

SUPPORTING LOCAL GROWTH 2019

ENGLAND EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND 2014 TO 2020



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

CLEAN GROWTH

IMPROVING BUSINESS



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2019 edition of ‘Supporting Local Growth’ where we once again highlight a selection of projects from the 2014 to 2020 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme in England. Managed by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) through delivery teams in 12 locations across England, the programme is helping to support the UK Government’s growth priorities rebalancing the economy and supporting key initiatives such as the Northern Powerhouse and the Midlands Engine.

PROGRAMME UPDATE

Since March 2015 the current ERDF programme in England, delivered by the European Programmes and Local Growth Delivery directorate at MHCLG, has been supporting projects across the country which boost business development and innovation and support local growth. Working closely with a broad range of partners, including Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Authorities, Universities, other Government departments and the private sector, £1,969 million of ERDF funding has been awarded to 754 projects (as of 31 August 2019), all of which are subject to ongoing evaluation - the programme has a total worth of £3.3 billion. All projects featured within this booklet have been part funded through ERDF with contributions ranging from a few hundred thousand pounds to tens of millions - ERDF contributions are often half of the total project value although this can vary. We have aimed to provide a snapshot of the wide ranging business support activity the programme continues to support.

For more visit www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding



INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

SPOTLIGHT - LCR ACTIVATE



Activate is a knowledge transfer programme exclusively for helping digital and creative business in the Liverpool City Region to grow. Led by Liverpool John Moores University the programme provides practical, hands-on support and funding for growing innovative digital, creative and creatch businesses.

Liverpool Tech studio Draw & Code is breaking into US and European retail markets with an enhanced version of SwapBots, collectable and customisable toys that are brought to life by a smartphone or tablet using augmented reality. Following support from the Activate programme Draw & Code was able to access the skills and technology needed to achieve market validation and late-stage user testing of the SwapBots app.

KRTS International provides innovative transformational e-health solutions for psychological health and wellbeing. As a result of the support, KRTS has been offered the opportunity to add advanced technology to its latest innovation, the KRTS Power to Respond® App, this will make it more attractive to customers. KRTS was able to focus on the app's development and to ensure that the product was ready for commercialisation and release with it's focus of supporting employees and managers after there has been a crisis or trauma.

Visit www.lcractivate.co.uk for more info



INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

HIGHLIGHTS

Smart Innovation Hub, Stoke and Staffordshire

Smart Innovation Hub is a major investment by Keele University in a new Management School and facilities for university-business collaboration. The investment forms a cornerstone of the 'New Keele Deal', a local area partnership to underpin innovation-led growth in productivity, improve healthcare, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide more, higher paid jobs for local people. The state-of-the-art facility offers a unique opportunity to grow new businesses through collaboration with Keele University's sector-leading academics and talented students. The programme provides a prestigious innovation leadership and support

programme designed to support businesses that are thinking about, or are currently in the process of, developing a new product, process or service. By 2033, independent appraisal estimates the investment in facilities and business-collaboration programme will contribute an additional £50 million to the local economy. Visit www.keele.ac.uk/estates/projects/currentprojects/smartinnovationhub for more info.



Digital Growth Programme, Leicestershire

Organisations in Leicester and Leicestershire can benefit from a range of fully-funded workshops, the opportunity to receive financial help and free one to one business advice to help introduce new digital technology with support from the Digital Growth Programme. Champions, a marketing and communications agency from Rushcliffe, was supported in providing staff with key digital skills in search engine optimisation, website development and social media advertising.

www.ebusinessclub.biz

Innovation Support for Business (ISfB), Oxfordshire

This OXLEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) run project helps SMEs bring new ideas to market with tailored support including workshops and mentoring, grants of up to £50,000 and access to equipment, expertise and resources. Hutano Diagnostics Ltd. and their CEO Atherton Mutombwera were supported in their work in diagnosing diseases and predicting their spread through a grant which enabled them to purchase vital equipment.

www.oxfordshirelep.com/isfb





INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

SPOTLIGHT - BIOVALE



BioVale is building on Yorkshire and the Humber's world-class strengths in the bioeconomy to establish it as an internationally recognised centre for bio-based innovation, focusing on renewable raw materials and agricultural technology. The BioVale ERDF project, led by the University of York, supports SMEs working in this field.

Through being a BioVale member Wilson Bio-Chemical have benefited in several ways. BioVale helped the company successfully access grant funding so they could locate their Micro Autoclave Fibre Production Plant for turning municipal solid waste into biomass fibre in Yorkshire. This new technology aims to divert substantial amounts of mixed waste from landfill and produce a range of chemicals and fuels to replace the use of fossil-resource-based products.

BioVale membership has also helped Professor Simon McQueen Mason from the University of York make new industry connections. He is now working with Drax Power Station to look at how they can integrate biofuel production with bioelectricity production.

And NibNibs, an award-winning baker of premium quality 'nibbles' produced using locally-sourced ingredients, have been supported in overcoming issues which were limiting the shelf life of their breadsticks and had caused a suspension in production.

www.biovale.org



PROFESSOR SIMON McQUEEN-MASON
Centre for Novel Agricultural Products (CNAP), University of York





INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY HIGHLIGHTS

Productivity and Innovation Centre, Lancashire

The Productivity and Innovation Centre is an SME centre of excellence for Lancashire managed by Edge Hill University in Ormskirk. The focus of the Centre is product and service innovation and their unique Innovation Sprint Programme with academic and business support helps SMEs with their challenges and to maximise their business opportunities.



The Country Range Group is a food service buying group for UK based food wholesalers and is one example, from over 70 SMEs, to have accessed support from the project. The effective use of data is increasingly a key driver of profitability and productivity in their business and sector. Continuing to drive growth required a step change in the sophistication of their digital capabilities, supporting purchasing, supply and other key management information decisions. The solution was to develop and implement a smart management and customer insight information system, utilising a range of performance and market data to drive growth through data-driven decision making.

For more information visit www.edgehill.ac.uk/pic

INSTILS, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire

INSTILS (Inspiring Networking to Stimulate Technology Innovation in Life Sciences) is improving the economic performance of the Life Sciences sector within the locality of D2N2 LEP area by providing access to sector expertise, networking opportunities and grant funding. The project is delivered by Medilink EM.



Locate Bio is a regenerative medicine company with novel technologies and products designed to overcome current limitations in cell therapy and gene therapy treatments. They wanted to enhance spinal fusion surgical procedures for both type 1 and 2 diabetic patients and needed to expand it's research facility. A grant enabled them to create the state-of-the-art cell culture suite.

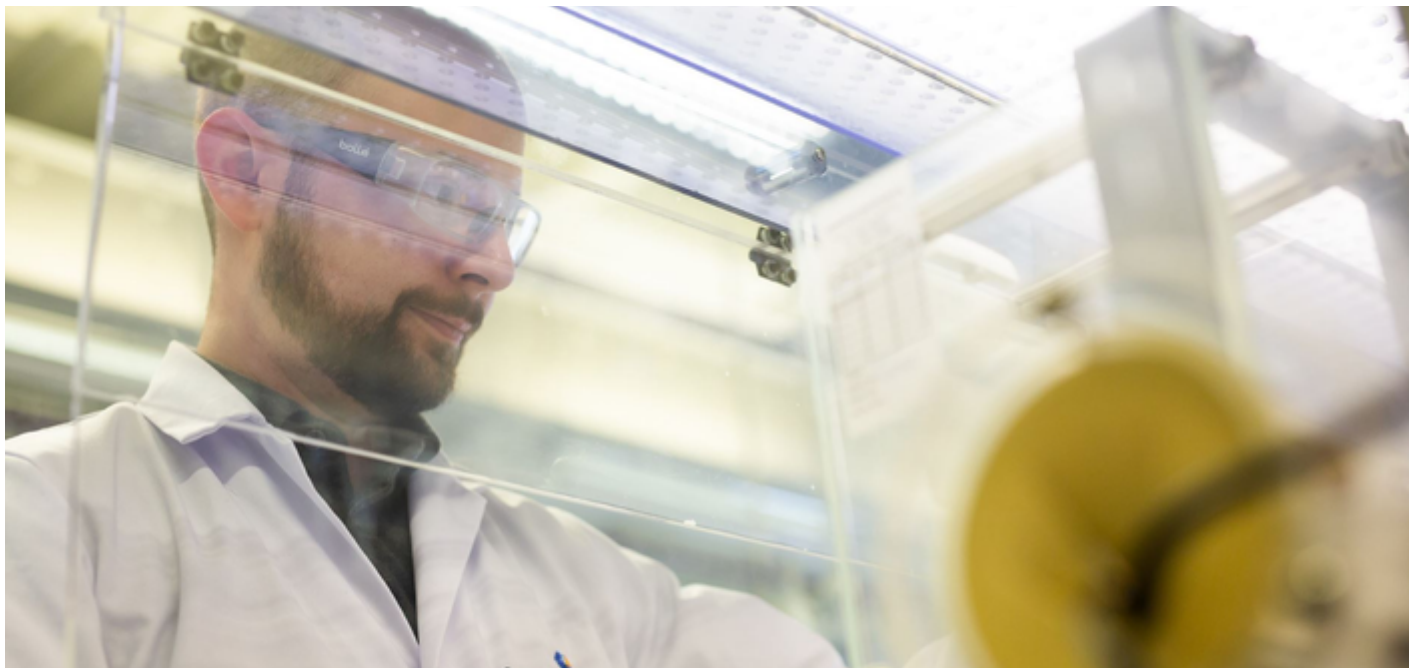
“Locate Bio Ltd was looking to revolutionise the way that type one and two diabetes are treated. Medilink East Midlands through the INSTILS project, with both funding and the support they provided, have been an invaluable help to us, and have allowed us to expand our research facilities and help implement new treatments,” said Robin Quirk, Chief Operating Officer.

For more information visit www.medilinkem.com/projects/instils-derby-notts



INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

SPOTLIGHT - ALDERLEY PARK ACCELERATOR



The Alderley Park Accelerator, delivered by the Biocity Group Ltd. offers start-up and scale up support to early stage and growing life science businesses. The service is based in Alderley Park, part of the wider Cheshire Science Corridor offering exceptional state-of-the-art laboratories for medtech and biotech start-ups within the Enterprise Zone.

Accelerator brings together the training, business support and networks needed for success and growth. Its aim is to accelerate the commercialisation of research and technologies, providing an interface between SMEs, industry, higher education institutions and the NHS.

Colibri Scientific, a provider of personalised operational and scientific clinical sample services. They accessed the bootcamp, business coaching and expert mentor network to help them with challenges they faced around uncertain sales forecasting, a lack of business systems and a lack of funding and marketing.

The project also assisted 7i, a provider of global healthcare market research and insight services, with workshops, coaching, financial planning and recruitment support to help incorporate a new service into their business offer. This resulted in a new business model leading to a significant uplift in sales, access to funding opportunities and the creation of three full time equivalent jobs. The company is currently transitioning to larger premises on site to accommodate their growth plans.

www.alderleypark.co.uk/accelerator





INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

SPOTLIGHT - DIGITAL INNOVATION BUSINESS ACCELERATION HUB



"Emma (DBAH mentor) was a pleasure to work with - highly perceptive, diplomatic and efficient. I would totally recommend her services to others and look forward to working with her again in the future."
Nicola Chilman, Co-Founder at EZ Education

The Digital Innovation Business Acceleration Hub (DBAH) is one of a number of hubs supported by the University of Bath and SETsquared Bath. The DBAH programme launched in 2018 and provides support for businesses who are innovating digitally in specific sectors, which include social care, residential care, human health and wellbeing, audience engagement, entertainment and creative media, AR/VR and immersive technology, enabling technologies - data, machine learning and AI.

There are a variety of businesses currently on the programme, all at different stages of their business journey. One is EZ Education, a business founded in 2012 with the aim to build confidence and raise standards in maths through personalised content via their learning programmes. Founders Nicola Chilman and Tom Minor are experienced classroom teachers and educators, and their insights into how children learn as individuals are the basis on which EZ Education's programmes were built.

EZ Education is hugely successful with parents and children signing up and subscribing at home, however, EZ Education wanted to scale up the business by targeting UK schools and selling more subscriptions into schools. In order to continue with the innovation and traction, EZ Education required support on structuring the business with a larger sales team. The DBAH programme has provided vital support in improving their recruitment processes, establishing business processes and values and helping them prepare for their next phase of growth.



INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

HIGHLIGHTS

CASTS, London

CASTS, delivered by Capital Enterprise, is expanding the provision of London's high quality accelerator programmes in order to generate more innovative tech and tech focused fast growth companies. It is also helping these Tech SMEs to rapidly scale up by providing expertise that will enable them to overcome technical challenges, and raise further private investment.



One business supported through CASTS is Entopy, a firm whose vision is to bring the supply chain online. They were facing challenges in building up their business exposure and raising investment. They participated in CASTS part funded Serephim Space Camp, a 9 week accelerator programme focussing on investment readiness and building corporate relationships. The results for Entopy have been really strong and include signing a European Distribution Agreement with TechData, (a Fortune 500 company), giving them access to 125,000 resellers and allowing their product to be distributed over 5 countries in Europe.

For more information on CASTS visit www.capitalenterprise.org/casts

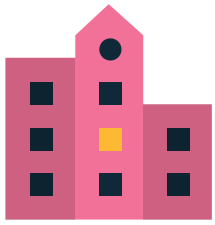
ICT Escalator, South East Midlands

The ICT Escalator project, delivered by the University of Bedford, is enhancing the use and quality of information communications technology and broadband provision for SMEs across the South East Midlands. This is being done through the provision of expert development support and small development grants to increase SME technology adoption.



Happy Tiddlers, a swim school that teaches children from 3 months old how to swim, needed a last bit of funding and business expertise to get the business fully operational. The owners (Helen and Nicky Reynolds, pictured), met with Jing Di-Wojtasiuk, Acting Principal Lecturer for Economics at the University, who conducted a thorough business review, assessing the current market provision for swimming lessons and forecasting future demand. Following the support, a fixed location for their business has been secured and they have doubled the number of swimmers on their books to over 500. They have also taken on four full-time equivalent staff and introduced new systems to support the smooth running of the business.

For more information visit www.ictescalator.co.uk



COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

SPOTLIGHT- E-HEALTH PRODUCTIVITY AND INNOVATION

E-Health Productivity and Innovation (EPIC) in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is a highly collaborative and interdisciplinary project, with partners ranging from healthcare trusts, charities, social enterprises and patient groups. EPIC aims to facilitate a sustainable E-Health sector in the area, by maximising innovation networks, sharing expertise and experience from the University and partner organisations, and providing sector-specific hands-on business support.

E-Health is anything technological that can help with health and well-being, improve quality of life and help make people's lives a bit easier. The development of a thriving eHealth sector will not only create new jobs, new products and support the local economy, but will strengthen the existing local health and care network, enabling new technological innovations to be created and adopted, to improve the quality of life and boost well being for all.

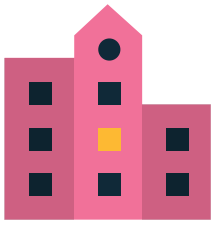
Eventide Care Home in Liskeard have worked closely with EPIC on a few occasions. One of the most notable projects was the introduction of e-pets, companion animal robots for the residents.

Not only have the residents interacted with the e-pets, and had their input in the design of new technology, but the management team have showed an enthusiasm towards e-health and have embraced how technology can be used to support carers in the future.

By working with EPIC, they are open to and actively looking for further technology enhancements to introduce to their residents and working with staff to incorporate their views on how they could use technology to support care delivery.

www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/epic





COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

SPOTLIGHT- KROWJI CREATIVE SPACE

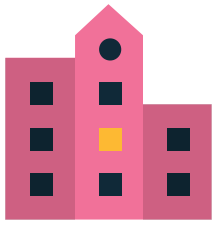


Krowji, which has been funded through both the current and previous ERDF programmes, is a vibrant, creative community that provides studios and workspaces for a wide range of creative practitioners and small creative businesses as well as some of Cornwall's key creative & cultural sector support initiatives. Krowji- which in Cornish means 'shed or workshop'- began life in a redundant former school in Redruth. As a result of their organic growth, there emerged an ever increasing demand for Krowji space and so an ambitious business plan was created to create a state-of-the-art eco building with new studios and workspaces which would complement those in the old building, help regenerate the local community and nurture creative talents from Cornwall.

The major redevelopment of the site started in 2014 with the first building opening the following year. 61 new studio spaces were created, doubling the available floor space and enabling the creative community to expand and diversify still further. There are now over 100 studios at Krowji. The project investment has been fully justified by Krowji's success – operating at an average occupancy rate around 98%, with a unique mix of tenants working right across the creative industries in the largest creative sector cluster west of Bristol.

The second phase of redevelopment is about to begin and is due to be completed by Spring 2020.

www.krowji.org.uk



COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

SPOTLIGHT- LIVERPOOL ENTERPRISE HUB

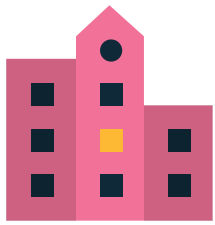
Enterprise Hub is an enterprise gateway for business start-up support in the Liverpool City Region, offering expert advice and support to those who are thinking about starting a business. Support can include help in understanding the process of starting a business, building a comprehensive business plan, developing a marketing strategy and identifying sources of finance to get started. As the project moves into its second phase, the successes of the first phase is worth noting. 2,361 individuals accessed the services of the Enterprise Hub and 1,068 new businesses started in the region.

One of the businesses supported is Ava&Harrison, a child friendly salon. Co-Founders Jo and Sara contacted the Enterprise Hub and working alongside a business adviser they got the ball rolling and made their life-long dream a reality. They set up a in Liverpool's Old Swan area, and were having to expand their team within the first few weeks of opening. Sara and Jo were keen to educate their staff with awareness of neurodevelopmental conditions, undertaking training to specialise in hair care for autistic children and collaborating with local community groups.

Helen Clarke Autism is a specialist autism training and consultancy service, dedicated to improving the lives of autistic children, in particular autistic girls. With support from the Enterprise Hub programme, Helen is taking her business from strength to strength. Helen provides educational and consultancy services for schools, parents, health services and other organisations that support autistic children.

Helen believes that autistic people possess many strengths including an ability to see the world from a different perspective and to be able to pay extraordinary attention to detail. Many autistic people are highly creative and others very logical, each being unique and individual. "Spectacular Girls" – Helen's series of well-being workshops – designed to help autistic girls understand how autism might affect them as individuals, while equipping them with valuable life skills and helping to build strong, personal identities.





COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

SPOTLIGHT- NORTH OF TYNE CLLD

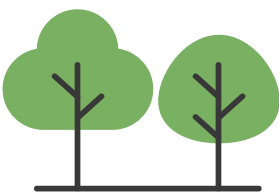
The North of Tyne Community Led Local Development (CLLD) project aims to support the most disadvantaged communities in Newcastle and Wallsend, by assisting people to find employment and encourage entrepreneurship and business growth.

The project set up a Local Action Group with representatives from all sectors: private, public, voluntary and the community to make sure ERDF investment gets to the places and people who can benefit most. The project will support 104 small and medium enterprises, with the aim of generating new local 79 jobs It will support 575 local residents to start their own businesses including the renovation and building of 200m2 of business accommodation in community hub facilities.

The Millin Charity, set up to support communities in Newcastle was awarded £37,000 of ERDF funding from the North of Tyne CLLD project to launch its 'A Chance to Trade' project, which aims to support unemployed women who face a multitude of barriers, but want to become self-employed. With the support of the CLLD project, local women, often from diverse ethnic minority backgrounds have access to intensive support packages including accredited training, enterprise workshops and tailored business advice.

www.northoftyneclld.weebly.com





CLEAN GROWTH

HIGHLIGHTS

Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP), County Durham

BEEP supports eligible businesses across County Durham to save financially through energy efficiency and energy awareness. BEEP provides a fully funded and independent audit to identify where savings can be made. In the case of Beamish Park Golf Club, for example, the audit identified that upgrading the lighting to LEDs would provide a 60-70% saving in lighting bills. This simple upgrading of 600 light bulbs has saved the club roughly £4,600 a year and reduced CO2 emissions by 13.7 tonnes.

www.durham.gov.uk/beep



Business Energy Efficiency (BEE) Anglia, Suffolk and Norfolk

BEE Anglia provides free support to eligible organisations in Suffolk and Norfolk to help them become more energy efficient. BEE Anglia can offer help with independent expertise, grant funding and Carbon Charter accreditation. Minuteman Press supply a range of printed materials and recently sought support during their relocation to meet environmental criteria. A BEE consultant advised them throughout the planning process on lighting, heating etc. Keith Boyce, MD, thanks the programme and says the relocation would not have been possible without the support of BEE. Visit www.beeanglia.org

Utilise Plus, Coast to Capital LEP area

The Utilise Plus programme offers services that help SMEs to save energy and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Businesses can attend a learning and networking event, sign up for an energy saving review or apply for a grant-funded energy-saving installation. Since launching in 2017, Utilise Plus has already supported over 100 SMEs with 77 grants awarded, 38 energy audits delivered and a collective saving of over 750 tonnes of greenhouse gas emission.

www.sustainablebusiness.org.uk/utilise-plus-programme





CLEAN GROWTH

SPOTLIGHT - LOW CARBON OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME

Low Carbon Opportunities Programme (LCOP) is designed to help SMEs access grants enabling them to install renewable energy systems or launch low carbon projects. With the support of the programme, countless SMEs in Worcestershire will be helped to innovate and grow in, or diversify into, the low carbon sector. In addition to free business support and grants towards projects, LCOP also includes networking and events.

Manik Ventures were supported by the Programme to develop The Home Energy Resources Unit (HERU) which literally gives you the power of generating hot water for your home from everyday objects. The unit utilises pyrolysis, a thermochemical decomposition process that means every house can generate their own hot water and gas, reducing their carbon footprint and reducing the household fuel bill by up to 15%.

The Programme supported the development of HERU with free consultancy support and a grant which is being used to fund the manufacture and build of the units in the trial phase.



Murcott Energy has similarly been enabled to develop 'The Murb,' a wind turbine for urban locations, with the support of LCOP. Although conventional wind turbines have historically not performed in urban areas, the Murb has proven design features that enhance performance in variable and fluctuating conditions, typical of urban environments. The specialist advice of LCOP helped advance the business plan and identify opportunities, before then providing a 45% match funded grant towards the development of the duration model.

www.carbonsmart.co.uk/low-carbon-opportunities-programme



CLEAN GROWTH

HIGHLIGHTS

Go Ultra Low North East

The Go Ultra Low North East project aims to innovate the rapid charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. In April 2019, Go Ultra Low opened Sunderland Filling Station, making it the first 350kW fast charging station in the UK. The station has four 50kW fast chargers and two 175kW fast chargers that are already enabled for 350 kW charging. This can provide certain Electric Vehicles with enough energy for 350 miles of travel, with a charging time of just 20 minutes. To-date, Go Ultra Low has supported 56 enterprises, already exceeding the project target in only the second year. Go Ultra Low has contributed to a CO2 saving of 82 tonnes so far. These figures are likely to increase as the project enters its final year.



United Downs Deep Geothermal Power

This project is currently exploring geothermal resources beneath Cornwall, drilling two geothermal wells and building a 1MW-3MW pilot power plant. To-date, the project has drilled the deepest hole ever drilled on land in the UK; 5,272m deep and temperatures reaching around 195 degrees Celsius. UDDGP also has an educational aspect, with the project interacting with 44 schools and reaching more than 3,000 students. In the community, the project has hosted 48 group visits and engaged with a further 2000 people. So far, it's been calculated that the project has contributed £1.5m to the Cornish economy.

www.uniteddownsgeothermal.co.uk



CLEAN GROWTH

SPOTLIGHT - SMART ISLANDS PROGRAMME

Smart Islands is a major programme of interconnected projects that aims to support the community on the Isles of Scilly in moving towards a low-carbon future with sustainable energy, water, sewage and waste management.

The Smart Islands Programme, led by Hitachi Europe, works to sustainably and affordably tackle some of the main local infrastructure and utilities issues, whilst providing a model of how other communities can profit from a rapid transition from being carbon intensive to having a low carbon footprint. The programme has the following goals - a 20% reduction in electricity bills by 2020, 40% of the Isles' energy demand met through renewable generation by 2025, 40% of vehicles being low carbon or electric by 2025, internships and STEM skill delivery for young people, full programme of energy efficiency measures delivered by 2020, become an environmentally responsible tourism destination .

The ERDF funded element of the programme will deliver an “Internet of Things” platform for the Isles of Scilly that will monitor electricity loads in houses and businesses, as well as electric vehicles, home batteries, smart heating technologies and other infrastructure, to optimise local energy use. This will enable to increase the use of the newly-installed renewable energy in the islands' network using the Internet of Things platform. The project also provides a support service to businesses to enable the more efficient use of locally-produced energy in the islands' businesses.

Future opportunities for Smart Islands include interest from wave and tidal power producers, opportunities for testing e-health products in the South West and collaboration with Universities in the region.

www.smartislands.org





CLEAN GROWTH

HIGHLIGHTS

Eco-Innovation Cumbria

This project helps SMEs improve efficiency, grow capacity and develop new solutions for industry, supporting innovation in low carbon technologies.

Chimney Sheep Ltd manufacture and sell an innovative energy saving chimney draught excluder. Made of felted sheep wool, the Chimney Sheep® fits snugly into the chimney throat just above the fireplace and prevents warm air from escaping up the chimney when the fire isn't lit as well as preventing cold air from sinking down.

The project team had the product tested by BSRIA (construction testing organisation) who demonstrated that it saves around 260kg of CO² per chimney per year showing that not only does fitting a Chimney Sheep make the home more comfortable, they help to do their bit for the environment as well. Sales have topped 40,000 and to date, Chimney Sheep have saved 19,856 tonnes of CO² and have saved households across the UK £2,895,793. With nearly 11 million chimneys across the UK the carbon saving potential of a Chimney Sheep is huge.

For more information visit www.cumbria.ac.uk/business/eco-innovation-cumbria



Advance London

Advance London provides connections, advice and finance to SMEs aiming to eliminate waste and the continual use of resources (the circular economy).

Unpackaged are a 'zero waste' retailer who, with the help of Advance London, have entered a gap in the market for consultancy for established independent food retailers. In 2018 they launched 'Unpackaged At' through which they have capitalised on their knowledge and expertise as a leader and pioneer in 'zero waste' retailing and shared best practice across the sector.

The project has also organised workshops, including one to bring together SMEs developing innovative products and waste management companies. As a result attendees are better informed and have a clear understanding of the mutual challenges and working relationships are in place.

For more information visit www.advancelondon.org





CLEAN GROWTH

SPOTLIGHT - ENTRESS

The Environmental Technologies Resource Efficiency Support Service (ENTRESS), delivered by the University of Wolverhampton, supports Black Country SMEs on the adoption of environmental technologies and resource efficiency processes for the reuse, recycling and recovery of materials and resources.

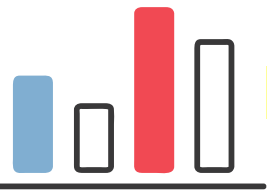
Drawing on university's environmental expertise ENTRESS provides one to one support to SME's on the adoption of technologies and processes for reuse, recycling and recovery of materials and resources – in addition to supporting SME's developing novel technologies and processes for reuse, recycling and recovery of materials and resources.

Prima is a leading UK supplier of bio-degradable, non-toxic, cruelty-free and vegan-friendly cosmetic glitter. The company were interested in developing a manufacturing capability for bio-degradable glitter and needed some technical input on dust extraction to eliminate environmental contamination. They also required assistance to develop a more efficiently degradable glitter base material. ENTRESS agreed to carry out initial research on the feasibility of alternative bio-degradable materials for the manufacture of glitter.



Their research suggested that the composition of the glitter's base material could be modified to increase significantly the compostability of the product. Three dust extraction solutions were identified ranging from full factory wide distribution systems to low cost individual machine based systems. In addition to the dust extraction, it was also recommended that the machinery be fully enclosed to contain manufacturing dust and have the added benefit of sound proofing the equipment. Bio-degradable packaging options were also explored.





IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - BOOST LANCASHIRE

Boost is Lancashire's Growth Hub helping Lancashire businesses grow - from start-ups to large companies can get access to a number of funded programmes in areas such as mentoring, scaling up, innovation, international trade, leadership development, and accessing finance.

Group55 manufactures pet and personal care products and since the mentoring support from Boost the company now employs more than 20 staff – with new roles created in the manufacturing, technical and quality departments of the company. Turnover has increased by more than 40% and Managing Director Stephen Turner is now aiming to triple the turnover again by 2020. Their laboratory and onsite manufacturing processes became fully operational in March 2019 with capacity for running three filling lines producing more than 500,000 units per month. A key part of support offered by Boost is how business owners are matched with a successful businessperson to offer 1-2-1 support, which Stephen later called, 'invaluable.' Since being mentored, Stephen has now qualified as a Boost Growth Mentor to help support other ambitious Lancashire business owners. Earlier this year, he started mentoring his first business client.

REAX Limited, a specialist rescue and recovery training company, saw sales in its last year rise by £100,000, and bosses say the Boost support has been a major contributing factor. The business has won a number of new contracts and customers, including the National Nuclear Laboratory. Commenting on the business mentoring provided, Director Keith Parmley said he was, "most impressed by the holistic approach of the programme. It was very refreshing in that it looked at the business as a whole, rather than just one element of it."



"The personalised approach is what makes the Boost Growth Mentoring programme a success and what makes it really stand out." - Keith Parmley





IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - THE BIG HOUSE

The Big House is a tailored support programme for the Creative and Digital Industries (CDI) sector across Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire helping them grow and create new jobs in the region, from potential to start-ups to established SMEs looking to expand. Support offered can include one to one advice, workshops, networking events and grant funding.

Partnering with organisations such as Derby Theatre, New Art Exchange, The Creative Quarter Company and many others allows Big House to provide a wide range of support and services. The UK's booming CDI sector is now worth £84bn a year and by supporting the regions CDI SMEs, Big House works to allow them to take advantage of this massive area of growth and opportunity.

One such business that has benefited from the help of Big House is CRZyBest, a company that design and create alternative bespoke bouquets and bridal accessories. With business support from The Big House, Claire has developed her knowledge and skills in a number of key areas, taking her business from strength to strength. Her first photo shoot in August 2018 was a massive success,



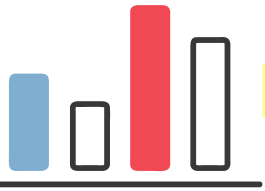
with images appearing in Rock n Roll Bride Magazine. Collaborating with the Innovation Centre to create a range of pieces through 3D scanning and printing, CRZyBest creations have so far travelled across the UK, America and the Far East. Claire has ambitions to reach other countries such as Japan and Russia by the end of this year!

Another business that The Big House has worked closely with is Dispace, who deliver inspiring working environments for the UK's 3m freelancers and homeworkers. Dispace run weekly co-working clubs to tackle the isolation of homeworking and offer 'worker-friendly' venues and meeting spaces with exclusive discounts they've agreed for members.



Dispace have been working with The Big House from the very beginning, having received coaching and attended tailored workshops. Having once been selected for The Big House Accelerator Programme, co-founder Ross Cox has been a key speaker at a Big House networking event.

www.bighouse.org.uk



IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - EXPORTING FOR GROWTH

Exporting for Growth helps SMEs in Yorkshire and the Humber grow their success within international markets. Businesses can benefit from a programme of direct engagement, information and mentoring and export workshops. By allowing companies to access match-funded grants, the project aims to help expand their international sales and grow their businesses overseas. In addition to this, companies receive tailored advice from an International Trade Adviser. The project has so far promoted and enhanced the growth of multiple local businesses, including Coeur de Xocolat and Paxman.

Coeur de Xocolat is an international chocolate consultancy business. Three years ago, the first opportunity emerged to start exporting to France. Head Chocolater David Greenwood Haigh soon realised that exporting was boosting his business enormously and soon sought the advice of Exporting for Growth. David met a web specialist who helped him target international clients and successfully applied for a grant that enabled him to go to Haiti on a trade visit.

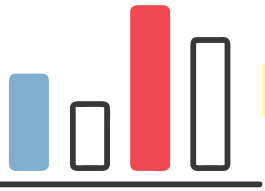
Another business that sought the advice of Exporting for Growth is Paxman Coolers, a medical device company that developed a scalp cooling technology, used to prevent hair loss for chemotherapy patient. They've installed over 2,700 systems throughout 30 markets worldwide. Paxman has been working with an adviser for over six years now and have used a number of helpful services, including OMIS (Overseas Marketing Introduction Services). Funding has allowed them to visit conferences around the world and make trade visits to both the USA and Japan.



"Almost within days of making the recommended changes, I started getting results."

- David Greenwood Haigh





IMPROVING BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

Gloucester Growth Hub

Since opening in 2014, Gloucester Growth Hub has worked with thousands of businesses to help them accelerate their growth through consultancy, workshops and collaboration. Their partnership with the University of Gloucestershire means their clients can access groundbreaking research and academic opinion. One business that Gloucester Growth Hub has worked closely with is Tubby Tom's, a sauce and seasoning manufacturer who feel grateful for the connections and advice they've received. Owner Tom Hughes says "the support from the Growth Hub has opened so many doors...and helped us achieve goals in ways we'd never have thought of before. The Growth Hub is a really valuable resource that is responsible for a lot of growth across Gloucestershire".

Visit www.thegrowthhub.biz



Warwickshire Business Support Programme

The Warwickshire Business Support Programme has already exceeded all targets during its first three years and has now successfully applied for funding for another three. The Programme supported 411 business, helped 159 people to start a business and created over 250 new jobs. Independent research found that 95% of respondents said they would recommend the project to other organisations. Warwickshire County Council's strategic director for communities Mark Ryder said: "I am sure that with the new ERDF funding, matched by ourselves and our partner organisations, the programme will go from strength to strength and help many more small businesses become established and grow."

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/cwbsp





IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - EXCELERATE LABS

Excelerate Labs is an innovative business growth support programme lead by The Women's Organisation. The programme is open to businesses in the business-to-business sector in Greater Manchester, with the support intended to help them diversify and grow. The two-day 'Start Your Business' course helps explore the fundamentals of launching a new enterprise, and for existing businesses, the support can range from how to develop a business growth culture to marketing processes and developing efficient technology.



Jennifer Unsworth, founder of Be-Baby Ltd that developed the multi award winning brand 'Tidy Tot', is one person who benefited from the help of Exelerate Labs. The brand was established to make mealtimes less stressful for parents, introducing the Tidy Tot bib and tray kit. Be-Baby are aiming high and forecasting 100% growth in 2019, primarily as a result of rapid growing sales in China and the Far East.



Senior Business Advisor at Excelerate Labs, Mike Marsden has been supporting the team for a while. Jennifer is thrilled that she has, "always left meetings with Mike brimming with ideas. Members of my team have attended training and it has been invaluable."

Be-Baby started 2019 off on a high, winning numerous awards such as Amazon's Export Champion of the Year, being crowned small Business of the Year at the North East Cheshire Business awards and have recently been invited to join the Northern Powerhouse as one of DIT'S Export Champions in their 2019 campaign.



IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - ENTERPRISE STEPS

Enterprise Steps provide a tailored programme of free support to new enterprises based in London, offering guidance and direction during their creation and establishment. The project also offers specialised mentoring and advice to help existing enterprises survive, prosper and grow. Support can include tailored workshops, networking events, one to one coaching, financial advice and product development. The project is led by Newham College, with partners London South Bank University and Enterprise for London.

Middle Path Soapery began in 2017 and found Enterprise Steps extremely helpful. The company creates high quality hand-crafted soaps using low-energy and low waste production methods and environmentally friendly packaging. An added bonus is that for every soap purchased, Middle Path Soapery will donate to plant a tree in a rainforest. Founder Katerina Qabaha Kralova talks of how she, "really appreciated the help of my Enterprise Steps business adviser in the planning stages, because initially I only knew I liked making soap but had no idea where to start with a business." After attending workshops and networking sessions as well, her business has achieved remarkable success in a short time.

Similarly, Janet and Kieron Smyth opened vinyl record store and coffee shop 'Let It Roll' in May 2018, with the support of Enterprise Steps. Having heard about the programme through Newham College, both founders realised advice in certain areas where they had little experience would be invaluable. Their adviser Nell created an initial support package that included guidance on cashflow, employment contracts and policy documents. In a short time, they have already been able to achieve a good local reputation and loyal customers and are now working towards their 12 month milestones, confident in their projections for the coming year.

For more information visit www.enterprisesteps.co.uk



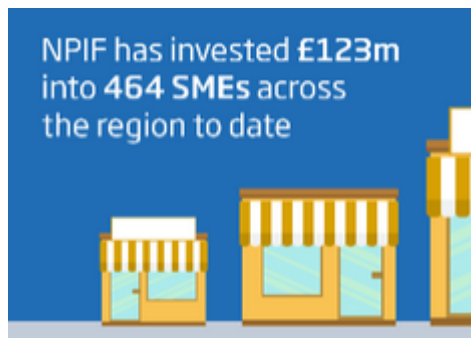


IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - NORTHERN POWERHOUSE INVESTMENT FUND

The Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund (NPIF), delivered by the British Business Bank, is a £400m investment vehicle that provides funding to businesses in the 10 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas that make up the 'Northern Powerhouse' region. It aims to nurture regional entrepreneurship by providing investment and support for small and medium businesses. The Fund has so far invested £123m into 464 ambitious SMEs across the Northern Powerhouse region.

An independent early assessment report already shows the impact of the fund across Northern Powerhouse area. The infographics below show some of the key impacts found in the evaluation.



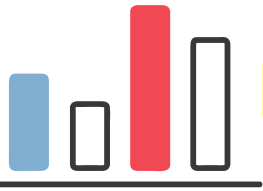
BA Sheffield company, Cobra Sport, which manufactures high-performance vehicle exhausts, expanded across the Pennines with the support of a loan from NPIF. Cobra Sport acquired the assets of long-established Macclesfield firm JP Exhausts in a deal which secured the jobs of all 16 staff. The deal, which is expected to create another five jobs in the near future, will allow Cobra Sport to expand its offering to the motorsport market. Cobra Sport was set up by Rachel Abbott and her brother Peter Jarvis in 2004, though it originates from a business founded by their father Philip Jarvis around 50 years ago.



The company produces performance exhausts for clients including Subaru UK, DemonTweeks, Radical Motorsport and jointly runs two cars with AmD in the British Touring Car Championships. It exports around 10 per cent of its products, primarily to Europe, though it aims to break into the US market in the year ahead.

For more information visit www.npif.co.uk/





IMPROVING BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

Cheshire and Warrington Business Growth Programme

The Cheshire and Warrington Business Growth Programme provides funded support for local entrepreneurs, new start-ups and SMEs. Support includes a business diagnostic, workshops and seminars, covering everything from finance to HR and product development.



One business who received help from the programme is the Cheshire Garden, a landscape design service that offers bespoke outdoors designs. Founder Jane Bingham describes the support as "invaluable, with the changes implemented resulting in successful growth". The company experienced a 25% growth in turnover.



Just Thai Kitchen is a Cheshire based business that specialises in creating authentic Thai ready meals. The company was founded by mother and son duo Nooch and Miles with the vision of producing handmade Thai dishes using authentic and quality ingredients to give consumers a true taste of Thailand. The Cheshire and Warrington Business Growth Programme is helping them expand their business further. For more info visit www.cwbusinessgrowth.com



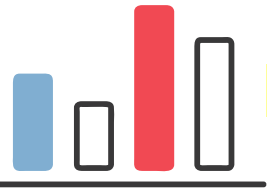
Hertfordshire Growth Hub (HGH)

The Hertfordshire Growth Hub is about unlocking potential and helping ambitious local businesses thrive. They help local businesses grow, innovate, create new jobs and strengthen the Hertfordshire economy.



Suzero started when a wager between two first-year Sports Science students resulted in a change of lifestyle. Oliver Vagg bet Sam Marchant that he couldn't stop eating sugar for a whole month. After losing weight, sleeping better and having more energy, Sam started baking snack bars at home as he was frustrated that other bars advertised as 'healthy' contained so much sugar. A recipe with less than 1 gram of sugar and 100% natural ingredients was developed.

Suzero were enjoying some success and growing steadily when, in late 2017, they hooked up with the HGH who helped them become investor ready. After raising funding from private sources, the company moved into a commercial production kitchen in February 2018. HGH also helped to convince Suzero to concentrate on online sales. They are now recruiting additional staff and looking to step up production to 10,000 bars a day. For more visit www.hertsgrowthhub.com



IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - CULTIVATOR

Cultivator is a programme designed to help established and aspiring Cornish creative entrepreneurs develop their skills and grow their business. Since the project started delivery in January 2017, over 650 creative businesses have already benefited. At the heart of Cultivator is a team of seven creative business advisers who provide mentoring and coaching to creative entrepreneurs.

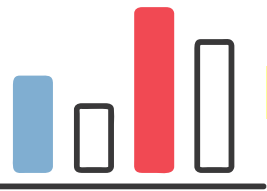
Through individual meetings, artists and makers receive personalised support to help them move forward with their creative ambition. Silver Sapling, a hand-made jewellery business based on St Mary's in the Isles of Scilly, is one of the businesses who have benefited. Owners Ben and Lucy Gerrard said; "The grant has enabled us to come to St Austell College to attend an enamelling course, leading us to expand our silver jewellery collection. During the visiting season, we are now running enamelling taster sessions for visitors, diversifying our income avenues."

Cultivator, which has also received funding from the European Social Fund, has supported the placement of over forty interns and helped seven businesses with taking on apprentices. Textile designer and print maker Helen Round, based in Mount Edgumbe has recently taken on two new full-time apprentices and one intern after engaging with the programme. Helen explained; "This is a really cold spot of Cornwall and finding employment here in the creative industries can be really difficult for young people. I feel very proud we have been able to do that through Cultivator."

Complementing the skills development support, Cultivator also offers targeted investment to help businesses build capacity. Over 250 creative businesses have received grants, varying in amount from a few hundred to £5,000. Countless creators and creative businesses across Cornwall have benefited massively from the support of Cultivator, including Miracle Theatre, Bookshell Bindery, Triangular Pixels, Tim Ridley, The Byre and Vital Spark Creative.

www.cultivatorcornwall.org.uk





IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - MIDLANDS ENGINE INVESTMENT FUND

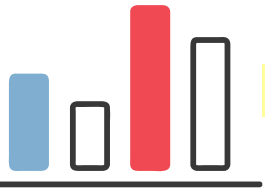
The Midlands Engine Investment Fund (MEIF) provides commercially focused finance through Small Business Loans, Debt Finance, Proof of concept and Equity Finance funds. The MEIF aims to transform the finance landscape for smaller businesses in the Midlands and empower the region's potential to achieve economic growth through enterprise. MEIF currently provides over £250m of investment to boost SME growth in the Midlands. This investment supports new and growing SMEs, creates jobs and encourages additional private sector investment.

There are numerous success stories that illustrate how far MEIF support has taken businesses in the region. Sign Solutions, for example, who provide high quality communication services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals, secured significant MEIF investment and have since grown. Since 2004, their innovative video interpreting service has improved the accessibility of interpretation for deaf people, by providing NRCPPD (National Register of Communication Professionals Working with Deaf and Deafblind People) qualified BSL Interpreters online for short and emergent interpretation requirements, enabling organisations to communicate in person or over the phone via an online BSL video Interpreter. Promoting equal access for all, all of the time. With the investment, seven jobs have been created at Sign Solutions in the last two years, and there are further plans to invest in developing their service and making it available in new areas.

Similarly, C7 Health, whose innovative software is set to significantly reduce waiting times for diagnostic scans, are now set for their first recruitment drive after securing MEIF funding. The finance package has enabled the firm to build and test the platform that will streamline the process of essential diagnostic scans for patients, minimising administration for GPs and reducing waiting times for NHS users.

Ken Cooper, MD at the British Business Bank, commented, "The Midlands Engine Investment Fund has been established to support the growth of companies like C7 Health. This funding will provide a real opportunity for this Midlands-based company to make a national impact in improving patient care." Visit www.meif.co.uk for more information.





IMPROVING BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

Northampton Cultural Hub

The Northampton Cultural Hub aims to support the creation and advancement of SMEs in the cultural and creative sector by developing nearly 6,000m² of new floorspace situated in Northampton's cultural quarter. The new space will include office and workshop areas, providing all the right conditions for these businesses to thrive. The project will support over 150 businesses in the area and is projected to create 220 jobs, leading to £28m in revenue for the region.



Buckinghamshire Business First Growth Programme

The Growth Programme is a thriving community with over 10,000 members for businesses across Buckinghamshire to receive knowledge, support and opportunities for growth. The Programme operates as the central information and support hub for all businesses across the region, creating a unique and vibrant business community for all. Brexit Tracker, a digital service that provides businesses with up to date information on how they will be affected by Brexit scenarios, received a growth grant. Founder Ben Martin said "the grant was pivotal in allowing us to upgrade."

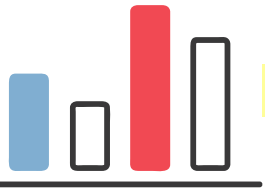
Visit www.bbf.uk.com/the-growth-programme for more info

The Arts University Bournemouth Innovate and Test (AUBIT)

The project targets SMEs in the creative, health and manufacturing sectors, providing grants and starting an 'Investment Circle' that provides expert advice. Participation in the Circle will assist SMEs in understanding the challenging landscape for funding for the creative industries and help develop new funding models to break down these barriers. The project aims to support 60 local enterprises, 40 of which will receive a grant, and help approximately 20 organisations to introduce develop new to firm products.



www.aub.ac.uk/about-us/industry/supporting-dorset-business



IMPROVING BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub

Since launching in 2014, the Growth Hub has helped create 2,400 jobs and added over £89 million to the region in gross value. Advertising itself as a one-stop shop for all business needs, the services they offer include start-up advice, financial advice, networking opportunities and growth planning. Fortress Recycling, a sustainable waste management business, received funding from CW Growth Hub and have now been able to develop themselves as the most advanced recycling plant in the country.

For more information visit www.cwgrowthhub.co.uk



North East Business Support Fund

North East Business Support Fund offer project grants and masterclasses for businesses across the North East. Having already supported over 2,500 businesses, the project has helped boost SMEs across the region. To take one example, Weardale Adventure Centre has become an unprecedented success since opening in 2015 thanks to the help of NEBSF. Weardale first enrolled on a digital marketing masterclass and then went on to access funding that helped them develop their own digital marketing strategy.

For more information visit www.nbsl.org.uk/nebsf

University of Sunderland Graduate Internship

The University of Sunderland's Graduate Internship Scheme provides local SMEs with a way of recruiting graduate talent. The SMEs receive funding towards the graduate's salary and support throughout the recruitment process. M.A.D Communications co-founders Amy Armstrong and Marie Donnelly turned to the programme when they felt a need to grow their team. "As a small business, taking on our first team member was a huge step – both financially and in terms of the responsibility. The Graduate Internship Scheme allowed us to take our next step safe in the knowledge that we were being supported by the University throughout the recruitment process."



www.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk/business-support/university-of-sunderland-1/graduate-internship-scheme-1



IMPROVING BUSINESS

SPOTLIGHT - CORNWALL AND ISLES OF SCILLY INVESTMENT FUND (CIOSIF)

“We are thrilled to have secured this CIOSIF loan, which enables us to improve the site, invest in new equipment and increase and upskill our team.”

**- The Wyldes co-founder,
Sam Dunnett**



CIOSIF, delivered by the British Business Bank, offers debt and equity funding for SMEs in the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly area. The Wyldes (pictured above), an events company organising music festivals, private functions and other events near Bude, is the latest company to be supported by the fund. The Wyldes, who host a number of music concerts at its farm-based site including the Leopalooza Festival, has successfully secured a CIOSIF loan.

Down in Gweek, just a few miles from the tip of Cornwall, Henderson Fletcher Yachts, a new start manufacturer of high end, sail powered yachts and motor cruisers to be sold to clients worldwide, have secured a loan from the fund. The financial injection will primarily be used to create new jobs, enabling the start-up business to begin its growth journey.



Wildanet, a young tech start-up with ambitious growth plans, has secured a substantial equity investment from CIOSIF. Based in Goonhilly, Cornwall, Wildanet uses state-of-the-art wireless radio technology to provide superfast broadband in hard to reach rural areas. The investment will support their continued expansion across Cornwall and into Devon, targetting 12,000 new customers and creating an estimated 39 jobs over the next three years



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