

## Appendix B

### GX Summary

GX is delivered across the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) area up until October 2019. The application and project responded to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Open Call to run a project providing support for research and innovation in the North East.

The GX project will champion NELEP as a global region, resilient and equipped to face the challenges of competing in international markets. It will capitalise on partnerships to ensure that areas of outstanding performance are not isolated, localised 'hotspots' but represent region-wide excellence. The project will be managed through a combination of GEOTN staff (based at NGI), procured services and delivery partners Innovate NE and Newcastle City Council. It will be fully integrated into GEOTN plans but will 'wraparound' the Summer event and provide focused support for NELEP scaleups and SMEs.

SMEs and scaleups will be working in the smart specialisation areas as identified by the NELEP: Passenger vehicle manufacture; Subsea and Offshore Technology; Life Sciences and Health; Creative, Digital, Software and Technology based Services. It will also support SMEs working in 'areas of opportunity' as identified by the NELEP 'Data for Growth' report produced by Urban Foresight which includes health innovation, business information modelling (BIM), and immersive technologies.

GX will foster cross cutting economic development through applications of innovation, digitisation and investment into key skills.

It is made up of three different workstreams and two strands.

- Workstream 1: *Connect*
- Workstream 2: *Challenge*
- Workstream 3: *Collaborate*

#### **Workstream 1: Connect** (in the lead-up to and during GEOTN)

GX will deliver a programme of workshops to stimulate demand with NELEP SMEs and scaleups to raise awareness of the benefits of engaging in innovation activity. It will provide high-level understanding of emerging trends and sector developments helping to develop SME capability to assimilate and exploit information.

#### **Workstream 2: Challenge** (throughout)

We will work alongside delivery partner Innovate NE in scoping *up to* five different challenges that will either be scoped by partners (e.g. corporates or innovation support partners) or through consultation with the public. Challenges will likely range from urban revitalisation and independent ageing to transport and social networks and shortlisted businesses will be able to draw down a subsidy for specialist consultancy services to begin developing their new products and responses. \*

\*SMEs will be expected to make a 50% contribution.

#### **Workstream 3: Collaborate** (throughout)

GX will also set up a small number of different collaborative partnerships between NELEP SMEs/scaleups and organisations whose primary activity is research and development (e.g. Newcastle University, Institute of Ageing, Cloud Innovation Centre). The purpose of this workstream is to:

- Highlight the capacities and incentives of SMEs to innovate;
- Improve the 'pull-through' of research at R&D organisations (as above);
- Exploit the potential of new technologies for addressing societal challenges;
- Improve business performance through developing new techniques or technologies.

In 2019, GX will also set up a series of innovation residencies where we will place creative innovators with NELEP SMEs with the potential for scale. They will work across a range of business areas including product, service and strategic design, design-led and social innovation, working with SMEs to problem solve, shape better practices, generate innovation and build resilience through an enhanced awareness and adoption of creative disciplines and practice.

**Strand A and Strand B** will run continuously through the GX project:

#### **Strand A: Network**

GX will also lever the expertise of existing organisations that deliver innovation support in the NELEP region to ensure that information about new opportunities, available resources and good practice are rapidly disseminated across research disciplines and business sectors.

Networking events will ideally rotate throughout the NELEP region and involve NELEP SMEs, industry bodies, research centres, HE and other key organisations including the Growth Hub, NE BIC, RTC North, NISDI, Digital Catapult NETV and Scaleup NE.

#### **Strand B: Showcase**

NELEP scaleups and SMEs will engage with the Business Summit to engage with a range of other businesses (size and type) from across the North and throughout the UK. It will provide optimal opportunities for dialogue with potential innovative suppliers and thought-leadership in 'foresighting the issues,' based on scenarios of different technological and market trends.

Business Summit activity will:

- Enable GX SMEs who have received intensive support to access market opportunities;
- Create space for live pitches from Challenge scaleups;
- Promote NELEP scaleups globally;
- Increase NELEP innovation visibility and showcase expanding innovation ecosystems.