



Innovate  
UK

**NEWANGLIA**

Local Enterprise Partnership  
for Norfolk and Suffolk



**Innovate UK**

**New Anglia Local  
Action Plan**



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# Forewords



Indro Mukerjee,  
Innovate UK CEO



C-J Green, Chair, New Anglia  
LEP Board



Johnathan Reynolds, Chair,  
New Anglia Innovation Board



Councillor Kay Mason-Billig,  
Leader, Norfolk County Council



Councillor Matthew Hicks,  
Leader, Suffolk County Council

## Foreword by Indro Mukerjee

Innovate UK is the UK's innovation agency. We work to drive productivity and economic growth by supporting businesses to develop and realise the potential of new ideas.

We are living in a time of challenge – a time of constant change; but also, a time of significant opportunity. There's the opportunity to help and improve the present, but also the opportunity to create the future.

There has never been a better time to focus on supporting our economy and society through innovation. Innovate UK will do this through the three axes by which we are organising ourselves; the Domains we support, the Products and Services we use, and the Places we operate within.

Innovate UK's Plan for Action outlines our commitment to work with leaders across the UK to develop innovation strategies that recognise the strengths and opportunities in their regions and nations. As an important milestone and a key example of this work, I'm pleased to launch this New Anglia Action Plan, which we have co-created with the New Anglia Innovation Board.

Norfolk and Suffolk are home to nationally and internationally significant science and innovation capabilities that can help to address those challenges and realise those opportunities. By working with innovation stakeholders in the area, we seek to accelerate the application and commercialisation of that knowledge.

Investing in these impactful ideas will drive sustainable growth and increase productivity. Together with improved skills, this will create better jobs and opportunities for people in these counties.

The Innovate UK team is ready to commit to working with partners across the UK nations and regions, across the research and innovation ecosystem and across government to drive Place based impact.

**Indro Mukerjee**  
Innovate UK CEO

## Foreword by Local Leadership

The **UK Innovation Strategy** sets out a clear roadmap to making the UK a global hub for science, research and innovation by 2035. The Government is committed to stimulating private sector investment to create jobs,

develop hubs of innovation, and revitalise local areas and regions across every part of the UK. The New Anglia LEP (covering Norfolk and Suffolk) and the New Anglia Innovation Board fully support this approach and are working closely with the various Government departments and organisations including Innovate UK and the Catapult network.

To unlock our world leading science and research base and technology capabilities highlighted in the National Innovation Strategy, a step change is required. This step change needs to be driven by a fresh approach which is open, inclusive and collaborative.

Although the global societal grand challenges facing us are complex, the ideas and solutions are often local. Through effective collaboration across cities, towns and regions in the UK, we can drive a more inclusive approach to innovation to help unlock these opportunities with talent and technology at the heart.

Innovative places also have the potential to become magnets for talent and investment and it's vital that we continue to push forward and invest in our homegrown talent as well as attracting skills and technologies from around the world.

Norfolk and Suffolk and the wider East of England are in an exciting position to be at the very forefront of science and innovation in the UK, helping to position the country as an Innovation Nation with Global Impact, helping to feed, connect and power the world. Our region is blessed with opportunity to leverage our unique sectoral strengths, our unrivalled place-based assets and our amazing skilled talent from our colleges and universities.

New Anglia LEP and the partners of the New Anglia Innovation Board are delighted to have created a strong alliance with Innovate UK and other parts of UKRI and look forward to continued efforts to support and drive forward the innovation economy in the region.

**C-J Green**  
Chair, New Anglia LEP Board

**Johnathan Reynolds**  
Chair, New Anglia Innovation Board

**Councillor Kay Mason-Billig**  
Leader, Norfolk County Council

**Councillor Matthew Hicks**  
Leader, Suffolk County Council



# Executive Summary

Innovate UK is delivering against the UK Government's vision to be a global hub for innovation by 2035 through its mission to grow, develop and commercialise products, services and processes, and by supporting outstanding innovation ecosystems that are agile and inclusive.

Innovate UK is committed to embed Place in all activity in this spending review period and beyond, to support existing excellent local innovation strengths that are critical to overall UK capability and explore new opportunities for growth.

The strengths and potential for economic growth and productivity gains in Norfolk and Suffolk highlight the need to assess the progress being made and to identify further areas to work together in the region.

This New Anglia Action Plan highlights areas of strength and positive trends in the local economy. It also flags key issues and challenges that are priorities for future action. It sets out directions including a longer-term perspective, building on existing innovation assets and the development of emerging opportunities.

This plan provides a strategic focus for innovation in Norfolk and Suffolk, and an overview of how we can catalyse the actions of partners in the region to create impact.

## Principles and Core Areas

We will draw on the principles set out in **Innovate UK's Plan for Action** and work with the leadership and wider partners across Norfolk and Suffolk to deliver our innovation ambitions by:

- **Inspire:** Inspiring more people and businesses to undertake all forms of innovation and to generate commercially valuable intellectual property (IP).
- **Involve:** Working together across the Norfolk and Suffolk ecosystem to have a greater impact than we can separately.
- **Invest:** Aligning our existing resources and investments to ensure that we build on the insights, assets, and capabilities from across Norfolk and Suffolk.

Innovate UK will work with the leadership and wider partners across Norfolk and Suffolk to deliver our joint innovation ambitions, through three core areas:

- **Strategic Partnerships** to ensure we have the necessary relationships to deliver this plan and grow Norfolk and Suffolk's economy through innovation, maximising local strengths and capabilities.
- **Innovation Support** that is targeted at connecting key clusters of agritech, biotech, clean energy, and digital knowledge and expertise. We will address the needs of local businesses and entrepreneurs, sharing expertise and data so we can take more informed actions.
- **Communication and engagement** to ensure we're reaching, engaging, and inspiring more entrepreneurs and business leaders, working closely with the Connected Innovation programme and partners.



# National Innovation



A growing global population and the aim to improve the quality of life for all against a backdrop of increasing environmental concern is already affecting the global economy, and this will be further transformed by the end of this century. To protect the environment and have a stronger and more equitable economy we must do things differently. Business innovation is essential to this.

We see solutions as well as significant opportunities for UK businesses in:

- achieving net zero carbon emissions and tackling wider adverse environmental impacts
- health and wellbeing - sustaining healthy human life, including nutrition and healthcare

- technologies - creating and benefiting from advances in technology.

Delivering on this will require working in parallel to achieve a more diverse innovation system that values difference, excites future innovators and enables the best ideas to succeed.

The UK Government is investing in R&D at record levels as it strives to consolidate the UK's position as a science superpower and innovation nation. This has been supported by an increase in private sector investment into R&D. The R&D mission in the 2022 **Levelling Up White Paper** outlines how the benefits of R&D will help local economies.

In November 2021, Innovate UK published its **Plan for Action** outlining its approach to delivering the **Government's Innovation**

**Strategy** and the vision for the UK to be a global hub for innovation by 2035.

Innovate UK's **Strategic Delivery Plan 2022-25** outlines how it will deliver through the development and commercialisation of new ideas supported by an outstanding innovation ecosystem that is agile, inclusive, and easy to navigate. This includes helping to maximise local strengths that can enhance UK capabilities and increase the regional and national impact of innovation clusters.

Innovate UK has committed to work with local and national partners to build greater coherence between national economic plans, local growth strategies and the Government's overall innovation strategy. It has also committed to co-develop local action plans

with local leadership, using the reach and breadth of UKRI collaborations.

This Action Plan sets out our shared ambition for Norfolk and Suffolk, and how we will work together in a systematic place-based approach through local to national co-creation, to drive greater innovation, resilience, productivity and growth.



# The View from New Anglia

Drawing on the area's knowledge and natural assets, innovation will help to address our productivity challenge and leverage our unique innovation assets.

Norfolk and Suffolk have a strong focus on innovation. Drawing on the area's knowledge and natural assets, innovation will help to address our productivity challenge and leverage our unique innovation assets. The **Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy** sets out a clear direction with innovation, skills and clean growth at its heart.

The New Anglia Innovation Board is the primary place for strategic conversations

on innovation. Innovate UK is an important member of the Board, alongside strategic leaders of Norfolk and Suffolk's main innovation hubs and clusters. The Innovation Board connects with key clusters through our Industry Councils (agri-food, energy and digital tech) and various sector groups covering manufacturing, space, financial services, creative industries, culture and tourism. Innovation does not recognise

geographical or sectoral boundaries. Our approach is to promote a more inclusive agenda, around 'innovation for all'.

New Anglia LEP's **Connected Innovation** programme is a significant regional innovation network made up of twenty five innovation hubs, research institutes, universities, and Freeport East, actively collaborating together to push the envelope of innovation in our region. The Connected

Innovation programme acts as the interface to engage with Government departments and agencies, and drives Norfolk and Suffolk's innovation ecosystem forward through its key business innovation clusters; joining the dots around innovation support for businesses; developing thematic opportunities and challenges, and facilitating cross-sector innovation.

In addition to Connected Innovation, local partners have developed a tailored portfolio of local support to compliment national programmes, including:

- **New Anglia Capital**, a co-investment fund investing in Norfolk and Suffolk's high-growth companies.

- **High Growth Network** and **Scale Up New Anglia Programme**.
- **Innovation Grant Mentoring Project**, supporting businesses to improve their chances of securing innovation funding.
- The **Growth Through Innovation Fund**.

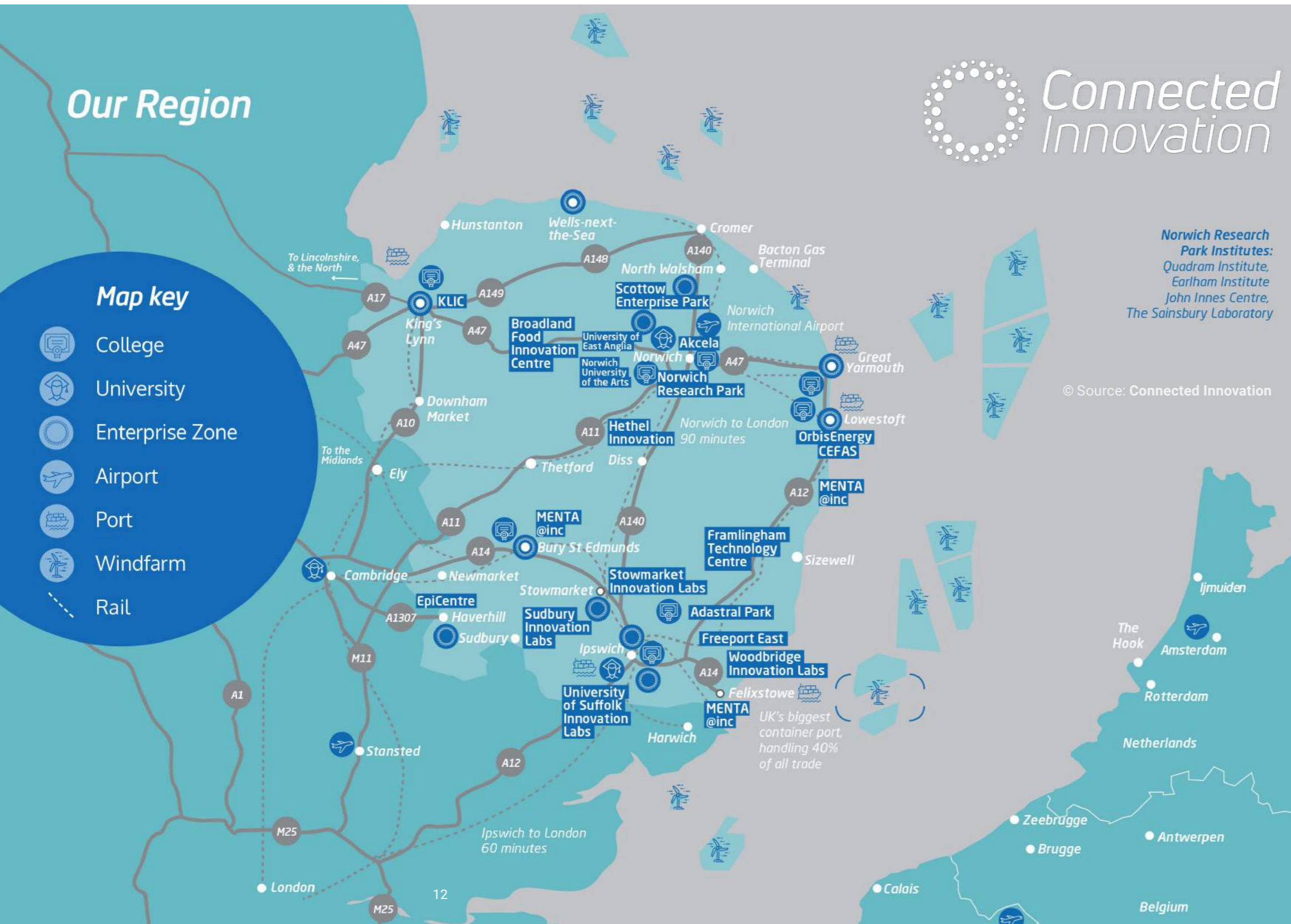
We have a challenge in connecting people across Norfolk and Suffolk's 3,500 square miles – including rural and coastal communities with unique challenges of their own. **Connected Innovation** represents an opportunity to better connect these communities to innovation assets.

The business incorporation rate in Norfolk and Suffolk tracks below the UK average, with a consistent gap of around 5-10 enterprises less per 10,000 head of the 16-64 year-old population. However, the five-year survival rate for businesses is 3.5 percentage points above the UK average (45.97% v 42.50%). The area ranks comparatively favourably, 13<sup>th</sup> of 37 LEPs (excluding London) for the number of scale-up businesses.<sup>1</sup>

Norfolk and Suffolk face challenges in training and retaining highly-skilled people to support innovation. Collectively, partners have sought to address this through the Local Skills Improvement Plan, Skills Bootcamps, and capital infrastructure investments such as **Productivity East** at the University of East Anglia, the University of Suffolk's **DigiTech Centre** on Adastral Park, the City College Norwich **Digital Technology Factory**, and Suffolk New College's **Tech Campus**.

Collectively, we must build upon these important investments to drive commercialisation and innovation. Strong commitment and effective collaboration are key to unlocking greater productivity, economic growth and global trade opportunities.

This Action Plan sets out this shared ambition for Norfolk and Suffolk and is vital to achieving our goals and aspirations.



<sup>1</sup> The Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk, [newanglia.co.uk/economic-strategy/](http://newanglia.co.uk/economic-strategy/)

# Our Innovation History

Norfolk and Suffolk have been at the forefront of innovation in industries from environmental and marine sciences through to renewable energy and telecommunications. In the agri-food sector, the area led the British Agricultural Revolution and spearheaded world-leading research on plant science.

The area has unique access to the Southern North Sea which for over 60 years has been home to the infrastructure and facilities for a vast range of energy including gas, nuclear and offshore wind. This has supported an industrial base of supply chain expertise and innovation.

The foundations for **Norwich Research Park** were laid in the 1960s with the **University of East Anglia (UEA)**. The **John Innes Institute** relocated from South Merton in 1967, undertaking plant, microbial and mammalian cell research, with a particular focus on crop science. Soon after, the Institute of Food Research moved to the site, accompanied by the opening of **The Sainsbury Laboratory** in 1988 which was founded to deliver research on molecular plant pathology. In 1992, the site was officially launched as Norwich Research Park.

The **Tyndall Centre** (founded in 2000) conducts cutting edge, interdisciplinary research, and provides a conduit between scientists and policymakers, with a substantial body of climate change expertise from its unique partnership between universities across the UK and in Shanghai.

The UK's **Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)** headquartered in Lowestoft, has over 120 years of experience providing high quality pragmatic science advice to national and international governments.

BT's global research and development headquarters at **Adastral Park**, Martlesham, were opened by Queen Elizabeth II in November 1975. Since arriving in Martlesham, BT has built the first commercial 140Mb/s single mode optical fibre link (1984); hosted Europe's first satellite transmission service (1982); made the first live data call over GPRS (1999); and won the Queen's Award for Enterprise (Innovation) 2014 for the creation of IP Exchange (IPX).







## Today's Outlook

Our vision for innovation in the region is about collaboration across our innovation communities, clusters, hubs, and researchers, to make a real difference on the world-stage in tackling societal challenges through the application of science, research, technology, and talent.

We aim to drive forward one of the UK's most impactful rural and coastal innovation clusters leveraging a strong partnership between Norfolk, Suffolk, and Innovate UK.

Norfolk and Suffolk have leading strengths in four of the five critical technologies named in the **UK Science and Technology Framework**; artificial intelligence (AI), future telecommunications, quantum technologies, and engineering biology. These capabilities are centred primarily around the world-class innovation sites at **Adastral Park** and **Norwich Research Park (NRP)**.

Adastral Park generates the largest number of AI patents from a single site in the UK and contributes £750 million to the region's economy. Home to BT's

global R&D headquarters and a cluster of over 150 innovative businesses, the site is at the forefront of innovation on future quantum and photonics and network and security technologies. This is central to the emerging **Space East** cluster.

NRP is one of the largest single-site concentrations of research in food, genomics and health in Europe, and brings together four independent research institutes: **John Innes Centre**, **Quadram Institute**, **Earlham Institute** and **The Sainsbury Laboratory**; with **University of East Anglia** and **Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**, supported and funded by The John Innes Foundation and UKRI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), and a community of over 115 businesses. NRP uses scientific research into living systems to solve some of the world's greatest challenges, employing advanced techniques in plant biology, bioinformatics, microbiology and genomics.

Building on significant capital investment in new facilities and research programmes at

NRP, the site will receive over £317 million over the next seven years from UKRI's Next Generation Infrastructure programme to enable a ground-breaking plant and microbial science and innovation hub. Additionally, BBSRC will provide the Earlham Institute, John Innes Centre and Quadram Institute with a combined £166.9 million to support the cutting-edge science at NRP.

The region also has leading expertise in the field of environmental, marine and aquaculture science. Of particular note is

Cefas' provision of marine and freshwater science expertise and innovative solutions to help keep seas, oceans and rivers healthy and productive and our seafood safe and sustainable by providing data. Cefas provide advice to the UK Government and overseas partners, which is highly targeted at the UN sustainability goals. Around 500 scientists and technologists are based here and Cefas is working closely with local partners, including universities such as UEA, to ensure the region presents a strong collaborative marine science and research community.

### Empowering Creators with Cutting-Edge Website and App Builder

**Juliana Meyer** is providing entrepreneurs with ready-made state-of-the-art websites and apps with her team at SupaPass. SupaPass have created an all-in-one website and app builder for the \$100 billion Creator Economy, so anyone can build their dream – with no-code – in less than a day. Through AI automation innovation, SupaPass makes it quick, simple and affordable for creators to have all their content, community, and paywall in one place on their own website and app platform.

Juliana, who is based in Norwich and studied at the University of Oxford, is working to elevate the presence of small businesses by offering pre-built cutting-edge websites and mobile apps that instantly look and feel like leading content platforms such as Netflix and Spotify.

SupaPass' award-winning software enables creators around the world to monetise their content through payment-ready platforms, powering businesses in areas such as podcasting, eLearning, events, membership organisations or for any business with content.

Juliana's passion to show young women that anything is possible contributed to her winning a Innovate UK Women in Innovation Award in 2021. The entrepreneur wants to set an example to others, showing how they too can turn an idea into an innovation and said, "The Women in Innovation Award is a great way to inspire women to excel in technology careers. Strong women role models have always played a huge role in my career and growing SupaPass."

Since then, SupaPass won an Innovate UK SMART grant exploring AI for hyper-personalisation innovation to make complex software onboarding accessible to all, and an Innovation Loan to accelerate commercialisation of these services.

# Feeding a Healthier World

Norfolk and Suffolk are globally renowned for plant science expertise and the ability to develop nutritious food products, from concept to consumer. This will meet growing global demand for sustainable food which will improve physical and cognitive health.

Agricultural businesses make up 9% of the Norfolk and Suffolk economy, more than double the 4% national average. Combined, Norfolk and Suffolk produces 12% of the UK's cereals, 16.6% of the UK's fruit and vegetables, 22.7% of the UK's pigs, 17.6% of the UK's poultry and 60% of the UK's sugar. There are significant strengths across the food chain, combined with our expertise in climate change and agri-tech.

We are working with partners in Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on regional initiatives in shared areas of interest – automation, agri-tech, plant science and nutritious diets. These present significant opportunities to unlock our potential as the UK's food gateway to the world.

This is the basis of the **Innovate UK Launchpad** for agri-tech and food tech, that opened in October 2023 to develop and pioneer game-changing solutions in this locally and nationally important cluster.



Innovative companies in Norfolk and Suffolk are working with the **Earlham Institute**, the **John Innes Centre** and the **Quadram Institute** to use plant science and genometrics to improve sustainable food production and enhance the nutritional value of food. This has been recognised as a **'Plant Science for Nutrition' High Potential Opportunity** by the Department for Business and Trade. This major commercial opportunity, at the interface between food science, gut biology, human health and disease, capitalising on our world-class bioscience cluster, is being promoted around the world.

**Cefas** monitors and assesses the state of aquatic environments to ensure seafood is safe and sustainable. They do so by using a wide array of surveillance, mapping, and sampling technologies including

genomics and AI. Their data collection vessels include the Cefas Endeavour, autonomous marine vehicles, remotely piloted aircrafts, and satellites.

Innovations such as controlled environment agriculture (CEA) are ever-present in the region, with the world's largest on Fischer Farms' 4-acre site at the Food Enterprise Park in Norwich. 25,000 m<sup>2</sup> of growing space supplies leaf salad, leafy herbs and other fresh produce to UK supermarkets and other customers every day. The Food Enterprise Park is also home to the **Broadland Food Innovation Centre** which provides food and drink businesses with bespoke facilities, support and cluster membership, to support them on their innovation and growth.



## Antiviral fabric to help stop the spread of COVID-19

Pioneering company **Colorifix** uses a biological process to produce, deposit and fix pigments onto textiles. With funding from Innovate UK, Colorifix is working alongside the University of Cambridge to develop anti-COVID-19 photoactive and light-independent dyes, using pigment-producing microorganisms.

Using microbiology, material science and nanotechnology, the team is developing fabrics that have antimicrobial properties which work against pathogens common in hospital settings. Colorifix's safe, sustainable, natural antiviral dyes are kind to both the environment and to people's skin.

In 2020, they won further funding to collaborate with the Earlham Institute, also at Norwich Research Park, to consolidate their leadership in the development of dyes using synthetic biology.

## Connecting the World

Norfolk and Suffolk have a rich tech ecosystem and unique capabilities in terms of core communications infrastructure behind mobile, 5G and fixed telecoms services. This has been recognised as a **'5G and Digitisation' High Potential Opportunity** by the Department for Business and Trade.

**Adastral Park** in Suffolk offers unrivalled experience in the development of 5G, digitisation, future technology, security and future networks. The site has a range of technical facilities available such as

showcases, shared 5G R&D facilities and labs, space and satellite labs as well as an experimental quantum communications network. Adastral Park is home to over 150 leading companies, over 3,000 technology professionals, and BT's global R&D centre.

The **Space East** cluster formed in 2023, with the support of New Anglia LEP and the UK Space Agency, focuses on connectivity in our rural and coastal communities; driving technological advancements in key sectors such as agriculture, marine science,

visitor economy; and supporting the transition to Net Zero. It has quickly established itself as a focus point for the sector, supporting the growth of businesses and opening up new market opportunities for organisations in converging sectors. The Satellite Applications Catapult, the LEP, local authorities, BT, and Innovation Martlesham are working together on opportunities for new innovation infrastructure locally.

### Working with universities to scale innovations

Orbital Global have worked with several universities to acquire new talent to work on innovative projects. VirtTuri® is a world-leading AI spin out from Orbital Global that is scaling the deployment of patented AI clinical informatics avatars in healthcare. VirtTuri® is the product of four years' research and development work via two Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) with the University of Essex and Cardiff University, both of which were rated as outstanding. The resulting technology secured the highly coveted 'Innovation of the Year' award at the Consumer Healthcare Industry (Chi) Awards in 2021. A previous KTP with the University of Suffolk led to the development of My Spira, the world's first augmented reality asthma education and inhaler training simulation technology, which is currently being distributed into public healthcare to improve childhood healthcare outcomes and save lives.

Orbital became an Innovate UK Scaleup Programme alumnus in 2022, saying: "Our scaleup director brought us on four years in three weeks" (Hayden Allen-Vercoe). Innovate UK continues to relationship manage the company with tactical investor communications support. Central to the work was the spin-out of VirtTuri® which was backed by the Anglia Capital Group and the Low Carbon Innovation Fund and was led by Chris Ellis working out of St John's Innovation Centre Cambridge.



## Powering a Cleaner World

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Norfolk and Suffolk have a unique mix of wind power, gas, and nuclear energy production with over 60 years of experience and expertise across the supply chain. In 2022, 32% of UK homes were powered by 8.7GW of clean energy from the East of England, which could rise to 24GW by 2035, the equivalent of powering 67% of UK homes.

The region's advanced manufacturing and engineering cluster is key to the supply chains for many of these nationally significant infrastructure projects and is supporting wider innovations to drive the transition to Net Zero. This strength is reflected in the grants awarded by Innovate UK, with more than 50% awarded in the area aimed towards the clean growth sector. The region has fantastic examples of companies such as Lotus and Equipmake who, with

Innovate UK's support, are leading the charge on electric supercars and electric double decker buses.

**Freeport East** is recognised by the Department for Business and Trade as a **High Potential Opportunity** for its focus as a world-leading centre for clean energy production. It encompasses Britain's largest container port and busiest railhead, two major ferry terminals, and is part of the UK's East Coast Green Energy cluster. Freeport East will propel the UK's Net Zero decarbonisation efforts through its role as a green energy hub to strengthen green energy technologies and innovation in the region. Demonstrated in its development of a 110-hectare site for creating an offshore wind hub designed to support assembly, manufacturing and associated engineering solutions.

### Engineering an electric future

'Equipmake was established in 1997 and then later expanded its operations within the Hethel Engineering Centre near Norwich, focusing on the design and production of electrification products and drivetrain solutions. The company formed a working relationship with Innovate UK and the Advanced Propulsion Centre in 2012 and has subsequently won funding for 13 projects ranging from £75,000 to £2.6 million. In 2019, Equipmake moved to a new 1,500m<sup>2</sup> purpose-built facility at Snetterton Business Park. The company has grown to 90 staff members, achieved a turnover of £5.1 million in the 12 months to 31 May 2023 and secured £16.2 million in investment since its initial public offering in July 2022.

Equipmake's IP has been adopted across multiple sectors internationally including buses, coaches, emergency vehicles, aerospace and the marine industry. The company has also signed a key licensing agreement with Sona Comstar, a global automotive systems and components manufacturer, that will see Equipmake license certain products from its range for applications in electric cars, buses, commercial vehicles and off-road vehicles in India, Thailand and other select South Asian countries.

## Keronite

### Low-cost water purification system without the need for chemicals

Keronite, a company specialising in metal coatings, based in Haverhill, has used an Innovate UK grant to develop a highly efficient, low-impact solution to water treatment.

The company has designed Pristine: technology that uses photocatalysts to remove pollutants from water.

Unlike chemical treatments, which need to be replenished and can cause pollution themselves, photocatalyst surfaces provide unlimited purification without the risk of contaminating water streams.

"The technology has potential in many areas, from cleaning contamination from farming or mining, through to large-scale municipal drinking water and sewage treatment." Dr Robin Francis, Senior Director, Technology at Keronite.

# Innovate UK in Norfolk and Suffolk

Over recent years, Innovate UK has worked with partners across Norfolk and Suffolk to align national and local strategies and plans for business innovation by focusing on areas where we have shared priorities.

## Investment into Norfolk and Suffolk

In the past five years, Innovate UK has invested £23.3 million into the innovation projects of 161 businesses and other organisations in Norfolk and Suffolk.

More than four fifths of that, £19 million, was invested in the projects of 126 small and medium enterprises (SMEs), with a further £1.3 million (6%) awarded to larger businesses.

£3 million (13%) has been invested through academic, research and public sector organisations for supporting business innovation and strengthening the relationship between industry and academia. This is particularly important for SMEs who are less likely to have the research capability in-house and need external research organisations to help progress new ideas to commercialisation.



### Innovate UK puts spring in step of insoles innovator

Suffolk based Enertor uses its innovative RSscan technology to design and manufacture bespoke orthotic insoles using its unique PX1 shock-absorbing technology. It is an authorised insole supplier to the NHS and the only authorised supplier to the UK military, having been clinically proven to reduce injury in a three-year independent Ministry of Defence clinical trial.

Innovate UK started working with Enertor in January 2021 following a £94k grant award for its 'Introducing circular economy system in the UK insoles market' project.

Enertor wanted to tackle business growth challenges related to finance, manufacturing capability and IP strategy. The Innovate UK team identified funding options and support with manufacturing. They helped the company to secure grant funding to facilitate working with the High Value Manufacturing Catapult which led to the development of a system using machine vision and a "cobot" (a collaborative robot), that the company plans to adopt to increase productivity threefold, which could generate up to £3 million in additional annual sales.

Innovate UK also managed Enertor's application for an Intellectual Property Office's IP Audit that has shaped their IP strategy, and applied marketing expertise to aid its new product launch.

Enertor has also won £25k in grant funding through the Growth Through Innovation Fund from New Anglia LEP to develop and launch a new product range in 2023.

Nick Beresford, Director and Owner, said: "Our Innovate UK Innovation & Growth Specialists have been an immense strategic asset over the past couple of years. We are delighted to receive ongoing support from Innovate UK in driving our business growth, having already achieved a remarkable year with a growth of over 20%. Additionally, we are on track to make a profit for the first time this year, which would not have been possible without its significant support."

[www.enertor.com](http://www.enertor.com)



## Programmes in Norfolk and Suffolk

Innovate UK has supported the region's strengths to directly address needs and opportunities, such as the **Norfolk Climate Change Partnership's** Clean Growth and Citizen Preparedness project, and **Creative East**, part of the **DCMS Create Growth Programme** that unlocks the growth potential of creative businesses in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. New Anglia LEP worked in partnership with Innovate UK as well as the neighbouring Greater Lincolnshire LEP and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority to shape the **Launchpad** for agri-tech and food-tech, that opened in October 2023.

Innovate UK growth advisors work closely with the **Connected Innovation** programme and local partners to deliver bespoke business growth and scaling support to ambitious businesses. Since April 2021 they have supported more than 200 companies in the area, helping to create 173 new jobs and maintain 530 more jobs. Together, these companies saw a combined increase in turnover of £17.8 million. Twenty-four of the companies went on to raise investment totalling £22.7 million.

As part of their role in Connected Innovation, Innovate UK contribute their knowledge

of finance and investment to Norfolk and Suffolk's **Innovation Grant Mentoring Project**, that gives expert advice and guidance to small businesses applying for funding for their first innovation projects. One example is I Boxit who were helped to win a grant for their work to create an environmentally friendly alternative to polystyrene packaging for seafood.

Innovate UK has worked with partners in Norfolk and Suffolk to deliver the Innovate East events at Adastral Park in 2018, Norwich Research Park in 2020, and with a virtual audience of over 400 people in 2021. In total,

Innovate UK has linked over 700 innovators in Norfolk and Suffolk with events and organisations across the UK to exploit new innovation opportunities.

Through the **Adopt and Accelerate programme**, Innovate UK is working with partners to shape Net Zero opportunities for the agri-food sector in Norfolk and Suffolk. Their joint efforts focus on fostering knowledge exchange opportunities to accelerate the diffusion and adoption of Net Zero innovations, and subsequently taking advantage of market opportunities.

The **Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult** employs an Innovation Manager for the East; a post created with, and originally part-funded by, New Anglia LEP. That has led to benefits linked to supply chain innovation, including the **Fit4OR New Anglia** programme and the first **Launch Academy** programme in East Anglia, with added funding from local County Council partners.

Innovate UK's programmes will support more new innovators and spin-out businesses commercialising science from the area's excellent academic and scientific institutions. Businesses like Jonas Seafood in Cromer, who won an Innovate UK Fast Start grant to investigate creating a new sustainable revenue stream by separating protein from crab shell waste. Teams from the University of East Anglia, the John Innes Centre and the Earlham Institute have taken part in **ICURe**, Innovate UK's pre-accelerator programme for researchers.

# Aligning Ambitions

As one of three core strategic priorities, Innovate UK has committed to embedding Place into everything it does in this spending review period and beyond.

Recognising that the needs of innovative businesses will vary from place to place, Innovate UK will work with innovation leaders in Norfolk and Suffolk to achieve their ambition to become one of the best places in the world to live, work, learn and succeed in business.

This Action Plan for Norfolk and Suffolk sets out three priority areas, that address major societal challenges. They are interdependent and connected through people, institutions and business and

through their location in this urban, rural and coastal landscape.

- **Feeding a healthier world:** Norfolk and Suffolk are home to an advanced and nationally significant agri-food and drink sector, with globally renowned companies and a world-leading research base, at the forefront of global food and health research.

- **Connecting the world:** The area is a global centre of research and development and innovation in communications technology. It has a fast-growing digital creative hub, with an international reputation for producing graduates who excel.
- **Powering a cleaner world:** The area is at the centre of the world's largest market for offshore wind energy and one of the

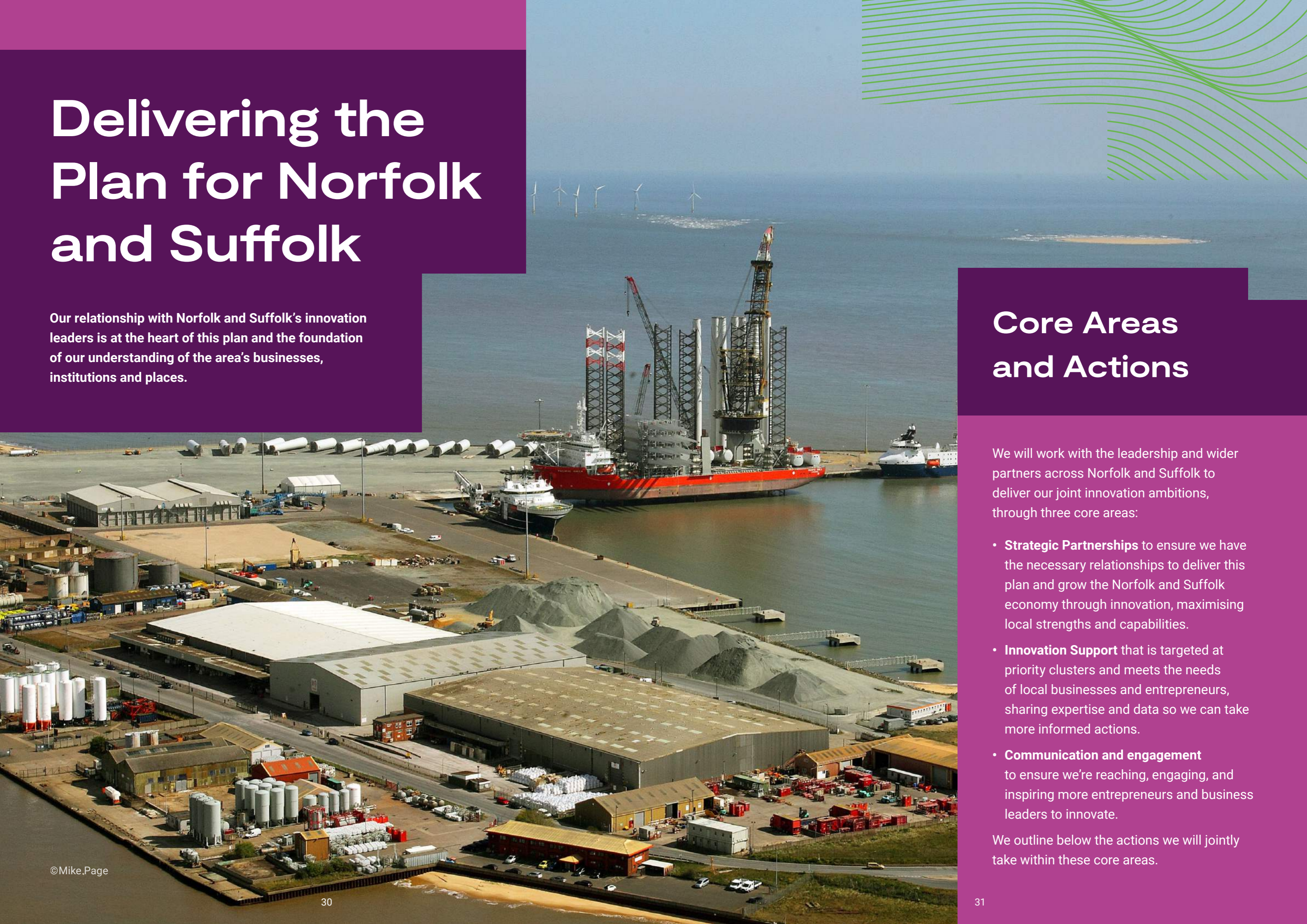
few places in the UK where all forms of energy generation exist together, including existing and future nuclear power and an emerging hydrogen economy that are vital in delivering the UK's Net Zero mission.

Together, this ambition and three priority areas anchor our guiding principles set out in the next section.



# Delivering the Plan for Norfolk and Suffolk

Our relationship with Norfolk and Suffolk's innovation leaders is at the heart of this plan and the foundation of our understanding of the area's businesses, institutions and places.



## Core Areas and Actions

We will work with the leadership and wider partners across Norfolk and Suffolk to deliver our joint innovation ambitions, through three core areas:

- **Strategic Partnerships** to ensure we have the necessary relationships to deliver this plan and grow the Norfolk and Suffolk economy through innovation, maximising local strengths and capabilities.
- **Innovation Support** that is targeted at priority clusters and meets the needs of local businesses and entrepreneurs, sharing expertise and data so we can take more informed actions.
- **Communication and engagement** to ensure we're reaching, engaging, and inspiring more entrepreneurs and business leaders to innovate.

We outline below the actions we will jointly take within these core areas.



## Strategic partnership

The New Anglia Innovation Board and Innovate UK will:

- **Co-investment opportunities:** Develop programmes in which we can align our investments to grow local innovation clusters and develop a pipeline of activities to drive inclusive innovation in Norfolk and Suffolk.
- **Increasing Engagement:** Use our joint convening power to ensure national agencies and partners in Norfolk and Suffolk are joined up on relevant activities, including UK Research & Innovation, Department for Business and Trade and the British Business Bank.
- **Innovate UK presence:** Ensure all Innovate UK services continue to be increasingly visible, active, and well understood across Norfolk and Suffolk, supported by the Connected Innovation network of partners and places.
- **Strategic Forums:** Participate in key forums, providing appropriate representation and sector expertise from across Innovate UK, including but not limited to the:
  - New Anglia Innovation Board
  - Connected Innovation Programme
- **Skills Gap Opportunities:** Work jointly on understanding the innovation skills gap and explore ways to deliver talent and skills to drive the UK economy through more inclusive innovation.
- **Alignment of Opportunities:** Inform each other of new programmes to ensure alignment and reduce the risk of duplication.
- **Provide appropriate resources:** Ensure the success of this local action plan through better collaborative working arrangements.

## Innovation Support

The New Anglia Innovation Board and Innovate UK will:

- **Cluster Growth:** Connect our services and programmes to grow Norfolk and Suffolk's connected innovation cluster, taking positive action to support established capabilities in:
  - Agritech and biotech, with a concentration of research excellence at Norwich Research Park and at Cefas and connected by **Agritech-E** and **Connected Innovation**.
  - Cleantech, offshore renewable energy and the engineering and manufacturing excellence that supports these, distributed across the region and connected by the **NAAME** network and with hubs at **Hethel Innovation** and **Orbis Energy**.
  - Advanced manufacturing, building stronger links between the **NAAME** cluster group, the **Made Smarter Programme**, and the High Value Manufacturing Catapult.
  - Digital innovation in networks, robotics, space and the creative industries, with a concentration of research excellence at **BT's Adastral Park** and **Norwich University of the Arts**, top two UK creative arts university.



- We will build on the strong links that exist with the Satellite Applications Catapult, the Digital Catapult and Innovate UK.
- **Data Sharing and Business Intelligence:** Share relevant data for specific businesses and applications for Innovate UK and competitions run by partners in Norfolk and Suffolk, with the aim of improving targeted support and to aid monitoring of the take up of Innovation support.
- **Identify Local Expertise:**
  - Drive awareness of the opportunities associated with Knowledge Transfer Partnerships for businesses across Norfolk and Suffolk, from universities and research institutes in the region and those in neighbouring areas.
  - Identify appropriate local expertise to invite to become Innovate UK application assessors and project monitoring officers.

# Communication and Engagement

The New Anglia Innovation Board and Innovate UK will:

- **Joint Communication:** Work collaboratively on communications and marketing in areas that support the ambitions of both parties.

- **Innovation Events:** Work specifically with local partners to inspire innovation and promote opportunities to businesses and diverse communities in Norfolk and Suffolk.
- **Maximise Visibility:** Work with the **Connected Innovation website** and programme to align business-facing information with the new **Innovate UK Innovation Hub** to maximise reach into the area.



# Monitoring, Delivery and Outcomes

Innovate UK and the New Anglia Innovation Board have responsibility for overseeing the implementation of this plan. The plan is intended to be an agile and evolving document, which responds to changing governance, local needs and economic pressures over the next three years.

Reviews will take place annually. At each review we will assess progress against the actions and create a delivery plan for the subsequent year, evolving existing and creating new actions as appropriate.

The high-level impacts for Norfolk and Suffolk are:

- more resilient and innovation active businesses
- greater diversity of talent involved in innovation
- new and more rewarding jobs for people in Norfolk and Suffolk
- higher levels of public and private finance for businesses to innovate and grow
- a stronger entrepreneurial culture leading to innovative start-ups and spinouts from universities and research organisations
- a more attractive location for inward investment and stronger international trade

And contributing to national and global impacts:

- more innovative businesses developing solutions to national and global challenges
- supporting scale up and positioning innovative businesses in supply chains of the future
- higher national productivity
- a stronger UK wide research and innovation ecosystem cementing the UK's position as a science superpower and innovation nation

The overarching outcome of this New Anglia Action Plan is that, by working in partnership with the business and innovation leadership of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the connected local innovation ecosystem, we will ensure that businesses in the two counties are more resilient and able to profitably develop their ideas. This will contribute to growing the economies of Norfolk and Suffolk, and so the economy of the UK, while launching more and better solutions to our national and global challenges.



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Local Enterprise Partnership  
for Norfolk and Suffolk



[ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk](http://ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk)

03003 214357 • [support@iuk.ukri.org](mailto:support@iuk.ukri.org) • [@innovateuk](https://twitter.com/innovateuk)

Innovate UK, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, SN2 1FL