

*Book Review*

## **Enterprise for Life Scientists**

edited by David Adams and John Sparrow

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The UK Government recognises the knowledge-based economy as key to wealth generation and to the well-being of society as a whole. University research, particularly in the life sciences, has a significant role to play in this regard. However, exploitation of knowledge requires particular skills and commercial awareness. It is essential, therefore to inspire biologists to pursue entrepreneurial activities and to underpin this with the necessary skills training.

The last few years has seen a growth in the development of courses specifically designed to meet the emerging demand for enterprise training. The School of Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Durham University has been running its Biology Enterprise module for 7 years. Aimed at undergraduates the module has been designed to introduce students to the commercialisation of biological innovation and to develop their entrepreneurial skills, attitudes and behaviour. Biotechnology is one of, if not, the most regulated sectors and raises highly specific challenges with regard to the commercialisation of new products and process. Durham's Biology Enterprise module is delivered by a mix of academics and practitioners with the necessary sector specific knowledge and experience. However, until now it has only been possible to direct students to general text books on business planning. There has been a real need for a publication that provides sector specific guidance — Enterprise for Life Scientists successfully fills this gap.

Enterprise for Life Scientists is a very informative publication, covering the processes, considerations and skills that are integral to the development of effective strategies for the exploitation of novel ideas generated through biological research. This much needed guide is presented in a highly accessible format and makes good use of real-life case studies to illustrate key points and processes. The style, content and use of features, such as the summary sections at the end of each chapter to reinforce core messages, make this a valuable teaching aid for undergraduate students, postgraduate researchers and trainers alike.

The titles of the chapters are: Knowledge and technology transfer (Shane Booth & Kathy Armour); Creativity and innovation in the biosciences (David Adams & Paul Grimshaw); Protecting ideas (Louise Byass); Researching ideas (David Wilkinson & Amanda Selvaratnam); Communicating ideas (Samantha Aspinall & David Wilkinson); Starting up a business (Alison Price & Ted Sarmiento); The role of the business plan (Andrew Ferguson); Funding your ideas (David Baynes & Louise Pymer); Regulation in the biosciences (Nick Medcalf & Bob Pietrowski); Ethical issues (Rob Lawlor).

To summarise, Enterprise for Life Scientists is a timely publication which provides biologists from undergraduate to researcher, with a comprehensive guide to knowledge transfer and the commercialisation process. The accessible format and language make this an excellent tool to support enterprise learning.

**Reviewed by Sarah Wilbourn**

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