

THE GREATER MANCHESTER FURTHER EDUCATION INNOVATION PROGRAMME

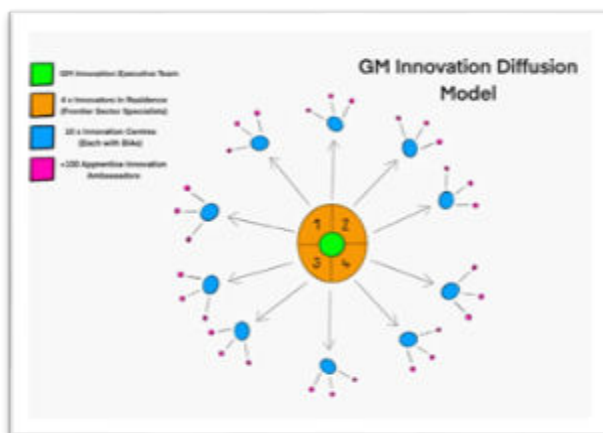
The GM FE Innovation Programme builds the capacity and capability of Further Education Colleges (FECs) to enable their staff to increase the adoption and diffusion of innovations by businesses in their locality and create better links between them and the city region's innovation ecosystem. This addresses the challenge of low productivity, and limited engagement with innovation support services in the outer areas of the City Region.

Innovation support is a new area to GM FE. It will differ from other Innovation Support services because of the business base FECs are networked into. They have close community ties; with multi-generational family connections. Our programme is a collaborative partnership of all 9 GM FECs which cover all 10 Boroughs of the Greater Manchester economic area.

Our Delivery Model

The underpinning concept of the GM Further Education Innovation Programme is diffusion of innovation knowledge and capacity, radiating out from industry and research to business via 10 'Innovation Centre' Hubs, one in each Greater Manchester borough. This:

1. Positions Business Innovation Support in 10 Innovation Centres outside the city region's core, where there are lower levels of productivity and engagement with support services.
2. Increases FEC capacity and capability to promote and support business innovation in technologies, business models and processes through CPD, and by piloting the placement of 4 peripatetic 'Innovators in Residence' who work across 9 GM FECs (covering 10 GM Boroughs).
3. Maximises use of LSIF funded capital investments such as CAVEs and 3D Printers for relevant industrial application
4. Tests whether Apprentices, already employed as staff within GM SMEs and with strong FE relationships, can contribute to 'innovation readiness' and be agents for change in their host businesses.
5. Moves towards the 'levelling-up' of the GM Innovation Ecosystem



The Team we are building

All contracts initially April 2024 – March 2025, may include internal or external secondments

Innovators in Residence – total 4 FTE @ £65,000 each - engaged by GMFEIP Executive Team

Innovators in Residence (IiRs) are a new concept for FE. The 4 IiRs will have specialist knowledge of adoption and diffusion of innovations in the 4 GM Frontier Sectors:

- Advanced Materials and Manufacturing
- Health Innovation and Life Sciences
- Digital and Creative
- Clean Growth

This knowledge does not currently exist in the FE system. FEIF funding enables an injection of specialist insight for a 12-month period. We expect these IiRs to be secondments from HEIs or Industry, so that when they return their tacit knowledge from the experience isn't lost from the ecosystem. The priority for the IiRs will be to increase capability and transfer knowledge to FEC staff through CPD, but they may also advise businesses directly.

Business Innovation Advisors - 1 FTE per Borough @ £50,000 each – employed by FECs

After conducting innovation diagnostics and guidance, Business Innovation Advisors will introduce employers directly to facilities and training provision to secure the workforce development that enables innovation and growth.

A GM FE 'BIA Network' will be established for peer learning and support as the Business Innovation Advisors. They will record their experience and impact to inform GMFEIP evaluation, share practice on what has/hasn't worked, and be supported in their professional development.

Business Innovation Coordinators - 1 FTE per Borough @ £30,000 each – employed by FECs

Community Managers will provide the 'front of house' for the Innovation Centres. They will coordinate the hosting of local events and facilitate connections between local businesses and college staff into the wider innovation ecosystem.

AIA Coordinator - 1 FTE per Borough @ £30,000 FTE employed by FECs

GM colleges have access to an unparalleled resource of approximately 7000 apprentices placed in GM businesses. The GM FE Innovation Programme will develop an innovative training resource for apprentices (who are employed in local businesses) to gain an additional certificate in '*Innovation Literacy*' and become 'Apprentice Innovation Ambassadors' who increase the innovation capacity in the SMEs where they are based. The AIA Coordinator role based in each college will communicate the value of this training to apprentices, employers and apprenticeship

delivery colleagues, facilitate delivery of the Innovation Literacy training and monitor and celebrate impact.

GMFEIP Executive Team – new roles include Monitoring Manager @ £30,000 FTE & Admin Officer @ £25,000 (employed by Oldham College)

Our small executive team will share coordinating and executive functions, achieving efficiencies and vfm, avoiding administrative duplication of separate projects in 9 GM Colleges.

A Monitoring Manager will coordinate collection of data, reports and qualitative evidence of impact that will inform evaluation and lessons learnt, but we also expect that much tacit knowledge will be retained in the GM FE colleges after funding ends. A project admin officer will support comms and operations across the programme and partnership.

Contact us:

Please email teamGMFEIP@oldham.ac.uk for further information about being part of this exciting opportunity, or helloGMFEIP@oldham.ac.uk with general enquiries.