



University
of Glasgow

Building Innovation Ecosystems

GLASGOW
RIVERSIDE
INNOVATION
DISTRICT

From Strategy to Regional Economic Impact



WORLD
CHANGING
GLASGOW

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Vice Principal Innovation and Economic Development

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Innovation: what's the Glasgow story?

- **Historically:** our innovation has led the world
- **Over the decades:** world-leading in research, but behind the curve in innovation
- **2022:** better support needed for innovation; under-resourced; limited view on value of student enterprise
- **Now:** seeking to shift that dial through our ambitious innovation strategy.
- **Ingredients for success:**
 - Investment in innovation support
 - Senior leadership backing
 - Creating an enabling culture

Innovation Strategy: 2022-2025

VISION AND MISSION	 Vision We want our innovation to change the world, for the better		 Mission To empower innovation, in every corner of our University		
OUR VALUES We will...	 Challenge everything	 Focus on solutions	 Build resilience for future challenges	 Embed fairness in all our decision-making	
ENABLING THEMES	 Change mindsets		 Connect our innovation community		 Invest in our enabling infrastructure
DELIVERY PILLARS	Grow and accelerate our innovation portfolios	 Create partnerships that matter	 Expand access to our knowledge and expertise	 Create impact in our communities	
OUTCOMES	Recognised as an entrepreneurial university		Double our performance against all elements of our innovation portfolio		

What have we focused on?

- Getting the basics right
- Full review of suite of policies to drive an enabling culture for success
 - Equity, incubation policy, spin-out creation
 - Feedback loop – what is not working for academics?
 - Authorisation and approvals – who are the decision-makers on risk?
 - Investor relations
- Streamlining our ecosystem offerings
 - Focus on de-risking and external validation
 - Seed fund
- Building economic development capacity



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Health Innovation Hub



Church Street Innovation Zone



ARC & Keystone



SWG3



QEUH and Clinical innovation Zone



Govan Partick Bridge



Smart Things Accelerator Centre

Innovation Assets around GRID



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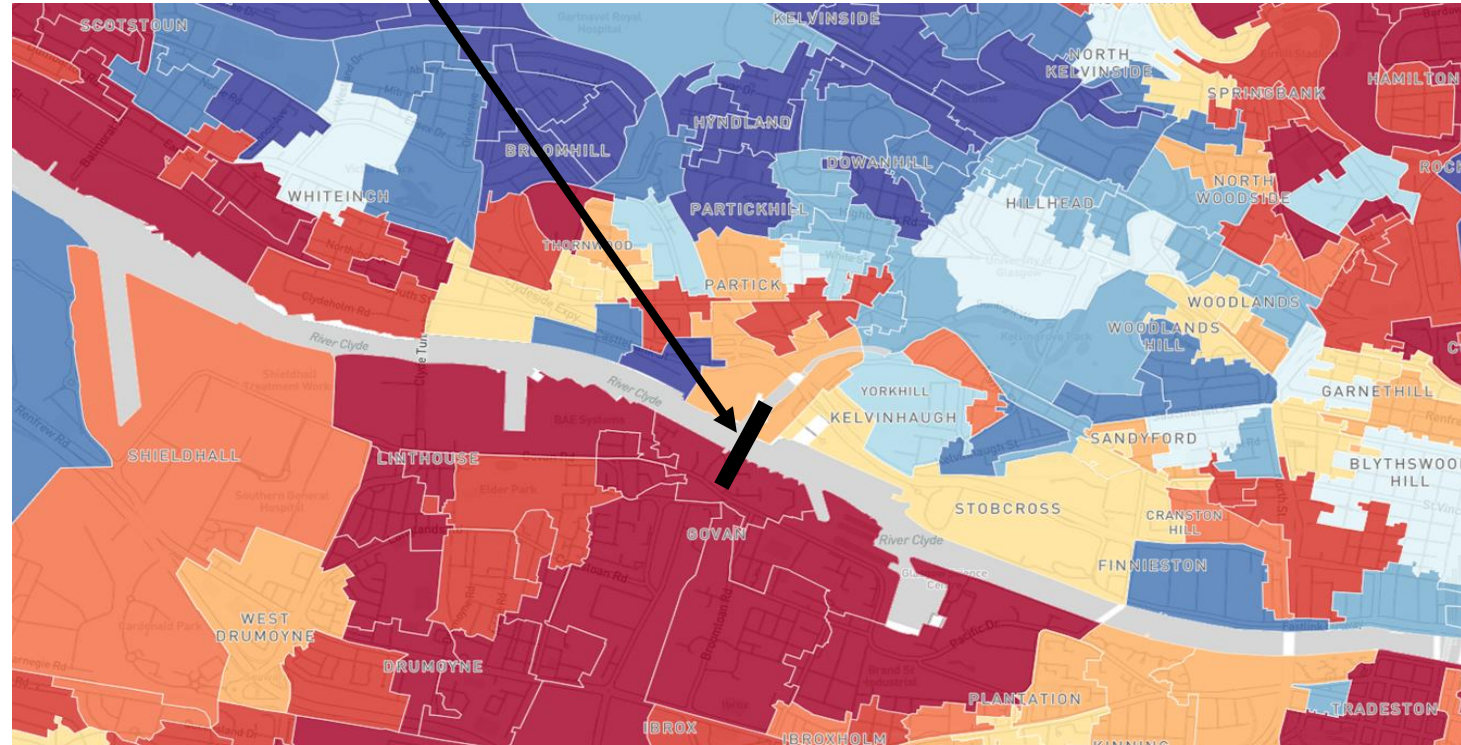
Glasgow Riverside Innovation District (GRID)



The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



Govan-Partick Bridge



- GRID is a partnership between UofG, Scottish Enterprise and Glasgow City Council
- University Economic Development Board:
 - established to provide governance
 - ensure our contribution to place-making and economic development is embedded within the ecosystem.
- UofG significant anchor employer, and the wider Glasgow Riverside Innovation District accounts for **15% of employment in Glasgow City, 9000 businesses within GRID.**

Civic and Community Engagement

CIVIC Fund Applications

- GRID Civic Fund launched in April 2024 – with awards in Summer 2024
- **Over £100k committed** support projects with a community impact in GRID.
- Macro-grants of between **£1k-£5k** per project
- Micro-grants of up to **£850**.
- 60+ applications, asking for more than **£250k** in total.
- **40 Projects supported**

Breakfast Clubs, Community Pantries, meals for under-represented groups, community gardens

Sports clubs to support young people, walking groups for veterans, chess clubs, cycling

Dementia Support, Library facilities for groups, Autistic Carers, refugee support

Skills development programmes, training in podcasts, walking guides

Skills Development

- **MoU developed with Glasgow Clyde College** to explore HE/FE collaboration
- Working with partners to develop **SCQF in Life Sciences**, as a complement to Morrisons construction SCQF programme.
- **GRID Planners Scholarship** providing x2 fully funded MSc accredited planners places plus stipend. Working experience and placements with industry and planning department.

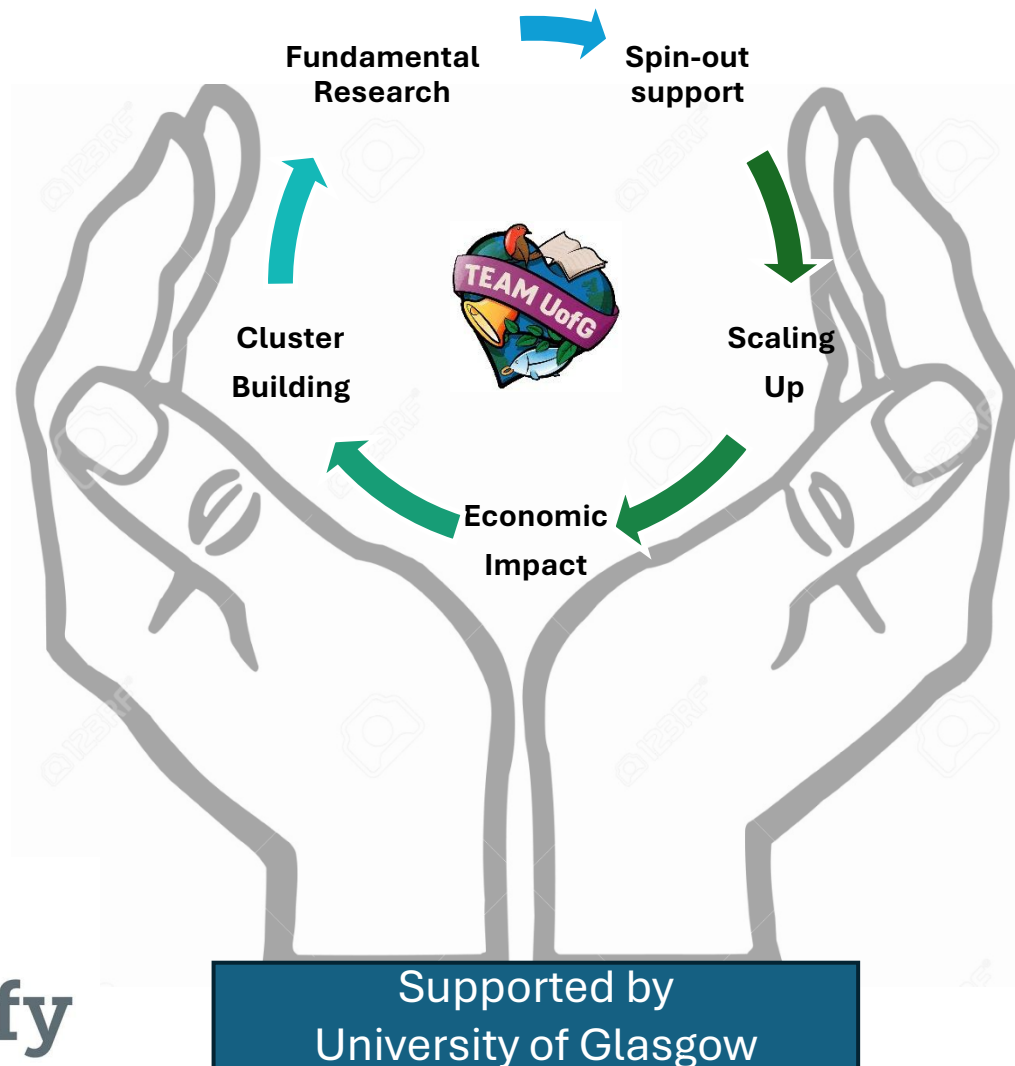
A tale of 2 spin-outs (in the same city)

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times”

- Research: The Cronin Group, founded in 2002 (Digital Chemistry)
- Incorporated in 2019
- Nearly 200 employees
- Dedicated state-of-the-art lab and office space on campus
- Access to Finance – GUHL Seed funding (£250k) & Innovation Accelerator (£12m); secondment to Spin-out
- Successful Series A raise (£33m) in 2024, Series B raise (£50m) in '25
- Infrastructure support: Health Innovation Hub; Eco Dev: access to Scottish Enterprise for £1.2m RSA funding (factory)
- New production factory in Maryhill (June 25) - ChemFarm
- Upskilling the Community: Life Sciences



Chemify



- Research: MeLAB, founded in 2017 (Microelectronics)
- Incorporated in 2021 (first ever joint spin-out from Edin and Glasgow)
- Nearly 30 employees
- Incubation space
- Access to Finance – GUHL Seed Funding (£250k) & Investment Zone (£5m)
- Successful raise (£6m) in 2025
- Infrastructure support: state-of-the-art magnetism lab Eco Dev team: support to secure IZ funding
- Scaling up production in Glasgow

Key learnings?

- Partnerships – industry, investors, community, funders/public bodies (the ‘quadruple’ helix)
- Think differently about Technology Transfer Offices:
 - Innovation Catalyst – four-way university partnership
 - Shared services, support and expertise
- How to maintain a momentum in a financially constrained climate?
 - Tap into regional ecosystems and collaborative programmes