

Lancashire Innovation Plan

2023-2028

VISION: A globally connected, competitive, & resilient innovation ecosystem throughout Lancashire



Grow

Objectives

- Lancashire's world-class sector capabilities in AdMan, Materials, & Nuclear are maintained & strengthened
- New opportunity areas in Cyber & Digital are developed, building on the County's existing strengths
- Lancashire's businesses are increasingly more active in global markets

Actions

- 1.1 Enable effective clustering activity in support of the National Cyber Force
- 1.2 Boost spin-offs from Lancashire's unis & spin-ins from outside the County
- 1.3 Improve availability of attractive, digitally enabled, flexible grow-on office/lab space in city/town centres
- 1.4 Define detailed Smart Specialisation strategy
- 1.5 Secure external funding to help strengthen Lancashire's innovation ecosystem



Broaden

Objectives

- Lancashire maximises the benefits from its key innovation assets including AMRC, EIC, HIC, NCF & HE/FE
- Lancashire's businesses have an increased commitment to innovation for productivity, growth & resilience
- More of Lancashire's businesses are undertaking effective innovation, closing R&D funding the gap to the UK

Actions

- 2.1 Utilise innovation assets such as AMRC, EIC & HIC to build innovation capacity & capability in Lancashire's businesses
- 2.2 Deliver programmes of effective innovation support to Lancashire's SMEs



Connect

Objectives

- Lancashire's strong strategic partnerships with neighbouring Manchester & Liverpool, & beyond unlock the benefits of scale in facilitating innovation
- People in Lancashire's businesses, unis & public sector organisations have stronger & wider networks of contacts within & across the County's sectors, & beyond Lancashire

Actions

- 3.1 Work with adjacent regions to increase Lancashire participation in relevant networking opportunities in/around Manchester & Liverpool
- 3.2 Establish & resource cluster organisations for identified Smart Specialisation sectors, where these do not already exist
- 3.3 Develop a start-up pitch events programme for Lancashire



Tell

Objectives

- Increased awareness within Lancashire of local capabilities & opportunities, improving talent retention
- Greater external awareness of Lancashire's innovation offer, helping to attract talent & investment
- Lancashire has advocates in key national fora & is influential to national policy

Actions

- 4.1 Develop & resource an innovation marketing strategy for Lancashire
- 4.2 Develop a technology & market foresight observatory to monitor Lancashire's evolving capabilities & to ensure that skills development aligns with business/technology need

Lancashire Innovation Plan: Key Points

- Commissioned by Lancashire County Council, Innovation & Digital team
- Led strategically by the Lancashire LEP Innovation Board – representatives from universities (UCLan, Lancaster), innovation organisations (AMRC NW, Groundswell Innovation, Innovation Agency NW, Research England, Innovate UK, Sedulo), and private sector (Victrex, Westinghouse, Fuuse, MSG Plastics, BCW Engineering). Each board member sponsoring one of the 12 actions.
- Delivered operationally by Lancashire County Council (Innovation & Digital Team), Lancaster University, UCLan and AMRC NW (along with wider ecosystem partners).
- Initial core resource commitments from Lancashire County Council, Lancashire LEP, Lancaster University, University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), and AMRC NW. With discussions to add private sponsorship in near future, and bids into UK Government also live.
- Very much a fixed term (5 year) action plan, to deliver key initiatives on the ground and fill identified gaps in provision.
- Resource allocated to develop monitoring and reporting; so we can properly measure our impact and challenge ourselves on what is and isn't working.
- Example of key aim: Lancashire ranks 15th (at 45.3%, of 41 ITL2 regions) for '% of businesses that are innovation active', it only ranks 28th for 'Innovate UK funding per annum' (at £10m), suggesting that there is a huge potential of already innovation active business ready to absorb much more innovation funding than they are already doing, if they were given better support and guidance to do so.