

UKSPA
ASPIRE

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ASPIRE is the continuous improvement framework endorsed by UKSPA which has been created by internationally respected Science Park Executives for professionals developing innovation environments. Such facilities include Technology Incubators, Innovation Centres, Research Parks, Technology Centres and Technopoles.

The process enables Managers and their teams to access, adapt, and co-evolve existing industry best practices with the support of an experienced practitioner. The independence of the practitioner provides an objective view of your operation, facilitates a credible bespoke development plan, and provides an impartial review of progress towards meeting that plan.

ASPIRE provides the Management Team with a bespoke plan for continuous improvement, which has been developed through an accredited process and which may also be used to meet the needs of the various stakeholders of your facility.

ASPIRE also provides the organisation with an opportunity to be recognised for achieving excellence in the innovation ecosystem within which you operate.

To discuss how ASPIRE could benefit your business contact the UKSPA office on 01799 532050.

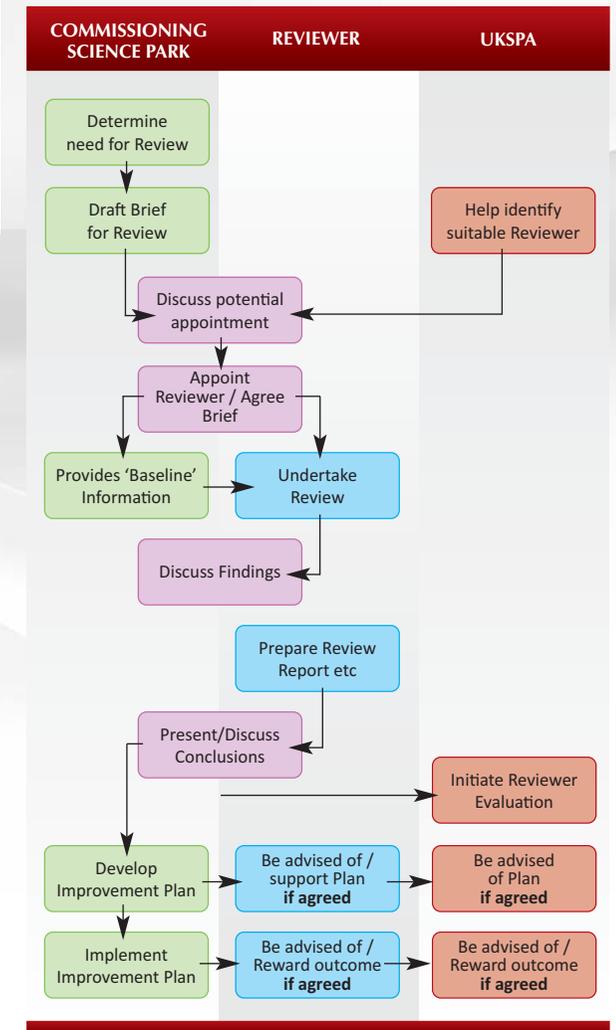
The process involves an initial in-depth review of key aspects of your organisation, discussion to establish identified key goals, an agreed timetable of follow-up reviews to monitor progress, and an opportunity for your progression and success to be recognised.

Reviews and follow up meetings are taken at an agreed pace specific to each participating UKSPA Member. The responsibility is placed on the organisation to take action to achieve agreed goals identified in the initial review.

Ownership of data generated by the process remains entirely with the UKSPA Member commissioning the review and is not intended for external publication or use.

The Process

ASPIRE is a confidential process conducted in partnership between the participating organisation and an UKSPA Licensed Reviewer. You are able to select a reviewer from a panel of four Licensed internationally respected experts.



Key Benefits

ASPIRE benefits to a participating UKSPA Member by increasing its effectiveness and creating value that will be recognised by your various stakeholders. These are summarised in the table below.

STAKEHOLDER	VALUE	BENEFIT TO THE PARK
Potential Tenants	Assurance of an accredited innovation environment	Increased attractiveness to potential tenants
	Increased recognition as loci of business activity	Enhanced tenant retention
Investors	Enhanced asset value from higher occupancy	Increased likelihood of continued investment
	Formalised governance structure	Increased attractiveness to future investors
	Credibility of an independently reviewed development plan	Better support for investment / business plans
	Association with a quality product / environment	
Local Economic Partners (LEPs, Chambers of Commerce, LAs HEIs etc)	Assurance of an accredited innovation environment.	Increased likelihood of public sector support
	Increased economic impact from improved effectiveness Better engagement with regional knowledge & business communities (attractive to potential tenants).	Increased below the line marketing
Management Team	A clear and credible development plan	Better buy-in creating enhanced performance. Better staff retention



Scope of Reviews

A comprehensive **ASPIRE** Review might be expected to examine all the following characteristics of an UKSPA Member. A number of sample questions are included below for illustrative purposes:

Purpose and Strategy

What is the strategy? How is the organisation managing and adapting this strategy in the face of changing external and internal factors? What is the target market or sector? Is the strategy agreed and understood by partners and stakeholders? Are there links with relevant institutions and universities? What are they? How do they work? Could they be more effective?

Governance

What is the structure? Does it demonstrate the desired qualities? Are the right people involved? Is there a sufficiently wide and relevant range of experience and expertise at the right levels? If not, why not? Can decisions be made quickly and effectively? Do key stakeholders contribute to decision making?

Business Case/Plan

Is the business plan viable? Are the planned levels of growth achievable? What account has been taken of current market conditions? Is the investment strategy sound and deliverable? Are KPIs understood and measured at appropriate levels of management?

Policies

What policies are in place? Are they used and working effectively? Do they block rather than support progress? Do they really support the objectives of the organisation? Do they have unforeseen

and negative impact? Are accounting policies clear and able to show real value / impact of investment for all parties?

Management

What arrangements are in place for property and facilities management? Are potential occupiers able to access and occupy facilities that are “support ready”

Premises Offer

Does the configuration of space availability match the requirements of the market? What are the arrangements for ICT management? Is the quality / condition of the asset appropriate for the type of tenant the organisation wished to accommodate / attract? Is the price of the accommodation consistent with the market? How are services charges managed? Why do tenants settle here rather than a business park down the road? What is the USP of this location? Are terms sufficiently flexible and attractive for the type of company the organisation wishes to attract to the site?

Business Support

Does the organisation differentiate itself with suitable offerings of business support? Is business support managed in house or outsourced? Are the range of support services consistent with the requirements of the tenants at this location? What is the pricing policy?

Innovation Support

How is the organisation positioned with respect to the local / sub-regional innovation network? Could it be a more central / focussed contributor? Are the right conditions being created? Is there evidence for the organisation’s role in facilitating innovation? Are there links between knowledge generators and tenants? Is the organisation tapping into networks that identify and attract entrepreneurs? Does the provision of innovation support mechanisms differentiate the organisation from conventional property offerings?

Local Context

Does the local policy framework support the objectives of the organisation and enable development? What are the planning barriers? Can they be overturned? How strong is the local business base? Does it offer opportunities or present risks? How are these managed? Does the local infrastructure have any implications for the effectiveness or impact of the organisation? Are there any shortages in skills / deficiencies in transport infrastructure or availability of housing that may impact on the organisation?

Local Knowledge Economy

Can you provide evidence of understanding of how the organisation fits the local knowledge economy? Are there links with appropriate knowledge generators / research institutions and



other innovation support networks? What are the strengths and areas of expertise? Are these relevant to the organisations’ strategy? Is there a clear understanding of the local knowledge economy and the contribution the organisation makes to it?

Results

Is the organisation recognised as an exemplar? Is it recognised as a contributor to the economic vitality of the area / region? Does it achieve good results (both financial and non-financial) that satisfy all stakeholders? Are achievements and impacts reported and reviewed regularly? Do stakeholders make a return on IP? How important is sustainability?

The scope of the Review will, however, be determined by the agreed brief and may be limited to one or more of these aspects.

The Reviewer will examine the agreed aspects of your organisation using a guide, prepared by UKSPA, which is intended to encourage an objective look at your organisation from many different perspectives.



Post Review Action

An effective Review will identify issues / opportunities, consideration of which are likely to benefit the UKSPA Member through informing the development of strategy, and addressing potential weaknesses or gaps in strategy which would benefit from attention, and the reasons for this.

Where a potential improvement or improvements are identified, it is recommended that the commissioning UKSPA Member will implement initiatives or projects to address them with specified objectives and/or desired outcomes. In such cases, the UKSPA Member is encouraged to inform the Reviewer of the proposed course of action (if necessary on confidential basis) if the Reviewer is not involved. Subject to any confidentiality restrictions, this will enable Reviewers to advise UKSPA

about the usefulness and impact of Reviews undertaken.

Furthermore, in cases where improvements have been secured following Reviews (and verified by the Reviewer), UKSPA would be able to formally recognise the achievement through an ‘UKSPA Innovation Excellence’ award with the attendant promotional benefit to the particular UKSPA Member and the innovation community as a whole.

Project Duration

The duration of each ASPIRE project is determined by the Client and the Reviewer after the project scope has been agreed. As a general gauge we would expect an average Innovation centre or Incubator review to take in the region of 3-4 days to complete, and for larger science parks it may take 8 or more days.

The ASPIRE process represents an excellent investment that will identify issues for the long-term sustainability and health of your business.

UKSPA Licenced Reviewers

UKSPA Reviewers have been granted a licence to operate under the UKSPA brand and have undertaken training to ensure consistency of approach and application of the **ASPIRE** process. We have carefully selected individuals with a mix of experience and skills. The client selects their own Reviewer, but it may be advisable to use a mix of Reviewers according to the nature, scope and complexity of your agreed Review.



Tim Bacon

Tim has a professional and career background in Town Planning, Economic Development, Business Support and Property spanning 35 years.

Having worked previously at three local authorities (including one in Scotland), he moved to Loughborough in 1989 to work for Charnwood Borough Council and then to Loughborough University in 2004.

Tim has substantial experience of planning, funding and developing sites, putting in place their infrastructure and managing a range of premises to support business start-ups and larger companies. Tim has undertaken a range of consultancy and change-management projects and has extensive experience of staff and organisational development, having grown his own Economic Development Team at Charnwood from scratch.

As well as developing Managed Workspaces and Innovation Centres Tim, in his town planning role, allocated the site for Loughborough Science Park and attracted its first major occupier. Working subsequently for the University, Tim oversaw the submission of a successful

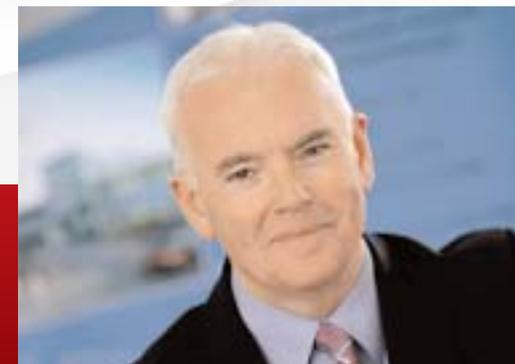
planning application for Phase Two of the Science Park and led the process to procure a private-sector development partner. During this time Tim was also managing one of the UK's largest Innovation Centres, working closely with tenants on making a success of their businesses.

Tim has been an active member of UKSPA since 2004 having been Deputy Chair recently and supported a number of new UKSPA initiatives. Tim joined the second group of science park Managers to go through UKSPA's Ithaka training programme and that Group continues to meet regularly, providing a valuable source of peer information, advice and support.

Nigel Halford

Nigel has been associated with UKSPA since 1987, initially as a member park representative and subsequently as a Director.

He was appointed Chairman of the Association between 2000 and 2002 and influenced the strategic direction of UKSPA. This work involved visiting a large number of member parks, identifying best practice and brokering partnerships and collaborative activity.



In 1987, he joined the University of Hull where he assumed the position of Head of Business and Regional Support – an extremely broad role which embraced technology transfer, innovation and enterprise. Reflecting the University's commitment to engage with its city and region, he took on a number of representative roles which included Chairman of the Hull Chamber of Commerce Regional Affairs Committee, Shadow Board Member of The Deep Millenium Project and a period of secondment to CityVision, Hull's regeneration company.

During his long association with UKSPA, Nigel undertook a number of consultancies, principally overseas and presented at international conferences

on the subject of science parks and technology transfer.

As Chief Executive of Tamar Science Park (TSP) during the period 2003-2011, he continued to work closely with UKSPA in promoting best practice initiatives and this was reflected in many visits to TSP by both new and mature science parks from the UK and overseas. One of these initiatives saw reciprocal staff exchanges with Manchester Science Park.

TSP was the founder member of the South West Science Park and Incubator Leader's Forum and as Chairman of this Forum for the first four years of its life, Nigel was able to work closely with, and extend advice to new as well as existing operations.



Charles Monck

Charles Monck is a recognised international science park expert, having been closely involved in their evolution in the UK and in overseas countries for the last 30 years.

He played an active role in the setting up and early development of UKSPA. He led the first evaluation of UK science parks with Prof David Storey, which formed the basis of the book 'Science Parks and the Growth of High Technology Firms'.

He is now engaged in a range of economic development consultancy projects in the UK and internationally including the development and evaluation of science parks, innovation centres and the commercialisation of research and is one of the reviewers for UKSPA's Aspire Programme.

In the UK, Charles has been involved in a range of market assessments and feasibility studies for new schemes including BT Martlesham, Chesterfield, Colworth, Cranfield, Croydon, Hull, Imperial College, Leeds, Liverpool, Loughborough, Medway, Newcastle and Reading. He has also undertaken reviews and evaluations of existing schemes including the Surrey Science Park, Northern Ireland Science Park, NetPark, Liverpool and Sheffield. He has also

undertaken a range of science park-related assignments in the Brunei, Estonia, Hong Kong, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, New Zealand, Russia and Turkey.

He first became involved in 1983 when he joined the government agency, English Estates, as their science park specialist, where he was involved in the development of over 10 science parks and innovation centres in England. After a period as chief executive of the Yorkshire and Humber Development Agency, responsible for the attraction of inward investment to the region, he moved into consultancy. He graduated in engineering from Cambridge, set up and ran an engineering business and subsequently completed an MBA at Cranfield.



Malcolm Parry

Malcolm has been an active member of the Science Park movement in the UK since 1981.

He has been responsible for the planning, development and operation of the Surrey Research Park since it was first promoted in the early 1980s. This site has a master plan which he developed and implemented and included raising development capital.

The planning included defining the specification and operation of the Surrey Technology Centre 1982 which is one of the original business incubators in the UK that continues to operate, but now also includes a pre-incubator.

Malcolm contributed a chapter on finance to the first book published by UKSPA in 1991 and subsequently acted as lead and sole editor respectively on the 1999 and 2006 editions of the UKSPA books on the planning, development and management of science parks. He contributed a number of chapters to each on wide range of topics.

Malcolm has worked for the British Council and continues to work for UNESCO and the United Nations Economic Commission to Europe as an expert on science and technology parks. In the last twelve years he has undertaken missions and advised governments on science and technology parks in Kenya, Namibia, Egypt, The Gambia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Portugal,

India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, South Korea, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Russia, Iran and Belarus. Each of these has required written reports to be submitted to the commissioning organisation. He has also worked as a consultant with ANGLE Technology and Zernike UK.

He has sat on the International Association of Science Parks Advisory Council as an expert and been elected to the IASP Board for one term of office. He was one of the founders of UKSPA and sat on the initial organising Board following which he has served two terms as Chair of the Board.



The Benefits of an **ASPIRE** Assessment

- ✓ You will be able to use the **ASPIRE** framework, well tested through previous UKSPA quality initiatives
- ✓ You will have access to an independent and respected Science Park Reviewer accredited by UKSPA
- ✓ You can set the scope of the Review based on the **ASPIRE** framework
- ✓ By agreeing the scope of the Review, you will be able to manage the investment according to your needs
- ✓ You will have a clearly signed **ASPIRE** contract setting out the deliverables and the cost
- ✓ Your Reviewer will seek a good evidence base for the Review to ensure it is robust
- ✓ Your Park's Strategy and operations will be assessed and critical success factors identified
- ✓ Your Reviewer will be able to draw on UKSPA's extensive best practice portfolio
- ✓ **ASPIRE** will provide you with a basis for continuous improvement for your business
- ✓ You will have the opportunity to discuss the initial findings with your Reviewer
- ✓ You will receive a Review Document that you could share with your Board/stakeholders
- ✓ The objective and independent assessment will assist you with Stakeholder messages
- ✓ The Reviewer will draft an Improvement Programme for your Business if required
- ✓ The Improvement Programme will identify opportunities such as strategic actions, new markets or operating methods
- ✓ The details of the Review and any Improvement Programme remain confidential to you, unless agreed otherwise
- ✓ The Reviewer will provide a follow-up visit if requested, to check progress against the Improvement Programme
- ✓ Where you agree, UKSPA will formally recognise best practice secured as a result of your **ASPIRE** Review through an "UKSPA Innovation Excellence" Award to your business and attendant promotional benefits conferred from time to time by the Association
- ✓ You may wish to use your UKSPA Innovation Excellence Award for your own local and national publicity purposes
- ✓ Feedback to UKSPA on the performance of **ASPIRE** Assessors is built into the programme to help us continually improve the process



Chesterford Research Park Home to the United Kingdom Science Park Association

To discuss how **ASPIRE** could benefit your business contact the UKSPA office.

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