

Prof Russell Smith began his career in business by starting an electronics company, whilst still studying for his PhD, in the early 1980s. Products from that company were promoted by the British Council and sold in 27 countries worldwide. In 1986 he joined the pharmaceutical industry, running drug development programmes for major pharmaceutical companies in North America, Europe and Japan finally leading a team of more than 100 staff. Since 1998 Russell has worked exclusively with start-up businesses from many sectors but with a focus on bioscience. In 2012 Her Majesty The Queen was graciously pleased to approve the Prime Minister's recommendation that he should receive the *Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion* which was announced in the Birthday Honours list.



In 1999 he co-founded Avidex Ltd, a spin-out company from the University of Oxford and, as Managing Director, raised £1.7m in their first year of operations. At the same time, Russell developed the "Business for Bioscience" internet-delivered management course at Oxford Brookes University. Russell left Avidex in December 2000 (after the successful completion of a £10m finance round that valued the company at £25m) to join Prolysis Ltd, another University of Oxford spin-out, as Chief Executive Officer in a "turn-around" exercise. During his time at Prolysis he raised over £5m of venture capital and successfully restructured the company.

In November 2004 Russell became Chairman of Surface Therapeutics Ltd, his third University of Oxford spin-out, leading a finance round that raised £1.5m of venture capital. Russell also became a non-Executive Director of Glide Pharma Ltd in February 2005 having helped them to raise £500,000 of business angel funding. From 1999 to 2009 Russell was a Director of Venturefest Ltd, the organisation that facilitates the annual Venturefest conference in Oxford for entrepreneurs, and was Chairman of the Board in 2006/7. In 2007 Russell led, as Chairman, the launch of Oxford Expression Technologies as a spin-out from Oxford Brookes University. Since 2009 he and other members of his team have undertaken significant projects for the Department of Health and in 2012 Russell became a Director of Hammersmith Medicines Research Ltd.

Business Boffins Ltd was founded by Russell in order to create an educational programme for small business owners; that programme has now become an accredited university course that offers the new Certificate in Small Business Management. A major trial of the programme with nearly 150 businesses over one year saw business failure rates slashed and the material has now been provided to over 3,000 owner-managers. That programme has now been licensed to universities both at home and abroad. Russell has developed many schemes aimed at making education and self-employment available for disadvantaged groups with an emphasis on the disabled and their carers, low income group women and ex-service personnel who retire for medical reasons.

Russell wrote a monthly page on business matters for "The Independent" from 2004 to 2010 and his book "How to Start a Successful Business" was published in 2007. He lectures extensively at seven universities in England and his recent invited lecture tours outside of the UK include Iceland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Italy. Russell is married with four sons and lives in Chinnor, Oxon where he is Chairman of his local Scout group. In his spare time he grows prize-winning vegetables, makes furniture from native hardwoods and restores classic cars. Sadly, his legendary "Sauce of the Nile" pickle is not yet on sale to the public.