

Manufacturing Centre of Excellence

Objective

To develop an Innovation Centre of Excellence that works on the next generation of products & processes. This facility will help to provide build the future of the manufacturing sector in Teesside.

Aim

To build upon the development of innovation in manufacturing for the region through the exploitation of IP. Create a more effective use of resources by pulling information from all the required areas whilst developing them appropriately.

Problem

There are many organisations involved in the development of IP in manufacturing in the region. The aim is to provide them with a single forum for exchanging ideas and best practice.

Funding which is currently available for SME's developing Innovative products in the North east

R&D is widely promoted within the region currently and there are several grants available for companies of all sizes. The RDA, in conjunction with the DTI, provide money for innovation within companies and resources are also available from organisations such as N star which can also provide venture capital. One major issue is the barriers to receiving funding and the hurdles (e.g. time) SME's encounter prior to negotiations, setting a bad image from the start.

Where is the Innovation/R&D currently coming from?

- **Universities** have a pool of knowledge, however it is based on research projects as appose to the development of innovative products and processes.
- **The Innovation Relay Centre**; technology transfer is increasing internationally amongst research institutions and companies offering an alternative source of innovative technology whilst enabling easy, facilitated access to overseas markets.
- **Centres of Excellence** have a high standard of research in specific industrial sectors.
- **Companies** are potentially delegating more funds to in-house research.

What value will the centre of Excellence have?

Benefits for Both sides;

- Building trust and interaction between key groups
- Encourage collaboration as well as competition amongst industrial manufacturers
- Industry led innovation building the strength of the sector
- Advice and resource for individuals looking to protect intellectual property.

SME's;

- Freeing up essential operational time without restricting innovation
- Removing elements of risk associated with long term investment
- Centres of Excellence will influence new methods and new technologies.
- Clarity of purpose and effective engagement with Centres of Excellence
- Creating and identifying a new market opportunities.
- Learning from best practice and applying suitable methodologies
- Investment in the Centre of Excellence will influence quality and quantity of innovation in the region.
- Create potential for product and process diversification

TVEP;

- Pooling of innovative processes and products.
- Innovation in the region will receive a boost from the Manufacturing sector.
- National and International recognition
- Raising the profile of the Manufacturing and Engineering sectors in the Tees Valley
- Increased competitiveness in these sectors
- It will provide the North East with access to overseas countries for potential R&D collaboration and an increased customer base.
- Sustained growth is dependant on continued investment.