

## **£2 million programme to tackle sustainability challenges in the UK manufacturing industry**

**(6 June 2023, London):** Digital Catapult and the High Value Manufacturing (HVM) Catapult have been awarded £2m from the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) to accelerate the adoption of digital solutions specifically designed to tackle major sustainability challenges in the UK manufacturing sector.

The two Catapults will work alongside industry partners and innovative small businesses to transform the country's manufacturing sector by using advanced digital technologies to deliver greater resource efficiency and energy efficiency (REEE) as part of the industry's journey to net zero. Both Catapults are part of the national Catapult Network of leading technology and innovation centres established by Innovate UK, and the project is funded by the Made Smarter Innovation Challenge at Innovate UK.

The Made Smarter Innovation Sustainability Accelerator will facilitate sustainable economic growth by expediting adoption of industrial digital technologies (IDT) in manufacturing - a traditionally long and costly process.

The programme comes amid growing demand to transition manufacturing towards net zero and help the industry meet the UK Government's environmental objectives. The manufacturing sector contributes over [11% to UK GVA but 12%](#) of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and the Government's 2017 Made Smarter Review into industrial digitalisation set out a 4.5% target reduction of CO2 emissions. In the 2021 Net Zero Strategy, a legally binding target of 68% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 was also included.

To overcome the difficulties associated with sustainability in manufacturing, five industry partners will work with Digital Catapult and HVM Catapult to scope and define two real-world sustainability challenges each. Ten startups will join the programme to prototype and pilot innovative solutions to these challenges that utilise artificial intelligence (AI) and other digital technologies.

Supported by experts at Digital Catapult and HVM Catapult, the startups' solutions will help the five manufacturing partners improve productivity, cut costs and drive down carbon emissions. Over the course of the two-year programme, it is estimated the industrial partners will generate a combined £2.75m in value from their initial £625,000 investment.

**Katherine Bennett CBE, HVM Catapult CEO, said:** "Without doubt, sustainable manufacturing must be the number one priority for the sector, and the development and integration of new and existing industrial digital technologies is critical to this.

"By bringing together industry heavyweights, technology developers and subject-matter experts to prove-out ideas and develop them rapidly, this programme can find solutions to the biggest challenges facing manufacturers right now. Through this, we can deliver a UK manufacturing sector that is resilient, flexible, productive and – vitally - environmentally sustainable."

**Jeremy Silver, Digital Catapult CEO, said:** “The UK’s vibrant tech startup sector is a deep well of untapped opportunity for manufacturing industries. Resource and energy efficiency gains are examples of the ways in which advanced digital technologies - and the innovative startups that use them - support growth and sustainability gains for industry through new products and services that can disrupt traditional approaches.

“Digital Catapult-led programmes such as the Made Smarter Technology Accelerator and the Made Smarter Innovation Digital Supply Chain Hub have already shown how to make smart use of small amounts of public money to drive private investment and create tangible impact in support of both large industrial players and smaller, agile businesses”.

Ends.

### **Notes to editors**

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#### **About HVM Catapult**

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:

- 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
- National Manufacturing Institute Scotland - University of Strathclyde and other
- partners
- Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre – University of Sheffield
- WMG – University of Warwick