

# The Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Strategy

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## 1. Introduction

Innovation is a catalyst for growth, enabling businesses to stay competitive in an ever-evolving global marketplace. The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy, published in 2025, places a clear focus on the importance of driving innovation investment, increasing the speed of innovation to market, expanding access to finance, and supporting regional innovation. The Industrial Strategy also identifies eight highest-potential sectors (the "IS-8") on which targeted action will be taken to drive growth. Of these eight, we can link four in particular to the sectors we believe offer the highest innovation potential within Greater Lincolnshire – Advanced Manufacturing (including ag-tech), Clean Energy, Defence, and Digital & Technologies.

By fostering innovation, regions can attract investment, create good jobs, and develop solutions to pressing societal challenges. Greater Lincolnshire's businesses have untapped innovative potential, building on local sector specialisms, areas of comparative advantage and expertise. But currently there are too many businesses not innovating, and too few businesses investing strategically in innovation to drive growth. This is primarily a result of structural challenges, cultural barriers, and a lack of the right support for businesses that want to innovate.

In 2024, in preparation for devolution, the Greater Lincolnshire constituent authorities convened an Innovation Commission to provide an evidence base on innovation activity and make recommendations via an Innovation Routemap on how to increase levels of innovation across Greater Lincolnshire. This strategy builds on that work, utilising the recommendations and evidence within the Innovation Routemap to lay out clear plans for increasing the levels of innovation across Greater Lincolnshire and achieving our ambition to become the rural testbed for innovation nationally.

By nurturing and embracing innovation, we will attract more investment, create higher-value jobs, develop solutions to pressing societal and environmental challenges and help our businesses become more efficient, more competitive, more profitable. more resilient and better able to cope with change.

Our aims are to:

- ❖ Create an environment where problem solving and creative thinking thrives, and a culture of innovation permeates businesses of all sizes and sectors. We want to **increase business investment in R&D** in Greater Lincolnshire and **improve productivity in all our businesses, but particularly those within our priority sectors.**
- ❖ Target the opportunities which build on our existing assets and expertise, and where Greater Lincolnshire can deliver world-leading economic activity to support wider prosperity. We want to mobilise around growth opportunities to leverage investment within Greater Lincolnshire businesses, increase inward investment, **increase the number of well-paying innovation-oriented jobs within Greater Lincolnshire and raise innovation-related skills levels.**
- ❖ Convene the right partners and multi-disciplinary teams, to access funding and investment, and build connections across different sectors, innovation assets and supply chains. We want to work with national partners to **increase the share of public innovation spending going to businesses within Greater Lincolnshire.**

## 2. Executive Summary

The Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Routemap, commissioned by the GLCCA constituent authorities in preparation for devolution, demonstrated how Greater Lincolnshire lags behind other areas on levels of innovation and R&D income. This strategy uses the Routemap as a basis for the innovation objectives and priorities which the GLLCA will pursue to raise the levels of innovation in Greater Lincolnshire businesses. It links strongly to the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy via the high-potential growth sectors of Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, Defence and Digital Technologies.

The strategy is built around two objectives:

### **Objective One: Supporting all businesses to innovate**

Exploring options for business support activities which encourage incremental innovation and adjacent innovation, helping to increase individual business productivity, profitability, competitiveness and resilience focusing on:

- ❖ Creating the structures for success and promoting Greater Lincolnshire's innovation offer;
- ❖ Reviewing and enhancing the portfolio of business advisory, financial and accelerator support services available to local businesses;
- ❖ Creating the spaces for innovation and collaboration.

### **Objective Two: Accelerating strategic growth opportunities**

Directly encouraging disruptive innovation and radical innovation by developing three priority innovation accelerators focused on:

- ❖ **Accelerator 1:** Cross-sector growth opportunities through Big Data and AI;
- ❖ **Accelerator 2:** Innovating at scale towards Food Security;
- ❖ **Accelerator 3:** Advanced Manufacturing supporting energy opportunities.

Our delivery model will be built around five pillars:

- ❖ **Convening**  
Bringing together partners across private, public and academic spheres – the “triple helix”.
- ❖ **Targeting**  
Utilising evidence to ensure interventions are targeted for maximum benefit and value for money.
- ❖ **Co-design and planning**  
Utilising the triple helix to co-design programmes and projects, and their implementation plans.
- ❖ **Resourcing**  
Utilising the triple helix to develop resourcing plans and joint funding bids with partners.
- ❖ **Delivery and impact**  
Monitoring progress against agreed targets, and measuring outputs and outcomes to ensure benefits realisation.

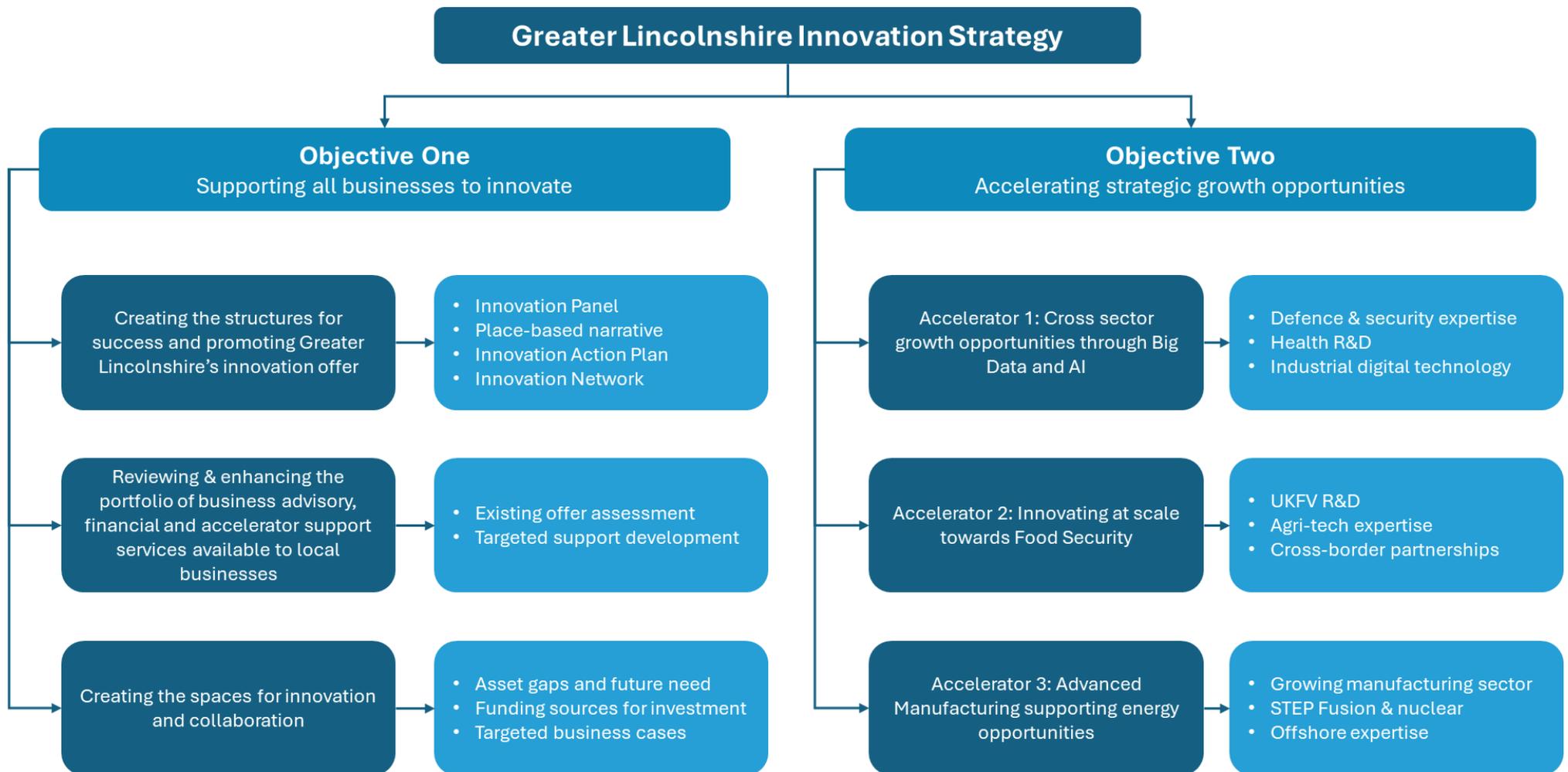


Figure 1: Greater Lincolnshire innovation Strategy overview

### 3. Setting the Scene

Greater Lincolnshire is a £25.4bn economy with significant potential to increase innovation-led growth. Boasting a mix of manufacturing and engineering industries, a nationally important agri-food sector, a world-leading energy sector, a ports and logistics sector that connects Greater Lincolnshire to national and international markets, and a nationally recognised defence & security cluster, Greater Lincolnshire has the assets for innovation-led growth.

Alongside the University of Lincoln and other innovation-oriented institutions, local partners have invested heavily in R&D capabilities, with the ongoing growth of private sector assets like the Lincoln Science and Innovation Park. Greater Lincolnshire has major opportunities for growth in our high-potential sectors, and is home to many innovative businesses at the forefront of their sectors. Our innovation assets are strong and future-focused.

Like many places across the UK, raising productivity (the average value of work done within a place) remains a priority for Greater Lincolnshire. Increasing the value of economic activity enables more investment in people, places and essential services; and innovation is one of the mechanisms to achieve this. It serves as a catalyst for economic growth, enabling businesses to stay competitive in an ever-evolving global marketplace, and generating wealth and boosting local wages. By fostering innovation, we will be better placed to attract investment, create good jobs, and develop solutions to pressing societal challenges.

There are many possibilities which businesses and academics across the region are already exploring. Businesses in Greater Lincolnshire secured £16m from UKRI in 2020-2021 to progress R&D projects, and the University of Lincoln generated £1.45m in consultancy income in 2022-2023. We have local research specialisms, such as in Computer Science, where 87% of the University of Lincoln’s research impact is rated world-leading. There are also hotspots of activity around strategic assets that help bolster the innovative capacity of our region, and five high-potential sectors (agri-tech, defence & security, ports & logistics, energy and advanced manufacturing) that have the potential to transform the long-term trajectory of our economy by providing significant economic impact.

The Innovation Routemap identified opportunities to continue to build sector specialisms, but also highlighted the barriers which currently limit our potential:

Barriers to innovation-led growth	Opportunities for innovation-led growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low levels of business density, connectivity and absorptive capacity, restricting a flow of information, ideas and opportunities between firms and sectors</li> <li>• Talent attraction and retention challenges</li> <li>• Practical challenges such as finance, information and space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong base of innovation assets and clusters of activity providing a focus for growth and collaboration</li> <li>• Established sector strengths with complementary expertise which could create new market opportunities</li> <li>• Ambition, and a coalition of local partners keen to raise the profile of innovation and Greater Lincolnshire’s nationally significant sectors</li> </ul>

Source: Greater Lincolnshire Innovation Routemap, 2024

The Innovation Routemap also highlighted that Greater Lincolnshire lags behind the national picture, and behind the comparator region of Norfolk & Suffolk in many areas:

Indicator	Greater Lincolnshire	Norfolk & Suffolk	UK
R&D expenditure per full time employee	£353	£4,101	£1,638
Innovation jobs (% of total jobs)	1.8%	2.2%	4.4%
Total Innovate UK grants per business (5-year total 2018/19-2022/23)	£1,284	£669	£3,356
% of university students enrolled in STEM subjects	40%	32%	45%
% of university research impact at REF 3*/4*	61%	92%	87%
% of university graduates in full time employment or study	68.4%	69.2%	68.6%
Total IP revenue of universities per £100k of income	£7	£703	£702

Source: Innovate UK (2023), HESA (2021), BRES (2023)

The reasons for this are varied and often interconnected. Some challenges are structural - the dispersed nature of Greater Lincolnshire's business base, and lack of churn and complexity, means there are fewer competitive pressures on businesses to encourage innovation. Levels of business confidence, access to finance and growth space, as well as technical support and know-how for innovation, can also have an impact.

However, these challenges are certainly not unique to Greater Lincolnshire, and regions across the UK have taken different approaches to tackling them. Whilst city regions have been able to capitalise on the density of their innovation and industry assets to accelerate knowledge exchange and commercialisation; some more rural regions have increased clustering around major assets, for example the Norwich Research Park and Martlesham Innovation in Norfolk & Suffolk.

Creating the places where innovation can happen is therefore important. Strengthening clusters which support connectivity within an otherwise dispersed economy and make innovation visible, could help address many of the barriers to innovation. The region's wider investments in infrastructure, business support, trade and inward investment, skills and place will also play a role in creating the wider conditions for growth.

By collaborating around strategic growth opportunities, we can identify where knowledge, expertise and technologies could be applied to create new markets for businesses and entrepreneurs. Accelerating transformational growth opportunities at scale will require us to work differently, facilitated by an effective innovation ecosystem providing the spaces, finance, connections and support that businesses need.

## 4. Strategic objectives

Within the Innovation Routemap, the Innovation Commission identified two over-arching objectives for increasing innovation across Greater Lincolnshire, and these form the basis of our Innovation Strategy:

**Objective One**  
**Supporting all businesses to innovate**

- ❖ Supporting more businesses across all sectors and sizes to innovate – helping to increase individual business productivity, profitability, competitiveness and resilience.
- ❖ Supporting **incremental innovation** and **adjacent innovation** - forms of innovation defined by their low cost, low risk nature - across the business base, with strong cumulative impacts for productivity, while underpinning more radical and disruptive forms of innovation for certain businesses, institutions and sectors.

**Objective Two**  
**Accelerating strategic growth opportunities**

- ❖ Working with businesses and innovation partners to accelerate strategic innovation-led growth opportunities which can impact at scale.
- ❖ Directly encouraging **disruptive innovation** and **radical innovation** – forms of innovation defined by their high costs, low frequency, high impact and strategic nature - through partnership working which targets scalable strategic growth opportunities for Greater Lincolnshire.

This approach is based on building core support for all businesses with growth potential, and targeting expertise on innovation-led strategic growth opportunities, bringing together sector specialisms and enabling technologies to accelerate innovation and bring forward new market opportunities.

Whilst we must continue to support more businesses to engage in linear innovation activity with a customer or knowledge partner, we will accelerate opportunities which have scalable potential or can impact across sectors. These opportunities will require collaboration between partners and multi-disciplinary teams, access to funding and investment, and connections to be built across different sectors, innovation assets and supply chains.

This balanced approach aims to create an environment where research and development can thrive, while also fostering a culture of innovation that permeates businesses of all sizes and sectors. By doing so, we seek to increase the overall innovative capacity of our region, ensuring that more businesses can engage with and benefit from innovative practices and technologies.

## 4.1. Objective 1: Supporting all businesses to innovate

The strength of the broader innovation ecosystem underpins the growth and success of innovative companies and organisations across the business base, and facilitates the flow of finance, resources and people between innovative companies and actors. We need to create the conditions for success and for businesses to innovate, encouraging inventors, entrepreneurs and tech adopters, and supporting innovation-related skills development.

The research carried out by the Innovation Commission highlighted the importance of:

### ❖ **Profile & Connectivity**

- Creating greater visibility of innovation, and profile-raising of successes on the national and international stage;
- Developing a shared narrative of innovation opportunities in the region;
- Creating opportunities for innovators to connect and collaborate.

### ❖ **Innovation Spaces**

- Place-making and expansion of innovation sites;
- Creating flagship spaces where companies can grow, and partners can come together to collaborate, share ideas and access support and advice.

### ❖ **Comprehensive Financial Offer**

- Accessible finance which helps innovators from ideas to commercialisation;
- Funding support which connects businesses to private investors;
- Funding support which facilitates greater strategic co-ordination and proactive targeting of major public funding or investment opportunities.

### ❖ **Innovation Advisory Support**

- Enabling high-quality innovation advisory support offer for businesses;
- Developing an accelerator which is accessible and builds on the success of previous programmes, but also helps to connect and co-ordinate activity across the innovation ecosystem.

This translates into three strategic areas of activity:

### ❖ **Creating the structures for success and promoting Greater Lincolnshire's innovation offer**

To include activities such as:

- Establishing an Innovation Panel;
- Developing a place-based narrative that promotes our innovation offer and potential;
- Co-designing an Innovation Action Plan with Innovate UK;
- Exploring the potential of an innovation network.

### ❖ **Reviewing and enhancing the portfolio of business advisory, financial and accelerator support services available to local businesses**

To include activities such as:

- Reviewing the breadth and effectiveness of the existing support offer;

- Developing targeted innovation support services to address identified gaps.

❖ **Creating the spaces for innovation and collaboration**

To include activities such as:

- Assessing the current provision of innovation assets and identifying gaps and areas of future need;
- Identifying potential funding sources for investment in asset development;
- Working with partners to develop targeted business cases for investment.

## 4.2. Objective 2: Accelerating Strategic Growth Opportunities

Through consultation with regional partners, the Innovation Commission identified three strategic growth opportunities for development through innovation accelerators:

2. **Accelerator 1:** Cross-sector growth opportunities through Big Data and AI
3. **Accelerator 2:** Innovating at scale towards Food Security
4. **Accelerator 3:** Advanced Manufacturing supporting energy opportunities

Progressing these opportunities will not only strengthen our innovation ecosystem to raise productivity, but will also increase the links between our priority sectors and business base to support business retention and enhance the attractiveness of the region to inward investors. The aim with all three accelerators is to explore ways to reduce barriers to entry for innovative start-ups and spin-outs, create conditions where those businesses can scale up, unblock barriers for businesses of all sizes to be competitive in national and global markets, and create an attractive inward investment environment.

### 4.2.1. Accelerator 1: Cross-sector growth opportunities in Big Data and AI

The Innovation Routemap identified opportunities to accelerate innovation through an increased use of digitalisation and utilisation of data, generative AI and machine learning. Our existing assets and expertise, particularly in the defence and security sector, can be leveraged and applied to other local sectors such as health, and our wider growth sectors such as manufacturing, creating new market opportunities and supporting the regional customer base.

Digitalisation, remote sensing, robotics and AI are increasingly being used across the agri-food industry, and ag-tech in particular. There are significant opportunities for cross-fertilisation between these sectors which we will continue to explore.

With an ageing population, we also have an opportunity to establish Greater Lincolnshire as a testbed for innovative digital health solutions. Digital and distributed healthcare is still in its early stages of development as a sector. Although it has all the components for innovation-led growth, it needs supporting infrastructure (hard and soft) to bring the sector together and provide a focus for innovation acceleration.

## Accelerator 1: Regional assets

- **Nationally significant defence & security assets with expertise in big data and AI**

We have a well-developed and highly innovative defence & security sector, with the region's strategic importance being underscored by the presence of RAF operations. The RAF forms the backbone of a robust supply chain comprising highly innovative defence organisations. The local ecosystem includes the MOD-recognised [Greater Lincolnshire Regional Defence & Security Cluster](#), and boasts an established consumer base and significant growth potential, creating a fertile ground for innovation.

We are leading ISTAR operations in the UK, with the headquarters at the RAF base in Waddington. The growth of ISTAR operations present opportunities in data collection and management, and require capabilities in data storage, wrangling and visualisation. Our defence businesses around RAF Waddington have strengths in cyber and security, with emerging opportunities in Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), including the manufacturing of swarm UAVs, utilising the strengths the local economy has in 3D printing.

- **Nationally significant expertise in ag-tech and agri-food**

Our UK Food Valley hosts a nationally-significant presence for food processing and manufacturing, and ag-tech, alongside the Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology (LIAT), National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM), and three Food Enterprise Zones, complemented by a strong base of potential private sector partners.

- **Increasing inward investment interest in AI data centres and innovation centres**

The AI and data sector holds significant inward investment potential, with increasing interest in locating such assets in Greater Lincolnshire being shown by investors. This also opens the possibility of developing capital assets such as an AI Innovation Centre, in the development of an AI and data ecosystem.

- **A manufacturing sector with room to benefit from big data and AI**

Manufacturing is another key Greater Lincolnshire sector (the second largest by size) with substantial opportunity to benefit from spillovers in emerging regional big data and AI capabilities. Industrial digital technology can help technology helps manufacturers reduce operating costs, improve quality, productivity, capacity and boost profitability and economic growth; in turn, the growth of big data and AI computing demand will fuel demand for manufactured products and services through the creation of data centres.

- **A strong health sector with R&D potential**

Our health sector is made up of a strong workforce of 60,000 people, with key assets spread across the local geography. This includes a network of local hospitals, National Centre for Rural Health and Care, Mablethorpe Campus for Future Living, and the Lincoln International Institute for Rural Health, based in the Lincoln Medical School. The Institute focuses on health inequalities and the challenges of delivering high-quality care to rural communities.

### **Accelerator 1: Implementation**

This opportunity will have relevance to the **health, defence, digital, agri-food and manufacturing sectors**.

The application of data and AI within the health sector has been identified as a nascent, long term opportunity, requiring early stage activity to build connections and momentum. In developing the implementation plan consideration will need to be given to:

- Working with partners to baseline existing structures, assets, partnerships and connections which can be focused on the data/AI opportunity. Consideration will also be given to the region's manufacturing assets which might play a role in product design and efficiency improvements.
- Proactive engagement with key customers for data/AI and health innovation, including the NHS, to inform targeting of activity and identify potential funding opportunities.
- Capital investments required to enable growth and clustering of data and digital assets, particularly around the University of Lincoln and Lincoln Science Park. In addition to commercial space, this will explore wider capital requirements which may accelerate innovation, including enhancing the region's data storage and processing capabilities.
- Exploration of the long term skills and labour market requirements essential to realise the growth opportunity, including opportunities for student retention and PHD placement programmes to capitalise on local research assets.
- The potential provision of targeted start-up support to attract and retain tech entrepreneurs.

### **4.2.2. Accelerator 2: Innovating at scale towards food security**

The Innovation Routemap highlighted the substantial room for innovation uptake offered by Greater Lincolnshire's well-established agri-food specialism. By leveraging our agricultural assets, we can serve as a commercial testbed for agri-food innovation, and further solidify our position as a leader in this nationally critical sector.

There are distinct opportunities for innovation-led growth within Greater Lincolnshire in accelerating technology adoption to support food security. As food security is one of the 13 Critical National Infrastructures Sectors, our region can play a crucial role in supporting national security by adopting new technologies for year-round farming and building on our strengths in automation and robotics. The food manufacturing sector, in particular, has the potential to accelerate automation by adopting new technologies that enhance the efficiency of food packing and processing, and the possible development of an Grimsby Ocean Cluster supporting innovation in seafood waste valorisation and innovative startups offers the opportunity to further develop and broaden the seafood sector.

### **Accelerator 2: Regional Assets**

- **Recognition as the UK Food Valley and nationally recognised R&D assets**  
The agri-food sector is one of high growth potential sectors, presenting a distinct economic opportunity through the UK Food Valley. Built on our historic strengths in agriculture, seafood and food processing, the area boasts strategic assets such as the Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food

Technology (LIAT), National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM), and three Food Enterprise Zones, complemented by a strong base of potential private sector partners.

- **Nationally significant cluster and agri-tech capabilities**

Greater Lincolnshire is home to Europe's largest Agri-food Tech automation and robotics cluster, attracting businesses that invest heavily in automation. Greater Lincolnshire also hosts expertise in remote sensing, and data analytics and wrangling through the Greater Lincolnshire Regional Defence & Security Cluster, and cross overs between this sector and ag-tech also present significant opportunities.

- **Cross-border partnership with neighbouring agricultural hubs**

Led by the University of Lincoln, with the backing of a £4.9m grant award from the EPSRC the Greater Lincolnshire and North Cambridgeshire (LINCAM) region agricultural technologies (agri-tech) cluster project aims to make the LINCAM region an agri-tech gateway for the world. This will enable the development of technologies at commercial scale and provide export opportunities for agri-tech companies and inward investment opportunities within both the agri-tech and primary production sectors.

The recent £2.5m Innovate UK Launchpad programme, delivered in partnership across Greater Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk supported SMEs with grant funding for R&D and innovation projects focused on agri-tech and food technology.

## **Accelerator 2: Implementation**

This opportunity will have relevance to the **agri-tech, digital and manufacturing sectors**.

Adoption of technology and circular economy innovation principles to support food security has been identified by partners as immediate opportunities which can build on existing activity and assets in the agriculture, digital technology, and food manufacturing and processing sectors.

Working with established assets such as the LIAT and GL Manufacturing Board, there will be an opportunity to quickly convene partners around specific interventions and investment propositions.

In developing the implementation plan consideration will be given to:

- Targeted support to help businesses and researchers connect and access funding (e.g. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and Innovate UK grants) in order to accelerate business-led innovation projects which support food security
- Engagement with key customers to understand challenges in tech and circular economy adoption and how these could be overcome
- Facilitation of tech challenges which convene partners to tackle common issues and design innovative solutions
- Identifying sources of financial support to de-risk investment
- The role of pilot projects and promotional activities to demonstrate technology effectiveness
- Opportunities to promote Greater Lincolnshire as a demonstrator or living lab able to support business and academic partners with product development and the commercialisation of research, and to attract international investors looking to deploy technologies at scale in new markets.

### 4.2.3. Accelerator 3: Advanced Manufacturing supporting energy opportunities

Manufacturing is an essential sector within the Greater Lincolnshire economy, as the largest sector by GVA and a major provider of high value, tradeable exports (which have an outside effect on local productivity). The energy market has played a major role in shaping the local manufacturing sector, with key local employers and specialisms in carbon intensive and energy sector-oriented production.

Greater Lincolnshire is now well-placed to take advantage of the exciting opportunities associated with new and emerging energy technologies, including the STEP Fusion site at West Burton, nuclear technologies such as Small and Advanced Modular Reactors, and the development of hydrogen, offshore wind and carbon capture technologies in the Humber. Manufacturers will need to innovate to respond to these changing customer needs. This offers an opportunity to drive uptake of innovative, advanced manufacturing techniques through customer-oriented innovation, industrial digitalisation, energy efficiency and the development of novel materials.

#### Accelerator 3: Regional Assets

- **A regionally important manufacturing sector with the capacity to serve new energy markets**  
Greater Lincolnshire's manufacturing sector is particularly resilient when compared to its neighbours and indeed the rest of the UK. The number of manufacturer businesses in Greater Lincolnshire has risen by more than 1.7% compared to declines in Leicestershire (-7.5%), D2N2 (-3.5%) and the rest of UK (-1.1%) over the last 5 years. The sector has grown by 64% in real terms (when adjusted for inflation) over the past decade in Greater Lincolnshire, while nationally (England) the sector grew by 29% in real terms over the past decade.
- **Cross -Humber industrial partnerships**  
Strong connections and partnership working cross-Humber between the north and south banks already exists, including the Humber Freeport, the Freeport Innovation Liaison Group, the Humber Energy Board and the regional universities can be built upon to enhance the regional offer.
- **Established strengths in offshore renewables which provide important markets for regional manufacturing expertise**  
The South Humber bank serves as a focal point for energy innovation, particularly in offshore renewable energy, hydrogen and carbon capture, hosting major innovation hubs including the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult and the newly designated Humber Freeport.
- **Emerging markets for regional manufacturers in new energy technologies**  
Our Local Growth Plan will capture the enormous potential of supply chain opportunities associated with emerging energy technologies including STEP fusion, SMR and AMR nuclear, and industrial decarbonisation.

#### Accelerator 3: Implementation

This opportunity will have relevance to the **manufacturing** and **energy** sectors.

Supporting the manufacturing sector to leverage opportunities in emerging energy technologies has been identified by partners as an immediate opportunity which can build on existing activity and

assets in the manufacturing and energy sectors. In developing the implementation plan consideration will be given to:

- Engagement with major customers in the energy sector to understand specific innovation challenges with implications and opportunities for the regional manufacturing supply chain, and explore how these could be taken forward
- Facilitation of tech challenges which convene partners from across Greater Lincolnshire and our neighbouring areas, to tackle common issues and design innovative solutions
- Identifying appropriate support to progress targeted business to business innovation projects
- Identifying sources of financial support to de-risk investment
- Developing targeted support to help manufacturing businesses, energy sector businesses and researchers connect and access funding in order to accelerate business-led innovation projects.
- Capital investments required to support growth and co-location of manufacturing, energy and research partners, particularly where this strengthens existing assets

## 5. Delivery model

The model for regional innovation accelerators builds on established approaches such as UKRI's Innovation Accelerator Programme and EPSRC's Place-Based Impact Accelerator Accounts. Whilst the focus of regional accelerators may shift over time as new opportunities emerge, they represent long term commitments to focus our innovation efforts, and demonstrate intentionality to raise business confidence and attract investment.

Our Innovation Strategy delivery will utilise the following model:

- ❖ **Convening**  
Establishing a forum to bring together partners across private, public and academic spheres – the “triple helix” approach.
- ❖ **Targeting**  
Utilising existing and new evidence to identify each programme or project focus, ensuring interventions are targeted where the maximum benefit and value for money will be realised.
- ❖ **Co-design and planning**  
Utilising the triple helix approach with partners to co-design programmes and projects, and their implementation plans.
- ❖ **Resourcing**  
Utilising the triple helix approach to develop resourcing plans and joint funding bids with partners.
- ❖ **Delivery and impact**  
Monitoring progress against agreed delivery targets, and measuring outputs and outcomes to ensure benefits realisation and demonstrate improvements.

## 6. Programme Development

Where programmes and/or projects are planned, business cases will be developed and submitted into the GLCCA pipeline approval process, as per the GLCCA Assurance Framework. This will allow decisions to be made on whether programmes and projects are to be funded directly by the GLCCA, or whether external funding needs to be sought. This will also ensure that a pipeline of innovation projects will be available as and when external funding opportunities become available.

Programmes will be developed with the triple helix approach in mind, aiming to leverage both public and private sector funding to gain maximum benefit.

## 7. Governance structure

This strategy is approved by the GLCCA Business & Infrastructure Board and forms part of the Strategic Framework of the GLCCA. This strategy will align with other strategies developed by the GLCCA, including the Local Growth Plan and the Spatial Development Strategy.

An Innovation Panel will be convened by the Business & Infrastructure Board. The Panel will meet once per quarter and will report directly to the Business & Infrastructure Board. The Panel will consist of public sector, private sector and academic sector representatives, in order to achieve the triple helix approach to planning and delivery.

The Panel will make recommendations to the Business & Infrastructure Board. Decision-making and expenditure authorisation will sit with the Business & Infrastructure Board.

## 8. Measuring Success

Reporting against delivery targets will be provided to the Business & Infrastructure Board in the first instance, as part of the routine reporting structure.

Performance metrics will be agreed at programme and/or project level as appropriate. Where relevant, this will also feed into the overall performance reporting process of the GLCCA.