

**Publication:** Education Guardian

**Circulation:** 370934

**Date:** 11 September 2007

### Partnership is best

Establishing an overseas presence should be high on the agenda for any university (The debate, September 4), but universities mustn't forget that they're in the business of creating knowledge, not buildings.

I strongly favour the partnership approach. After all, universities should be focused on knowledge creation for the benefit of the world economy, not on making a profit. When universities set up campuses abroad they are often registered as a private company, and the dynamics and focus of the organisations soon change, with the original mission possibly getting lost.

Brunel has successfully launched a PhD without residence in partnership with Ahlia University in Bahrain. For Brunel, we expand our overseas student numbers without putting pressure on our UK infrastructure and for Ahlia, they build capacity and mould themselves around a UK university that is built on innovation and entrepreneurship.

**Professor Zahir Irani**  
Brunel University business school