



Innovate  
UK

West  
Yorkshire  
Combined  
Authority



Tracy Brabin  
Mayor  
of West Yorkshire



# Innovate UK West Yorkshire Local Action Plan



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# Foreword

## By Indro Mukerjee



Innovate UK is the UK's innovation agency. We drive productivity and economic growth by supporting businesses to develop and realise the potential of new ideas.

We are living in a time of challenge; a time of constant change; but also, a time of significant opportunity. There's the opportunity to help and improve the present, but also the opportunity to create the future.

Innovation strongly helps to create the future, and there has never been a better time for us to focus on supporting our economy and society through innovation. We will do this through the three axis by which we are organising ourselves; the Domains we support, the Products and Services we use and the Places that we operate in. We will bring all this expertise to bear in partnership with West Yorkshire.

The Innovate UK Plan for Action lays out our commitment to work with leaders across the UK to develop innovation strategies that recognise the strengths and opportunities in their nations and regions across the UK. So, as an important milestone and example of this work, I'm pleased to launch this Action Plan, which was co-created with West Yorkshire Combined Authority, for the Region.

There are exciting and significant opportunities to help drive economic and societal improvement through business innovation right across West Yorkshire, and the Action Plan sets out Core Areas and Actions to fulfil those opportunities.

The Innovate UK team is ready to commit to working with partners across the UK nations and regions, across the research and innovation ecosystem and across government to drive Place based impact.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Indro Mukerjee". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Indro Mukerjee**

Innovate UK CEO

# Foreword

## By Tracy Brabin



West Yorkshire, the beating heart of the North, is the place for opportunity and the place for innovation.

For over three centuries, our region has been a leading pioneer of the innovation agenda - developing some of the biggest gamechangers to transform not just our local economy, but the global economy. From the first commercial steam-train, the Salamanca, to cat's eyes guiding our cars along dark roads.

As a Mayoral Combined Authority, we recognise the significance of innovation and the impact it has on our businesses, universities and people. Our innovation-intensive businesses are the catalysts for our regional economic growth, developing and commercialising new products made in West Yorkshire and sold to the world. Our research universities and institutions are spearheading cutting-edge research into new materials and technologies. All of this is down to our people. Creative and dynamic individuals and teams challenging the status quo, finding efficiencies, and supported by an open and inclusive innovation ecosystem.

This new Action Plan with Innovate UK reaffirms our ambitions to accelerate and drive the innovation agenda in West Yorkshire. Working with Innovate UK, and our local partners, we will play to our strengths, build effective partnerships to target business support, and embed equality, diversity and inclusion across regional innovation interventions.

As one of the youngest and most diverse regions in the UK, West Yorkshire stands ready to play a key role in the next chapters of the UK's innovation story.

### Tracy Brabin

Mayor of West Yorkshire

# Foreword

## By Shabir Pandor



Our new Action Plan with Innovate UK reconfirms our commitment to unleash the potential of innovation across West Yorkshire. As Chair of the Combined Authority's Business, Economy & Innovation Committee, I know how important innovation is to drive economic growth in the region.

In times of crisis and challenge, we look to innovation for the answer. Time and time again, we turn to testing new ideas and creating new ways of doing things. We've seen this recently in the COVID-19 pandemic in the race to develop a vaccine that allowed us to live normal lives again. We see it today, with businesses across the region looking at better ways of doing things during economic turmoil. And we will see it in the future, as we do all we can to tackle the climate crisis.

Key to our new Action Plan is recognising that innovation comes from anywhere. We must do all we can to ensure that residents and businesses across Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, and Wakefield have the opportunity to be involved in and benefit from innovation. Each district is uniquely placed to add extra value to our innovation story. Innovation happens everywhere – across our cities, towns, and villages, in our homes, our workplaces and within our innovation hubs like Nexus and 3MBIC.

Delivering on this Action Plan requires the support of the whole of the innovation ecosystem – a partnership approach is what is needed to maximise the potential of the region. By working together, we can continue to build an innovation culture we can be proud of and be a leading example for other regions across the UK and beyond.

### **Councillor Shabir Pandor**

Chair of the Business,  
Economy & Innovation Committee



# Executive Summary

Innovate UK is delivering against the UK government's vision to be a global hub for innovation by 2025, through its mission to grow, develop and commercialise products, services and processes, and support outstanding innovation ecosystems that are agile and inclusive.

Innovate UK is committed to embedding Place as one of the three axis into everything we will do in this spending review period and beyond, contributing towards the BEIS target of 55% R&D spending outside the Greater Southeast by 2024/25.

As West Yorkshire takes up its devolved powers with the direct election of its new mayor, it is an opportune and appropriate time to assess the progress the region is making and identify areas of opportunity. To reaffirm the commitment and collaboration between Innovate UK and West Yorkshire to achieve a coordinated approach to meeting our common goals.

This plan aims to provide strategic focus for innovation in the region and an overview of how we can catalyse the actions of all partners in West Yorkshire to create impact.

This Local Action Plan highlights areas of strength and positive trends in the local economy but also flags key issues and challenges that are priorities for future action. It sets out directions including a longer-term perspective building upon existing innovation assets and the future development of emerging opportunities.



**This plan aims to provide strategic focus for innovation in the region and an overview of how we can catalyse the actions of all partners in West Yorkshire to create impact.**



# Principles and Core Areas

We will draw on the principles we set out in our Plan for Action and work with leadership and wider partners across West Yorkshire to deliver our innovation ambitions by:

- **Inspire:** inspiring more businesses to undertake all forms of innovation and to generate commercially valuable intellectual property (IP)
- **Involve:** working together across the West Yorkshire ecosystem to have a greater impact than we can separately
- **Invest:** aligning our existing resources and investments to ensure that we build on the insights, assets, and capabilities from across West Yorkshire

We will work with the leadership and wider partners across West Yorkshire to deliver our joint innovation ambitions, through three core areas:

- **Strategic partnerships** to ensure we have the necessary relationships to deliver this plan and grow the West Yorkshire economy through innovation, maximising local strengths and capabilities
- **Innovation support** that is targeted at priority clusters and meets the needs of local businesses and entrepreneurs, sharing expertise and data so we can take more informed actions
- **Communication and engagement** to ensure we're reaching, engaging, and inspiring more entrepreneurs and business leaders to innovate

# Context



## National Innovation

The global economy has experienced dramatic change over the last three years. Our society, our UK economy, and our livelihoods have all been affected. Ongoing turbulence including the climate emergency, the global pandemic, and cost of living crisis, have all disrupted long-established norms. However, this disruption has brought with it new opportunities to create a robust and agile economy that works for everyone for a more prosperous future.

Innovation is fundamental to UK growth and prosperity and critical to business resilience and survival in challenging times. The UK Government is investing in Research and Development (R&D) at record levels, as it strives to consolidate the UK's position as a science and innovation superpower, and increase the levels of private sector investment into R&D. How these benefits will help local economies is driven by the R&D mission laid out in the [2022 Levelling Up White Paper](#).

Innovate UK is the UK's innovation agency - we published our [Action Plan for Business Innovation](#) in November 2021. This plan sets out how we will help businesses to grow through the development and commercialisation of new ideas supported by an outstanding innovation ecosystem that is agile, inclusive, and easy to navigate.

Our Action Plan for Business Innovation also sets out our commitments to supporting 'Place and Levelling Up' as one of the key foundations. This includes

helping to maximise local strengths that can enhance UK capabilities and to increase the regional and national impact of innovation clusters. It also sets out a commitment to build greater coherence between national economic plans, local growth strategies and the Government's overall innovation strategy, by working with local and national partners.

In order to deliver against these commitments our [2022-2025 Strategic Delivery Plan](#) articulates that we will co-develop local action plans with local leadership, leveraging the reach and breadth of UKRI collaborations.

This Local Plan sets out our shared ambition for West Yorkshire. How we will work together in a systematic place-based approach through local to national co-creation, to drive greater innovation, resilience, productivity and growth.





# The View from West Yorkshire

West Yorkshire, we are pioneers, we're determined, full of ideas and not afraid to take on challenges. Traits that put us at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution making us the manufacturing powerhouse of the world.

We embrace our industrial heritage to innovate and collaborate, paving the way for the emergence of new industries at the cutting edge of health and technology, and with ideas and innovations that will tackle wider societal challenges including the climate emergency.

Our brilliant universities support our region to attract talent from around the world. International businesses have flocked to our region to pioneer advanced methods in transportation, health, and manufacturing.

We're proud to be one of the most diverse parts of the UK with people representing many ethnicities, backgrounds, and lifestyles, connecting us to communities across the world. West Yorkshire's diversity is its strength. This diversity of people is an untapped talent pool for innovation and business growth.

The region's ambitions are to build on its diversity and heritage as pioneers, inventors and makers, capitalising on the strengths of the region as a place where innovation thrives, and not only that, but a place where everyone can benefit from innovation.

- **People:** A highly diverse population of 2.3m with a workforce of 1.1m, alongside seven Universities with 91,000 students and 30,000 graduates.
- **Places:** A mix of distinct places with cities, towns and significant rural areas, with each place having different roles to play in our innovation ecosystem.

Our aim is to be a place that is globally recognised for developing an open, inclusive, thriving and coherent innovation ecosystem, where SMEs, budding entrepreneurs and individuals are inspired to innovate, and can easily navigate the support landscape and connect and collaborate with others to create new and better solutions for business growth and societal good.



# Our Innovation History



We're building on solid foundations. West Yorkshire has a long history of innovation and industry delivering economic success alongside social progress. Industrialists such as Sir Titus Salt had the vision and drive to support the people of our region out of poverty and into a skilled workforce.

Benjamin Gott revolutionised the production of woollen cloth, investing large amounts in the cultural and civic life of Leeds, founding the city's Philosophical and Literary Society. We are committed to ensure that a new generation of diverse entrepreneurs continue that legacy with their ideas benefitting all communities, creating a legacy of prosperity and business success.

We have a history of ground-breaking discoveries and transformative practices. From firsts in the world of film and transportation, to the production of world-renowned video games and pioneering medical technologies such as Paxman Coolers' work on cancer treatment. The invention of Cat's Eye technology in West Yorkshire transformed road safety across the world.

**Towering figures across the arts have been inspired by our places – from the Brontë sisters, the Poet Laureate Simon Armitage, to David Hockney and Barbara Hepworth. We have influenced modern culture from the countercultural post-punk movement to the biggest pop groups in the world. Innovation in the creative industries is an emerging and important strength for the region.**

# Today's Outlook

Today, we gain strength from our success not being aligned to one or two sectors. We are blessed to have many and varied industries and businesses. This sectoral diversity has helped our economy weather the economic crosswinds of the past and can drive prosperity for the future.

As an integrated part of the UK's economy, we are poised to be a test bed of innovation and new ways of working. An idea can spark here, develop then cascaded to the rest of the country. We are perfectly positioned to be a key driver of economic growth not just in the North of England but for the whole of the UK.

- West Yorkshire accounts for 43% of the population of Yorkshire and the Humber and 15% of the population of the North of England.
- Businesses: an internationally significant economy with output of £57.4bn, over 90,000 businesses, with one of the most diverse economies in the UK and retaining some key national specialisms.

As innovators and makers, we also know that culture and creativity is not just a nice to have, but a powerful driver of job creation, regeneration, skills and better wellbeing. And while we are admired across the UK and globally for our creativity, we know there's always more we can do.

Ideas and innovation are our bread and butter, powering the region's success. Pioneering textile technologies during the Industrial Revolution have developed to become cutting-edge techniques using recycled and recovered plastics. Weaving technology has been adapted to make super-strength jet engine parts. Our knowledge-based clusters and expertise in medical technologies and medical equipment manufacturers are some of the best in the world.

The diversity of education assets in the region attracts international talent. It was at the University of Leeds that William Bragg's revolutionary research on X-ray crystallography changed the face of modern science. Today, the Centre for Precision Technologies,



FeTu is a West Yorkshire company that has designed a revolutionary 'green' energy device targeting carbon reduction across a broad range of systems and industries.

The FeTu 'roticulating' concept is perceived as the world's first 'quad-acting' device. It is lightweight and scalable and uses just two moving parts to operate four anti-phased compression chambers, offering low-loss conversion from potential to kinetic energy.

FeTu's new technology inherently lends itself to cost-effective, ultra-efficient fluid displacement devices across a wide range of applications. It is seemingly able to run any thermodynamic cycle, offering exciting potential for large-scale closed-loop Brayton/Sterling cycle engines, which are seen as highly effective methods of electrical energy production and waste energy capture.

Nexus and the 3M Buckley Innovation Centre build on that legacy, innovating and collaborating with industry across our sectoral and technological strengths.

But we won't deepen our understanding about what we're doing well or where we could improve without 'data'. Luckily, our region is home to a vast array of internationally recognised data research initiatives such as Born in Bradford bringing new insights into childhood health. The Space Hub is a respected new initiative driving novel satellite and geospatial data markets, bringing new collaborations and industrial opportunities.

West Yorkshire economy mirrors closely the national economy with some notable areas of specialisation and focus.

# Manufacturing



Manufacturing is an important sector for the region and nationally. West Yorkshire has more manufacturing jobs than anywhere else in the North – with thousands of workers in sub-sectors ranging from textiles, furniture-making, food and drink, chemical works, electronics and precision-engineering.

The things we make in our region are as diverse as the region itself. From national and international food brands, sets for the music industry, world-class textiles to chemicals and components for the aerospace and automotive industry.

- Business in WY exported more than £5 billion in 2020.
- Manufacturers make up over 7% of businesses in the region.
- 14% of high growth businesses in West Yorkshire are manufacturers – compared to 9% nationally.
- 10% of all West Yorkshire apprenticeships are in manufacturing companies.
- Of the 1.64 million jobs in West Yorkshire, 118,805 (10.9%) are in manufacturing.
- The number of manufacturing businesses in West Yorkshire has grown by 6% since 2016.
- Demand for manufacturing skills currently exceeds pre-pandemic levels. From 1,750 in January 2020, to 3,200 in January 2022.
- Manufacturing is estimated to be the biggest source of CO2 emissions intensity (by sector) in West Yorkshire – around 3,200 tonnes.

Given the sectors importance to the region, the Mayor of West Yorkshire has set up a Manufacturing Taskforce to drive forward talent and skills, innovation and productivity.

**ionix**

ADVANCED  
TECHNOLOGIES

Huddersfield based company Ionix is manufacturing ultrasonic sensor technology to monitor corrosion in the oil and gas industry, allowing power generation facilities to check for cracks or defects without the need for a full shut down. With support in strategic road mapping, branding and development of its business model from an Innovate UK EDGE innovation and growth specialist, Ionix is looking to branch into new sectors. It was also a recipient of an Innovate UK Sustainable Innovation Fund grant and received a continuity grant.

# Healthtech

West Yorkshire has a unique healthtech ecosystem across medical technology, digital and data with good connections between these strengths that help accelerate the translation of research into commercialisation.

The region is recognised by central government as a **High Potential Opportunity (HPO)** area for wound care, regenerative tissue, AI and data analytics. This reflects the unique combination of assets and competencies that exist in West Yorkshire across industry and academia, plus unique strengths within our public sector infrastructure:

- West Yorkshire is home to the **Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust** who are creating a new innovation village for Leeds, working with the University, NHSX, and NHS Digital with specialism in medical technology. The OLS data (2018) cements the region's position as a leading med-tech location.
- According to OLS data from 2018, the region ranks within the top 10 LEP areas in England for both core biopharma (7th), and for digital health (4th), clearly positioning the region as a major contributor to the UK's overall health-tech business base.
- Leeds City Region is home to an internationally recognised healthcare and innovation ecosystem with over 20 clinical commissioning groups, 600 life sciences companies, 250 MedTech firms and 62 digital health enterprises. There are over 196,000 people employed in health and science roles
- Leeds City Region is home to NHS England, NHS Digital, Public Health England, The NHS leadership academy as well as large teaching hospitals and 20 clinical commissioning groups. The region is also home to the world's largest healthcare data platforms – NHS Spine and NHS Database alongside leading tech companies such as EMIS and TPP



Two million people globally have knee surgery each year, a figure that is predicted to rise to 3.5 million by 2030. Currently, up to 20% of patients are dissatisfied with the outcome of their surgery. Yorkshire-based med tech company Eventum Orthopaedics aims to change that, supported by Innovate UK EDGE.

Innovate UK EDGE has supported Eventum with product development strategy, digital and data strategy and intellectual property development and exploitation.

The start-up has developed technology that helps surgeons during the operative process. It provides real-time intraoperative data that enables surgeons to make better decisions while operating. The aim is to improve patient outcomes, reduce the need for repeat operations and reduce the financial cost to the NHS.

# Digital and Technologies

The West Yorkshire tech ecosystem includes over 9,200 digital & tech businesses, companies tracked by Beauhurst have raised over £120m since 2012.

The Kalifa review named Leeds as an internationally significant FinTech cluster with a disproportionately high presence of established financial services organisations, and the UK Government's HPO programme has recognised Leeds as a world-leader in **Artificial Intelligence**.

West Yorkshire has powerful and unique contributions to make to the UK Space industry, particularly regarding commercial applications of satellite data and geospatial intelligence, ubiquitous connectivity and secure communications, and advanced manufacturing and precision engineering capabilities.

Advances in Space technologies, satellite communications and Space data also present major economic growth opportunities in high priority industries across Yorkshire including digital and IT, telecommunications, low carbon and environmental industries, health innovation, agriculture, finance and legal.

Furthermore, the region's contribution to research and teaching on issues highly relevant to the future Space industry is notable, including climate and environmental science, advanced computer techniques, satellite technology, telecommunications and quantum technology.



See.ai is a Medtech company that develops solutions to solve the shortage of radiologists. The demand for imaging diagnostic services is significantly higher than the capacity to handle them. We are a multidisciplinary team of experts working towards a future where patients can get their medical imaging diagnosis within minutes.

Their CEO Saile Villegas is an Women in Innovation winner, who is inspiring others. 'I want to become a role model for young women of ethnic minority backgrounds and inspire them to challenge the status quo'



# Challenges

Despite these opportunities the UK economy continues to be turbulent, and over 70% of West Yorkshire businesses are currently concerned about their survival over the next 12 months. To improve business resilience, the importance of focusing in on innovation is critical.

However, analysis by West Yorkshire Combined Authority suggests that it is underperforming against its potential for innovation led growth.



The Office for National Statistics analysis on Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D (GERD), shows the region had the lowest investment in R&D per £1m of GVA of any English region outside London. The findings of the most recent UK Innovation Survey (2021) suggests that West Yorkshire is not only lagging nationally, but also lagging in comparison to South Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, and the West Midlands for 'innovation active' businesses.

By working in partnership with Innovate UK we want to address this gap – to make more businesses in West Yorkshire aware of the funding opportunities. To encourage more businesses in West Yorkshire to be innovation active and to use public funding to leverage greater levels of private investment into R&D.



# Innovate UK in West Yorkshire

Over the last 6 years Innovate UK has worked with partners across West Yorkshire to align national and local strategies and plans for business innovation by focusing on areas where we have shared priorities.

In 2017, West Yorkshire was the first place within England with which we signed an MoU to improve collaboration and drive innovation. Since this, we have made steady progress and continue to work closely with the region's leadership following the recent Devolution Deal with Government.

Our technical experts and business advisors have brought sector and technology expertise into local initiatives, including via the Business Economy and Innovation Committee (BEIC) and a number of innovation programmes. We have co-created the West Yorkshire Innovation Network (WYIN), and partnered on the flagship West Yorkshire Innovation Festival, aligning our presence and support to the festival, as well as celebrating the amazing businesses across the region.

Innovate UK KTN has connected over 34,000 people with events and organisations within West Yorkshire, to exploit innovation opportunities. More recently we have supported the Mayor's innovation prize through

mentoring programmes within our Young Innovators programme and free business advice and support from Innovate UK EDGE to young entrepreneurs.

We have well established ways of working between Innovate UK EDGE and the business support agencies in West Yorkshire, including with West Yorkshire Growth Hub. Between April 2020 and October 2022, Innovate UK EDGE provided tailored support to 302 innovation-focused businesses in West Yorkshire, which created 337 jobs and maintained 1600 jobs.



Collaborating with Teesside University, CorkSol has developed a novel cork-based home insulation material which includes nano-additives to enhance its thermal performance, creating a next generation coating that will protect homes against heat loss and damp from the inside out.

It has been supported with its growth strategy, value proposition and finance strategy by an innovation and growth specialist at Innovate UK EDGE and has also been a beneficiary of Innovate UK's Sustainable Innovation Fund.



# Our Funding to the Region

Since 2007 Innovate UK has competitively awarded £143.6m to organisations in West Yorkshire. Our investment into West Yorkshire has seen a year-on-year increase over the last 10 years, with £13.5m invested in 2021-22. Since 2007, 12.9% of our funding has gone directly to large businesses and 45.7% to SMEs, totalling 58.6% to businesses across the region.

In that same period, 35.1% was awarded to academic and research organisations through Collaborative Research and Development projects, supporting business innovation and strengthening the relationship between industry and academia. This is particularly important for SMEs who are less likely to have the research capability in-house and need external research organisations to help progress new ideas to commercialisation.

**Innovate UK Spend by Organisation Type in West Yorkshire**



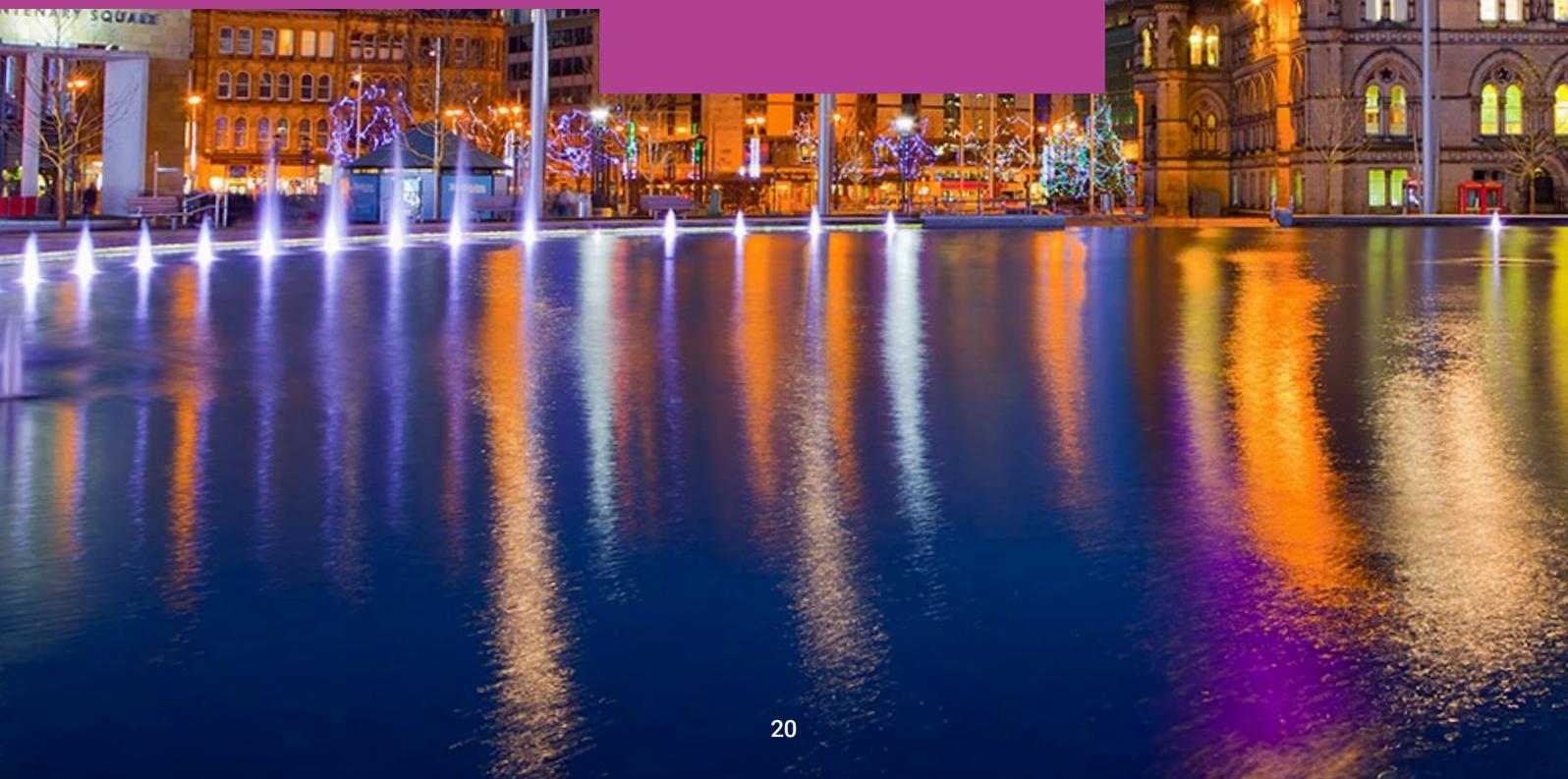
More broadly, the thematic alignment of the funding characterises the strengths of West Yorkshire’s business innovation clusters. With £40.5m investment into Manufacturing, Materials and Mobility, and £29.1m into Aging Society, Health and Nutrition projects since 2007.

We know that there is so much more that we can do to support the region to boost innovation activity. Hence, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (and partners) and Innovate UK are jointly committing to undertake the actions in this plan to drive forward local transformational change as we recommit and reaffirm our shared ambitions.

# Aligning Ambitions

Innovate UK is committed to embedding Place as one of the axis to everything we will do in this spending review period and beyond, contributing towards the BEIS target of 55% R&D spending outside the Greater Southeast by 2024/25.

The needs of innovative businesses will vary from place to place. We will tailor our support to build capacity, stimulate greater connectivity between local businesses and the research base to improve productivity. We will support local businesses to adopt new knowledge, skills, and cutting-edge technologies and use them to deliver greater productivity and economic impact. We will join forces with organisations across West Yorkshire to unlock the power of untapped innovation. Working together on the Knows No Limits mission we will focus on inspiring future innovators and addressing disparities in funding and support for innovation.





The **West Yorkshire Innovation Framework** sets out several priority areas, in which Innovate UK will support implementation. These priority areas summarised below, anchor our guiding principles set out in the next section:

- Inclusive innovation – by and for everyone - to create a more diverse, inclusive and open innovation ecosystem, with the guiding principle being ‘innovation - by and for everyone’.
- A focus on Healthtech - Prioritise sector specific innovation investment in Healthtech, building on existing strengths, assets and emerging opportunities. This will be used as proof of concept around targeted innovation support in Leeds City Region.
- Innovation finance availability - Organise and work across partners to develop joined up innovation finance provision from pre-start to scale-up across Leeds City Region, to support innovators from much more diverse backgrounds.
- A new mission-based approach to innovation - Adopt a mission-based approach to stimulating innovation.
- A strengthened Higher Education Institute (HEI) and SME relationship - Strengthen the untapped potential that exists between the Higher Education institutes (HEI) and SME base to drive business innovation in the region.
- Creation of peer-to-peer innovation support networks - Create an innovation peer-to-peer network to use the power and credibility of small businesses themselves to support other businesses.
- Increasing adoption of new innovative practices - Support the adoption of new innovative practices in SMEs and microbusinesses.
- Connecting the landscape - Support and facilitate connectivity across the innovation ecosystem.

# Delivering the Plan for West Yorkshire

At the heart of the plan is our relationship with West Yorkshire's leadership for increasing business innovation and working closely with West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (WYCA) who are the custodians of the Devolution Deal with Government.



# Principles

We will draw on the principles we set out in our Plan for Action and work with the leadership and wider partners across West Yorkshire to deliver our innovation ambitions:

- **Inspire:** by inspiring more businesses to undertake all forms of innovation and to generate commercially valuable intellectual property (IP).
- **Involve:** by working together across the West Yorkshire ecosystem to have a greater impact than we can separately.
- **Invest:** aligning our existing resources and investments to ensure that we build on the insights, assets, and capabilities from across West Yorkshire.



## Core Areas and Actions

We will work with the leadership and wider partners across West Yorkshire to deliver our joint innovation ambitions, through three core areas:

- **Strategic Partnerships** to ensure we have the necessary relationships to deliver this plan and grow the West Yorkshire economy through innovation, maximising local strengths and capabilities.
- **Innovation Support** that is targeted at priority clusters and meets the needs of local businesses and entrepreneurs, sharing expertise and data so we can take more informed actions.
- **Communication and engagement** to ensure we're reaching, engaging, and inspiring more entrepreneurs and business leaders to innovate.

The next section outlines the actions will jointly take within these core areas.

# Strategic Partnerships



WYCA and Innovate UK will:

- **Co-investment opportunities:** develop programmes in which we can jointly invest to grow local innovation clusters and develop a pipeline of activities to drive inclusive innovation in West Yorkshire.
- **Increasing Engagement:** Using our joint convening power to ensure national agencies and West Yorkshire partners are joined up on relevant activities, including UKRI Research Councils, DIT and British Business Bank.
- **Innovate UK presence:** Ensure Innovate UK services (Innovate UK EDGE, Innovate UK KTN, Catapults) continue to be and are increasingly visible and active across the West Yorkshire Innovation Network and via Business West Yorkshire.
- **Strategic Forums:** Participate in key forums, providing appropriate representation and sector expertise from across Innovate UK, including but not limited to the:
  - Business Economy and Innovation Committee
  - West Yorkshire Innovation Network
  - Healthtech Cluster Network
  - Manufacturing Advisory Board
- **Skills Gap Opportunities:** Work jointly on understanding the innovation skills gap and explore programs of inclusive innovation support to impact the skills, inequalities and disadvantages impacting the communities. Learning from the West Yorkshire Manufacturing Taskforce and Green Jobs taskforce
- **Alignment of Opportunities:** Inform each other of new programmes to ensure alignment and reduce the risk of duplication
- **Provide appropriate resources:** ensure the success of this local action plan through better collaborative working arrangements, including consideration of secondments across Innovate UK and West Yorkshire.

# Innovation Support

WYCA and Innovate UK will:

- **Cluster growth:** connect our existing services and programmes to grow West Yorkshire's innovation clusters, acting as an integral part of the ecosystem, taking positive action to support established capabilities in:
  - Healthtech
  - Manufacturing
  - Digital and Technology
- **Mayor's challenge programme:** Provide wrap around support to the Mayors Innovation Prize pilot and future annual roll out of challenge competitions.
- **Data Sharing and Business Intelligence:** Share relevant data sets for specific businesses and applications for Innovate UK and WYCA competitions, with the aim of improving targeted support including EDI characteristics to aid monitoring of take up.
- **Identify Local Expertise:** Work with the West Yorkshire Innovation Network to identify appropriate local expertise to become IUK assessors and monitoring officers.
- **Accessibility:** Ensure all activity and programmes are accessible for a range of communities.



# Communication and Engagement

WYCA and Innovate UK will:

- **Joint Communication:** Work collaboratively on communications and marketing in areas that supports the ambitions of both parties.
- **Innovation Festival:** Work specifically with local partners on the annual West Yorkshire Innovation Festival, including Innovate UK and WYCA collaborating on a campaign to inspire innovation and promote opportunities to WY businesses and diverse communities.
- **Maximise visibility:** Work with the WYCA to align their business facing website with the new Innovate UK Innovation Hub to maximise reach into West Yorkshire.



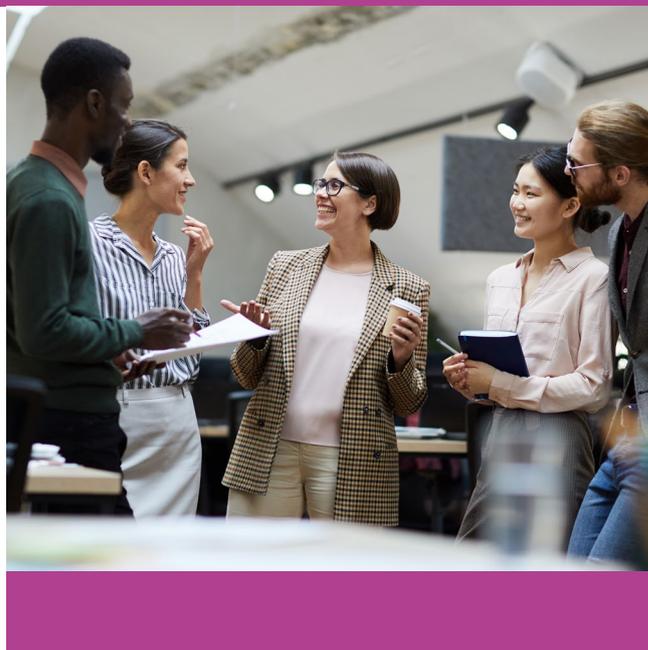
# Monitoring, Delivery and Outcomes



Innovate UK and the WYCA, via the Business Economy and Innovation Committee, have responsibility for overseeing the implementation of this plan. The plan is intended to be an agile and evolving document, which responds to local needs and economic pressures over the next 3 years.

Reviews will take place annually. At each review we will assess progress against the actions and create a delivery plan for the subsequent year, evolving existing and creating new actions as appropriate, in line with the principles and core areas in which we have agreed to work.

The overarching outcome of the West Yorkshire Local Plan is that, by working in partnership with WYCA and the local ecosystem, we will ensure that West Yorkshire businesses are more resilient and help them to grow through innovation. This will subsequently grow the West Yorkshire economy contributing to national economic growth.



The high-level impacts for West Yorkshire are:

- More resilient and innovation active businesses in West Yorkshire.
- Greater diversity of people involved in innovation.
- More and better jobs for people in West Yorkshire.
- Higher levels public and private finance for businesses to innovate and grow.
- A stronger entrepreneurial culture leading to innovative start-ups and university spin-outs.
- A more attractive location for inward investment and stronger international trade.

And the national contributions are:

- More innovative businesses developing solutions to national and global challenges.
- Supporting scale and positioning innovation businesses in value supply chains of the future to disrupt global markets.
- Higher national productivity.
- A stronger UK wide Research and Innovation ecosystem cementing the UK's position as global science powerhouse.



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Mayor  
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