

An Assessment of The UWI's Faculty of Engineering Capability and Willingness to Engage in Industrial Collaboration for Innovation

Cary R. Cameron ^{a,Ψ}, and Graham S. King ^b

Department of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, The University of the West Indies, St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies

^aE-mail: cary.cameron@gmail.com

^bE-mail: graham.king@sta.uwi.edu

^Ψ - Corresponding Author

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Abstract: *University-industry collaboration (UIC) has been recognised by numerous authors as engendering innovation and economic development. Despite Trinidad and Tobago's highly industrialised economy, the efforts of The University of the West Indies' (The UWI) Faculty of Engineering to foster such UIC has been limited. We use a Conceptual Model of good practice in UIC, which requires that four pillars are in place for effective UIC: high quality academic research; a predisposition on the part of academics to engage; a framework of supporting policies and procedures in the university; and an effective office supporting technology transfer. Our assessment of the capability of The UWI Faculty of Engineering for UIC is against the Conceptual Model. Publications data shows that the relatively low international visibility and impact of research undertaken in the Faculty might harm confidence in potential industrial partners. Although academic members of staff are keen to collaborate and many have industrial experience, the university policy framework does not create sufficient incentives for definite UIC initiatives to be established. The UWI Office of Research, Development and Knowledge Transfer does not have sufficient human or financial resources to fully support UIC. Strategic action by The UWI can alleviate all these limitations and significantly improve capability for UIC. Other universities in the developing world, particularly in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, may be facing similar challenges in UIC and could learn directly from our work.*

Keywords: *University-Industry Collaboration (UIC); Technology Transfer; Caribbean Universities; The UWI.*