

Consultancy and universities

Some key questions

- What is consultancy
- What is research
- Can MASTS do consultancy?
- Should MASTS do consultancy?

Consultancy 'markets'

- Involves buyers and sellers
- It isn't always an informed market
 - There are quality markets
 - There are bucket shop markets
- Value is placed on time/service/facilities required to meet a predefined outcome, most often in a limited (too short) timescale
- Product meets the needs, wants, hopes of the customer

Research 'markets'

- Research explores the unknown, the novel, the uncertain
- Research should inform markets, not try and meet their needs
- There should only be quality research
- Outcomes are/should be scrutinised by peers

The lines between research and consultancy are increasingly blurred

- Libraries are being replaced by google
- Laboratories are being replaced by yellow pages
- Researcher can be hired as sub-contractors
- Papers can be self published as blogs
- Small businesses can have real global reach

Key success factors

- Having a unique selling point
- Knowing what you have to offer
 - Skills, facilities, experience
- Promote past achievements and successes
- Seek pro-active opportunities rather than waiting for tender calls
- Link with local business partners
- Always stay focussed on excellent, world class research

Key concerns

- Failure to deliver on time
- Ability to deliver broad pragmatic rather than idealised/blinkered/narrow input
- Being able to sifting out poor research
- Carpet bagging on new industries
- Competing unfairly in fragile market places
- Doing thinking that should have been done in the bath/or at the sink - on the back of a vessel at sea