

**Edwards Symposia:  
Targeting the academia/industry interface  
in soft matter research**



**Sir Sam Edwards, 1928-2015**

# The Edwards Centre for Soft Matter



- **A virtual laboratory for Soft Matter Research**
- **Physics, Chemistry, DAMTP, MSM, CEB, Engineering**

**ca. 50 PI's across 6 Departments**

**> 85 Postdoc / PhD Student Members**

# The Edwards Centre for Soft Matter



We use experiments, theory and simulations to address the science of soft matter systems, such as:

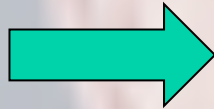
- **Colloids and Suspensions**
- **Polymers and Gels**
- **Molecular Aggregates**
- **Amphiphilic Systems**
- **Granular Materials**
- **Liquid Crystals**
- **Biological and Biomimetic Materials**
- **Microswimmers and Active Matter**
- **Soft Composites**
- **Soft Nanomaterials**

# The Edwards Centre for Soft Matter



## Activities:

Intra-University mini-conferences



**Edwards Symposia**

Industry Workshops

Contact point for external partners



# Edwards Symposia

Annual 3-day event at INI/CMS since 2016

Core funding from Unilever until 2021

## Focus

Basic science, especially theory and modelling,  
of direct industrial significance

Industry presentations + participation



Unilever

# Gateway Team Involvement (Jane, Lissie, Clare)

Programme planning – with academic team

Publicity

Branding (shared with Edwards Centre)

All pre-meeting and on-site logistics:

Registration, financials, catering, accommodation...

Post-meeting feedback analysis

# Annual Timetable

Academic programme planning: Nov – Jan

Industry speaker planning: Feb - June

Publicity: Dec - August

Symposium: early September

**Note: mismatched academic/industry lead-times**



# Involvement as Industry Speakers

Year 1: Croda, Mars, NPL, Schlumberger, Unilever

Year 2: AstraZeneca, CPI, Innovia, Lucite, Unilever

Year 3: ExxonMobil, Merck, Pepsico, Unilever

Year 4: TBA

Several of these introduced via Gateway team

# Evolving Modes of Industry Participation

Year 1: Sectoral overview talks

Year 2: Paid-for 'pitch a problem' slots

Year 3: Industry-facing science challenges

+ round table on licensing/spinout

Year 4: Industry-facing science challenges

+ round table on sustainable plastics

# Poster Sessions: Open to All

Year 1: poster session only

Year 2,3,4: posters + elevator pitches

3 minute time limit

popular with all participants

+ early career prizes  
[RSC, Likhtman family]



# Issues around Industry Participation

## Talks:

secrecy, signoff, speaker anxiety

## Participation:

signoff, budgets, prioritization, duration

## Funding / sponsorship:

community member or purchaser of research?

Thank you for your attention!