



SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Our support for local businesses has had a measurable impact on economic growth – creating jobs and securing investment, as well as helping NHS providers to reduce costs and improve care.

COMMERCIAL TEAM RECORDS 'BEST YEAR EVER'



new investment



new contracts



new jobs

Our commercial team supports small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) working in health and social care – and they reported their best ever performance in the last year.

We receive support from the European Regional Development Fund to help SMEs whose innovative products and services improve healthcare and offer potential savings, working with partners in three programmes – Liverpool City Region; Lancashire; and Cheshire and Warrington.

A total of 99 companies reported benefit from working with us in the past year; having:

- Received investment totalling £8.2 million
- Gained new contracts worth nearly £2.5 million
- Created 73 new jobs

"We offer wrap-around support to companies in the North West Coast and these figures show that we're having a major impact on companies' performance.

"They also show that companies appreciate what we do, from identifying sources of funding to opening doors to key decision-makers in the health and social care system."

Mike Kenny
Innovation Agency Associate
Commercial Director

MED TECH COMPANY WINS MAJOR INVESTMENT

A business in Merseyside has won major funding to develop and market its products after support from the Innovation Agency.

Inovus Medical produces affordable keyhole surgical simulators which are being used by around 100 hospitals in the NHS, potentially saving trusts hundreds of thousands of pounds.

The company was founded by Dr Elliot Street and Jordan Van Flute, who built their first prototype in Elliot's bedroom while they were students. The model was affordable, accessible and portable – disrupting the existing market of more expensive products.

They were introduced by our commercial team to the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) Healthcare and secured £100,000 funding. Our team also supported a successful bid to the European Institute for Innovation and Technology (EIT) Health, resulting in a further €50,000 funding.

This was followed by £500,000 funding from the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund, part of a £700,000 investment round alongside an angel investor.

Inovus Medical now employs 12 people and has won several business awards.

Elliot said: "It is astonishing how far we have come since starting the company. From bending pieces of plastic with rudimentary jigs, we are now using thermo forming, CNC machining, laser cutting, 3D printing and silicone injection moulding all from our plant in St Helens."

The company now has eight different healthcare simulators on the market including a number of versions of their original keyhole surgery simulator, which has been sold in over 65 countries worldwide and is used by nearly 100 hospitals in the NHS.

Dr Street is one of a cohort of NHS Clinical Entrepreneurs supported by NHS England's National Clinical Director for Innovation, Professor Tony Young, who said: "It is great to see the Clinical Entrepreneur programme and SBRI Healthcare initiatives coming together to support the work of one of our entrepreneurs.

"This is what innovation is all about – let our frontline clinical staff highlight unmet needs and then support and empower them to solve those needs."

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Dr Elliot Street
NHS Clinical Entrepreneur

Inovus Medical founders
Jordan Van Flute and Dr Elliot
Street with Andy Cairns of the
Innovation Agency





Cadscan Managing Director Dr Alastair Buchanan
with Indi Singh of the Innovation Agency

FUNDING FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH APP

A product design company in Cheshire was awarded funding to develop a voice-operated app to treat anxiety in young people, after support from the Innovation Agency.

Cadscan was awarded the contract to develop Phobot as part of the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) Healthcare. The contract is to develop interventions that support positive mental health.

Public Health England estimates that 10 per cent of children aged five to 16 are likely to develop a clinically significant mental health disorder, one of which is anxiety. Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is recommended as a treatment option but the provision of therapy is often restricted due to demand.

Phobot uses artificial intelligence and language understanding which enables it to interpret a user's words and respond with a tailored treatment programme.

The funding has facilitated the first phase of development for Phobot, which is currently being tested on different platforms with a group of young people.

Dr Simon Lewis, a clinical psychologist at Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust, has been working with Cadscan on the development of Phobot. He said: "Phobot will help young people by using key elements from an evidence-based approach to social anxiety whilst being responsive, accessible and approachable."



AUGMENTED REALITY HELPS PEOPLE AT RISK OF SUICIDE

A mental health trust worked with one of our region's innovators in a pioneering approach to support men at risk of suicide, after being connected by the Innovation Agency.

When Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust were seeking innovative technology to support their work with Liverpool suicide prevention charity James' Place, we introduced them to Media and Digital. Working in collaboration with James' Place, Media and Digital used Augmented Reality (AR) to bring potentially lifesaving human contact to people in need.

James' Place then launched a service involving a 'Crisis Card' which can be scanned by a mobile phone to bring to life an AR human being who can help break down the very real barrier of asking for help by offering immediate warmth, support and advice. The James' Place Crisis Card is now

being distributed in places like university campuses, sports stadiums and A&E departments to offer a powerful resource in the fight against male suicide.

Stuart Atherton, managing director of Media and Digital said: "When we were approached by the Innovation Agency on behalf of Mersey Care, we knew immediately how we could use the power of AR to reach out to and really engage with this demographic.

"The feeling of having someone to talk to greatly lessens the possibility of an individual taking their own life – and the Crisis Card offers a supportive, one-to-one contact in a safe and familiar format. Crucially, all interactions are measurable so that we can evaluate the success of the campaign and evidence the impact of its intervention."

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Stuart Atherton
Managing Director of Media and Digital

DIGITAL AUDIT COMPANY MAKES THE RIGHT CONNECTIONS

Four NHS trusts are using audit management tools developed by a Lancashire company helped by the Innovation Agency.

Meantime Information Technologies Ltd have designed, developed and delivered AMaT (Audit Management and Tracking) into four NHS trusts in the last 18 months, including Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust.

AMaT streamlines the organisation's auditing, improvement and guidance requirements into one simple, easy-to-use system.

They have worked closely with the Innovation Agency to access NHS audit process expertise and refine their solution.

"We are delighted to be working with the Innovation Agency, who are helping us share our story of who we are and how we are working closely with the NHS. They believe our product has the potential to make the capture, analysis, reporting and evidencing of actions from clinical, ward and area audit data from ward to board better, safer and faster."

Fenner Pearson
Meantime Managing Director



Fenner Pearson of Meantime



£2M CONTRACT FOR FASTROI

Technology company Fastroi has seen rapid success in the UK after support from the Innovation Agency in the last year.

Its product Real-Time Care is an easy-to-use digital system for all kinds of residential, domiciliary and community care environments. It improves the planning and reporting of social and care work, data transfer and analysis, organisation of customer information and resource management.

Managing Director Jim Ward said: "Since working with the Innovation Agency, we have secured a £2m contract over 10 years and are confident that with their continued advice, support and network we will win additional contracts and help to improve care and services."