

# Technology Strategy Board

## Driving Innovation

### Press release

26 January 2012

### **Technology Strategy Board announces Connected Digital Economy Catapult**

*New centre will accelerate innovation in the internet economy*

The Technology Strategy Board ([www.innovateuk.org](http://www.innovateuk.org)) today announced that it will establish a Catapult centre for the connected digital economy.

The new Catapult is a technology and innovation centre which will accelerate innovation and stimulate growth in this important area of the economy. It will bring together technological expertise to help the UK's world-leading digital businesses to develop, test and apply new technologies, reducing the risk associated with creating hugely profitable products and services in the future. The centre may focus on areas such as:

- How digital media and content are traded and used - in order to find sustainable ways to help businesses co-operate to create profitable services;
- The pervasiveness of digital services - addressing the impact of new technologies and systems such as cloud computing and identity management, as businesses and industries become more digital;
- The blending of digital and physical worlds - looking at how our devices, clothes, cars and other consumer goods become better connected to enhance our physical lives.

The Connected Digital Economy Catapult will also help businesses that traditionally are less active in the digital market place, such as health, retail and education, by transferring knowledge and experience from industries which are leading, such as the media and creative sectors. This will help a broad spectrum of UK business take advantage of digital technology and quickly exploit profitable new business models.

The Catapult will also enable small and medium enterprises to collaborate with the wider digital value chain and showcase their products using state-of-the-art demonstrators that will be found at the Catapult.

The combined market for the UK's software, ICT and creative industries today accounts for £109bn of GVA. The UK's internet economy (e-commerce) is also larger, per head, than in any other country and it is forecast to grow 10% per year for the next four years, and contribute 10% of UK's GDP by 2015\*.

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board said: “We are extremely pleased to be supporting such an important technology area with a Catapult centre. With many, if not all, industries searching for ways to utilise digital technology, the opportunity for the Catapult will be enormous. It will also be applicable to all internet-using businesses and industries as they attempt to innovate with digital technology to provide consumers and businesses with new products and services.

Business Secretary, Vince Cable said: “We have world leading, innovative businesses in the ICT, Digital and Creative sectors which have considerable potential for growth. For instance, a few years ago, there were just fifteen technology start-ups around Old Street and Shoreditch- now there are hundreds of high-tech companies in the area, including Holition where I am today.

“I and the rest of the Government want to make sure that we can maintain that position in the future, taking new technologies and using them in an innovative way to make a product or service that people want. The Connected Digital Economy Catapult will be instrumental in making sure that happens.

“In the coming weeks, we will be announcing the final areas that will be covered by Catapult centres, further areas where we have a cutting edge which we can support, nurture and exploit to help us rebalance the economy and deliver strong, sustainable and balanced growth.”

The announcement is another milestone in the establishment of the new network of Catapults by the Technology Strategy Board, following news in December of the Cell Therapy Catapult, to be established in London, and the Satellite Applications Catapult announced earlier this month.

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**Notes to Editors:**

1. The Technology Strategy Board is the UK’s innovation agency; its goal is to accelerate economic growth by stimulating and supporting business-led innovation. Sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Technology Strategy Board brings together business, research and the public sector, supporting and accelerating the development of innovative products and services to meet market needs, tackle major societal challenges and help build the future economy. For more information please visit: [www.innovateuk.org](http://www.innovateuk.org)

Our approach to accelerating the pace of innovation in the UK is captured in our strategy document, Concept to Commercialisation, published in May 2011. This builds on our first strategy, developed in 2008, and sets out new directions, taking

into account the challenges and exciting opportunities that lie ahead. To see the new strategy please visit: [Concept to Commercialisation](#).

2. The Technology Strategy Board is establishing a series of technology and innovation centres, known as Catapults. The Government has committed at least £200 million to this programme, over the four years in this current spending review period. The plan to establish a minimum of six such centres by summer 2013 is provided in the Technology Strategy Board's strategy document, *Technology and Innovation Centres Strategy & Implementation Plan*, published in May 2011. This builds on previous reports created by Herman Hauser (*The Current and Future Role of Technology & Innovation Centres in the UK*) and James Dyson (*Ingenious Britain*). To see these documents please visit:  
<https://catapult.innovateuk.org/key-documents>
4. The Technology Strategy Board will oversee the establishment of a network of Catapult centres. So far high value manufacturing opened for business in October 2011; cell therapy, offshore renewable energy and satellite application Catapults have been announced. The Technology Strategy Board will announce how it will support the remaining candidate areas in the coming weeks.
5. \*From *The Connected Kingdom*, Boston Consulting Group, October 2011  
<http://www.connectedkingdom.co.uk/the-report>
6. The Technology Strategy Board's [connect](#) platform provides an effective and powerful way to collaborate online, network and share knowledge with other innovators. It provides a place to work together securely and share information & knowledge. Users can utilise the online tools to work collaboratively, discuss ideas and find events. The networks offer up-to-the minute news on funding, events, articles and publications, plus information about all 15 Knowledge Transfer Networks. Through the networks, users can find potential business partners, entrepreneurs, collaborators, other innovators, researchers and academics.
7. Media enquiries only should be addressed to the Technology Strategy Board's media relations team: David Hulmes, Media Relations Consultant - Mobile: 07799 777921, Email: [david.hulmes@tsb.gov.uk](mailto:david.hulmes@tsb.gov.uk) or Claire Cunningham, Media Relations Manager – Mobile: 07554 115745, Email: [Claire.cunningham@tsb.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.cunningham@tsb.gov.uk)
8. Companies and other organisations seeking information about the Technology Strategy Board and the Catapult centres should visit the website – [www.innovateuk.org](http://www.innovateuk.org).