

The
DOUGLAS BOMFORD
SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING *Trust*

*What we can deliver,
through collaboration*

Paul Miller
(Trustee/ex-Secretary)

***“What we do now, how do we do it,
and why we do it the way we do.”***

We aim to:

- Use the available funds effectively to make a ‘value for money’ contribution to UK agricultural engineering.
- Invest in the right people and projects.
- Identify (and now initiate) suitable projects.
- Monitor people and project progress - ensuring and encouraging effective delivery.
 - via Trustee mentors.
- Enable and encourage collaboration.

Role of the Trust

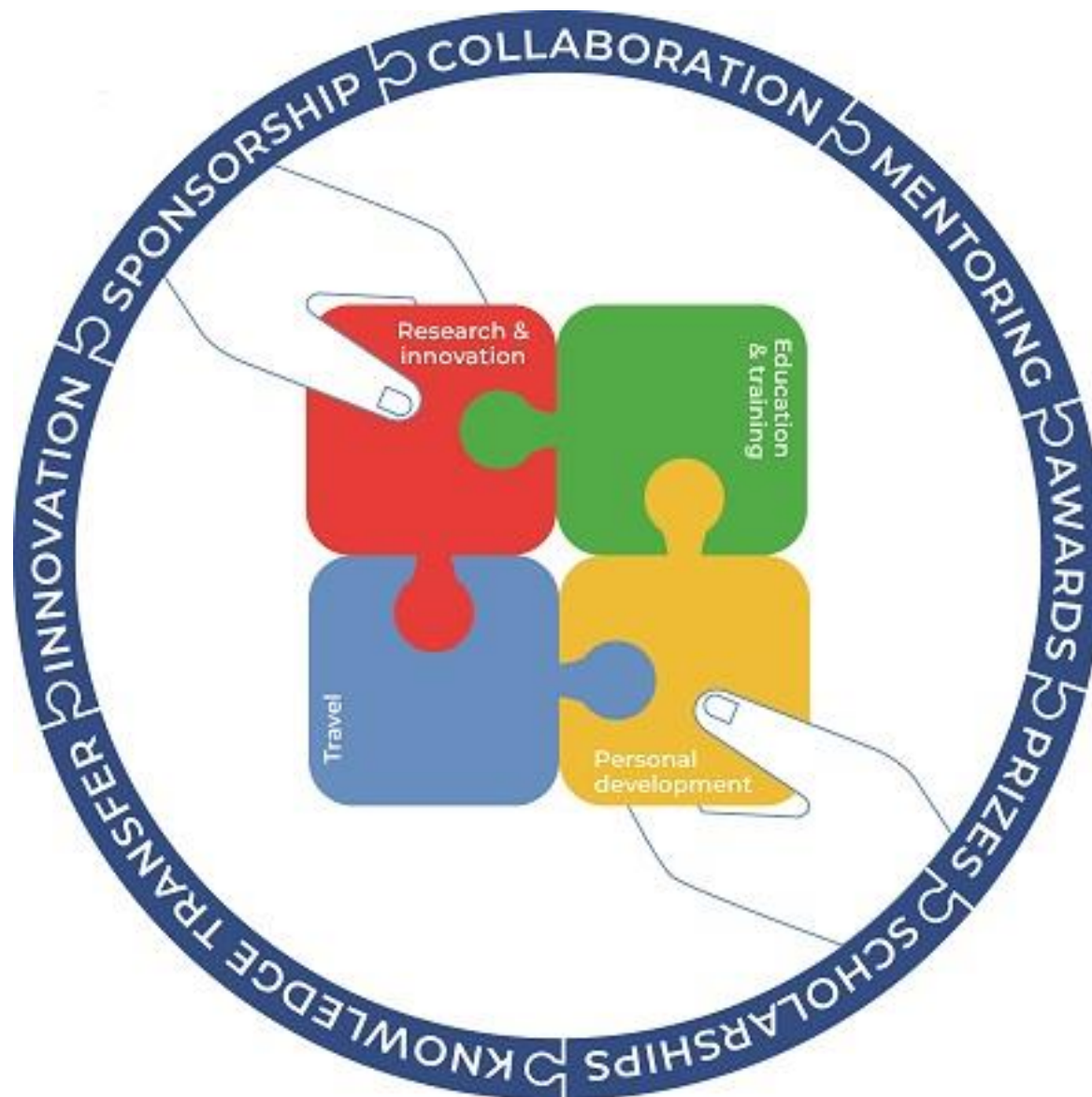
The Trust provides funding primarily for:

Research and innovation

Education and training

Travel

Personal development



Scope of The Trust

The Douglas Bomford Trust is:

- *A charity*
- *Concerned with all aspects of engineering to support agriculture (food production, energy crops and environmental cropping schemes), horticulture (food production and ornamentals), and forestry.*

Resources

- Circa £6mill invested (ethical focus).
- Income provides annual disbursement of circa £150k.
- Part-time Secretary and Administrator.
- Office in IAgRE HQ at Cranfield University – but much business conducted remotely. (Long and close association with the Institution)
- 8 (volunteer) trustees with wide range of expertise and experience.



Our activities (1)

- **Supporting projects**

- Mainly (but not exclusively) as PhD projects with Universities and other sponsors
 - Identifying research topics
 - Recruiting students
 - Shared costs with other funders
 - Working together (mentoring)

} Collaboratively

- **Supporting students**

- Undergraduate studentships
- “A” level students via The Arkwright/Smallpeice scheme
- Awarding prizes
- Student membership of IAgRE
- Travel and conference attendance
- Other student activities

Our activities (2)

- **Supporting professionals**

- Through:

- *Training*

- *Travel and conference attendance*

- **Contributing to and supporting events with others**

- *e.g. Through the AgriFood Charities Partnership & AgriEpi Centre*



Why develop a new Strategy?

- The desire of Trustees to have some input to subjects included in proposals and topics funded.
- Project work at Cranfield University that has involved “horizon scanning”, the definition of current and future scenarios and identifying components that could be included in our strategy.
- The industry and government research in the UK is now very different from when the Trust was established.
- A need to recognise that the Trust cannot do everything with our (limited) available resources.
 - *Our budget is small in the context of national research funding.*
 - *Recruiting UK students to undertake higher degree studies at UK universities is difficult.*
 - *Use trustees with a range of expertise and use external opinions when necessary.*

(We need to do what we do well – and not over-stretch!)



VISION

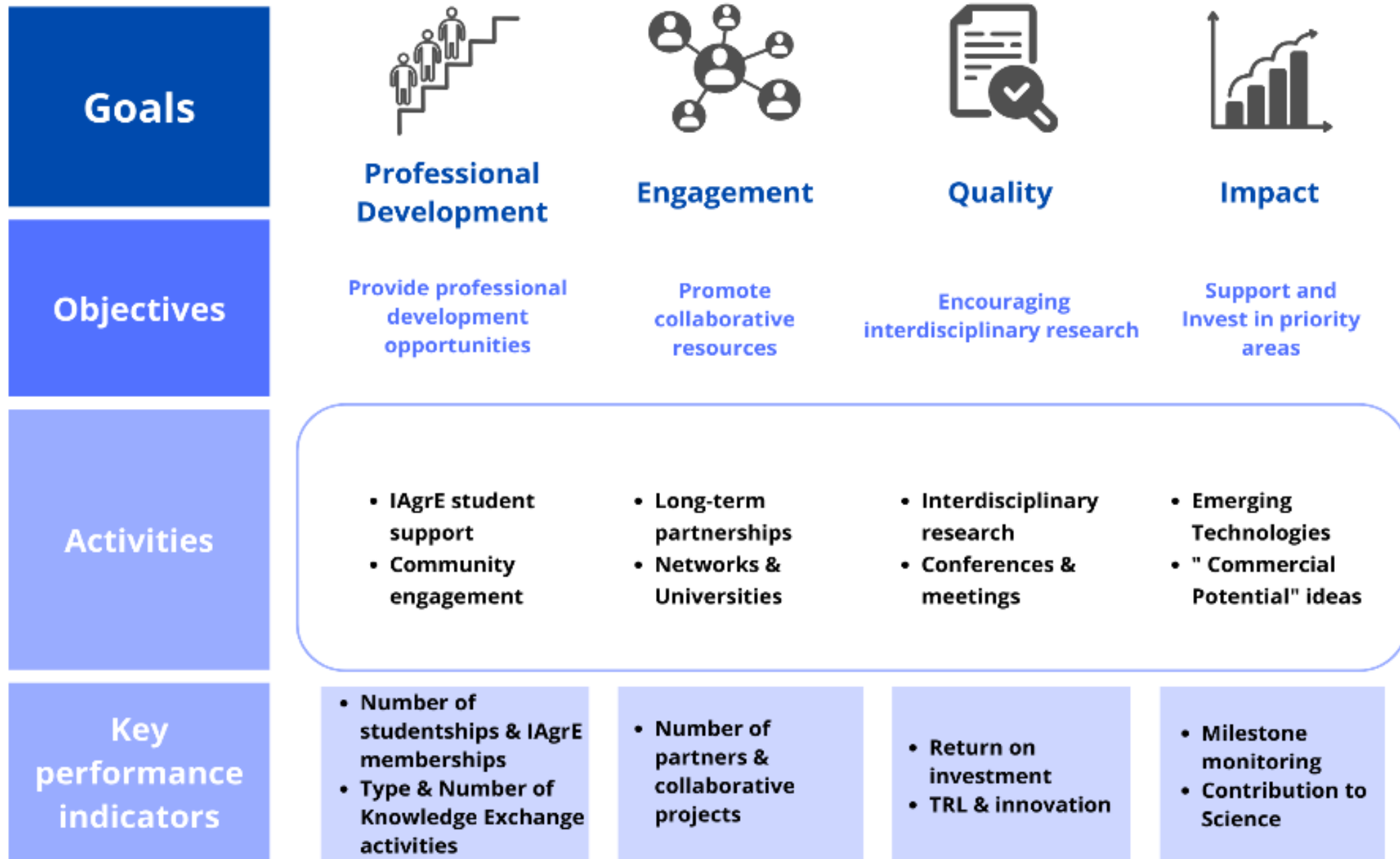
“To make a difference for UK agricultural engineering for the sustainable benefit of the environment and society.”

MISSION

“To provide resources to help advance the application of engineering and technology to achieve sustainable agricultural , food, and biological systems for the benefit of the environment and mankind.”

***A framework
for the next 3 years
by fostering:***

**Skills
Technology
Education
Collaboration**



New Strategy

Based on Horizon Scanning
(by Cranfield MSc Group Projects)



Plans for the future (1)

- **Move from a mainly responsive mode to include an element of initiation and steering.**
- **For the period 2023 – 2026, allocate up to 50% of the total funding provided for research, to ‘priority’ topics:**
 - ❖ Developing technologies, control systems and strategies that directly improve the performance of sustainable agricultural production systems
 - ❖ Improving the use of energy sources in agricultural situations, particularly in relation to climate change objectives (Net Zero)
 - ❖ Developing innovative food production methods in controlled environments.



**Wot – No robots
No soils !**

Plans for the future (2)

The Trust will:

- **Review and update the identified priority topic areas at regular intervals**
 - ❖ Building on outputs from today's discussions
- **Seek to identify (with partners) projects that will:**
 - ❖ Provide a strong training and personal development component
 - ❖ A link to UK agriculture
 - ❖ A relevant and practical component
- **Seek to develop further the way in which we work with funded projects**
 - ❖ To build a team approach with The Trust represented by project mentors (with implications for the ways in which we use Trustees time)
 - ❖ To achieve the best possible outputs in terms of **personal development** for the student/participant and the delivery of **technical objectives**
- **To identify projects and partners that will address priority areas, if these are not being met by submitted proposals.**

Conclusions

Looking to the future, The Trust will:

- **Support projects and people**
 - *With a lower emphasis on facilities and equipment*
- **Define a strategy for support and allocate 50% of funding spend to support this defined projects as part of this Strategy**
 - *Identify key topics for support – using information from today's meeting*
- **Continue to support travel, attendance at technical events and training**
- **Continue to support professional qualifications and the image of agricultural engineers in the UK.**