

Science's soft powers

Teun Vissers (QuestPair)

The world needs a plethora of new technologies to achieve a sustainable development addressing climate change, food security, healthcare, pollution, infrastructure resilience, and many other global challenges. Tackling these pressing issues requires that scientific experts with diverse backgrounds boost their collaboration, and foster connections with innovative industrial sectors. Increasingly, around the globe funding for research projects also depends on industrial collaborations and creating impact for society at large. In this respect, soft matter scientists are uniquely positioned because their expertise touches many different sectors and can often be directly applied through collaborations with industry. However, it often remains difficult and time-consuming for scientists and companies to find each other to initiate consultancy or contract research projects. As part of an EU-funded project, we are exploring the feasibility of an online platform to create new opportunities for businesses and scientists to collaborate, start new projects, and exchange expertise, data, materials and equipment.