

# AgriScale Pilot 25/26

**Innovate UK's new pilot will support businesses to scale up agri-tech manufacturing in the UK.**

- **AgriScale will enable agri-tech businesses to scale within the UK, strengthening the country's advanced manufacturing capabilities and driving growth in the agri-tech sector.**
- **By focusing on accelerating product manufacturing rather than early-stage research, AgriScale fills a critical gap in the innovation pipeline.**
- **This helps promising technologies move from concept to market more quickly and reliably.**
- **Through the High Value Manufacturing Catapult, five businesses will receive tailored support from the Manufacturing Technology Centre and Warwick Manufacturing Group.**
- **Backed by the Modern Industrial Strategy and aligned with the Manufacturing Sector Plan, AgriScale draws on the successful scale-up models in the automotive sector and others.**

# Current Agri-Tech Innovate Funding Opportunities

Chris Danks

Head of AgriFood

April 2026

# Innovate UK

- Innovate UK has [launched their new prospectus](#).
- This refreshed direction sets out how Innovate UK will better support the UK's most ambitious businesses to scale, commercialise and compete globally.
- This marks a significant moment for Innovate UK.
- The Prospectus brings together Innovate UK's ambition, role and offer in one place.
- It sets out their strategic focus, the sectors and technologies where they will concentrate their efforts.
- It also explains how they will work differently to support the UK's most promising innovators.



# Current Agri-Tech Investments

Advanced Manufacturing

Global Missions

Defra Farming Innovation Programme

# AgriScale 26/27

Supporting businesses to deploy late-stage Manufacturing scale up plans & businesses with technology gaps which are currently restricting scale-up.

- [£8m round of Experimental Development enabling manufacturing scale up](#)  
£1-£3m total project costs with 18-month duration
- [£5m round of Industrial Research to solve technology gaps in transfer to manufacture](#)  
£250k - £750k total project costs with 12-month duration
- Concurrent opening of both competitions Opening 30 March 2026 **Closing 3 June 2026**  
Projects start Jan'27 and Oct'26 respectively

# Advanced Manufacturing

## Advanced manufacturing supply chain innovation: CRD

UK registered businesses can apply for a share of up to £6.5 million for collaborative industrial research to make supply chains more productive, resource efficient and resilient.

### Eligibility

This competition is open to collaborations only.

To lead a collaborative project your organisation must be a UK registered business of any size.

### Open now

Opened: 27 April 2026

Closes: 10 June 2026

### Your project

Your project must:

- have a grant funding request of between £250,000 and £1 million
- last between 12 and 36 months
- start on 1 October 2026
- end by 30 September 2029

Any funded organisation needs to carry out their project work in the UK and must intend to exploit the project results from or in the UK.

### Specific themes

Your project must focus on one of the following themes:

- measurement, sensing and instrumentation
- additive manufacturing
- digital manufacturing and industrial AI
- robotics and intelligent automation
- power electronics

### Advanced Manufacturing frontier industries

Your project must focus on at least two of the following Advanced Manufacturing frontier industries:

- automotive
- aerospace
- advanced materials
- batteries
- agri-tech
- space

# International Opportunities 26/27

Agri-Tech Going Global to build on the global opportunities for UK Agri-Tech, helping businesses to develop and configure new technologies for global markets. These will build on existing international partnerships we have developed

- Six Global Missions based on current key countries/delivery partners in 2026/27
  - Australia GIP – Farmers2Founders OPENS SHORTLY
  - New Zealand GIP – Sprout CLOSED
  - Canada GIP – Cultivator LATER IN YEAR
  - US GIP - SVG Thrive Accelerator CLOSED
  - KSA GIP – KAUST DATES TBC
  - European GBIP –likely Netherlands TBC
- Next recruitment calls AUSTRALIA
- [Webinar on 9 April to introduce plan for the year](#) recording available

# Defra Farming Innovation Programme

- Part of Defra's Farming in Agriculture Programme
- Aims to:
  - Drive innovation in agri-tech and agriculture
  - Enhance productivity, environmental sustainability and resilience in England's farming sectors
- Provides R&D support for business led opportunities from initial feasibility through to on farm trials
- Projects must benefit farmers and growers in England
- Since 2021, FIP has supported over 300 projects across breadth of technologies and farming sectors



# The **Farming Innovation Programme** offers a range of opportunities for farmers, growers, businesses and researchers to collaborate on industry-led research and development:



Small **Research Starter Projects** where farmers, growers & foresters can explore a new idea



**Investor Partnerships** blending public grant funding with private investment to help agri-tech businesses scale and commercialise late-stage innovations.



**Feasibility projects** where businesses can check if a research idea works in practice.



**Themed competitions** (Farming Futures R&D Fund), where businesses and researchers can work on longer-term innovation focussing on issues like: **Climate-Smart Farming, Sustainable farm-based Proteins, Robotics and Automation, Environmental resilience or Nutrient management, Precision Breeding, Low emissions**



**Small/Large Partnership Projects**, where businesses can further develop a new farming product or service towards commercialisation.



**ADOPT Fund** where farmers can trial on-farm new innovations, practices or technologies



## The ADOPT Funding Opportunity

ADOPT will support collaborative farmer-led, on-farm trials or experiments to generate, test and demonstrate innovative solutions to farming challenges.

Project outputs will provide knowledge of new approaches which will be shared to the wider sector to provide confidence for others to adopt.





# ADOPT: Adoption of on-farm technologies

## Summary

### 2 Strands

1. Facilitator Support Grant
2. Full Grant

### Total Project Costs

1. Support Grant £2,500
2. Project trials £50K-£100K

### Duration

1. Up to 6 months
2. Between 6–24 months



**Lead must be** a farming, growing or forestry business of any size **based in England**



1. For support developing an ADOPT Full grant application
2. For on-farm trials and demonstrations of existing solutions



**A support grant is not required before applying for the Full grant**



# ADOPT: Adoption of on-farm technologies

Competition	Competition round	Opens	Closes	Status	Project Start by
Full ADOPT Grant	Round 1	28 April 2025	25 June 2025	Closed	1 November 2025
	Round 2	26 June 2025	20 August 2025	Closed	1 January 2026
	Round 3	21 August 2025	22 October 2025	Closed	1 March 2026
	Round 4	23 October 2025	10 December 2025	Closed	1 May 2026
	Round 5	11 December 2025	4 February 2026	Closed	1 June 2026
	Round 6	5 February 2026	8 April 2026	Closed	1 September 2026
	<u>Round 7</u>	9 April 2026	3 June 2026	Details available	1 October 2026
	Round 8	4 June 2026	29 July 2026	Details to be provided	1 December 2026
	Round 9	30 July 2026	23 September 2026	Details to be provided	1 February 2027
	Round 10	24 September 2026	18 November 2026	Details to be provided	1 May 2027
Future competition dates will be posted in due course					



# Defra Farming Innovation Investor Partnership

A blended finance initiative to turbocharge the development of high potential agri-tech SMEs.

UK registered SMEs can apply for a share of up to £5 million to develop innovative farming solutions.

This must align with private investment with selected investor partners.



# Defra Farming Innovation Investor Partnership



Sole **UK SMEs** seeking aligned private investment minimum **2x** grant awarded

**Opens 11 May 2026**  
**Closes 17 June 2026**

Total grant budget



**£5**  
Million

Research category

**Experimental  
Development**

Total project costs

**£750,000 -  
£3,000,000**

Duration

**18 months**



**Must** be able to demonstrate how the project will benefit farmers, growers or foresters in England.

Develop ambitious late-stage innovative solutions, technologies, systems or approaches that will make significant steps towards improving productivity, increasing sustainability and resilience.

Require 1 Investor from the Innovate UK Investor Pool



Currently 200+ Investors, plus can syndicate with others

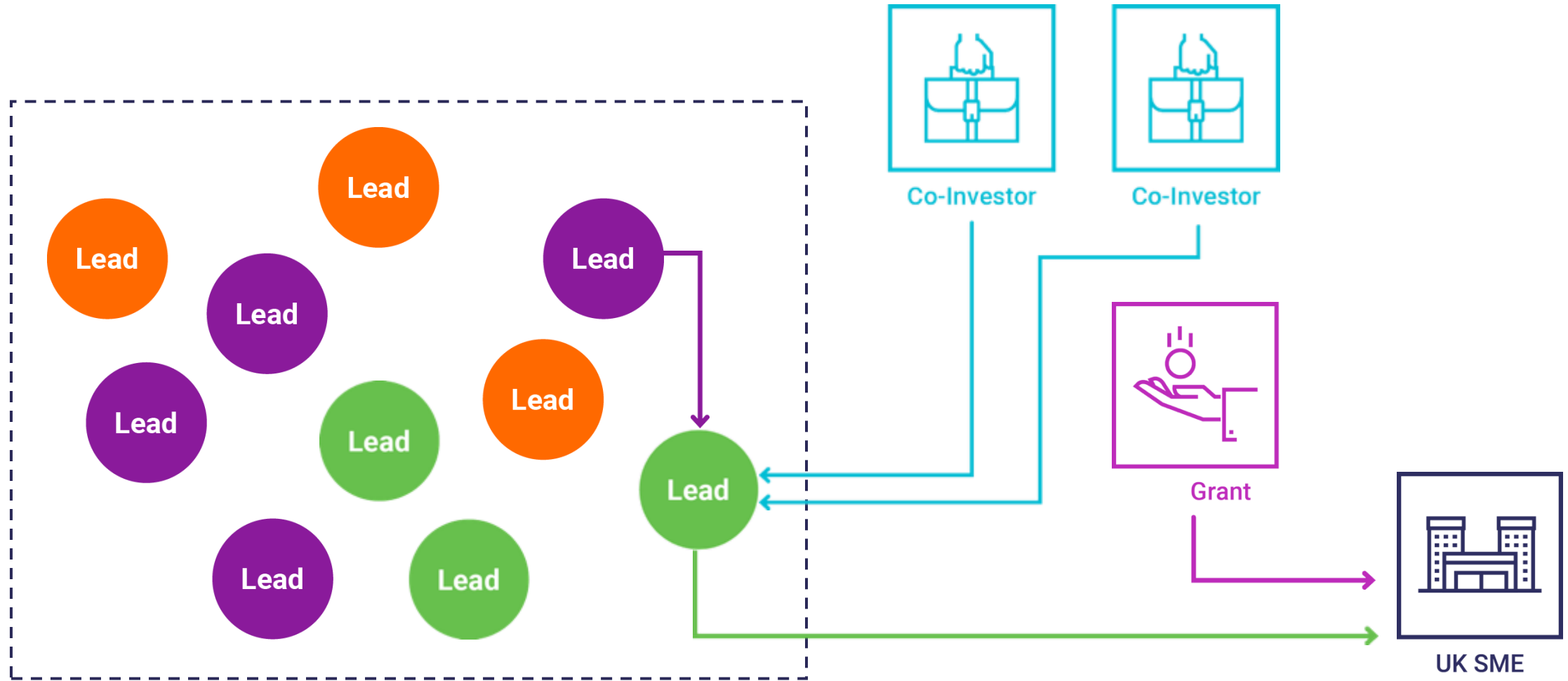
SMEs above threshold notified on  
**24 July 2026**

One-page investment profiles shared with all onboarded Investor Partners

**Heads of Terms** to be agreed by  
2 December 2026

**Projects start by  
April 2027**

# Build Eligible Deals by 2 December



# 200+ Investor Partners

## Directory of Investor Partners

The Investor Partner directory is a pool of carefully selected investors with an appetite to invest in innovation and who represent a wide variety of focus, be that sector focus, founding team, business stage and location. Providing the financing needed to grow and scale.

All Investor Types

All Investment Stages

All Sectors

Investor	Investor Type	Investment Stage	Sector Focus	Details
<b>1818 Venture Capital Limited</b>	VC	Early Revenue, Revenue	Digital and Technologies, Financial Services	<a href="#">More Info</a>
<b>24Haymarket Limited</b>	VC	Early Revenue, Revenue, Growth	Advanced Manufacturing, Clean Energy Industries, Creative Industries, Digital and Technologies, Financial Services, Life Sciences	<a href="#">More Info</a>
<b>6 Degrees Capital</b>	VC	Pre-Revenue, Early Revenue, Revenue	Digital and Technologies, Financial Services	<a href="#">More Info</a>
<b>ACT Venture Partners</b>	VC	Early Revenue, Revenue, Growth	Clean Energy Industries, Digital and Technologies, Financial Services, Life Sciences, Defence and	<a href="#">More Info</a>





# Investor Partnerships Agrifood Case Studies

## The impact of agrifood Investor Partnerships

**38**  
Projects

**£24m**  
Grant awarded\*

**£65m**  
Aligned investment\*\*

**2.7**  
Multiplier

These figures reflect only investor partnership projects within the agrifood sector and do not represent the full Innovate UK portfolio.

\* Grant and aligned investment are based on data submitted at application, which includes £4m grant support from Defra.

\*\* Post project investment and overall multiplier based on investment according to Beahurst published data accessed 26/08/2025



**35**  
Companies supported

**£112m**  
Follow on investment

**7.5**  
Overall multiplier



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# Defra Farming Innovation IP Round 2 Results

- **40 UK based SMEs** seeking late seed / Series A investment sought to close deals by Dec 2025
- Total project costs **£50m** and Grant request **£22m** all late stage funded at 45% requiring minimum 2x grant as private investment
- **Expected £5m Grant** to support **4-8 deals**.
- **Showcase Event** was held 9 September London.
- Defra increased budget to **£8m Grant** to support **12 deals**, with a potential aligned investment of over **£40m**, 4 SMEs already announced see below
- At least **9** of those beaten by time targeted the **Growth Catalyst R2** building on the **14** Agrifood successes in R1
- Round 3 could be ideal for those SME's looking for investment to complement **AgriScale**



**Thank you for listening**  
**Happy to take questions**