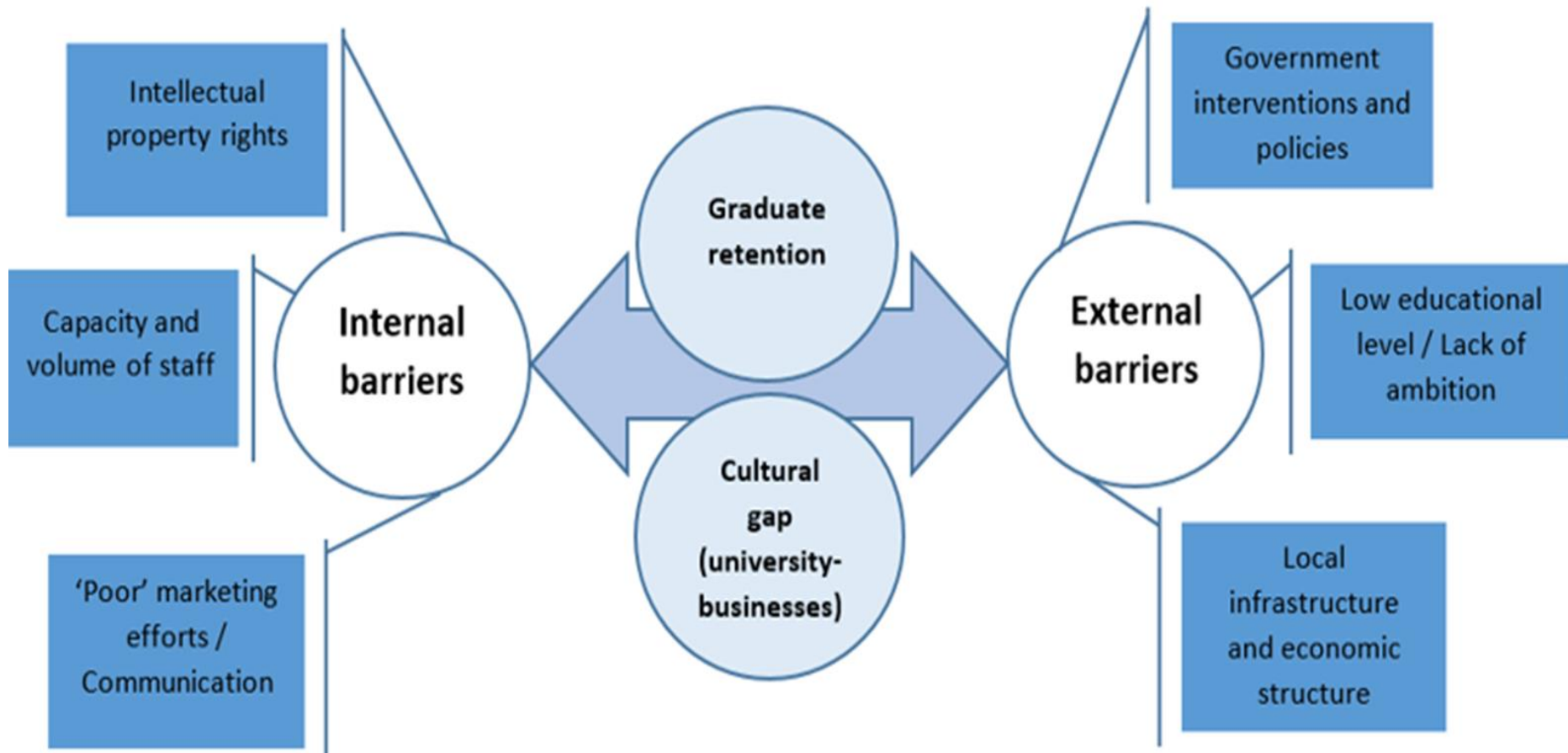
## 3. The University of Lincoln and County Council

- key drivers for regional innovation
- Common goal is to increase innovation potential within the region



*'[...] we are getting new businesses to relocate here just because of the university. I think the Science park [...], is really gaining momentum.'* (employee, County Council )

# Findings - *barriers*





# Findings – *barriers 2*

**Government Interventions and policies:** *‘when Brexit was announced, some of our clients lost 20% of their workforce over-night and you know the shock waves that happened [...] those sorts of things impact on us hugely [...] our challenges are externally-driven, political challenges’* (staff, UoL).

**Graduate retention:** *‘[...] well there are no jobs, some who could actually get jobs just have the big cities like London on their minds’* (graduate, UoL).

**Staff capacity:** *‘I am expected to know the entire breadth of qualifications and curriculum because you have to do that, because you can’t go to a company and say, well I’ll get somebody to get back to you...’* (staff, UoL).



# Reflections: on overcoming the barriers

- Universities are **constantly pushed to reassess their role and relationship** with the identified stakeholders and communities
- **Strategic planning is required** in understanding and managing the diverse partnerships, also to avoid undesirable consequences of adapting new collaboration models (Jongbloed *et al.*, 2008)
- The UoL addresses the issue of lack of knowledge-based businesses in its strategies by adapting the concept of a **‘tough leader’** – the spirit of innovation and experimenting new practices in teaching, research, partnerships (UoL Strategic Plan, 2016-2021)
- *In the end it comes down to the collaboration and actions between individual universities and businesses to determine whether the partnership is successful* (BIS, 2012)

# Conclusion

*The quest to engage, requires strategizing on the part of UoL and a concerted effort from all stakeholders*





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*Thank you!*



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