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Knowledge Quarter awarded landmark Government Science and Innovation Audit

Universities and Science Minister Jo Johnson has today instigated a Science and Innovation Audit for an area of London known as the Knowledge Quarter; encompassing Bloomsbury, Euston and King's Cross. The consortium leading the audit includes the British Library; Camden Council; the Knowledge Quarter; the Royal Veterinary College; City, University of London and UCL.

The Knowledge Quarter area, part of the boroughs of Camden and Islington, is home to 18 higher education institutions and over 600 research groups as well as world-renowned companies such as Google, Wellcome Trust and Springer Nature. It has attracted international attention in recent years due to the arrival of the Alan Turing Institute, the Francis Crick Institute and Central Saint Martins.

The next five years will see continued growth for the area with the construction of corporate headquarters for Universal Music, McKinsey & Company, and Google, as well as an extension for the British Library and the national Dementia Institute at UCL.

The audit will investigate the extent and ability for the Knowledge Quarter area to deliver major economic benefits for the wider UK. It will focus on five 'smart specialisms' including emerging Infectious Diseases, including Antimicrobial Resistance; Musculoskeletal Pathology Associated with Ageing; Dementias; Digital Archiving, Curation and Publishing; and Machine Learning/Artificial Intelligence.

In addition, the audit will map the area's global competitive advantages and build on identified areas of research innovation and scientific strength which will increase UK productivity, create jobs, and drive economic growth.

Science Minister, Jo Johnson, said:

"Now in its third wave, the Science and Innovation Audits are providing valuable insight into the ground-breaking work taking place across the UK and the contributions we are making to solve challenges across the world.

"The work of the successful regions undertaking their SIA in this wave will support the development and delivery of our Industrial Strategy and allow local places to build on their strengths. This will ensure that the UK remains competitive in the global market and is best placed to continue leading scientific discoveries and taking them to market."

Chair of the Knowledge Quarter and Chief Executive of the British Library, Roly Keating, said:

"We're absolutely delighted that the Knowledge Quarter has been selected as the focus for one of the Government's Science and Innovation Audits. Across its 88 member organisations, KQ already boasts a unique concentration of world-class talent and resources across science, research and culture. The Audit will provide the catalyst - and the evidence base - that will help us make an even greater contribution to UK innovation and economic growth."

Principal of the RVC, Professor Stuart Reid, said:

“The RVC is delighted to have a leading role in this Science Innovation Audit on behalf of the Knowledge Quarter. The future success of science depends on organisations working together, exploiting the synergy between our different skills sets and ensuring the outcomes have social, economic and political impact.”

Dr Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost for Enterprise and London, said:

“We are delighted that the Knowledge Quarter proposal for a Science and Innovation Audit has been supported. This is an exciting opportunity for all of the Knowledge Quarter’s world-leading partners in Camden, including universities and industry. The Science and Innovation Audit will help to unlock innovation and new collaborative initiatives across sectors, contributing to our neighbourhood, London and the country.”

-ENDS-

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Notes to Editors

British Library

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's greatest research libraries. It provides world class information services to the academic, business, research and scientific communities and offers unparalleled access to the world's largest and most comprehensive research collection. The Library's collection has developed over 250 years and exceeds 150 million separate items representing every age of written civilisation and includes books, journals, manuscripts, maps, stamps, music, patents, photographs, newspapers and sound recordings in all written and spoken languages. Up to 10 million people visit the British Library website - www.bl.uk - every year where they can view up to 4 million digitised collection items and over 40 million pages

Royal Veterinary College

The Royal Veterinary College is the largest and longest-established vet school in the English-speaking world and is a college of the University of London. It offers undergraduate, postgraduate and CPD programmes in veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing and is ranked in the top 10 universities nationally for biosciences. RVC produces world-class research and provides support for the veterinary profession through its referral hospitals, including the Queen Mother Hospital for Animals, Europe's largest small animal hospital.

As one of the world's leading specialist veterinary and biological science research institutions, the RVC brings together talented individuals; all of whom share a passion for human and animal health and welfare.

Knowledge Quarter

The Knowledge Quarter is a partnership of 88 academic, cultural, research, scientific and media organisations within a one-mile radius comprising of King’s Cross, Bloomsbury and Euston, who all have within their purpose the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Since its launch in December 2014, it has welcome a further 52 organisations as partners. The Knowledge Quarter fosters knowledge exchange and collaboration between staff and users of cross-disciplinary communities to exchange ideas, expertise and evidence.

UCL

UCL is one of the world's leading multi-disciplinary universities. We operate in a global context and are committed to excellence, innovation and the promotion of global understanding in all our activities: research, teaching, learning, enterprise and community engagement.

UCL Innovation and Enterprise are a group of specialist teams working with students and staff to encourage a spirit of enterprise, create links with the outside world and accelerate UCL's innovation and impact.