



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

High Value Manufacturing Catapult CTO Sam Turner to lead launch of £98million Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre at Queen's University Belfast

14.10.22 - Queen's University Belfast and the High Value Manufacturing (HVM) Catapult have today announced that HVM Catapult chief technology officer, Sam Turner, has been seconded for a year to join the leadership team of the new Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) as chief executive officer.

Led by Queen's and developed in partnership with Ulster University and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, this £98million flagship centre of Northern Ireland manufacturing will reinvigorate the region's industrial potential. This includes £78.7m investment from the UK Government as part of the Belfast Region City Deal. Turner will drive forward plans to launch the project and assist with rapidly building AMIC's capability to bring new technology-led manufacturing solutions to Belfast, Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.

With more than two decades in aerospace, steel, defence, and automotive manufacturing, Turner has a wealth of experience working with businesses, academics, and the UK government to develop the country's manufacturing strategy. During his leadership, the AMIC is set to transform Northern Ireland's manufacturing sector, investing in research and innovation to create local high-value jobs in growing industries such as aerospace, food and drink, materials handling, construction, and green tech and renewables.

The centre will be closely connected with existing manufacturing research efforts at Queen's, ensuring funding and facilities are used as efficiently as possible. Following an initial launch period, The Northern Ireland Technology Centre and the Polymer Processing Research Centre will join AMIC in a cutting-edge Factory of the Future. To



be located at Global Point in Newtownabbey, the factory will harness technology like 5G, automation and 3D printing to boost productivity while conserving resources.

Sam Turner, chief technology officer at the High Value Manufacturing Catapult and incoming Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre CEO, said:

“I’m really excited by this opportunity to join a great team at AMIC to help shape the future of Northern Ireland manufacturing by working with Queen’s University Belfast and partners. There is significant potential to unleash industrial transformation in Northern Ireland and this important investment will ensure that is achieved. This industry-led collaboration, drawing upon the excellent academic base through Queen’s and Ulster University, will position AMIC as a manufacturing innovation asset for the whole of the UK and beyond.”

Katherine Bennett CBE, CEO of the High Value Manufacturing Catapult, said:

“With support from Innovate UK, HVM Catapult has shown we can accelerate manufacturing innovation and productivity by sharing expertise and resources between business and academia. In much the same way, Sam Turner’s secondment to Queen’s demonstrates the huge scale of opportunity there is for key players in UK manufacturing to support each other and boost our sector’s growth. I wish Sam every success in launching AMIC at Queen’s University and look forward to seeing Northern Irish manufacturing thrive”

Vice-chancellor of Queen’s University, Professor Ian Greer, said:

“Our partnerships with government and industry are key to the success of the Belfast Region City Deal-funded Innovation Centres.

“The new partnership with HVM Catapult will enable AMIC to link at scale into UK-wide networks, which means that industry in Northern Ireland will have increased access to national expertise, a factor that will be crucial for it to thrive in the next decade. The partnership also gives our businesses a platform to showcase their expertise on a national stage which we hope will lead to many mutually beneficial collaborations.

“We warmly welcome Sam’s secondment as he brings extensive commercial experience to the leadership team to drive inclusive, innovation-led growth. It’s a major milestone in the journey towards AMIC’s launch after many years of excellent groundwork by the AMIC team.”

Mel Chittock, interim CEO of Invest Northern Ireland, said: “With over 20 years manufacturing experience in the aerospace and automotive sectors, Sam has extensive knowledge and capability to support the new centre.

“His experience as CTO of HVM Catapult and in the development of Factory 2050 at the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) will be invaluable for the progress and development of the AMIC Factory of the Future planned for Global Point.”

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Image

Caption: Katherine Bennett CBE, HVM Catapult CEO; Sam Turner, HVM Catapult CTO and incoming AMIC CEO; Professor Ian Greer, Queen’s University vice-chancellor; Professor Paul Maropoulos, AMIC director.

About Queen’s University Belfast

Queen’s University is a member of the Russell Group, and one of the UK and Ireland’s leading universities which continues to shape and serve the world through research and teaching.



Based in the heart of Belfast, which is a lively hub of diversity, Queen's is committed to enhancing its historic campus and the surrounding conservation area while providing 21st century facilities for education and research. Over the last 10 years the University has invested £350 million in developing world-class facilities with ambitious plans to invest a further £350 million over the next decade.

BRCB Programme at Queen's

Queen's University is leading on the delivery of three Innovation Centres under the Innovation Pillar of Belfast Region City Deal. The centres in advanced manufacturing, clinical research and secure, connected digital technologies will build on the areas where Queen's has demonstrated research excellence, working with key partners to solve real-world challenges.

The UK Government and Northern Ireland Executive are providing £170m funding towards three Queen's-led Centres - the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC), the Global Innovation Institute (GII) and the Institute of Research Excellence for Advanced Clinical Healthcare (iREACH), while an additional £30m will be invested by the University and its partners.

AMIC

The £98m AMIC project, in partnership with Ulster University and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, will provide fresh capabilities for the NI Advanced Composites and Engineering Centre (NIACE) and create a 10,500m² state-of-the-art facility at Global Point in Newtownabbey, giving advanced manufacturing and engineering businesses access to the very latest technology, specialist equipment and expertise. The 'Factory of the Future' will be AMIC's flagship facility and will become Northern Ireland's national centre for advanced manufacturing, significantly accelerating levels of innovation and collaboration between industry and researchers. The UK Government is investing £78.7m to support the project through the Belfast Region City Deal.

About HVMC

Established and supported by Innovate UK, the High Value Manufacturing Catapult is the catalyst for growth and success of UK advanced manufacturing. Our centres offer access to world-class equipment, expertise and collaborative opportunities. We help



manufacturing businesses of all sizes and sectors turn ideas into commercial applications by addressing the gap between technology concept and commercialisation.

Our centres are:

- National Manufacturing Institute Scotland - University of Strathclyde and other partners
- Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre – University of Sheffield
- Centre for Process Innovation – Redcar, Sedgefield and Darlington
- Manufacturing Technology Centre – near Coventry
- National Composites Centre – at Bristol and Bath Science Park
- Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre – University of Sheffield
- WMG – University of Warwick

In 2021/22, the centres produced 2,677 commercial projects and worked with more than 5,500 companies.

During Turner's Northern Ireland mission, Chris Dungey from NMIS, will be seconded to HVMC as CTO.

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