
WORKING AT INNOVIA

As a consultant or an intern



WHAT DOES INNOVIA DO?

Innovia is a consultancy specializing in breakthrough innovation. We work with leading companies like Procter & Gamble, Kraft-Heinz, LEGO, Johnson & Johnson, and Jaguar Land Rover. They come to us with some of their hardest problems and we help them invent the future.

Since we started up in 1999 we've worked on over 1000 projects across a broad range of sectors. From consumer products to energy, from transport to healthcare. We build lasting relationships: 80% of our work is repeat business.

Why is it that such successful companies come to Innovia for help? Our clients tell us that we bring new thinking from our broad experience across many industries. They recognize that, unlike many R&D professionals, we do early-stage innovation every day. They appreciate that we can seamlessly blend expertise that normally falls across corporate boundaries. They also say that we're able to combine impressive creativity with pragmatism about what works in the real world.

WHY WORK AT INNOVIA?

Working at Innovia brings many benefits, including: being part of a world-class team; working for varied clients on fascinating challenges; having a great work environment; and continually developing your skills. Here's a peek into our company, so you can decide whether working for Innovia is right for you.

World-class team: At Innovia, you'll meet engineers, vets, physicists, chemists, biochemists, consumer psychologists, and designers. Everyone brings discipline-specific expertise as well as a desire for multi-disciplinary working.

Great work environment: As a small Cambridge-based team of around 80 people, we recognise that work-life balance is important. While we're serious about doing great work for our clients, we maintain a relaxed and supportive culture in the office. We eat lunch together daily and have a healthy social life outside of work, including walks along the river, pub trips and summer frisbee.

Fascinating challenges: There are few graduate opportunities that can offer the same range of work as Innovia. We typically work on two to four projects at a time, with each lasting between two and six months. The problems are rarely easy – after all, they've been passed on to us by some of the world's most capable companies. But this makes us even prouder when we are able to deliver successful results.

Training and development: As well as giving new recruits opportunities to learn on the job, we offer a comprehensive training programme. This makes it easier to bridge the gap between studying and consultancy. Training includes modules in innovation, business, written and verbal communication, working effectively with other disciplines, and project management. And training doesn't stop after two years – more established consultants have access to a range of advanced courses through our continuous development scheme.



WHAT DO OUR CONSULTANTS DO?

At first, you will spend most of your time working on the innovation problems faced by our clients. A typical process we use to do this is:

- Understand the problem through literature research, first principles analysis, or simple experiments.
- Explore possible solutions by drawing on our knowledge of our subject areas, our experience across other industries and working collaboratively to build and refine ideas.
- Decide the best solution for the client by helping them evaluate their options and decide on next steps. This can involve bringing concepts to life through graphics or prototypes.

Our consultants are typically working on 2–4 projects at once. The nature of these projects can be remarkably varied.

All of our consultant roles are client facing from the first few weeks. We don't work on client sites for long periods of time, but we do need people who are willing and able to travel to meet our clients in Europe, the USA and beyond.

There's no such thing as a normal day at Innovia, but we've tried to sketch out what a week might look like for a consultant during their first year here.

KEY:

Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Sale projects	Internal activities
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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00	Admin Time to catch up on emails, etc	Desk-based analysis		<i>Late start, after last night's late finish</i>	Proposal writing Yesterday's sales call went well. As lots of the team in yesterday's sales call are rather busy, I volunteered to create the first draft of a project proposal for the client
10:00	Meeting Team meeting to discuss ideas, ask questions and to plan work for the week	Using scientific principles to determine whether an idea is physically possible or not	Background reading Preparing for a new project, and its start-up call by reading around the area	Working session There's no substitute for getting a multidisciplinary team in a room to throw ideas around!	
11:00					
12:00	<i>Lunch with colleagues, followed by a stroll down by the river</i>	<i>Lunch with colleagues</i>	<i>Lunch with colleagues</i>	<i>Lunch with colleagues</i>	<i>Lunch with colleagues</i>
13:00	Company meeting Innovia comes together for a weekly meeting	Group discussion Two of us meet with the project manager to refine objectives and success criteria for this new project	Desk-based research We're constantly having to learn about new things – you can't challenge conventional thinking until you understand it! There's no substitute for getting out the textbooks and reading academic literature, and seeing what else is in the market	Making and testing prototypes Sometimes, you just need to try things out	Client call A regular, informal check on progress with the client
14:00					Finish off presentation Sending early to allow time for comments
15:00	Training Part of the Consultant Development Programme – a session on innovation tools and techniques	Chat with expert We encourage our consultants to leverage the expertise of experienced people		Sales call Call with a potential client to discuss their needs	Review proposal with team leader Refine and get feedback on my draft
16:00			<i>Take a walk by the river</i>	Write presentation We expect our new consultants to quickly develop the skills of creating client-ready presentations of their work	<i>Early finish – it's been a busy week!</i>
17:00		Write slides Helping to create the slides for tomorrow's client call	Start-up call This continues until late because it's a west-coast US client. Consultants are in client-facing roles from the start, and can expect to present to clients and contribute to discussions.		
18:00				<i>Join some of the team in the pub for an after-work drink and a pizza</i>	
19:00					

SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE PROJECTS



THE RAY

“How could a smart road stud make driving safer?”



The Ray is a non-profit that is committed to making roads safer and more sustainable. We helped them design and create a smart solar road stud that could detect driving dangers and improve driver safety. Looking at accident statistics and the psychology of driving, we were able to design systems that targeted the biggest dangers.

This allowed us to design and prototype an innovative new system that was presented to government departments and industry-leading manufacturers.



ARENA INTERNATIONAL

“How can we create a faster swimsuit?”



The swimsuits that we developed with Arena have helped athletes win medals and break world records since the 2009 World Championships in Rome.

Our team took the science of swimsuit design to a new level by integrating fluid mechanics, material science, physiology, psychology and design. We created prototypes and tested them with competitive swimmers to ensure they delivered significant performance benefits in the water.



KRAFT

“How can we improve the manufacture of natural cheese?”



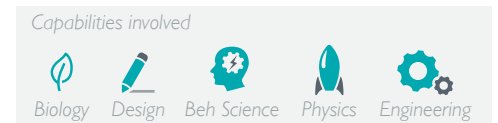
Kraft produces some of America’s best-loved cheeses, but they require constant innovation to stay ahead in the marketplace. To help Kraft stay ahead of the competition, we first built a fundamental understanding of the texture and flavour profile of cheese.

From this, we identified technologies that could improve the manufacture of natural cheese without affecting the consumer experience of the product.



DEPUY SYNTHES

“How do we help hospitals save time and money for knee replacements?”



DePuy Synthes is a leading manufacturer of orthopaedic implants. As well as implants, it makes the reusable surgical instrument sets that are needed to place the implant precisely – these sets can cost \$30,000–\$100,000. This high cost to the industry skewed the business model and reduced flexibility and development.

We worked with DePuy to create single-use disposable versions of the two most complex instruments in the set. The disposable instruments needed to be low-cost, as accurate as the stainless steel version, and at least as acceptable as familiar reusable instruments to orthopaedic surgeons.

HOW DO I APPLY TO INNOVIA?

We want to keep our recruitment process simple and straightforward. As a small company, we can sometimes be more flexible than bigger organisations – please do ask if you're interested in a short-term contract or need an answer from us quickly.

Vacancies for innovation consultant roles are open all year round and there is no application deadline. Recruitment for summer internships begins in the autumn for the following summer, and the deadline can be found on our website. Our selection process for full time consultant roles and internship roles is very similar.

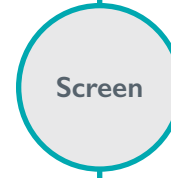
Here is what we're looking for and how we select. This should help you to make the best application and show off your skills well at interview.



RECRUITMENT PROCESS



Apply directly on the careers page of our website (www.innoviatech.com/careers). There's no application form - you'll just need to answer a few questions, upload a CV, an excellent cover letter, and provide some information about the modules you studied during your degree.



We'll screen the applications. We're looking for a strong academic track record, great written communication skills and team-working experience, as well as information about any internships, volunteering or work experience you may have gained, and diverse interests which broaden your perspective.



If we like what we read, we'll schedule an informal 20–30 minute video interview with you. This will be focused on asking technical questions related to your area of expertise, as well as giving you a chance to ask any initial questions you have about Innovia.



If you are selected to progress to the next stage, you'll be invited to a longer interview that will also be conducted over video. As part of the interview you'll be given time to complete a case study task that mimics a typical innovation project. Your interviewers will then ask you follow-up technical questions to explore your understanding of the fundamentals of your discipline and your ability to creatively apply your knowledge to solve broad real-world problems. We'll be looking for strong interpersonal skills, flexible thinking, clarity of communication, your motivation for the role, and your understanding of the work Innovia does. To help you prepare for the interview, Innovia will send you an example case study alongside your invitation to interview. Note: Innovia does not ask applicants to complete psychometric / personality tests.



Occasionally we invite promising candidates for a third video interview before making a final decision. In general, we hope to let you know the outcome within a week of the interview. Sometimes we need a bit longer, but we'll stay in touch with you if that's the case.

MAKE IT HAPPEN



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