



Entrant company name: **King's College London**

Entry title: **Science at King's**

Category: **Best In-House Campaign**

Brief, objectives and budget:

In 2024, King's announced a £45.5 million investment in science talent, research, education and infrastructure to accelerate growth, interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation. This included King's new Natural Sciences degree and the AI for Science Master's.

As King's is traditionally known for politics and health, a major communications effort was needed to shift perceptions and position the University alongside established science competitors.

Objectives:

- Increase national and international media reach to establish King's as a leading authority in science.
- Highlight King's new education offerings to prospective students and industry partners.
- Demonstrate King's serious investment in science to develop globally significant solutions to some of the most pressing global challenges – supporting a wider narrative about the value of the university sector

A small team of two PR professionals, a social media manager and an internal communications specialist delivered an integrated press, digital and internal campaign to change perceptions of King's as a science institution. This was critical to support recruitment for the new degrees and to attract talent to the 64 new academic posts created through the investment.

Budget: around £60k

The idea, research and planning

We developed the 'Science at King's' campaign to showcase innovative research and future-facing education, uniting four Faculties at the University for the first time in a campaign that made science at King's visible, human and compelling.

Our research revealed that King's scientists were producing world leading work that was buried in departments and had little external recognition of King's scientific strength.

Information gathering sessions with research leads unearthed potential stories that would resonate with media and prospective students. This revealed spokespeople who could offer expert commentary, demonstrating King's authority.

Strategy, creativity and innovation

We put authentic voices at the centre of our storytelling and trained 8 scientists to speak confidently to the media, encouraging greater engagement with the press. With no production budget, we upskilled the team in video creation and developed a visual identity, using real labs and real scientists.

We prioritised influential media, responded rapidly to journalist's requests, and packaged innovative research breakthroughs with bite-sized, authentic social media content to reach our core audiences. Four themes - Net-Zero Carbon futures, transforming outcomes in health and ageing, Quantum for the future, and basic science - helped to build a consistent narrative externally.

Delivery/implementation of tactics

We pitched 30 stories to media and produced 22 social videos. Partnerships with Google Cloud, Breast Cancer Now and Government amplified our reach.

Social media content evolved to engage academics, funders and prospective students.

A video series 'Science at King's' showcased interdisciplinary research, while our series 'Meet the scientist' built scientists' profiles on LinkedIn with 77k views.

Standout stories:

- Self-healing potholes: Coverage in 600+ titles, including BBC, Sky News, The Guardian and The Engineer and the front page of The Times. The lead scientist was invited to speak at the Google Cloud Summit and received collaboration enquiries from Aramco, Hyundai and other academics.
- AI for Science Master's launch: To celebrate the launch we organised a visit for the then AI and Digital Government Minister Feryal Clark MP to coincide with London Tech Week. She attended a roundtable with King's academics and viewed key research – including a robotics demo. A video of the visit generated 18.2k video views, 15k impressions and 299 engagements on social media and was shared by DSIT and Minister Clark.
- Toothpaste made of hair: Coverage in 800+ titles, including key media targets BBC, Daily Mail, Times of India and CNN, and named one of the 'Weirdest science stories of 2025' in BBC Science Focus. Videos shared across social media platforms by BBC, Reuters and ABC channels, and on the King's Instagram and TikTok accounts, received 800k views. A 'Behind the Research' interview for internal audiences was one of the week's most clicked articles.

These tactics ensured high-visibility of King's research and education across media and social channels.

Measurement, evaluation and impact

We achieved:

- 470+ pieces of coverage in our national, international and trade targets including 2 front pages, and 773 broadcast mentions across all outlets.
- Coverage in more than 35 nations including the United States, India, China, Germany, Australia.
- Built relationships with five science influencers on Instagram to advocate for King's science.
- 1 million plays across Science at King's videos.
- 2 million impressions across all Science at King's posts.
- 1.1 million people reached across social media.
- 24.5k social media engagements (likes, comments, shares).
- Achieved the highest amount of science media coverage compared to key competitors Imperial, University of Bristol, University of Manchester and University of Sydney.

Beyond metrics, the campaign has yielded new opportunities for academics. Comments from astrophysicist Dr Shyam Balaji on social channels resulted in him being approached to write a book on cosmology. He is also regularly contacted by national and international journalists and was featured on a science influencer's YouTube channel with more than 1.76m subscribers. In house, Dr Balaji's comments on an eclipse became the highest performing post across all King's social media channels in 2025, achieving 294.7k plays, 293 shares, 2k likes.

Member of the Senedd for Cardiff Central Jenny Rathbone first learned of the self-healing potholes research in an article we had placed in The Guardian, subsequently raising it in the Senedd. Academic meetings with local councils followed, exploring how the technology might be implemented in future.

Our media coverage also had a direct impact on student recruitment, with a record number of students enrolled on the MSc program in regenerative dentistry, alongside increased interest from potential collaborators and funders. Applications for the Natural Science degree were 20% higher for 2026 enrolment than 2025 enrolment, reflecting the elevated profile of the course and Science at King's.