

Leading universities unite for enhanced global engagement in Brazil mission

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Senior academics from the University of Birmingham and the University of Nottingham are visiting Brazil this week in a joint research-focused mission.

The signature visit provides opportunities for both Universities to work together to cultivate new and existing mutually beneficial research collaborations in Brazil. Areas of focus include energy, environmental and physical sciences, economics and social sciences.

The Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham are looking to form research partnerships and collaborations with leading universities, institutions and funding agencies in Brazil. The University of Nottingham already has a strategic agreement with the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) to develop collaborations particularly in areas of research strength that include global food security and bioenergy, where there are already strong links with research organisations in Brazil.

The mission will look to strengthen existing links and identify new areas for collaboration which have the potential to secure funding from UK, EU and Brazilian sources. The aim is to enhance long-term research collaborations, researcher mobility, doctoral training and interactions with industry in both Brazil and Europe which will deliver research excellence and potential for innovation in both the UK and Brazil. Nottingham's priority groups are already targeting these in areas such as carbon capture and plant biotechnology through bringing together international teams of researchers from different disciplines. Birmingham is interested in strengthening collaborative interests in a number of areas including the sustainable use of natural resources, engineering and physical sciences, health and wellbeing, and business and management.

This mission follows the announcement earlier this year that the two leading Russell Group Universities would establish a framework for collaboration. Alongside specific international engagement the Birmingham / Nottingham partnership will see the Universities working together for mutual success in a range of different areas, including research initiatives, student experience and business engagement.

Joint mission leader Professor Malcolm Press, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Life and Environmental Sciences at the University of Birmingham, said: "This is an exciting opportunity to look at ways in which two of the UK's leading research-led universities can work in partnership with organisations of equivalent standing, reputation and global ambition in Brazil."

Furthermore, joint mission leader Professor Bob Webb, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Professor of Animal Sciences at the University of Nottingham, said: "We are excited about working with the University of Birmingham to strengthen research relationships between the UK and Brazil. In the case of Nottingham University we plan to also draw on Nottingham's presence in China and Malaysia, countries where Brazil already has strong research links. We hope to establish broad-based international research programmes, involving researchers in Brazil, which address global challenges."

The Birmingham / Nottingham delegation will visit São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia during the week-long mission. Institutions and organisations to be visited include the State University of São Paulo, the State of São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) the State University of Campinas, the University of São Paulo, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), the University of Brasilia, the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) Fundação Getulio Vargas, the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and Petrobras. In addition, the academics will meet with alumni in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

Notes to Editors

The University of Birmingham:

- The University of Birmingham is a truly vibrant, global community and an internationally-renowned institution. Its work brings people from across the world to Birmingham, including researchers and teachers and more than 4,000 international students from nearly 150 different countries.
- The University is home to approximately 28,000 students. With more than 7,500 postgraduate students from across the world, Birmingham is one of the most popular universities for postgraduate study in the UK.
- The University is the eighth largest employer in the Birmingham/Solihull sub-region and plays an integral role in the economic, social and cultural growth of local and regional communities; working closely with businesses and organisations, employing approximately 6,000 staff and providing 10,000 graduates annually.
- The University contributes £662 million to the City of Birmingham and £779 million to the West Midlands region, with an annual income of more than £462 million.
- For further information, please visit: www.bham.ac.uk (<http://www.bham.ac.uk/>)

The University of Nottingham:

- The University of Nottingham, described by The Times as "the nearest Britain has to a truly global university", has award-winning campuses in the United Kingdom, China and Malaysia. It is ranked in the UK's Top 10 and the World's Top 75 universities by the Shanghai Jiao Tong (SJTU) and the QS World University Rankings. It was named 'Europe's greenest university' in the UI GreenMetric World University Ranking, a league table of the world's most environmentally-friendly higher education institutions, which ranked Nottingham second in the world overall.
- The University is committed to providing a truly international education for its 40,000 students, producing world-leading research and benefiting the communities around its campuses in the UK and Asia.
- More than 90 per cent of research at The University of Nottingham is of international quality, according to the most recent Research Assessment Exercise, with almost 60 per cent of all research defined as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent'. Research Fortnight analysis of RAE 2008 ranked the University 7th in the UK by research power. The University's vision is to be recognised around the world for its signature contributions, especially in global food security, energy and sustainability, and health.
- For more news from the University, please visit: www.nottingham.ac.uk/news (<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/news>)

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