

Network for Integrated Retail Logistics

The Network for Integrated Retail Logistics (NIRL) is a focus for research, technology transfer, education and training for optimised solutions in food and non-food retail logistics. It leverages the activities of a broad spectrum of retail supply chain partners in order to research, develop and exploit new systems and technologies for retail logistics.

The Network brings together major retailers, their suppliers and third party logistics providers with leading academic research groups, the leading R&D grocery retail organisation, as well as solutions and systems developers. The philosophy of the Network is to 'cooperate to compete' in order to capitalise on the emerging opportunities in retail logistics to maximise product availability at minimum overall supply chain costs.

The partnership will stimulate closer co-operation between researchers and business and will become the focus for advancing knowledge in this economically important business sector. Cross-sectoral learning will be emphasized across retail and related areas.

The Network's aim is to be the principal focus in the UK for research, development, technology transfer and professional education in retail logistics and related sectors. This aim will be achieved through providing a network that draws together the UK's existing research capability. This network will provide the mechanism to co-ordinate and disseminate research into improving performance in the management of supply chains. Ultimately, the Network aims to become a policy developer for integration within the sector.

The main scientific and technological objectives of the network are as follows:

- To establish working research partnerships and to prepare a research framework that will effectively combine and add value to research activity
- To generate innovative collaborative research projects
- To frame scoping studies, surveys, market analysis, technology road mapping exercises and problem clinics to identify research needs and priorities
- To focus on delivering solutions that exploit intelligent systems design, forecasting, planning, co-ordination, optimised routing and loading, labelling and tracking and real-time control

- To determine the enablers and inhibitors of inter-supply chain collaboration
- To analyse new ways of managing supply chains to achieve effective and efficient retail
- To provide advanced modelling and analysis capabilities to the sector
- To develop and exploit mechanisms for technology two-way transfer between the knowledge-based partners and industry and for cross-sectoral learning.

For further information please contact:

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