

West Midlands could reap £1.5bn a year manufacturing boost, says Birmingham's latest strategic commercial occupier

- City welcomes the country's business-led R&D organisation
- High Value Manufacturing Catapult's arrival highlights Birmingham's industrial potential
- New HQ at Innovation Birmingham will help smaller businesses improve their productivity through research and support

The West Midlands has the potential for a £1.5bn a year manufacturing dividend, according to new analysis by the UK's strategic hub for industrial research.

The High Value Manufacturing Catapult analysis marks the move of its HQ to Innovation Birmingham, part of the Bruntwood SciTech network and Birmingham's leading digital and tech campus. Formed 11 years ago by Innovate UK, the HVM Catapult comprises seven research centres, including WMG, and worked with more than 5,500 industrial partners in 2020/21.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, said: "Birmingham - and indeed the wider West Midlands – has for centuries enjoyed a distinguished heritage as a centre of manufacturing excellence and it remains a source of strength as we reinvent the sector for the 21st century.

"Thanks to the calibre of research output emanating from our local universities, our dynamic private sector and cross-party political will, we're well placed to help shape the future of manufacturing not just here in the UK but right around the world.

"That's why it's fantastic news that HVM Catapult – by moving its headquarters to Innovation Birmingham – will now join this powerful concentration of commitment to manufacturing. I'm confident that HVM Catapult will serve as a brilliant sector catalyst – joining dots, showcasing talent and shining a spotlight on best practice. As we bounce back from Covid and seek to supercharge our region's recovery, it is vital that we fulfil our true potential in terms of the contribution that R&D, innovation and advanced manufacturing can and must make to our overall economic performance. HVM Catapult will help us to deliver on this important mission."

HVM Catapult sees a wealth of growth potential in the West Midlands. The wider manufacturing sector supports 317,000 direct jobs in the region - the second highest in the UK - with strengths in automotive and aerospace engineering. The 50 biggest manufacturing enterprises in the West Midlands are globally competitive and account for £3.5bn of gross value added per year. The average economic contribution (GVA) per job of these companies is 48% above the UK average for the sector.

However, the GVA per job of the wider manufacturing base in the region is 10% below the UK average. By supporting smaller companies and enhancing regional supply chains through joint research and innovation - from simplifying production lines to developing more efficient technology – the HVM Catapult can help bridge that productivity gap. By reaching the national average, the regional economy would be boosted by £1.5bn a year.

HVM Catapult chief executive Katherine Bennett said:

"Fostering manufacturing in Birmingham and the wider region is crucial to the 'levelling up' agenda, rebalancing the economy so that we see regeneration across the UK. The potential for manufacturing growth in Birmingham is huge and we're excited to explore the possibilities for the region's SMEs as part of our move to Innovation Birmingham.

"This move marks the next stage of HVM Catapult's growth, having helped nearly 22,000 companies commercialise their industry-defining ideas in our first decade. Our ambition for the next 10 years is to embed the UK's reputation as the world's go-to advanced manufacturing economy."

HVM Catapult has selected Innovation Birmingham due to its existing technology ecosystem, which has been curated by owners Bruntwood SciTech - a partnership between Bruntwood and Legal & General and the UK's largest property provider dedicated to the growth of the science and technology sector.

Bruntwood SciTech will also be supporting the Catapult with direct introductions to fast growing science and tech start-ups and scale-ups who would benefit from their support. Existing customers at Innovation Birmingham include Voilo, Spica Technologies and Cloud9 Telephony, and Bruntwood SciTech's Serendip access-to-innovation accelerator programme. The programme partners large scale corporate companies such as HS2, the West Midlands Academic Health Science Network and BNP Paribas with pioneering, disruptive SMEs based at the campus to solve large scale business problems using disruptive tech solutions and providing a new market opportunity.

HVM Catapult's new office space is home to more than 170 forward-thinking businesses in the heart of the Knowledge Quarter, many of which are start-ups, scale-ups and global corporates in Fintech, cyber security, AR, VR, blockchain, sports tech, ed tech and mobility.

Jamie Clyde, director of Innovation Services for Bruntwood SciTech said:

"As a long-time supporter of the HVM Catapult, we're delighted to welcome the organisation to Innovation Birmingham here in the Knowledge Quarter. They will be located in the heart of the city's innovation district, placing them within the ecosystem of leading academic institutions and tech and digital businesses that we're proud to have nurtured here.

"This exciting partnership aligns perfectly with our vision and model of curating interconnected, industry-leading innovation districts and ecosystems right across the UK. As well as joining our ecosystem in the West Midlands, HVM Catapult and one its founding centres, the Centre for Process and Innovation (CPI), are also locating with us in the North West at our Circle Square neighbourhood in Manchester, and at Liverpool Science Park through our partnership in Sciontec Liverpool, where another of the Catapult's founding members, the Manufacturing Technology Centre is based.

"There has never been greater access to facilities, funding, talent, or opportunities for collaboration to science and tech businesses looking to form, scale and grow in the UK's leading regional cities, and this partnership ensures West Midlands businesses are able to leverage all of this potential as easily as possible."

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Notes to editors:

Research sources: West Midland Combined Authority Economic Assessment 2017/2018 (which is the latest available), Oxford Economics Analysis of Manufacturing Sector 2020/2021.

About HVMC

The High Value Manufacturing Catapult is the go-to place for manufacturing technology innovation in the UK. Our seven centres across the country cover the full range of manufacturing technology

capabilities, from materials to biologics and from automation to virtual reality, from additive manufacturing to metal forming.

Our centres offer open access to the latest industrial scale equipment, leading expertise and an environment of collaboration between industry, academia and government. We work with businesses

of all sizes and all sectors to help turn ideas into commercial applications by addressing the gap in, and accelerating the activity between technology concept and commercialisation.

The HVM Catapult's centres are

- National Manufacturing Institute Scotland ([NMIS](#))
- University of Sheffield Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre ([AMRC](#))
- [CPI](#)
- [Manufacturing Technology Centre](#)
- [National Composites Centre](#)
- [Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre](#)
- [WMG](#)

About Bruntwood SciTech

Bruntwood SciTech is the UK's leading developer of innovation districts, creating the specialist environments and innovation ecosystems for science and technology businesses to form, scale and grow.

A 50:50 joint venture between Bruntwood and Legal & General, Bruntwood SciTech provides high quality office and laboratory space and tailored business support, offering unrivalled access to finance, talent and markets, an extensive clinical, academic and public partner network and a sector-specialist community of over 500 companies.

Bruntwood SciTech has unique experience in creating and developing strategic partnerships with UK regional cities, universities and NHS Trusts to drive economic growth through investment in science and technology infrastructure.

Valued at over £750m, Bruntwood SciTech has a portfolio of over 2.4m sq ft including Alderley Park in Cheshire, Platform in Leeds, Innovation Birmingham, Melbourn Science Park in Cambridge, a cluster in the heart of Manchester's Oxford Road Corridor innovation district - Manchester Science Park, Citylabs 1.0 & 2.0 part of the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) campus and Circle Square - a joint venture with Vita Group and has a development pipeline of 5m sq ft, which includes Birmingham Health Innovation Campus, ID Manchester and Glasgow's Met Tower.

Website: <https://bruntwood.co.uk/scitech>

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