

ANNEX B

Science City York: SRIP Action Plan

Overview

This project aims to continue and build on the success of the Science City York initiative in fostering the development of knowledge-based clusters in order to stimulate the creation and retention of employment, business growth and workforce development opportunities in York and North Yorkshire. Science City York nurtures growth through the development of key sectors in bioscience and health, IT & digital and creative technologies, as a leading partnership between the University of York, City of York Council and industry established in 1998.

Science City York's vision is to create value at a city, region and national level by stimulating *Prosperity from knowledge*.

Science City York seeks to extend activity in York and North Yorkshire through the following areas of activity:

1. ***Build and strengthen existing sectors supported by Science City York*** developing virtual, spatial and inter-cluster connectivity in York and North Yorkshire. This includes the creation of a dedicated specialist development technician officer, working alongside the Chair and stakeholder committee(s) to drive knowledge sharing and network building activities, as well as signpost business development referrals. Specifically within each sector, this will include: -
 - Develop medical and healthcare core competencies within bioscience.
 - Build and expand IT & Digital cluster strengths
 - Re-shape and expand creative technologies, to include additional heritage and arts technology strengths.

2. ***Enhance and expand activities to stimulate an entrepreneurial business environment to support the development of ideas and growth of new start-ups***
 - Develop and expand SCY business support activities to accelerate rate of growth and creation of new start-ups through specialist technology and business development provision through extending capacity with Business Promoter services and business surgery sessions.
 - Extend and develop the Micro Fund for pre-start-up ventures to provide essential proof of concept funding to assist the viability and creation of technology start-ups.
 - Facilitate the creation of flexible business space to support creative and digital businesses in major development areas within York and across key parts of the sub region.

3. ***Develop a supportive framework for creating a culture, which embeds enterprise, training and skills actions across SCY and supporting sectors***
 - Implementation of activities creative, science and technology workforce development needs, identified in the Impact Research feasibility assessment in 2003.
 - As part of the workforce development plan, deliver continued professional development support, targeted local community and education skills

development 'taster' sessions, supporting the continuation of management and providing support to early stage employer networks.

- Expand the inter-connectivity and synergies between SCY businesses and the supporting professional sectors through joint work within York Professional Initiative.

The key activities delivered in York and North Yorkshire would be reviewed by the SCY Board, which is led by industry with key representatives from the University of York and City of York Council. Regular reports on progress and consultation on proposals will be reported to EMAP and EDB.

Flexibility will remain at the heart of the partnership, enabling new priorities to be developed following regular review of performance and priorities

Targets & Outputs

The implementation of this Business Plan will continue to generate significant employment and business outputs to benefit the local economy, namely: -

- Establish 10-15 new businesses per annum
- Create 300-400 jobs per annum
- Generate 80 Learning Opportunities per year for local people
- Assist 30-50 businesses per annum
- Leverage over £100k per annum from private sector to invest in SCY activities

This will complement and contribute to the overall targets and vision of SCY, in stimulating direct growth of average of 5% employment growth per annum.

Local Workforce

A major part of SCY strategy since inception, has to ensure that business and employment growth can benefit the local community. The work undertaken by Impact Research in 2003, demonstrated that over 50% of employees with SCY clusters are from the local workforce. The next phase Business Plan for SCY is to maximise opportunities for the local community in developing skills and training initiatives to address perception issues and entry barriers.

The views of residents were evaluated as part of the Impact Research project through the *Talk About* panel. A high proportion of residents (33%) would consider a job in SCY clusters (an encouraging figure considering that at present the clusters account for around 10% of total employment in York), but more than half of respondents would never consider a job in the clusters due to perception issues on entry levels, qualifications and the possible career paths.

A key component of SCY activity under SRIP proposals therefore is to promote greater awareness of the range and diversity of careers that are available locally and skills development opportunities. The target for generating new Learning Opportunities is specifically geared to this objective.