EPSRC engineering student Liza Brooks combined a passion for winter sports, design knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit to create the UK’s largest snowboard company.

True Snowboards Ltd prides itself on engineering the best boards in the business, and its sponsored riders won more medals than any other company at the British Championships for two years running.

“That was quite an achievement,” says Brooks, who is due to complete her engineering doctorate – the world’s first in Advanced Snowboard Design – at Cranfield University in 2010. “It’s not all about the snowboards, but it shows they’re doing their job.”

True Snowboard’s objective is to push the boundaries of science and technology to create the ultimate snowboard.

“I am looking at three main areas, materials, geometry and the construction. You cannot look at these in isolation because they all affect each other. All three will improve snowboard design for both the pros and those out to just enjoy the slopes.”

And Brooks says it is academic excellence and innovation that gives her, and True Snowboards, the edge. “We wouldn’t have had the success we’ve had without the academic background. There’s so much pseudo-science in the snowboard industry and I openly challenge that.”

She adds: “I think EPSRC funding is essential to pushing science and engineering further than ever before, and pushing industry forward.”

“Without it, I wouldn’t be doing this. It’s something I love and something I hope will benefit the whole snowboard industry.”