

RUSSELL  
GROUP

# Profile

**The Russell Group of Universities**

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# Welcome

The Russell Group represents 24 leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining the very best research, an outstanding teaching and learning experience and unrivalled links with business and the public sector.

Our research-intensive, world-class universities play an important part in the intellectual life of the UK and have huge social, economic and cultural impacts locally, across the UK and around the globe.

Russell Group universities are all unique institutions, each with its own history and ethos, but they share some distinguishing characteristics.

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## Russell Group universities:

- Lead in **pioneering, excellent research and innovation**
- Produce **excellent research on a grand scale**, across a broad range of disciplines, generating huge impact through critical mass and quality
- Provide an **outstanding student experience** for both undergraduates and postgraduates, where teaching is enhanced by world-class research and facilities
- Work with major multinationals as well as SMEs and start-up companies to **drive cutting-edge innovation**
- Are responsible for **ground-breaking inventions and discoveries**
- **Compete on an international stage to attract the brightest minds from around the world** to study, research and teach
- Produce the **most distinguished contributors to society**
- Provide the **vast majority of medical research and education** in the UK
- Play a **key role in their local communities**

**Our universities are found in all four nations and in every major city of the UK. They are large, complex organisations with an average annual income of £688 million; for other UK universities the average is £132 million. Their multiple income streams include competitively-won research funding, as well as grants and contracts from the EU, charities, industry, endowments and investments.**

In 2015-16, each Russell Group university competitively won an average of £185 million in research grants and contracts, including:

- An average of £40 million in grants and contracts from UK-based charities
- An average of £25 million in grants and contracts from the EU
- An average of £10 million in grants and contracts from UK industry

Furthermore, Russell Group universities attracted an average of £19 million each in endowment and investment income.

Our universities offer a wide range of courses: each university offers on average more than 350 courses at undergraduate level.

Russell Group universities collaborate with the NHS to educate over 80% of the UK's medical graduates. Our universities play a leading role in advancing our understanding of illness and disease, and our research makes a direct contribution to improving patient outcomes.

Four of the top ten universities in the world are Russell Group institutions. Furthermore, 15 Russell Group universities feature in the top 100 and all 24 are in the top 250, according to the QS World University Rankings for 2018.

Russell Group universities operate globally, attracting students with top grades and academic staff from many different countries, but they also have a strong role and influence within their regional and local communities.

**Russell Group universities teach on average over**

**25,000**

**students compared to an average of 12,000 at non-Russell Group universities in the UK**

**The average number of staff employed is**

**7,100**

**compared to a non-Russell Group average of 1,700**

**The ratio of students to academic staff is around**

**7:1**

**at Russell Group universities compared to 14:1 at non-Russell Group universities**

# Building prosperity

**Russell Group universities are a prominent UK and international industry in their own right:**

- They have a total economic output of over £32 billion per annum, which represents 44% of the total economic output for the whole UK university sector (of which Russell Group universities comprise just 15%).
- They support over 300,000 jobs UK-wide.
- They are a major UK export industry, generating overseas earnings of over £4 billion per annum.
- The average annual capital spend in 2015-16 of Russell Group universities was £92 million; for other UK higher education institutions the average was £17 million.
- Capital investment projects by Russell Group universities between 2012-13 and 2016-17 are expected to support more than 98,500 UK jobs, including around 37,800 temporary jobs during the construction period, around 45,000 permanent operational jobs and almost 15,700 permanent jobs supported by the wider catalytic impact of the activity undertaken in the new facilities.

# Leaders in pioneering research & innovation

Russell Group universities are world leaders in research and innovation. They not only produce excellent research on a grand scale, across a broad range of disciplines, but they also have the critical mass of excellent research to generate huge impact, link the UK into global knowledge networks, attract investment and exploit technological breakthroughs for economic success. They provide the vast majority of medical research and education in the UK.

The UK is second only to Switzerland in the world, and ahead of the US, for the quality of its scientific research institutions.

The UK research base is highly productive and has a global reputation for excellence: with less than 1% of the world's population and just 4% of the world's researchers, the UK earns 12% of international citations and 16% of the most cited papers – of which nearly three-quarters were produced by Russell Group researchers. (source: SciVal)

Russell Group universities lead the world in pioneering research across a range of disciplines, which benefits the economy, creates technological breakthroughs and improves quality of life. High concentrations of research excellence across disciplines are a foundation for innovative, interdisciplinary research collaborations that are key to solving global challenges.

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Russell Group universities award 60% of all doctorates in the UK.

The 24 Russell Group universities constitute 15% of higher education institutions in the UK, yet they account for a much higher proportion of all funding competitively-won by UK universities:

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**76%**

of research grant and contract income (£4.45 billion)

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**70%**

of all international grants and contracts from outside the EU (£307 million)

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**71%**

of EU research grants and contracts awarded (over £600 million)

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**78%**

of total income from the UK Research Councils (almost £1.5 billion)

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**83%**

of research funding from UK charities (over £954 million)

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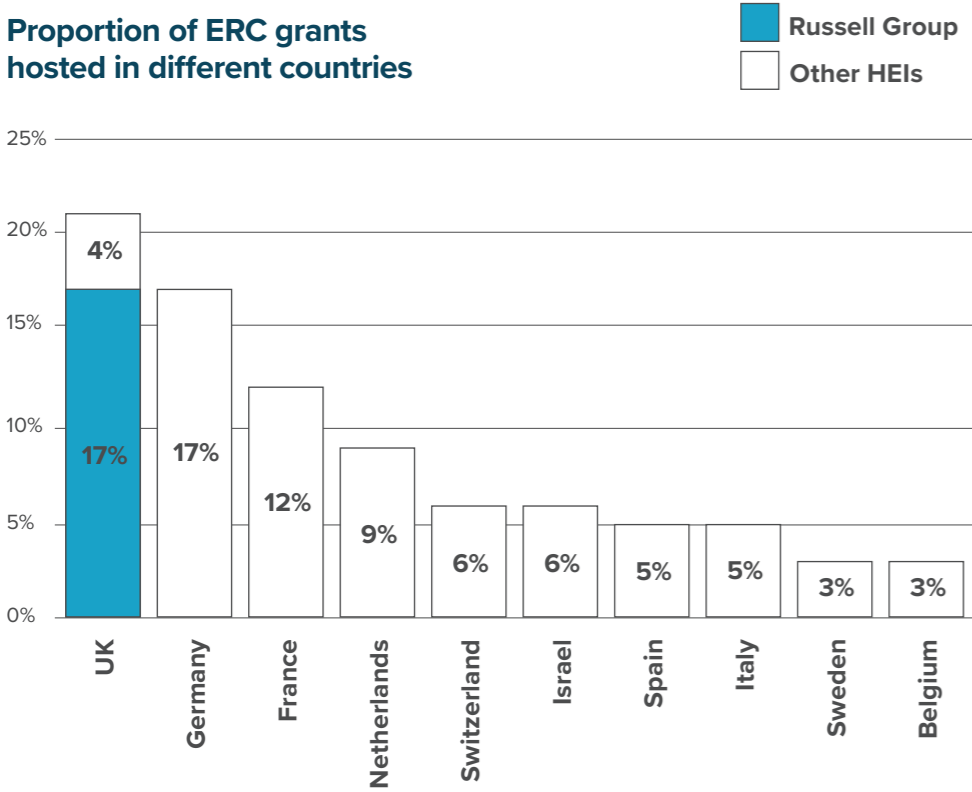
**68%**

of the total quality-related research funding allocated by the UK Funding Councils (around £1.3 billion)

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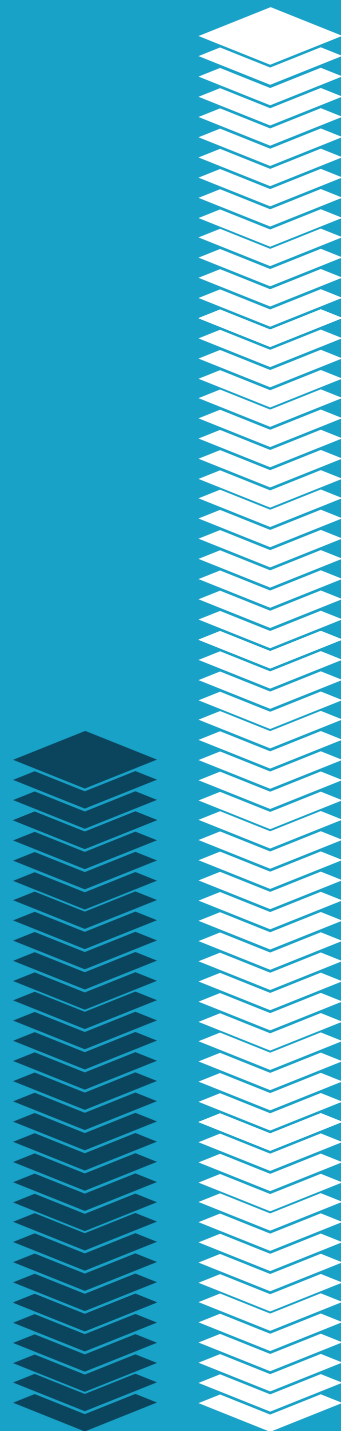
The UK leads Europe in winning grants from the European Research Council (ERC) – and Russell Group universities alone host a higher proportion of ERC grants than the whole of Germany or France.

Proportion of ERC grants hosted in different countries



While Russell Group universities make up 15% of UK higher education institutions, the proportion of research which is ‘world-leading’ at Russell Group universities is almost double that at other UK universities.

Other HEIs  
Russell Group



# Driving innovation

## Commercialising research

Russell Group universities have a proven track record of turning world-leading research into innovative products and services.

In 2015-16:

- Our universities generated over £86 million in intellectual property income, 49% of the total generated by UK universities.
- The estimated turnover from companies spun out from Russell Group universities was over £644 million.
- The 495 active spin-outs from Russell Group universities accounted for 59% of those which survived for three years or more.

Academics at Russell Group institutions are more likely to have taken out a patent, licensed their research to a company or formed a spin-out than academics at other UK institutions.

## Home to brilliant academics

The brightest and the best minds from across the globe have found a home at Russell Group universities, including nearly 200 Nobel Prize winning academics. Most recently...

- Christopher A. Pissarides, LSE, Economics 2010 “for analysis of markets with search frictions”
- Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov, Manchester, Physics 2010 “for groundbreaking experiments regarding the two-dimensional material graphene”
- Venkatraman Ramakrishnan, Cambridge, Chemistry 2009 “for studies of the structure and function of the ribosome”
- Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio, Bristol alumnus, Literature 2008 as “author of new departures, poetic adventure and sensual ecstasy, explorer of a humanity beyond and below the reigning civilization”

- Peter Higgs, Edinburgh, Physics 2013 “for the theoretical discovery of a mechanism that contributes to our understanding of the origin of mass of subatomic particles”
- John O’Keefe, UCL, Physiology or Medicine 2014 “for discoveries of cells that constitute a positioning system in the brain”

In 2014, Simon Donaldson of Imperial College London won one of the inaugural Breakthrough Prizes in Mathematics, John B. Pendry also of Imperial College London won a Kavli Prize for Nanoscience and Martin Hairer from the University of Warwick won a Fields Medal. John Hardy of University College London won a Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences in 2015.

# Enriching education and creating opportunities

**Russell Group universities provide an outstanding student experience for both undergraduates and postgraduates. Their combination of teaching and research excellence creates an ideal learning environment which attracts the most outstanding students from the UK and across the world.**

Our universities prioritise providing an excellent education and student experience which offers lasting benefits to our graduates – and to society as a whole. Our students benefit from world-class teachers, first-rate facilities and a highly-motivated and talented peer group.

In 2015-16, 417,000 undergraduates and 192,500 postgraduates were studying at the 24 Russell Group universities.

## World-class teachers

Our students work with their field’s leading experts and often engage in research processes. This approach provides particular strengths in postgraduate teaching and training, which is why 38% of all postgraduates in the UK are studying at Russell Group universities.

According to the 2016 National Student Survey:

- 87% of students at Russell Group universities were satisfied with their course
- 88% of students were satisfied with teaching at our universities

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**Russell Group universities taught 80% of doctors and dentists trained in the UK in 2015-16.**

## First-rate facilities

Millions of pounds are being invested in libraries and study space, cutting-edge laboratory equipment, improved lecture theatres, innovative teaching programmes, arts and culture facilities, the latest software, professional careers services and smaller class sizes.

On average, Russell Group universities spend 25% more per student than other UK universities on academic services and staff and student facilities. Our universities' libraries and IT facilities are highly rated, with 89% of students saying they have good resources and sufficient access.

Over a five-year period to 2017, Russell Group universities will invest:

**£768m**

in teaching and research facilities for science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM)

**£162m**

in teaching facilities for non-STEM subjects

**£367m**

in new and refurbished student accommodation

**£300m**

in sports, social and cultural facilities

**£172m**

in library facilities

**£81m**

in IT facilities

### A talented peer group

Entry to our universities is highly selective and applications outweigh places on the majority of courses. As a consequence, our students benefit from working with and learning from a highly-motivated and talented peer group.

Russell Group universities attract applications from the brightest and most highly qualified students from the UK and beyond. The average entry score for Russell Group universities is 460 UCAS tariff points (almost equivalent to three A grades and one B grade at A-level) compared with 330 (equivalent to one A grade and two B grades) for other universities in the UK.

We want every student with the qualifications, potential and determination to succeed at a Russell Group university to have the opportunity to do so, whatever their background. Bursaries and scholarships are available at all Russell Group universities, including for international students.

The Russell Group has some of the best university completion rates in the world.

**“Business needs innovation, skills and insight to succeed. Russell Group universities are vital to all three.”**

Carolyn Fairbairn,  
Director-General,  
Confederation of British Industry



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**“Graduate recruiters and developers highly value the breadth of intellect and skills that many Russell Group graduates can bring to their organisations.”**

Stephen Isherwood,  
Chief Executive,  
Association of Graduate Recruiters

**Nurturing valuable employment skills**

Russell Group universities teach their students how to problem-solve, learn independently and think creatively and analytically – valuable skills for the future world of work.

As a result, Russell Group graduates are highly sought after by employers, both nationally and internationally. Ten of the top 50 universities in the world, as ranked by employers, are Russell Group universities.

Studying at a Russell Group university equips graduates with the skills to be successful entrepreneurs, and our graduates have a strong tradition of setting up their own companies.

**Graduates from our universities earn on average around**

**10%**

**more than graduates of other universities over a lifetime.**

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# Relationships that last a lifetime

Russell Group universities have successful and growing alumni associations across the UK and internationally, which provide excellent opportunities for networking and staying in touch.

Russell Group universities are proud to include among their graduates many who have made significant and lasting contributions to science, business, the arts and global relations.

Outstanding international alumni of Russell Group universities include:

- Some of the most prominent politicians in world history, including Bill Clinton and Aung San Suu Kyi
- Successful entrepreneurs and business leaders, including George Soros, Danny Lui, founder of Lenovo, and Cyrus Mistry, Chairman of Tata Group
- World-leading researchers, such as Zhong Nanshan, the pulmonologist who discovered SARS, and John Polanyi, who won the 1986 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his research in chemical kinetics
- Renowned writers such as Mulk Raj Anand, pioneer of Anglo-Indian fiction

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**Russell Group alumni include current or former Heads of State/Government from countries across the globe, including Germany, Greece, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, United States, Canada, Trinidad & Tobago, Belize, Peru, India, Pakistan, Taiwan, Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Namibia, Colombia and South Africa.**

# Global powerhouses

Russell Group universities are global powerhouses, competing on an international stage, as well as being key players in their local communities. Our universities work with major multinational companies, as well as local small and medium-sized enterprises, and drive cutting-edge innovation.

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**“Our universities are amongst the best in the world... and that is a matter of huge importance to our success.”**

Greg Clarke,  
then Secretary of State for Business,  
Energy & Industrial Strategy,  
speaking at Policy Exchange event  
Developing a Modern Industrial Strategy,  
March 2017

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#### Excelling in business-university collaboration

Collaboration with business is a core part of the mission of all of our universities. They are open and accessible to businesses, with dedicated staff to promote knowledge transfer between the business and university sectors, and they significantly outperform other universities in the UK.

In 2015-16, Russell Group universities competitively won:

**£850m**

from collaborative research (66% of the total collaborative research income to UK universities)

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**£949m**

from contract research (76% of the total contract research income to UK universities)

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Russell Group universities represent nine out of the top 10 UK universities for contract research with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The UK is consistently ranked in the top five countries in the world for business–university collaboration, according to an annual survey of industry leaders by the World Economic Forum.

Our universities enter into research and commercial partnerships and ventures with global corporations, SMEs, and public sector organisations. Just a few of the companies we work with are Jaguar Land Rover, Tata, Microsoft, Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Procter & Gamble, BAE Systems and the BBC.

#### Commitment to local communities

Russell Group universities play a key role in their local communities and take their civic responsibilities extremely seriously.

Our universities interact closely with local residents and businesses, whether through opening the doors to their sports and cultural facilities, or providing advice and facilities to local start-up companies. Russell Group universities are often among the biggest employers in their regions.

Our institutions are working hard to address environmental concerns and to develop ways to become lower carbon and lower waste environments, as part of their wider environmental policies.

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**“What is fantastic about doing business in Britain is that we also have world-class universities...that act as vehicles for innovation. Continued investment in this area will be the engine that powers the UK economic recovery, generating long lasting wealth and creating jobs.”**

Juergen Maier,  
Chief Executive,  
Siemens UK

# Attracting talent from around the world

Russell Group universities attract the brightest minds from around the world. Students and staff are surrounded by a high-quality, highly-motivated peer group, and our universities produce the most distinguished contributors to society.

Russell Group universities welcome talented students and researchers from around the world into their diverse academic communities.

Evidence from several Russell Group universities shows that the primary reason cited by overseas researchers for choosing to come to the UK is frequently the quality, relevance and reputation of the research group or department they are joining.

Similarly, international students tend to travel to locations where they will receive the highest quality of education and greatest benefits.

All of our universities are highly trusted visa sponsors, according to UK Home Office standards, and provide support to international staff and students throughout the visa application process.

The UK is the second most popular destination in the world for international students, and there are currently over 179,000 students from outside the UK studying at Russell Group universities. Our communities include students and staff from Chile to South Korea, New Zealand to Morocco, Finland to Botswana.

In 2015-16 at Russell Group universities:

# 39%

of academic staff were of non-UK nationality – that's 55% of all non-UK academic staff in UK universities

# 21%

of undergraduates were from outside the UK

# 47%

of postgraduates were from outside the UK

# About the Russell Group organisation

Our member universities have histories varying in length from 50 years to over 1,000, but the Russell Group itself is a newer organisation.

The first stage in its development took place in 1994 when the heads of 17 leading research-intensive universities began to meet together at the Hotel Russell in London – hence its name.

In 2006 the Russell Group was set up as a professional, incorporated organisation. Its aim is to help ensure that our universities have the optimum conditions in which to flourish and continue to make social, economic and cultural impacts through their world-leading research and teaching. We provide strategy, policy development, intelligence, communications and advocacy for our member institutions.

The board is made up of the heads of the 24 Russell Group universities and chaired for a three year term by one of the directors. The following were appointed as Chairs of the Russell Group:

- 2000: Sir Colin Lucas, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, became the first official Chair

- 2003: Professor Sir Michael Sterling, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham
- 2006: Professor Sir Malcolm Grant, then Provost of UCL. As Chair, he oversaw the formalisation of the Russell Group as a company limited by guarantee
- 2009: Professor Michael Arthur, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds
- 2012: Professor Sir David Eastwood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham
- 2015: Professor Sir David Greenaway, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham
- 2017: Professor Anton Muscatelli, Principal of the University of Glasgow. Professor Koen Lamberts, Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of York, appointed Deputy Chair

# Russell Group universities

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Imperial College London  
King's College London  
University of Leeds  
University of Liverpool  
London School of Economics  
and Political Science  
University of Manchester  
Newcastle University  
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