



Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board

9 March 2026

Agenda Item 8 – Call for projects in Hampshire seeking capital funding from the LEP legacy reserves

The Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board (HPPB) is asked to:

NOTE the approach to managing conflicts of interest set out in Part 2, and **DECLARE** verbally any conflicts not identified in Part 2, at the beginning of this agenda item

NOTE the process undertaken so far to invite, assess and shortlist applications, as set out in Part 3

CONSIDER the composition of the shortlist of 16 applications, as set out in Part 4, including the spread of projects across HPPB priority areas, applicant types, and location of benefits, and **CONSIDER** whether the composition of the shortlist is aligned with the aim and the priority areas of the call for projects

CONSIDER whether any of the shortlisted projects, individually, are not aligned with the aim and the priority areas of the call for projects and should therefore not proceed to the next stage of the process

CONSIDER the specific issues related to some of the shortlisted projects set out in Part 5, and whether any of these projects should not proceed to the next stage of the process, as a result

Subject to the above consideration, RECOMMEND that:

- 1. All 16 shortlisted projects should proceed to the due diligence stage**
- 2. As set out in Part 6, 14 projects should proceed to the due diligence stage as an “A List” of projects that could all be funded from the total available of £22.3 million, and 2 projects as a “B List” that will only be considered further if any of the “A List” projects do not pass due diligence and/or subsidy control**

NOTE that all shortlisted proposals remain subject to (a) due diligence (b) subsidy control and (c) formal approval by Hampshire County Council, and NOTE the remaining stages of the process as set out in Part 8

1. Overview

1.1. The main body of this paper consists of the following parts:

- **Part 2** sets out an approach to managing **conflicts of interest** relating to the applications to the call for projects.
- **Part 3** describes **the process that has been followed so far**, including the call for projects itself, the initial assessment and shortlisting of applications, and the presentations by shortlisted applicants.
- **Part 4** considers **the shortlist of 16 applications**, including the spread of projects across HPPB priorities, applicant types, and location of benefits.
- **Part 5** discusses a number of **specific issues relating to some of the shortlisted projects**.
- The total LEP legacy reserves (LLR) funding requested across the 16 shortlisted projects is approximately £29.4 million, whereas the maximum funding that can be allocated through this call for projects is £22.3 million. **Part 6** addresses this by proposing that the shortlist should be split into an **"A List"** of projects that could all be funded from the total available of £22.3 million, and a **"B List"** that will only be considered further if any of the "A List" projects do not pass due diligence and/or subsidy control.
- **Part 7** sets out **key points for consideration** by HPPB, and **recommendations**.
- **Part 8** sets out **the remaining stages of the process**, including due diligence, and formal approval of funding for projects by Hampshire County Council.

1.2. This paper has four annexes:

- **Annex 1** (page 28 onwards) contains a list of, and provides some summary information about, the applications that were not shortlisted.
- **Annex 2** (page 33 onwards) provides an overview of the 16 shortlisted applications.
- **Annex 3** (page 35 onwards) provides further detail about the shortlisted applications. For each, this consists of: the response provided by the applicant in their business case template to the question "what is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"; and some comments by Hampshire County Council, following the presentation stage and follow-up questions.

- After shortlisting, each shortlisted applicant gave a face-to-face presentation to Hampshire County Council officers, and for this purpose, provided a brief overview of their project in slide form. **These slides are contained in Annex 4**, which is attached as a separate file.

2. Conflicts of interest

2.1. Each application to the call of projects was submitted by a single organisation i.e. the applicant. This is the organisation that, if the application were successful, would enter into a funding agreement with Hampshire County Council and receive the funds. In the case of a collaboration, the applicant would effectively be the lead partner.

2.2. Applicants were also asked to provide the “names of other organisations involved in your project”.

2.3. In the case of several applications, the applicant was an organisation led by an HPPB member. Organisations led by HPPB members were also referred to within several applications as “other organisations involved” in the project. This is set out in the table below.

2.4. We recommend that:

- **At the beginning of this agenda item, HPPB members declare verbally any other actual, potential and/or perceived conflicts of interest relating to applications, not shown in the table below. These will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.**
- **If during this agenda item any HPPB member wishes to discuss one of the projects for which the applicant was an organisation led by an HPPB member, the latter (as shown in the right-hand column of the table) should withdraw from the meeting room for the duration of that discussion.**

No.	Project name	Applicant	Other organisations involved	Shortlisted (yes/no)	HPPB member from applicant
1	spudWORKS Creative Infrastructure Expansion	SPUD	Hampshire County Council	No	
10	Romsey Railway Station – Stationmaster’s House Refurbishment and Community Regeneration	Romsey Town Council	Test Valley Borough Council	No	
11	Winchester School of Art Exchange	University of Southampton		No	Mark Smith
12	Test Valley Community Construction Academy	Sparsholt College	Test Valley Borough Council	Yes	Julie Milburn
13	IncuHive Farnborough	Rushmoor Borough Council		Yes	Gareth Williams

No.	Project name	Applicant	Other organisations involved	Shortlisted (yes/no)	HPPB member from applicant
14	Hampshire Green Growth Capital Grants Programme	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	Federation of Small Businesses	No	Ross McNally
15	Great Start Basingstoke	Basingstoke College of Technology	Hampshire County Council	No	
16	Grow Hampshire with Venturefest South	Venturefest South	University of Southampton, University of Winchester, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	No	
18	Solent Freeport Capital Innovation Grant	Solent Freeport		No	James Hassett
19	Portsmouth Clinical Research Facility at Queen Alexandra Hospital	Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust	University of Southampton	No	
20	Addressing Poor Air Quality at Hampshire Hospitals	Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Hampshire County Council, University of Southampton, University of Winchester	No	
22	Public Realm Reimagining, Market Place and the Furlong, Ringwood	New Forest District Council	Hampshire County Council	No	
26	Bacteriophage and Biologics Manufacturing and R&D Facility	University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	University of Southampton	Yes	
28	BRIDGE - Workforce and Innovation Centre	University of Winchester		Yes	Sarah Greer
31	Hampshire Creative Business Escalator	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce		Yes	Ross McNally
33	Regional Inward Investment Office	Business South	Rushmoor Borough Council, Test Valley Borough Council, Winchester City Council	No	
34	CETC/NEETs Provision Expansion – Replacement of End-of-life Hangar	South Hampshire College Group	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	No	
36	Hampshire Digital Foundry – The Digital Backbone for Smart Growth	Deep Tech Research Institute	University of Southampton (Future Towns Innovation Hub)	No	

No.	Project name	Applicant	Other organisations involved	Shortlisted (yes/no)	HPPB member from applicant
41	Farnborough Flightpath: Connecting aviation heritage and growth	Rushmoor Borough Council		No	Gareth Williams
42	South of Romsey Town Centre	Test Valley Borough Council	Hampshire County Council	Yes	Phil North
44	Microbial Innovation Centre	National Biofilm Innovation Centre, University of Southampton		Yes	Mark Smith
45	Securing the Future of the New Forest Tour	New Forest National Park Authority	Hampshire County Council	Yes	
46	Theatre Royal – Performance and creative arts studio	Winchester City Council		No	Martin Tod
48	Tech+Tour Hampshire Rollout	South Hampshire College Group	Sparsholt College Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	Yes	
50	Winchester Farming Cooperative Abattoir	Winchester City Council	Sparsholt College	No	Martin Tod
51	Hampshire New Business Growth	Business South	University of Southampton	No	
52	Chantry Centre Regeneration	Test Valley Borough Council		No	Phil North
54	Together We Make Eastleigh - Enterprise Hub and Town Centre Regeneration	Eastleigh Borough Council	Hampshire County Council, Navigator Quarter Solent Freeport, University of Southampton, Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	No	
55	Marchwood Industrial Estate – new units	Associated British Ports		No	Alastair Welch

3. The process so far

Call for projects

3.1. The approach to the call for projects was agreed with HPPB at its meetings on 9 September and 6 October 2025, and also discussed with the Joint Leaders Board on 22 September 2025. See for reference:

- Paper from 9 September HPPB meeting - [HPPB-250909-Approach-use-of-LEP-legacyreserves.pdf](#)
- Paper from 6 October HPPB meeting - [hppb-061025-approach-to-use-LEP-legacy-reserves.pdf](#)

3.2. The call for projects went live on 27 November 2025, with a closing date of 16 January 2026. Stakeholders were emailed directly to notify them when the call for projects opened. The following resources were published on Hampshire County Council's website:

- Overview: [Call for projects in Hampshire seeking capital funding from the LEP legacy reserves | Business and economy | Hampshire County Council](#)
- Guidance note: [LEPLegacyReserves-guidancenote.pdf](#)
- Template grant funding agreement: [Grant agreement](#)
- Business case template, to be filled in by applicants: <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-prosperity-partnership/LEP-LegacyReserves-BusinessCaseTemplate.docx>
- Questions and answers document. This contained answers to questions sent to the legacyreserves@hants.gov.uk inbox while the call for projects was open, and was updated twice, with the final version being published on 9 January 2026: [LLR-FAQ.pdf](#)

Applications received

3.3. By the closing date, 55 applications were received. Two of these (numbers 5 and 27) were withdrawn: in one case because the application was substantially incomplete; and in the other because the lead applicant had submitted three applications, exceeding the limit of two applications per lead applicant.

3.4. The total amount of LLR funding requested across the remaining 53 applications was £120.85 million i.e. over five times the available total of £22.3 million.

3.5. Applicants were asked to state whether they were requesting a grant or a loan. All 53 applications requested a grant. See paragraph 3.19 below for further consideration of this issue.

Initial assessment

3.6. Initial assessment and shortlisting of the applications was carried out by a panel of Hampshire County Council officers, chaired by the Head of Economy and Skills, on 26 and 27 January 2026.

3.7. Applications were scored against the criteria set out in the following table. For all criteria except “match funding” (see next paragraph), four HCC officers undertook preliminary scoring using the following scale: 4 for an excellent response; 3 for a good response; 2 for an acceptable response; and 1 for a poor and/or limited response. Where any of these panel members had provided a preliminary score of 1, the panel considered whether scoring had been applied consistently, and in some cases panel members adjusted their provisional scores accordingly. The four preliminary scores were then averaged to produce a single score.

Criteria	Description
Scope and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the business case clear about what the project is, what it will deliver, and what its objectives are?
Strategic alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the business case demonstrate how the project will contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth in Hampshire? Does the business case demonstrate how the project is aligned with the strategies referred to in section 2.4 of the business case?
Additional benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the business case set out additional quantified and measurable economic benefits in the HCC economic area, and are these credible? Will the project also deliver benefits in the rest of Hampshire and the Solent?
Additionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the business case demonstrate that the LEP legacy reserves funding will achieve additionality?
Collaboration, customers and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project achieve benefits from collaboration between partners? Does the business case demonstrate effective engagement of the project's customers and/or stakeholders?
Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will the project enable further private investment in, or attract more public funding to, Hampshire? Does the business case provide credible evidence for this?
Project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How robust and credible are the project management arrangements set out in Part 4 of the business case, including governance, resourcing, timeline, and key risks and their mitigation?
Delivery confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project have credible plans for obtaining any approvals or meeting any other conditions, required to enable the project to proceed?
Match funding	See paragraph 3.8

- 3.8. For “match funding”, scores were based on four bands, with a score of 4 assigned to projects where the LLR funding requested was up to 25% of the total project cost, through to a score of 1 assigned to projects where the LLR funding requested was over 75% of the total project cost.
- 3.9. As part of their business case template, applicants were required to provide values, over a period of up to eight years, for at least one of the following “core benefits”:
- Jobs created
 - Growth in business turnover
 - Moves from inactivity or unemployment into employment
 - Learners aged 16+ achieving qualifications
 - Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- 3.10. These core benefit values were used to carry out a simple cost benefit analysis for the projects. However, the core benefit data provided by applicants resulted in hugely varying benefit-cost ratios, and the panel concluded that it did not provide a robust basis for comparison. The core benefit values were therefore not used as part of the shortlisting process for any project. However, projects’ quantified benefits will be confirmed, and the resulting cost-benefit analysis will be revised, as part of the due diligence stage – see paragraph 8.3.
- 3.11. Of the 53 projects, 26 did not pass the initial assessment, on one of the following grounds. This is also set out in **Annex 1** below.
- For six applications, the panel concluded that the applicant was not a business organisation, as defined in the guidance note and Q4 of the questions and answers document, and was therefore not eligible to apply.
 - One application included a request for funding for revenue costs. Since capital funding only is available through the call for projects, this application was considered to be ineligible.
 - 19 applications received a score of below 2 (i.e. below “an acceptable response”) for at least one of the criteria set out at paragraph 3.7 above. This test was not applied to the “additional benefits” and “match funding” criteria, since there was no minimum requirement for these aspects.

Shortlisting

- 3.12. The remaining 27 applications are set out in the table below. The panel agreed that, to select a shortlist from among these, it would take into consideration the following factors. Hampshire County Council would reserve the right to determine the shortlist based on these and any other relevant factors.

- The total score for each project from the initial assessment
- The value-for-money benefits of a loan over a grant, since the former enables repaid funds to be reinvested in future
- The overall budget constraint of £22.3 million
- Capacity constraints on subsequent stages of the process for assessing and approving applications
- The need to ensure that benefits from the shortlisted projects are distributed around multiple locations in the county
- The spreading of risk across the shortlisted projects
- The total available funding of £22.3m is made up of £13m from the former Solent LEP and £9.3m from the former Enterprise M3 LEP. To align with the purpose of the original allocation of the funding from Government, projects must deliver benefits to the former LEP area for which the funding was granted (although this does not require the direct investment to be within the actual former LEP area).

3.13. Initially, the panel ranked the 27 applications from highest to lowest total score, as shown in the following table. It then identified a list of applications that would be affordable within the overall funding constraint of £22.3 million. In doing so, the panel decided not to include the following projects, in order to increase the spread of projects by type and location.

- No. 34, CETC/NEETs Provision Expansion – Hangar Replacement, was not included because the list already included a project on the Daedalus Enterprise Zone
- No. 19, Portsmouth Clinical Research Facility at Queen Alexandra Hospital, was not included because the list already included two life sciences projects
- No. 10, Romsey Railway Station – Stationmaster’s House Refurbishment and Community Regeneration, was not included because the list already included a project in Romsey
- No. 37, Havant Maths and English Hub, was not included because the project already included a project focused on Leigh Park in Havant

3.14. The resulting list of 13 applications is shaded in green in the following table.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Total score	Funding requested	Not shortlisted because	Running total
44	Microbial Innovation Centre	University of Southampton	29.75	£2,570,000		£2,570,000

No.	Project name	Applicant	Total score	Funding requested	Not shortlisted because	Running total
6	Aerospace, Defence and Security Curricula Development	ADS	29	£450,000		£3,020,000
26	Bacteriophage and Biologics Manufacturing and R&D Facility	University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	26.75	£3,000,000		£6,020,000
38	Faraday Connect	Fareham Borough Council	26.5	£1,167,941		£7,187,941
34	CETC/NEETs Provision Expansion – Hangar Replacement	South Hampshire College Group	26	£3,850,000	Second project at Daedalus	
42	South of Romsey Town Centre	Test Valley Borough Council	26	£2,000,000		£9,187,941
45	Securing the Future of the New Forest Tour	New Forest National Park Authority	25.75	£2,270,000		£11,457,941
19	Portsmouth Clinical Research Facility at Queen Alexandra Hospital	Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust	25.25	£1,137,000	Third life sciences project	
23	Leigh Park Skills Centre	Havant Borough Council	25.25	£6,681,080		£18,139,021
12	Test Valley Community Construction Academy	Sparsholt College	25	£1,056,000		£19,195,021
39	Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre	University of Portsmouth	24.5	£3,908,727	Exceeded total	
48	Tech+Tour Hampshire Rollout	South Hampshire College Group	24.5	£400,000		£19,595,021
28	BRIDGE - Workforce and Innovation Centre	University of Winchester	24	£3,519,000	Exceeded total	
43	Health Hub, Bordon Town Centre	Defence Infrastructure Organisation	24	£3,000,000	Exceeded total	
54	Together We Make Eastleigh - Enterprise Hub and Town Centre Regeneration	Eastleigh Borough Council	24	£4,147,000	Exceeded total	
47	Alton Adult Learning Hub	HSDC	23.75	£180,000		£19,775,021
11	Winchester School of Art Exchange	University of Southampton	23.5	£3,500,000	Exceeded total	

No.	Project name	Applicant	Total score	Funding requested	Not shortlisted because	Running total
13	IncuHive Farnborough	Rushmoor Borough Council	23.5	£1,445,000		£21,220,021
10	Romsey Railway Station – Stationmaster's House Refurbishment and Community Regeneration	Romsey Town Council	22.75	£500,000	Second project in Romsey	
52	Chantry Centre Regeneration	Test Valley Borough Council	22.5	£5,200,000	Exceeded total	
18	Solent Freeport Capital Innovation Grant	Solent Freeport	22.25	£2,000,000	Exceeded total	
22	Public Realm Reimagining, Market Place and the Furlong, Ringwood	New Forest District Council	22.25	£2,700,000	Exceeded total	
2	Hampshire Fare Digital Futures Programme	Hampshire Fare	22.25	£57,300		£21,277,321
37	Havant Maths and English Hub	HSDC	21.75	£400,000	Second project focused on Leigh Park	
32	Centre of Excellence in Engineering, Marine and Maritime	Brockenhurst College	21.5	£6,509,250	Exceeded total	
31	Hampshire Creative Business Escalator	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	21.25	£325,000		£21,602,321
50	Winchester Farming Cooperative Abattoir	Winchester City Council	21.25	£5,770,000	Exceeded total	

3.15. The panel then decided to shortlist a further three projects, based on the following considerations:

- The time available for presentations by shortlisted applicants, which was the next stage in the process.
- Some shortlisted applications might not be recommended by the HPPB, or might not pass the due diligence and subsidy determination stages. It would therefore be sensible to draw up a shortlist of projects with a total funding request somewhat larger than the available amount of £22.3 million, so that projects not passing subsequent stages of the process could be replaced.

- One application (No. 23, Leigh Park Skills Centre) was requesting approximately 30% of the total funding available, and this might be considered at a later stage in the process to be too great a concentration of funding in one place, and/or too much concentration of risk. It would therefore be sensible to include in the shortlist one or more projects that might replace this one, should that be the case. This issue is considered further from paragraph 5.3 onwards below.

3.16. The three further shortlisted applications, shaded in orange in the table above, are:

- No. 39, Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre. An innovation project in the strategically important marine sector with regional impact.
- No. 28, BRIDGE - Workforce and Innovation Centre. A project with the potential to make a strategic impact on both workforce development and business growth in the vital health and care sector.
- No. 37, Havant Maths and English Hub. Noting the significant deprivation, skills and employment issues faced by Leigh Park, the panel decided to include this in the list as a potential backup to No.23, Leigh Park Skills Centre.

3.17. This resulted in a shortlist of 16 applications. **Annex 1** briefly describes the applications in the table above that were not shortlisted.

Presentations and follow-up questions

3.18. The 16 shortlisted applicants were invited to present face-to-face to the Hampshire County Council officer panel, between 10 and 12 February 2026. Applicants were provided in advance with some questions prompted by their written applications, and were asked other questions during the presentation session. In some cases, Hampshire County Council also asked some further clarification questions by email, after the presentation sessions.

3.19. Where applicable, during these sessions, Hampshire County Council explored with applicants whether their projects might be viably supported with a loan rather than a grant. In all cases, however, applicants put forward a credible argument for why a grant would be the more appropriate form of support.

4. The shortlist

Composition

4.1. The following table shows the spread of applications by priority areas and by applicant type.

4.2. Many applications indicated that their project was aligned with several of the four priority areas. At least 12 of the 16 shortlisted applications did so for each of the priority areas, resulting in a relatively balanced spread across the four areas.

4.3. The mix of shortlisted applicants by (lead) applicant type was as follows:

- Five local authorities (four districts and one national park authority)
- One other public body (NHS)
- Three business organisations
- Three universities
- Four colleges

No.	Project name	Applicant	PRIORITY AREAS				APPLICANT TYPE				
			High potential sectors and clusters	Business support	Infrastructure: energy, digital, transport and business space	Skills, employment and careers	Local authority	Other public body	Business organisation	University	College
2	Hampshire Fare Digital Futures Programme	Hampshire Fare	X	X	X	X			✓		
6	Aerospace, Defence and Security Curricula Development	ADS	X			X			✓		

No.	Project name	Applicant	PRIORITY AREAS				APPLICANT TYPE				
			High potential sectors and clusters	Business support	Infrastructure: energy, digital, transport and business space	Skills, employment and careers	Local authority	Other public body	Business organisation	University	College
12	Test Valley Community Construction Academy	Sparsholt College	X	X	X	X					✓
13	IncuHive Farnborough	Rushmoor Borough Council	X	X	X		✓				
23	Leigh Park Skills Centre	Havant Borough Council	X	X	X	X	✓				
26	Bacteriophage and Biologics Manufacturing and R&D Facility	University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	X	X	X	X		✓			
28	BRIDGE - Workforce and Innovation Centre	University of Winchester	X	X	X	X				✓	
31	Hampshire Creative Business Escalator	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	X	X	X	X			✓		
37	Havant Maths and English Hub	HSDC				X					✓
38	Faraday Connect	Fareham Borough Council	X		X	X	✓				
39	Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre	University of Portsmouth	X	X	X	X				✓	

No.	Project name	Applicant	PRIORITY AREAS				APPLICANT TYPE				
			High potential sectors and clusters	Business support	Infrastructure: energy, digital, transport and business space	Skills, employment and careers	Local authority	Other public body	Business organisation	University	College
42	South of Romsey Town Centre	Test Valley Borough Council			X		✓				
44	Microbial Innovation Centre	University of Southampton	X	X		X				✓	
45	Securing the Future of the New Forest Tour	New Forest National Park Authority		X	X	X	✓				
47	Alton Adult Learning Hub	HSDC	X	X		X					✓
48	Tech+Tour Hampshire Rollout	South Hampshire College Group	X	X	X	X					✓
OUT OF 16			14	12	12	14	5	1	3	3	4

4.2. As mentioned in 3.12 above, the total available funding of £22.3m is made up of £13m (58%) from the former Solent LEP and £9.3m (42%) from the former Enterprise M3 (EM3) LEP. To align with the purpose of the original allocation of the funding from Government, the final list of approved projects will need to deliver benefits to the former LEP area for which the funding was granted. However, this does not require the direct investment to be within the actual former LEP area.

4.3. The following table sets out the 16 shortlisted projects, according to whether they would be expected to have a Hampshire-wide impact (with benefits in both of the former LEP areas), a local impact in the former EM3 LEP area, or a local impact in the former Solent LEP area. As shown in the bottom row of the table, 84% (48% plus 36%) of the LLR funding across the shortlisted projects would benefit the former Solent LEP area, and 64% (48% plus 16%) would benefit the former EM3 LEP area.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Hampshire-wide impact	Local impact ex-EM3	Local impact ex-Solent
2	Hampshire Fare Digital Futures Programme	Hampshire Fare	£57,300		
6	Aerospace, Defence and Security Curricula Development	ADS	£450,000		
12	Test Valley Community Construction Academy	Sparsholt College		£1,056,000	
13	IncuHive Farnborough	Rushmoor Borough Council		£1,445,000	
23	Leigh Park Skills Centre	Havant Borough Council			£6,681,080
26	Bacteriophage and Biologics Manufacturing and R&D Facility	University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	£3,000,000		
28	BRIDGE - Workforce and Innovation Centre	University of Winchester	£3,519,000		
31	Hampshire Creative Business Escalator	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	£325,000		
37	Havant Maths and English Hub	HSDC			£400,000
38	Faraday Connect	Fareham Borough Council			£1,167,941
39	Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre	University of Portsmouth	£3,908,727		
42	South of Romsey Town Centre	Test Valley Borough Council		£2,000,000	
44	Microbial Innovation Centre	University of Southampton	£2,570,000		

No.	Project name	Applicant	Hampshire-wide impact	Local impact ex-EM3	Local impact ex-Solent
45	Securing the Future of the New Forest Tour	New Forest National Park Authority			£2,270,000
47	Alton Adult Learning Hub	HSDC		£180,000	
48	Tech+Tour Hampshire Rollout	South Hampshire College Group	£400,000		
Total			£14,230,027	£4,681,000	£10,519,021
% of the total funding requested by the shortlisted applications			48%	16%	36%

The shortlisted applications

4.4. For further information about the 16 shortlisted applications, please see the following:

- **Annex 2** (page 33 onwards), which provides an overview of the 16 shortlisted applications.
- **Annex 3** (page 35 onwards), which provides further detail. For each application, this consists of:
 - the response provided by the applicant in their business case template to the question “what is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?”
 - some comments by Hampshire County Council, reflecting the discussion with shortlisted applicants at the presentation sessions, and follow-up questions in some cases
- After shortlisting, each shortlisted applicant gave a face-to-face presentation to Hampshire County Council officers, and for this purpose, provided a brief overview of their project in slide form. **These slides are contained in Annex 4**, which is attached as a separate file.

5. Project-specific issues

5.2. The Board is asked to note and consider the following issues relating to particular shortlisted projects. These issues would all be addressed in more detail as part of the due diligence stage.

No. 23, Leigh Park Skills Centre

5.3. This project is to build a new skills centre in Leigh Park, to house a construction training centre, co-located with the Havant Youth Hub and other services, and forming an important hub for the local community.

5.4. The LLR funding requested by Havant Borough Council is £6,681,080, which is approximately 30% of the total available of £22.3 million.

5.5. At the presentation stage, Havant Borough Council were asked whether they would be able to scale down their funding request, and how the project would change as a result. In response, they stated that, should they be offered a reduced amount of LLR funding, their preference would be to pursue further options for match funding in order to make up the difference, rather than reduce the scope of the project. However, this would take time and therefore postpone the achievement of the project's benefits.

5.6. Should this project proceed to the due diligence stage on the basis of the full amount of the funding request, we will seek further assurance regarding the evidence of demand for the proposed provision.

No. 26, Bacteriophage and Biologics Manufacturing and R&D Facility

5.7. The applicant for this project is University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust, in collaboration with the University of Southampton, the UK Health Security Agency, and Jafra, the world's largest manufacturer of bacteriophages. The proposal is to build the UK's first GMP (good manufacturing practice) certified facility for the manufacture of bacteriophages – viruses that kill bacteria, and offer an alternative for treating antibiotic-resistant infections.

5.8. The proposal is based on private and public co-investment from Jafra and the LLR. Considerable further work is required, however, to understand the partnership and commercial structure that would underpin the project. At their presentation session, the partners indicated that they would welcome Hampshire County Council (HCC) as an active participant in the partnership, and are open to discussing different models, including the nature of a potential HCC stake and revenue share. Alternatively, HCC might prefer to play a more passive role as a funder.

5.9. These issues will need to be discussed in detail with the partners and explored fully as part of the due diligence stage. Also, any potential approach would need to be compliant with subsidy control legislation.

No. 37, Havant Maths and English Hub and No. 47, Alton Adult Learning Hub

- 5.10. The applicant for both of these projects is Havant & South Downs College, HSDC. The first project is to establish a learning hub focused on Maths and English provision for post-16 NEET (not in education, employment or training) individuals, at HSDC's Havant campus. The second project is to establish a learning hub focused on tackling worklessness among the over 50s, at HSDC's Alton Campus.
- 5.11. On 29 January 2026, the Department for Education issued HSDC with a revised "Financial Notice to Improve": [Revised notice to improve: Havant and South Downs College](#). This placed HSDC under "enhanced supervision" by the FE Commissioner, due to "serious cashflow pressures".
- 5.12. As part of the due diligence stage, we will need to test further whether HSDC's current status raises any substantial concerns about the delivery of these projects.

No. 38, Faraday Connect

- 5.13. Over 90% of the cost of this project is for the construction of a link road at Daedalus (Solent Enterprise Zone), in order to unlock more land for development, enabling investment and growth by aerospace and advanced engineering businesses.
- 5.14. Following Fareham Borough Council's presentation, we asked them to provide further detail on several aspects of the proposed road scheme, including: compliance with Hampshire County Council's Local Transport Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework; the wider movement strategy for the Enterprise Zone; traffic modelling; options appraisal; scheme benefits; and costings, including optimism bias.
- 5.15. Fareham Borough Council have provided a helpful response, but as part of the due diligence stage, Hampshire County Council will undertake a specialist transport review and examine some of these aspects in more depth.

6. A List and B List

6.2. As shown in the table below, the total LLR funding requested across the 16 shortlisted projects is approximately £29.4 million, whereas the maximum funding that can be allocated through this call for projects is £22.3 million.

6.3. We are proposing to address this by splitting the shortlist into:

- an "A List" of projects that could all be funded from the total available of £22.3 million
- a "B List" that will only be considered further if any of the "A List" projects do not pass due diligence and/or subsidy control

6.4. As discussed in Part 3 above, the 13 shortlisted projects shaded green in the table below would all be affordable within the overall budget constraint of £22.3 million. As explained in paragraph 3.15, the three projects shaded in orange were then added, to create the shortlist of 16.

6.5. Because of the relatively low value of the funding requested (£400,000), No. 37, Havant Maths and English Hub would also be affordable within the £22.3 million limit. Subject to consideration of the shortlisted applications by HPPB (see Part 7), **the "A List" could therefore consist of the 13 projects shaded in green in the following table, plus No. 37, Havant Maths and English Hub.**

6.6. In that case, **the "B List" would consist of two projects: No. 39, Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre; and No. 28, BRIDGE – Workforce and Innovation Centre.**

6.7. However, the composition of the "A List" and the "B List" will need to be reviewed during the HPPB meeting, to take into account any changes to the shortlist recommended by HPPB (see Part 7).

No.	Project name	Applicant	Total score	Funding requested	Running total
44	Microbial Innovation Centre	University of Southampton	29.75	£2,570,000	£2,570,000
6	Aerospace, Defence and Security Curricula Development	ADS	29	£450,000	£3,020,000
26	Bacteriophage and Biologics Manufacturing and R&D Facility	University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	26.75	£3,000,000	£6,020,000
38	Faraday Connect	Fareham Borough Council	26.5	£1,167,941	£7,187,941
42	South of Romsey Town Centre	Test Valley Borough Council	26	£2,000,000	£9,187,941

No.	Project name	Applicant	Total score	Funding requested	Running total
45	Securing the Future of the New Forest Tour	New Forest National Park Authority	25.75	£2,270,000	£11,457,941
23	Leigh Park Skills Centre	Havant Borough Council	25.25	£6,681,080	£18,139,021
12	Test Valley Community Construction Academy	Sparsholt College	25	£1,056,000	£19,195,021
48	Tech+Tour Hampshire Rollout	South Hampshire College Group	24.5	£400,000	£19,595,021
47	Alton Adult Learning Hub	HSDC	23.75	£180,000	£19,775,021
13	IncuHive Farnborough	Rushmoor Borough Council	23.5	£1,445,000	£21,220,021
2	Hampshire Fare Digital Futures Programme	Hampshire Fare	22.25	£57,300	£21,277,321
31	Hampshire Creative Business Escalator	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	21.25	£325,000	£21,602,321
39	Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre	University of Portsmouth	24.5	£3,908,727	£25,511,048
28	BRIDGE - Workforce and Innovation Centre	University of Winchester	24	£3,519,000	£29,030,048
37	Havant Maths and English Hub	HSDC	21.75	£400,000	£29,430,048

7. Points for consideration and recommendations

7.2. HPPB is asked to:

- **CONSIDER** the composition of the shortlist of 16 applications, as set out in Part 4, including the spread of projects across HPPB priority areas, applicant types, and location of benefits, and **CONSIDER** whether the composition of the shortlist is aligned with the aim and the priority areas of the call for projects (see box below)
- **CONSIDER** whether any of the shortlisted projects, individually, are not aligned with the aim and the priority areas of the call for projects (see box below) and should therefore not proceed to the next stage of the process

Aim and priority areas

In considering the above two points, HPPB should have regard to:

- The **aim** of the call for projects, which is **to support projects that contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth in Hampshire**
- The four **priority areas** agreed with HPPB in March 2025, as follows:
 - **High potential sectors and clusters, including the Industrial Strategy “IS-8” sectors**
 - **Business support**
 - **Infrastructure: energy, digital, transport, and business space**
 - **Skills, employment and careers**

For background about the five priority areas, see the following papers from the January 2025 and March 2025 HPBB meetings respectively:

[HPPB-250106-Agreeing-HPPB-Priorities.pdf](#)

[HPPB-240325-priorities-proposed-workstreams.pdf](#)

The Industrial Strategy “IS-8” sectors are:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Clean energy industries
- Creative industries
- Defence
- Digital and technologies

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial services• Life sciences• Professional and business services |
|---|

- **CONSIDER** the specific issues related to some of the shortlisted projects, set out in Part 5, and whether any of these projects should not proceed to the next stage of the process, as a result
- **Subject to the above consideration, RECOMMEND that:**
 - **All 16 shortlisted projects should proceed to the due diligence stage**
 - **As set out in Part 6, 14 projects should proceed to the due diligence stage as an “A List” of projects that could all be funded from the total available of £22.3 million, and 2 projects as a “B List” that will only be considered further if any of the “A List” projects do not pass due diligence and/or subsidy control**
- **NOTE** that all shortlisted proposals remain subject to (a) due diligence (b) subsidy control and (c) formal approval by Hampshire County Council, and **NOTE** the remaining stages of the process as set out in Part 8

8. Remaining stages of the process

Feedback to shortlisted applicants following this HPPB meeting

8.2. Following this meeting, the shortlisted applicants will be emailed to advise them about the outcome of the meeting and next steps. We will also provide them with any feedback from HPPB members, including any issues raised during the meeting that need to be addressed at the due diligence stage.

Due diligence

8.3. The due diligence process will begin immediately after the HPPB meeting. This will be led by Hampshire County Council's Finance team, and will include the following. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to provide further information about their projects and/or organisations as required.

- Checks on the legal and financial status of applicants
- Review of project costings and other relevant financial information
- Confirmation of projects' quantified benefits and revised cost-benefit analysis
- Confirmation that LLR funding will be used to fund project activity that is classifiable as capital expenditure (with any revenue expenditure covered by other funding sources)
- Consideration of any other factors relevant to ensuring that use of the LLR represents proper use of public funding and value-for-money

8.4. A subsidy control determination will also be carried out during the due diligence stage, to confirm whether funding of shortlisted projects would be consistent with subsidy control legislation.

8.5. We estimate that the due diligence stage will be completed by the end of April, although this may depend on the complexity of the issues relating to particular projects.

Hampshire County Council decision-making

8.6. For projects that pass due diligence, a formal Hampshire County Council decision will be required to approve LLR funding for those projects. We expect that this will be a Cabinet decision, to be taken in Summer 2026.

Funding agreements

8.7. Following approval of funding, Hampshire County Council's Legal team will draw up funding agreements with approved projects. These will be based on the template funding agreement that was published as part of the call for

projects, which will speed up the process. Experience suggests that finalising and signing funding agreements is likely to take five to six weeks, although this is dependent on the timeliness with which applicants turn around requests from Hampshire County Council.

- 8.8. Projects will typically submit claims for a number of payments over the course of the project, paid in arrears against a schedule of milestones set out in the funding agreement. Funding agreements will also set out ongoing obligations on applicants to report on progress and achievement of outcomes. Ongoing monitoring of projects by Hampshire County Council will be the responsibility of the Economy and Skills team.

Annex 1 – Applications not shortlisted

The following table provides a brief description of the applications that were not shortlisted.

It does not include two applications (numbers 5 and 27) that were withdrawn: in one case because the application was substantially incomplete; and in the other because the lead applicant had submitted three applications, exceeding the limit of two applications per lead applicant.

The right-hand column indicates those applications that did not pass the initial assessment, with the reason why this was not the case. See paragraph 3.11 for further explanation.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Brief description	Did not pass initial assessment (with reason)
1	spudWORKS Creative Infrastructure Expansion	SPUD	£60,493	Upgrades to the driveway and entrance, electrical supply, and ceramics kiln facilities at a hub for creative micro-businesses.	Applicant not eligible Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
3	Minibus for Wildlife Explorers Club	Wild New Forest Guided Tours	£12,000	Purchase of a small minibus to enable young Wildlife Explorers to be transported to events.	Applicant not eligible Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
4	Development of Multi-Purpose Education and Skills Space	Peter Symonds College	£280,710	Refurbishment of a hall to create a modern, accessible and flexible teaching space.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
7	Scaling-Up Advanced Ultra-Light Aerospace Component Manufacturing in Hampshire	Farnborough Aerospace Consortium	£500,000	Funding to support expansion of operations at TISICS, global leaders in advanced metal matrix composites.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
8	Maritime Futures Accelerator	Maritime Solent	£389,475	Immersive STEM and maritime careers engagement, digital infrastructure, an innovation asset register, and a business networking app.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
9	Training Bus	Upskill Training Network	£400,000	Acquisition and fit-out of a multi-functional mobile training facility.	Applicant not eligible Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Brief description	Did not pass initial assessment (with reason)
10	Romsey Railway Station – Stationmaster’s House Refurbishment and Community Regeneration	Romsey Town Council	£500,000	Refurbishment of the former Stationmaster’s House to create a community-led facility providing café, meeting, cultural and enterprise space.	
11	Winchester School of Art Exchange	University of Southampton	£3,500,000	Transforming Handy Villas into an innovation hub, providing incubation space, advanced prototyping facilities, and tailored business support.	
14	Hampshire Green Growth Capital Grants Programme	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	£315,000	Providing match-funded capital grants to help micro and SME businesses to invest in green technologies and embed long-term sustainability strategies.	Application included request for funding for revenue costs
15	Great Start Basingstoke	Basingstoke College of Technology	£150,000	Establishing a dedicated off-campus training facility to engage 16-18 year old NEETS in education.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
16	Grow Hampshire with Venturefest South	Venturefest South	£387,100	Creating digital, physical and mobile infrastructure to enable Venturefest South to significantly scale business support, innovation engagement and skills access.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
17	Langstone Harbour 2050: Gateway to Nature	Langstone Harbour Board	£150,000	A long-term plan to restore habitats, open inclusive routes to the coast, and catalyse a blue-green economy.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
18	Solent Freeport Capital Innovation Grant	Solent Freeport	£2,000,000	Supporting capital investments that enable organisations to innovate, aligned with the defence, advanced manufacturing, and clean energy sectors.	
19	Portsmouth Clinical Research Facility at Queen Alexandra Hospital	Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust	£1,137,000	A clinical research facility that will strengthen NHS-SME collaboration and support early-phase medtech innovation.	
20	Addressing Poor Air Quality at Hampshire Hospitals	Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	£343,600	Addressing poor air quality on hospital sites, by focusing on vehicle movements and smoking.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
21	Milestones Development Phase 1	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	£5,000,000	Upgrading the existing visitor hospitality offer and installing a children’s adventure playground, at the Milestones Museum.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Brief description	Did not pass initial assessment (with reason)
22	Public Realm Reimagining, Market Place and the Furlong, Ringwood	New Forest District Council	£2,700,000	Creating a better environment in the Market Place and a more attractive route from the Furlong car park.	
24	Get Set for Growth Hampshire	YTKO	£1,000,000	A capital grant programme for SMEs, supported by tailored business support and a digital application and monitoring platform.	Applicant not eligible Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
25	Strategic Enabler for Economic Growth – Basing View	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	£7,875,000	Demolition and clearance of Fanum House, unlocking seven acres in a strategic employment zone.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
29	Criterion & People's Park – Gosport Creative Cluster Led Regeneration	Gosport Borough Council	£3,500,000	Reopening the Criterion as a multipurpose arts and entertainment space, and developing the People's Park to provide a waterfront performance space.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
30	Portsmouth Skills for Future Prosperity	City of Portsmouth College	£1,476,528	Upgrading the college's engineering and advanced manufacturing facilities, to provide training for the maritime, aerospace and defence sectors.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
32	Centre of Excellence in Engineering, Marine and Maritime	Brockenhurst College	£6,509,250	A new, unified Centre of Excellence in Engineering, Marine and Maritime, replacing the existing engineering department.	
33	Regional Inward Investment Office	Business South	£700,000	Establishing an independent service that will enable and attract investment to Hampshire and the wider Central South region.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
34	CETC/NEETs Provision Expansion – Replacement of End-of-life Hangar	South Hampshire College Group	£3,850,000	Transforming an end-of-life hangar into an industry-led training hub, addressing construction skills shortages and creating pathways for NEET individuals.	
35	Maritime Training Infrastructure Development	Southampton Solent University (Warsash Maritime School)	£7,450,000	Development of maritime training infrastructure, and specialist facilities for training in safety, fire, survival, and ship handling.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Brief description	Did not pass initial assessment (with reason)
36	Hampshire Digital Foundry – The Digital Backbone for Smart Growth	Deep Tech Research Institute	£3,750,000	Digital infrastructure to catalyse growth in high-potential sectors, with four pillars: business intelligence; CRM; digital marketplaces; a collaboration backbone.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
40	Langstone Harbour 2050: Path to Zero	Langstone Harbour Board	£215,000	Purchasing a workboat with electric propulsion, to support statutory patrols, nature restoration, harbour tours, and commercial maritime services.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
41	Farnborough Flightpath: Connecting aviation heritage and growth	Rushmoor Borough Council	£350,000	Revitalising Farnborough town centre through enhanced wayfinding, improved shopfronts, digital displays, and public spaces with aerospace-themed features.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
43	Health Hub, Bordon Town Centre	Defence Infrastructure Organisation	£3,000,000	Development of a new-build health hub, accommodating a GP surgery, community healthcare facility, pharmacy, dentist and opticians, plus 85 apartments.	
46	Theatre Royal – Performance and creative arts studio	Winchester City Council	£4,500,000	Creating additional, flexible performance and studio space, increasing opportunities for community participation and creative employment.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
49	Warsash Simulation Centre Upgrade	Southampton Solent University (Warsash Maritime School)	£3,000,000	Upgrading the centre with advanced simulators and remote operations centres, expanding learner capacity and enabling research.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
50	Winchester Farming Cooperative Abattoir	Winchester City Council	£5,770,000	Establishing a cooperative to deliver and own a state-of-the-art abattoir, increasing the productivity and resilience of the county's livestock sector.	
51	Hampshire New Business Growth	Business South	£1,500,000	Developing the Fareham Enterprise Centre and the Solent Business Centre, creating an east-west business hub for start-ups, creative and digital.	Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
52	Chantry Centre Regeneration	Test Valley Borough Council	£5,200,000	A comprehensive refurbishment of Andover's principal shopping centre, including retail units, offices, and the multi-storey car park.	

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Brief description	Did not pass initial assessment (with reason)
53	Kings Walk Creative Enterprise Zone, Winchester	Partnerships and Places	£5,500,000	Transforming an underused city-centre site into a hub for creative industries, with affordable workspaces, studios and cultural spaces.	Applicant not eligible Application scored below 2 for one or more criteria
54	Together We Make Eastleigh - Enterprise Hub and Town Centre Regeneration	Eastleigh Borough Council	£4,147,000	Regenerating Eastleigh town centre through a new business accelerator space at Enterprise House, and transformation of the public realm.	
55	Marchwood Industrial Estate – new units	Associated British Ports	£4,300,000	Redeveloping a vacant brownfield site to deliver five modern units for industrial and storage/distribution use.	Applicant not eligible
Total			£91,418,156		

Annex 2 – Overview of shortlisted applications

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date	Brief description
2	Hampshire Fare Digital Futures Programme	Hampshire Fare	£57,300	£69,300	May 26	May 28	Delivering digital platforms to improve productivity, connectivity and market access, for over 350 food, drink, farming and hospitality businesses.
6	Aerospace, Defence and Security Curricula Development	ADS	£450,000	£1,043,500	Feb 26	Nov 27	Developing industry-validated apprenticeship and training curricula in aerospace, defence and security, and licensing this to Hampshire FE and HE institutions.
12	Test Valley Community Construction Academy	Sparsholt College	£1,056,000	£1,320,000	Aug 26	Dec 26	A mezzanine extension to the existing Future Skills Construction Centre at the Andover College campus, with multi-trade, electrical, and retrofit and green skills bays.
13	IncuHive Farnborough	Rushmoor Borough Council	£1,445,000	£1,670,000	Sep 26	Oct 27	Refurbishment of The Meads Business Centre to create 19,000 sq ft of affordable, flexible workspace for start-ups and SMEs.
23	Leigh Park Skills Centre	Havant Borough Council	£6,681,080	£7,488,780	Jul 26	Sep 28	Building a construction training centre in Leigh Park, providing skills development opportunities for individuals at risk of becoming NEET, and acting as a community hub.
26	Bacteriophage and Biologics Manufacturing and R&D Facility	University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	£3,000,000	£10,000,000	Summer 26	Spring 28	Building the UK's first GMP-certified bacteriophage and biologics manufacturing facility, to supply the NHS and global private industry, and boost leading-edge research.
28	BRIDGE - Workforce and Innovation Centre	University of Winchester	£3,519,000	£6,982,379	Nov 26	Nov 27	A collaborative, industry-partnered centre, training health and social care professionals in home-care and digital delivery, and enabling the development of new technology.
31	Hampshire Creative Business Escalator	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce	£325,000	£400,000	Aug 26	Aug 27	Creating an online platform that will connect creative businesses with the people, advice and resources required to fuel their growth.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date	Brief description
37	Havant Maths and English Hub	HSDC	£400,000	£500,000	Jan 26	Ongoing	Creating a hub from which to deliver roll on / roll off, modular Maths and English provision, to re-engage post 16 NEETs.
38	Faraday Connect	Fareham Borough Council	£1,167,941	£2,335,881	Sep 26	Jul 28	Enabling additional business space at Daedalus (Solent Enterprise Zone) through a new link road with junction improvements, and an accelerated power upgrade.
39	Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre	University of Portsmouth	£3,908,727	£5,113,116	Sep 26	Aug 29	Creating a collaborative facility for marine ecosystem restoration, regenerative aquaculture and technological innovation to scale nature-based solutions.
42	South of Romsey Town Centre	Test Valley Borough Council	£2,000,000	£23,000,000	Jun 26	Mar 30	Regeneration of the Romsey bus station and Crosfield Hall sites, delivering a new bus station, community facility, public car parking and public realm.
44	Microbial Innovation Centre	University of Southampton	£2,570,000	£9,330,000	Sep 26	Aug 29	Creating a Microbial Innovation Centre that will provide specialised testbeds and services, to support the validation and commercialisation of advanced microbial technologies.
45	Securing the Future of the New Forest Tour	New Forest National Park Authority	£2,270,000	£3,720,000	Oct 26	Oct 28	Securing the long-term future of the New Forest Tour by investing in a new generation of modern, accessible, low-emission open-top buses.
47	Alton Adult Learning Hub	HSDC	£180,000	£240,000	Feb 26	Ongoing	Creating a hub focused on tackling worklessness among the over 50s, by connecting them with high local demand in manufacturing, logistics and healthcare.
48	Tech+Tour Hampshire Rollout	South Hampshire College Group	£400,000	£518,000	Jun 26	Mar 27	Acquiring a second mobile unit, to enable the proven, Solent-based Tech+Tour outreach project to extend its delivery across the whole of Hampshire.
Total			£29,430,048				

Annex 3 – Descriptions of shortlisted applications

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
2	Hampshire Fare Digital Futures Programme	Hampshire Fare	£57,300	£69,300	May 26	May 28

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Hampshire Fare's Digital Futures Programme will modernise digital infrastructure to enable 350 food, drink, and craft businesses to grow faster, smarter, and more sustainably, generating increased income and regional economic impact. Building on our 2024 brand and website relaunch, this structured digitalisation project will enhance membership experience, create scalable digital tools, and support longterm growth across Hampshire & the IOW food, drink, and craft sector.

Hampshire Fare represents over 350 food, drink, farming, craft, hospitality, and trade businesses. Many are small and medium-sized enterprises in rural and semi-rural areas, where access to digital tools, networks, and efficient systems can be limited. This project addresses these challenges by investing in connected digital platforms that support members, staff, and consumers, while significantly reducing administrative burden.

The project consists of five integrated components.

First, an online member community platform will provide a secure space for members to connect, collaborate, and access opportunities. Features will include member directories, discussion forums, event booking, and targeted networking for producers, buyers, and corporate partners. This platform will strengthen peer to peer support, improve engagement, and increase membership retention.

Second, a Local Produce Guide digital portal will streamline members booking adverts, uploading artwork, and managing listings for Hampshire Fare's flagship annual publication (20,000 print copies). The portal enables self-service for members, reduces manual administration, improves data accuracy, and provides better insight into advertising performance and engagement.

Third, a Local Produce Guide Companion App, launching alongside the 2027 Guide, will build on the success of Hampshire Fare's "Bites, Sips & Savings" hospitality initiative. The app will feature interactive member maps, exclusive consumer offers, and push notifications to drive footfall and engagement, introducing potential for future earned income through promotional activity and partnerships.

Fourth, an IT equipment upgrade for staff, including laptops, screens, hard drives, a printer, and peripherals, will ensure the team can effectively manage new platforms, improve productivity, and support flexible working practices. Finally, broader digital infrastructure improvements, including cloud-based systems, secure data storage, and scalable software licences, will future-proof operations, enable the expansion of digital services without significant overhead, and allow further integration of our CRM system, KEAP.

Upon completion, the project will deliver a modern, integrated digital ecosystem that improves efficiency, strengthens member engagement, expands consumer reach, and

creates new income opportunities. It will position Hampshire Fare to better support local businesses, adapt to future growth, and continue championing Hampshire and the Isle of Wight's food, drink, and craft sector in a digitally connected economy.

These digital platforms will continue to generate economic and social value beyond the funding period, creating a lasting legacy aligned with the purpose of the LEP legacy reserves. This investment will deliver a modern, integrated digital ecosystem that drives long-term growth, economic value, and enduring benefits for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight's food, drink, and craft sector.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- Hampshire Fare (HF) has a five year strategy. It recently rebranded, and launched a new website last year. It has approximately 350 members, and estimates that their combined turnover is approximately £300m. HF estimate that the project would lead to an increase in member turnover of 10 to 20%.
- HF was set up by farmers and the core of its membership are producers (around 200 members). Around 100 members are retail/hospitality businesses, and around 50 provide support services. HF are unsure of the potential for membership growth. New members are vetted, to confirm that they use local suppliers.
- The project will create one-stop-shop digital infrastructure for HF. This includes putting the local produce guide online, although HF will also continue to produce the paper version. It also includes a consumer app, which will provide information about e.g. producers and retailers, and also offers and loyalty rewards.
- Of the total project cost, around £8 to 10k is for IT equipment; the remainder is for product development. For the latter, HF will use a Hampshire-based developer with hospitality sector experience. Products will be tested with members during development. AI optimisation will be considered, as well as SEO.
- HF has been self-sustaining for 12 years. Its three revenue streams are: membership fees (£20 per annum); corporate partnerships; and sale of advertising in the local produce guide (£42k this year). Maintenance and further development of the assets funded through this project will be covered by HF from future revenue. The consumer app will be launched on a freemium basis but may generate additional revenue in due course.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
6	Aerospace, Defence and Security Curricula Development	ADS	£450,000	£1,043,500	Feb 26	Nov 27

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

The Problem

Hampshire is home to major employers like Airbus, BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce, and Leonardo, along with hundreds of smaller specialist companies. These businesses are critical to the UK economy and national security. However, they face a severe and growing problem: they cannot find enough skilled workers.

When a young person wants to become an apprentice in aerospace or defence, they must wait for a local college to run the relevant training course – which can take up to a year. During this time, the employer's job vacancy remains unfilled, damaging productivity and business growth.

The Government's Defence Industrial Strategy identifies critical shortages in: submarine engineering, precision welding, specialist manufacturing, cyber security, avionics, and advanced materials. Only 9% of UK vocational students train in engineering/manufacturing versus 32% in comparable countries – a major disadvantage.

The Solution

This project designs bespoke training courses directly matched to what defence and aerospace businesses actually need. Instead of waiting for traditional college courses, companies work with us to specify exactly what skills they need. We then create EAL-accredited apprenticeship programmes, delivered immediately by Hampshire colleges – typically within 3-6 months rather than 12 months.

Young people complete training faster and enter jobs faster. Employers get the skilled workers they need. Hampshire's economy strengthens through increased productivity, higher wages for workers, and company growth. The colleges get modern, industry-validated curricula that make them more competitive.

The ADS Curricula Development Project will create a suite of industry-validated, EAL-accredited apprenticeship and training curricula specifically designed to address critical skills shortages in the aerospace, defence, and security sectors across Hampshire.

We will work with local businesses to assess their specific operational objectives and skills needs to design sector-specific curricula. Example curricula could include:

- 1. Aerospace and Combat Air** – covering aerostructures, advanced materials, avionics, electronic systems, and aircraft maintenance and support
- 2. Maritime and Naval Systems** – covering marine engineering, shipbuilding, naval systems integration

3. Defence Electronics and Cyber (subject to capacity) – covering cyber-resilience, defence communications systems, and electronic warfare basics

Delivery Model

To maximise benefit to Hampshire, these curricula will be licensed free-of-charge to Hampshire FE (Further Education) and HE (Higher Education) institutions for a 3-year period (2026-2029). This eliminates the typical 12-month college waiting time – institutions can begin delivery within 3-6 months of project launch.

Following this 3-year free license period, institutions will be charged standard market-rate license fees (£15,000-£20,000 annually), ensuring long-term sustainability and commitment to the programme.

Delivery and Impact Timeline

- **Year 1 (2026-27):** Curricula launch with 2 pilot Hampshire colleges delivering 75 apprenticeships
- **Year 2 (2027-28):** Expansion to 4-6 additional Hampshire colleges, 150+ apprenticeships
- **Year 3 onwards:** Continued expansion with learner cohorts progressing through 3-year apprenticeships, completing with improved employment outcomes

We are focusing the bid on achieving successful delivery in the initial pilot colleges (2 institutions) with proven infrastructure to support this type of training. Once we have demonstrated effectiveness and proven the model works, we can then confidently scale to additional institutions. This approach ensures quality delivery from the outset rather than overcommitting to institutions that may lack the necessary technical facilities or experienced staff.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- ADS has consulted with employers regarding their skills needs. Jobs growth in the sector is also anticipated as a result of increased government spending.
- ADS is not-for-profit. Income from licensing will be reinvested in keeping curriculum up to date, which is crucial. Licence fee income will be from both employers (primes) and from colleges and universities. ADS will aim to keep licence fees relatively low.
- The project involves running a three-year trial in Hampshire. The curricula will be bespoke to Hampshire businesses (albeit it will have common components with curricula developed for businesses in other regions).
- The LLR funding will pay for curriculum development (including employer engagement required for this) and deployment. The project also includes mentoring of learners, employers and providers.
- ADS is working with government on a recruitment campaign, which aims to address workforce diversity.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
12	Test Valley Community Construction Academy	Sparsholt College	£1,056,000	£1,320,000	Aug 26	Dec 26

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Hampshire's construction sector is experiencing sustained skills shortages driven by major housing development programmes, increased retrofit requirements, and significant infrastructure commitments set out in the Hampshire Skills Strategy 2025. Employers across the region consistently report challenges in recruiting appropriately skilled staff, reinforcing the Strategy's emphasis on aligning training provision with employer demand and expanding the pipeline of job ready entrants. In recent years, the College has invested substantially to extend its construction curriculum offer to better serve learners and employers in mid and north Hampshire. The development of 650m² of new construction training facilities in 2024 has already enabled an additional 40 learners to study construction skills with us. These facilities are now operating at full capacity, with 2026/27 applicant numbers exceeding available places, evidencing both the success of existing provision and the pressing need for further expansion.

This demand pressure is heightened by Test Valley's emerging Local Plan, which identifies a substantial uplift in housing need resulting from changes to national planning policy. The Government's revised formula increases the borough's housing requirement by 78%, rising from 524 to 934 homes per year, creating a minimum target of 15,878 homes between 2025 and 2042. Delivering this scale of growth requires a significantly larger and better-trained construction workforce. Without focused intervention, labour shortages will continue to impede development, affect build quality, and restrict employers' ability to meet project timelines.

The proposed project directly responds to these challenges by extending the existing Future Skills Construction Centre through the development of a cost effective mezzanine floor. This investment will create 340 sqm of additional high quality teaching space, enabling a material expansion of provision and the launch of the Test Valley Community Construction Academy. The Academy will increase learner capacity by a minimum of 22-45 places each year where we will seek to now be able to train 300 learners from the centre each year in construction skills from Foundation to L3 and enhance the breadth and depth of construction pathways available. This will include extended provision in electrical installation, Level 2 and 3 apprenticeships, multitrade programmes, welding, digital construction, and emerging green technologies including Solar PV installation, EV charging, and heat pump systems. These areas align strongly with employer identified needs and support progress towards regional and national sustainability targets.

The development will also play a critical role in supporting those most at risk of disengagement from education or employment. The new space will enable delivery of targeted pre-employment and transition programmes, including Construction Skills Bootcamps, pre-apprenticeship pathways under the new Youth Guarantee Programme, and the GROWTH programme designed for learners facing significant barriers, including mental health challenges, SEND, neurodiversity, care experience, military transitions, or limited prior attainment. This inclusive provision will equip residents with core trade skills,

employability skills, digital competence, and essential health and safety certification such as CSCS.

On completion, the project will deliver a modern, flexible, and industry aligned training hub that strengthens Hampshire's future workforce, increases progression into high value construction careers, supports housebuilding and retrofit commitments, enhances productivity, and contributes to long term economic resilience. The Academy will provide a sustainable pipeline of skilled professionals, supporting employers, stimulating local supply chains, and enabling the region to meet both growth ambitions and net zero targets.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- The mezzanine is a quick and effective way of optimising use of the existing space and maximising the number of places. Permitted development only is required, and design work pre-Summer 2026 is being carried out at risk. Costs are based on the costs of building the original extension plus 5 to 7% for inflation.
- Provision will be complemented by other programmes e.g. the "GROWTH" programme for students at risk of becoming NEET, the "Building Heroes" programme for military leavers, functional skills delivery especially maths. The college's current women in STEM initiative will be rolled out to construction.
- Additional learner numbers are expected to ramp up over time because Adult Skills Funding is fully committed in the short term, and the college is anticipating an expansion in funding for this provision in subsequent years. However, they confirmed that the space will be fully used in any case e.g. for more 16+ provision and other programmes.
- Test Valley Borough Council have confirmed demand for retrofit.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
13	IncuHive Farnborough	Rushmoor	£1,445,000	£1,670,000	Sep 26	Oct 27

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Farnborough is a key commercial centre within the M3 corridor, benefiting from strong transport connectivity to London, Heathrow and the wider South East. While historically known for aerospace, defence and engineering, the town has developed a broader professional and digital employment base, supported by Farnborough Business Park and a growing town-centre offer.

The Meads, owned by Rushmoor Borough Council, is positioned as Farnborough's primary town-centre mixed-use destination, combining offices, retail, leisure and residential uses. Its occupier mix and amenity offer differentiate it from out-of-town business parks and make it particularly attractive for smaller businesses and teams that value accessibility, visibility and nearby services. For flexible office users, this type of environment is increasingly important, particularly where space is used for collaboration, client meetings and team days rather than daily attendance.

The Meads Business Centre sits within a shopping centre and consists of five floors of office space. Three of the floors are currently let. However, two of the floors require extensive improvements for them to be occupiable. The heating system on both floors requires updating and the roof of the fifth (top) floor is leaking and requires significant investment to make good and as such that floor is currently uninhabitable.

Partnering with IncuHive, we are applying for £1.445m from the LEP Legacy Funds to undertake a full refurbishment of the second (9,500 sq ft) and fifth floor (9,500 sq ft) of the business centre, update the heating systems and repair the roof to bring the fifth floor back into use. The Council would invest an additional £200,000 to support the refurbishment. Once the renovation is completed the two floors would be leased to IncuHive on an initial period of 5 years, with a revenue sharing agreement in place.

IncuHive offers flexible, affordable workspace solutions designed for start-ups, freelancers, and growing SMEs. With simple monthly licences and all-inclusive pricing, small businesses can move in quickly and scale as their business grows. The proposed offer consists of small, private office suites ranging from approximately 100 to 500 square feet, let on short, rolling 30-day licence agreements.

On completion, the site would provide:

- Unfurnished private offices from £395 + VAT per month
- Dedicated Desks - £149 per month + VAT
- Hot Desks - £89 per month + VAT
- Virtual Office Services - £39 per month + VAT
- Free business support to help companies to start, grow and scale

All provisions (except virtual offices) include onsite parking and 24-hour access.

Rushmoor borough provides a strong underlying demand profile for flexible workspace. In 2023, there were approximately 3,490 active enterprises in the borough. The structure of this business base is heavily skewed towards smaller firms: around 80% are micro-

businesses employing fewer than 10 people, with a further 15% employing between 10 and 49 people. This size profile aligns closely with the typical occupier of small, serviced office suites and suggests a deep and resilient pool of potential demand.

Rushmoor supports around 53,000 employee jobs, with a higher-than-average proportion of full-time roles compared with the wider region and Great Britain as a whole. Of particular relevance to serviced offices is the sectoral composition of employment. Information and communication accounts for approximately 17% of all employee jobs, while professional, scientific and technical activities account for just over 15%. Both sectors are significantly over-represented relative to regional and national benchmarks.

These sectors tend to generate demand for flexible, high-quality workspace: businesses are often project-led, growth can be uneven, and staff are accustomed to hybrid working models. They are also more likely to prioritise good digital connectivity, privacy, and professional meeting space over long-term lease commitments.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- Farnborough has flexible workspace for individuals and plenty of large office space, but there is a gap for spaces for small/growing businesses, on flexible terms. Incubation support is also an important part of this model.
- The focus will be on digital and professional services. There is also potential for a creative cluster. IncuHive's support offer could include AI upskilling, working with the AI Growth Alliance.
- IncuHive at the Chantry Centre in Andover achieves 85% occupancy, despite not having 24 hour access and a lack of parking.
- Rushmoor Borough Council (RBC) expects local authority ownership to continue for at least 10 years (with IncuHive as operator). The condition of the roof means that the top floor of the building is completely unusable, but this project would stabilise the whole building.
- This project would complement the new leisure centre (expected 2028), Civic Quarter regeneration (expected 2028/2029) and the replacement of Princes Mead with residential development.
- Based on 85% occupancy, RBC expects to generate a surplus of £10-20k on the project.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
23	Leigh Park Skills Centre	Havant BC	£6,681,080	£7,488,780	Jul 26	Sep 28

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

The LEP Legacy Fund provides an excellent opportunity to build the Leigh Park Skills Centre, a purpose-built construction training facility that will co-locate Havant Borough Council's Youth Hub, Park Community School's 14-16 construction provision and create a new 16 plus and adult offer in one of the country's most income deprived communities.

With a population of 27,544, the area faces significant challenges: low employment (70.5%), high unemployment (5.2%), and economic inactivity (26.3%). Many local neighbourhoods rank among England's **most deprived**, particularly for **income and employment**. These issues translate into poorer health, education, and life chances.

Youth unemployment is a critical concern. Havant records some of the highest NEET rates in Hampshire: 133 known (4.6%) and 193 unknown (6.6%) compared to county averages of 2.9% and 4.6%. At Havant Academy, based in Leigh Park, the figure rises to 13%. SEND students are disproportionately affected. Post-COVID, these challenges have deepened, impacting mental wellbeing and educational attainment.

The DWP & HBC Youth Hub supports over 400 young people annually but has found limited meaningful pathways for 16–18-year-olds. Many fail to meet minimum grades for FE provision and cannot afford travel outside the borough. Entry-level construction jobs are common destinations, yet apprenticeship opportunities are scarce. This restricts progression into better paid roles and perpetuates economic disadvantage.

Leigh Park's adult skills base is among the lowest nationally with only 23% holding NVQ Level 4+, compared to 34% nationally. This centre will provide clear progression routes to higher-level learning for young people and adult learners.

The Leigh Park Skills Centre will change this. It will deliver school-age training, post-16 FE courses, employability support, and adult upskilling. It will accommodate over 150 students per year, enrolling students from neighbouring schools and the local community.

Construction remains one of the largest employing sectors regionally yet demonstrates an ageing workforce and a shortage of under-25s. CITB data shows the average age rising from 42.1 in 2023 to 46.4 by 2050. Addressing this gap locally will strengthen the sector and create sustainable careers.

The project forms part of a wider regeneration programme for the Leigh Park Community Campus. Relocating 14–16 provision will enable demolition of the outdated former ambulance station and phased development of a modern Apex Centre. Co-location of services will provide a joined-up approach to education, training, and employment, underpinned by HBC's nationally recognised Youth Hub, which has already supported over 400 young people into work since 2022.

The revitalised site will offer hands-on, industry-standard training aligned with regional projects, including Solent Freeport. Estimated cost is £6.745m, with match funding from public and private partners. This investment will transform opportunities for young people

and adults, reduce NEET rates, and boost the local economy by creating a continuous journey from education into employment.

In the spirit of the programme, young people from Park Community School, City of Portsmouth College and the Youth Hub will be involved in the design and delivery of the centre as a learning opportunity.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- Leigh Park has a population of 27,000.
- Park Community School (PCS) is delivering construction skills in Leigh Park up to age 16. At that point, many learners will not travel to current City of Portsmouth College (COPC) provision, a few miles away. Of the targeted 150 learners per year, maybe 20 are existing learners, learning at an existing location (although there would be benefits to them of being able to learn at the new centre). Construction is the most popular option at PCS.
- PCS is renting the Apex Centre to deliver construction skills but the building is not suitable. COPC facilities for delivering construction skills are at capacity.
- Havant Youth Hub is one of the highest performing in the country and is expected to continue to receive government support. However, should the programme end for some reason, there would be potential to co-locate with other services at the new skills centre.
- Females are a growing minority of construction skills learners. Engaging them at an early age is key to this.
- Havant Borough Council owns the site and it is expected that it would continue to do so. It is expected that the new skills centre would be operated through a partnership between PCS and COPC.
- If the project was offered less LLR funding than requested, the preference would be to seek alternative funding from elsewhere, rather than reduce the scope of the project. There is potential to do this, but it would take time, and a year of learners would therefore be lost.
- Havant Borough Council have considered refurbishment of existing buildings as an alternative approach, but insufficient space is available, and the benefits of co-locating services would be reduced or lost.
- There is potential for synergies and efficiencies between this project and No. 37, Havant Maths and English Hub, including cross-referrals and progression routes, avoiding duplication of provision, and shared community outreach.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
26	Bacteriophage and Biologics Manufacturing and R&D Facility	UHS NHS Trust	£3,000,000	£10,000,000	Summer 26	Spring 28

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Overview

(Bacterio)phages, viruses which specifically infect and kill bacteria, are a new alternative for treating antibiotic-resistant infections. In 2023 the Science, Innovation and Technology Committee released an open call to investigate the therapeutic potential of phages. Phage therapy has been acknowledged in the UK Government's 2024-2029 National Action Plan to address antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and is currently available only on a compassionate use basis. Calls for further investment and clinical trials into this alternative antimicrobial therapy have been widely observed both nationally and internationally to tackle the growing global and UK AMR crisis.

The UK Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) issued guidance in 2025 that only GMP standard phage should be used for patients in the NHS and in clinical trials. Currently, GMP phage cannot be manufactured in the UK, and there are few commercial providers in the European Union (EU) or globally that can supply phage. Importing phage for clinical use is expensive, and formal clinical trials are a prerequisite for generation of NICE-level evidence to support widespread NHS commissioning.

Current Challenge

UK clinical trial applications including Southampton-led trials must source phage from EU suppliers, incurring high costs and logistical delays. Creating a domestic GMP in Hampshire gives the UK a route to provide Phage into and beyond the NHS, into private pharmaceutical industry, and become part of an international supply chain.

Proposed Solution

The project will design and build the UK's first end-to-end GMP-certified facility for phage and biologics manufacturing at Adanac Park, Test Valley. This facility will:

- Supply **GMP-grade** phage for Southampton-led, national, and international clinical trials.
- Support **NHS and private healthcare distribution** through co-location with the new UHS aseptic pharmacy, achieving economies of scale.
- Serve as an **innovation hub** for phage therapeutics, microbiome biologics, and biofilm diagnostics.

Strategic Partnerships

The initiative leverages collaboration between Jafra, as the World's largest manufacturer of bacteriophages, University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS), UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), University of Southampton. Jafra's expertise and infrastructure will accelerate UK capability, providing direct investment and expertise to enable UK-based manufacturing by end of 2027.

The proposed facility will provide national reach through [NIHR Homepage | NIHR Biomedical Research Centre <https://www.southamptonbrc.nihr.ac.uk/>](#) and Clinical Research Facility [UHS Health Research](#) networks. Leveraging the National Biofilms

Innovation Centre [NBIC: Advancing Biofilm Research & Industry Innovation](#), the hub will foster research, industry collaboration, and future applications in animal health and biotechnology.

Impact

The facility will strengthen Hampshire's Life Science Innovation Cluster, a Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board (HPPB) priority area for economic growth. Attracting inward investment and building this and other facilities for life science innovation are key components of the 'Life Science South' strategy with this investment proposal supported by both Wessex Health Partners and Health Innovation Wessex who are working on behalf of the region with HCC. It will enhance health security, reduce reliance on imports, and position the UK as a leader in phage therapy and biologics innovation. Long-term, the hub will enable cross-sector applications in human health, animal health, and industrial biotechnology.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- Bacteriophages are viruses that are selective killers of bacteria. They are primarily extracted from sewage. They are used to treat antibiotic-resistant infections; so far, about 25 people have been treated with bacteriophages in the UK. Longer term, bacteriophages could displace antibiotics for some kind of infections, and they are no more expensive. They may also be used in future to reduce bacteria associated with other diseases. See the 2024 Parliamentary inquiry: [The antimicrobial potential of bacteriophages - Science, Innovation and Technology Committee](#)
- Suitable accommodation for the facility is already available at Adanac Park. Jafral are interested in investing in Hampshire because of this, and also because of relationships with partners here.
- Also, a skills pipeline exists in Hampshire e.g. from biomedical degrees at the universities of Southampton and Portsmouth. The facility will also provide work experience opportunities.
- New European regulation last year has been mirrored by the UK. There is potential for export, as well as supplying the UK market. Pharmaceutical companies are expected to get involved with bacteriophages in due course.
- There would be multipliers between this project and the biofilms project (No. 44, Microbial Innovation Centre). NBIC have not done much work with bacteriophages yet, but bacteriophages are natural biofilm predators. Having a dual centre of excellence would enable spinouts and attract inward investors.
- The commercial structure of the partnership has not yet been determined. The partnership would be stronger with HCC as a member. The partners are open to discussion about different models, and about the nature of a potential HCC stake and revenue share. UKHSA are also exploring whether they could be co-investors in this. The approach would need to be compliant with subsidy control legislation.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
28	BRIDGE - Workforce and Innovation Centre	University of Winchester	£3,519,000	£6,982,379	Nov 26	Nov 27

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

This project will deliver **BRIDGE**: an innovative training and innovation centre combining simulation, cutting-edge technology and workforce development to improve health and productivity. It is a capital investment in skills and workforce capability. It does not fund or provide NHS service delivery.

The future economic prosperity of Hampshire will be constrained by the health of the population and the ability of the Health and Social Care (HSC) workforce, business and charities to deliver the complex care required.

Hampshire benefits from a predominantly rural and coastal geography, covering 75% of the county and serving 300,000 people who hold a strong community identity. Hampshire is also home to one of the largest armed forces communities, and the only local authority with military bases for all three services.

These demographics face significant challenges to accessing traditional health services, deepening health inequality and creating economic inactivity for themselves and the family and carers who support them.

There are opportunities for emerging technology to address this problem, including significant regional growth opportunities for advanced manufacturers and digital SMEs to develop devices and technical solutions enabling care closer to home. These businesses lack the space to develop, test and iterate their products in a safe environment, and engage meaningfully with the communities they seek to serve.

Similarly, the HSC workforce lack both specific skills and confidence in the use of emerging technologies, as well as the specialist skills to work with communities within their own homes, both in-person and via technology.

The proposed BRIDGE Workforce and Innovation Centre provides a simulated environment where care professionals of all levels train in new technologies and home-care practice, while innovators test and validate devices in realistic domestic settings — supported by the adjacent Foundry observation space enabling trainers to view kit in use, capture data and iterate safely.

The BRIDGE links workforce development directly to product innovation, enabling hands-on learning and rapid feedback between users, designers and developers. By supporting training and validation together, the centre negates investment in kit that quickly becomes outdated and keeps provision industry-standard. In turn, this accelerates Hampshire's adoption of effective solutions for all communities, improving access to care and reducing inequalities, while strengthening Hampshire's position in Health and Care, Life Sciences, Digital and Advanced Manufacturing.

The regional capability is delivered at scale as the BRIDGE utilises two Hyflex training rooms which are designed to connect directly with the remote workforce in-situ at the communities where care is delivered. By enabling both onsite and remote participation, it ensures that clinicians, care professionals can access high-quality training and individuals can contribute their lived experiences, providing feedback which is then incorporated into product development. The adjacent Instructional Media Studio will create evidence-based training materials for both the workforce and users, enabling safe, confident care at home.

BRIDGE will improve access by equipping the HSC workforce with the skills and confidence to deploy validated technology and home-care practices through commissioned NHS and community pathways. It will not provide care; it is a capital-enabled training and innovation asset that future-proofs skills, supports economic activity, and accelerates SME-led solutions that remain current and industry-standard.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- The project will co-locate workforce development with innovation support for SMEs. It aims to provide three SMEs per year (one initially) with an eight week support cycle. This will be free for the participating SMEs.
- SMEs to be supported through the project could be developing digital tools e.g. using AI to gather and analyse information from patients at home, or new wearables (monitoring things other than blood pressure). The project would enable these to be tested in a simulated home environment. The university has extensive experience of SME engagement, holds the Small Business Charter, and will use existing networks and go and talk to clusters.
- The university is already delivering 50-75 health and care CPD (continuing professional development) courses. The same volume is assumed for BRIDGE, and these will all be additional. The BRIDGE home care course will be new.
- BRIDGE will charge for training. These costs will largely be covered by organisations' CPD budgets, which is the model for current courses. Offering hybrid, remote and self-directed learning will help to address the issue of employee release. The university will engage with care providers.
- Most trainees will already be qualified professionals. There will also be an opportunity for the project to showcase health and care careers, and the university is happy to share the facilities with colleges offering Level 3 access courses. There is potential to involve community groups and service users remotely.
- Funding from the NHS is not available. NHS training funding has been squeezed, and virtual wards are focused on replicating hospital care at home.
- The match funding for the project includes estates costs and staffing costs.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
31	Hampshire Creative Business Escalator	Hampshire Chamber	£325,000	£400,000	Aug 26	Aug 27

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Challenge

The creative industries represent one of Hampshire's most significant growth opportunities.

Current data indicates approximately 11,420 creative businesses in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, employing 39,000 people and contributing an estimated £5.25 billion GVA to the regional economy. When including freelancers, total employment linked to the creative economy exceeds 80,000 roles, with 60% of these existing in the Hampshire County Council administrative area.

Despite this scale, growth is constrained by structural barriers: fragmented access to finance, skills, technology, and specialist advice. These barriers disproportionately affect micro and small businesses, which make up most of the sector.

Solution: The Creative Business Escalator

The Creative Business Escalator will address these barriers and deliver economic return by creating a digital platform that connects creative businesses with the expertise, opportunities and resources they require to grow. The platform is designed to enable the right business to connect to the right resource at the right time.

The platform will leverage AI to connect businesses to relevant resources, including:

- Funders and investors
- Professional advisers
- Professional bodies
- Specialist accelerators
- Skills and training providers
- People and talent, including HE/FE and freelancers
- Clients and commercial opportunities
- Workspace providers.

Most of these resources already exist.

The platform will reduce the time, cost and risk faced by creative businesses in identifying and accessing support. Regionally, it provides an efficient mechanism for enabling growth across a high-potential sector.

Impact Of the Creative Business Escalator:

Job Creation: Conservative estimates suggest the platform will enable 325 new FTE jobs over seven years, based on less than 1% of businesses adding one employee per year. This is supported by evidence from similar interventions (e.g. Creative UK's regional accelerators), which have demonstrated job growth of 3–5% among participating firms.

Business Turnover Growth: The platform is expected to generate incremental turnover growth of £10.5 million per year by Year 7, calculated using industry benchmarks for productivity uplift from employment.

Finance Leveraged: The platform will facilitate access to external investment, with a projected £9.75 million in private finance raised by participating businesses over seven years.

Cost-Benefit Ratio: With a total capital investment of £325,000, the projected economic uplift (jobs, turnover, and finance raised) represents a return on investment exceeding 100:1, delivering value for public funds.

Additionally, the platform strengthens Hampshire's position as a creative cluster, attracting talent and investment, and supporting inclusive growth by enabling freelancers and micro-businesses to scale. These impacts align with Hampshire's Economic Strategy and the UK Industrial Strategy priority for creative industries.

Project outline

Due to the heterogeneity of the sector delivery is structured around three broad stages:

- **Research and insight (FUNDED)** – identifying the needs of creative businesses at different growth stages. This stage is funded from the AHRC/RSA/Creative PEC
- **Resource identification** – mapping and curating best-in-class resources.
- **Platform design and build** – creating the digital infrastructure that connects businesses to resources.

The resource identification and platform design and build are the stages enabled by LEP legacy reserves funding.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- The current research project, part funded by the RSA, will produce interim outputs in May, and published reports by the end of June. This would inform the design and build, which would run from August to August.
- The Southern Creative Catalyst (SCC) is aiming to be in a position to launch the platform in around 18 months, and at the same time to have in place a more formal organisation and a small team.
- Hampshire Chamber will be the grant holder. SCC does not have a legal entity yet. Ongoing ownership of the asset is to be confirmed.
- AI will be provided to the project in a way that protects security and intellectual property.
- Once proved, this model could have potential for “white labelling”. The same model and technology could work for other sectors.
- The project will focus on Hampshire, plus Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. The geographical span will also stretch across into Bournemouth, and over the borders with Surrey and Berkshire.

- Given that detailed design and user testing is yet to be undertaken, it would be necessary to mitigate the risk of abortive costs that might not be classifiable as capital expenditure. Also, if this project were to proceed to due diligence, it would be necessary to scrutinise whether costs relating to website development could all be treated as capital.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
37	Havant Maths and English Hub	HSDC	£400,000	£500,000	Jan 26	Ongoing

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Project Description: This project will transform an underutilised area of the college (previously A Level Music) into a modern, multi-functional learning hub specifically designed for post-16 NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) individuals or those wanting to leave college as English & Maths plus their full time course is too much. These students need a quieter learning zone with a more consolidated / flexible timetable consisting of English and / or Maths only. Once these qualifications are achieved, they are well-positioned to move onto further study or training. The space will feature a dedicated IT learning suite, a 'chill-out' zone for social integration, collaborative group spaces, and private booths for intensive 1:1 delivery.

The Need: The project targets the Havant & Leigh Park catchment area, addressing the critical need for 'inclusive growth' that offers opportunities to all of Hampshire's communities. Currently, there is a gap in flexible, 'enticing' provision for learners who have disengaged from traditional education. By offering modular, 'standalone chunks' of GCSE / Level 1 & 2 English and Maths delivery, the project removes the psychological barrier of year-long commitments and provides immediate 'currency' for employment or further training. This aligns with the national Industrial Strategy's identification of significant skills shortages in foundational areas that hamper productivity. Once learners have completed all standalone module tests, they will be ready for assessment.

This project directly supports the following strategic drivers:

- **Hampshire Economic Strategy (2025-2027):** The strategy prioritises 'tackling deprivation' and ensuring that all communities benefit from growth. By focusing on Leigh Park and the surrounding area, the project directly addresses the goal of 'inclusive growth'.
- **Economy and Growth Plan for Hampshire:** The project supports Action E5 (Connect to Work) by integrating skills support for those facing barriers to employment. It also aligns with the 'Hampshire Careers Hub' (Action E7) by providing effective careers advice to transition learners into 'good work'.
- **UK Modern Industrial Strategy:** The bid responds to the government's commitment to 'simplify the skills system' and provide easier access to jobs through 'Skills Bootcamps'. It specifically addresses the 'talent pipeline' for crucial occupations by securing the basic qualifications (GCSEs) required for the UK's eight growth sectors.
- **Local Growth:** The modular delivery and personalised mentoring model reflect the 'flexibility to meet specific demands' called for by businesses in recent national consultations.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- Maths and English is the key stumbling block to tackling NEET. Feedback from schools is that no-one is delivering this in an innovative, engaging way. HSDC has evidence of the effectiveness of a modular approach from other provision, and has been involved in an Education and Training Foundation “Maths Mastery” pilot.
- The change in the physical environment will enable a psychological reset by learners. Other key features are that this will no longer be a year-long programme, and that delivery will be flexible depending on the needs of the learner (e.g. 1-2-1, small groups, AI-assisted).
- HSDC has good partnerships with the Havant Youth Hub and Park Community School, and does outreach at Leigh Park Learning Centre. It is part of a “Talent Corridor” with City of Portsmouth College, with cross referrals between the two colleges.
- HSDC has achieved 100% of Gatsby benchmarks and is very good at careers support. It is also experienced in meeting the support needs of students with EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans), and offers digital counselling to all students.
- HSDC intend to start delivery of this provision in September 2026, for a limited number of learners, using an alternative space until the refurbishment of the hub is complete. The capital works would take approximately five months from the point at which funding was approved.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
38	Faraday Connect	Fareham BC	£1,167,941	£2,335,881	Sep 26	Jul 28

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Our project at the Solent Enterprise Zone, Daedalus – Faraday North & South, will enable development of approximately 24,218 sqm of new employment space by delivering two critical infrastructure upgrades: a new internal link road with junction improvements and a 1,500 kVA power capacity upgrade. These works will open otherwise fully serviced land benefiting from existing outline planning permission for high-value industrial development. This fully serviced land will then be ready for development for aerospace and advanced engineering businesses to invest and grow in line with FBC's vision for Daedalus.

The new link road will connect the Faraday Business areas, joining the North to Fareham Innovation Centre and South Hampshire Combined Colleges (SHCG) CETC & CEMAST training centres and the southern part of Faraday Business Park. It includes improvements to the Spitfire Way/Broom Way junction and key internal intersections, enhancing both Business Park entrance junctions' capacities, reducing congestion, and improving access sufficient to enable detailed planning permissions. This vehicle through-route, including pedestrian and cycle link, will increase capacity in the wider surrounds, ensuring that large existing businesses and future development sites in Faraday are interconnected without congesting local roads. The link road will increase capacity and provide improved connectivity for adjacent sites such as the SHCG centres, FIC and Solent Airport. Crucially, it enables development of currently constrained, but otherwise serviced plots, for future business space and efficient access for employees and delivery vehicles.

Delivered by Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN), the 1,500 kVA high-voltage power upgrade will be completed within 12 months. It will provide the electricity capacity required to support the advanced manufacturing and hi-tech engineering sectors being targeted and future occupiers. Without this upgrade, the current grid would limit development potential. Together, these infrastructure improvements remove key barriers to growth, future-proof the site, and allow land to be used to its full capacity.

Upon completion, the project will enable the transformation of Faraday North as a high-quality employment zone with strong investor appeal, comprising fully serviced employment land ready for private development of approximately 24,218 sqm further modern floorspace. This development is of interest to a major aerospace engineering occupier, with an estimated need for this amount of space on Faraday North, bringing several hundred skilled jobs to the area. Alternatively, several large plots will be enabled for a comparable amount of development floorspace.

The project complements a parallel initiative by the SHCG to develop much improved civil engineering/building trades training facilities adjacent to their existing site. Either initiative/project can proceed independently. By delivering employment land and infrastructure, the project ensures that students from the CEMAST and CETC centres have real job destinations nearby. In turn, the college will provide a pipeline of skilled talent, including training and retraining towards employment for local young people who would otherwise not be in employment, education or training (NEET). This powerful link between infrastructure and education ensures Daedalus grows as a business hub for inclusive economic opportunity.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- The 24,000m² Faraday North site will not come forward for development without the new infrastructure.
- Fareham Borough Council (FBC) undertook traffic modelling and considered a range of potential mitigation measures for the traffic problem that the project seeks to address, before identifying the link road as the preferred option. Staggered working has not been considered in detail.
- Costs have been independently assessed. The quotation is valid for one year. No contribution is expected from third parties. If costs turned out to be higher, then FBC would find the additional funding. Costs include 20% optimism bias, which FBC consider to be justified, given the fairly simple nature of the proposed link road.
- FBC own the land. They would use an established project management approach, already used successfully for other projects at Daedalus.
- The unallocated pot of retained business rates from the Enterprise Zone is currently £1.77m. FBC is proposing to provide 50% match funding for this project from this, but then to prioritise Swordfish Business Park for allocation of retained business rates in future years. The business rates increase arising from this project will in turn help to pay for Swordfish. Daedalus as a whole is revenue neutral.
- Daedalus has further potential to develop as an aerospace cluster. There is education on site. The Innovation Centre (operated by Oxford Innovation) is at over 90% occupancy. Some businesses have moved out of the Innovation Centre into other units.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
39	Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre	University of Portsmouth	£3,908,727	£5,113,116	Sep 26	Aug 29

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

The **Seascape Restoration and Innovation Centre (SRIC)** will unite academia, industry, government and communities with national and regional partners to unlock **large-scale nature recovery**. Based in Hampshire's Maritime and Marine Sector, SRIC will provide bespoke infrastructure for training, research, innovation, and collaboration, to improve Hampshire's **marine natural capital, social wellbeing, food security, and climate resilience**, while creating **sustainable coastal livelihoods**.

The World Economic Forum lists biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse in the top 5 risks for the next decade. When ecosystems decline, we lose the vital ecosystem services (ES) they provide, such as fish stocks, water quality and climate regulation. Nature-based Solutions (NbS) - actions that protect and restore ecosystems whilst addressing societal, economic or environmental challenges and improving human wellbeing - could mitigate 27% of global annual emissions and are essential for achieving climate and biodiversity goals.

Coastal ecosystems across UK and Europe have undergone drastic decline in extent and quality with the corresponding loss of the ES they provide, and the Solent is among the hardest hit. **The 2025 State of Nature Report and Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) reveal dramatic habitat losses: 65% of saltmarsh, 92% of seagrass, and 95% of oyster reefs since the 1970's.** This decline threatens the marine natural capital of Hampshire, wider Solent, and the blue economy they support.

Nature restoration provides exceptional returns on investment (ROI): 8-38 EUR for every 1 EUR spent (EC 2022) through ES and livelihoods created. Yet we are failing to achieve NbS at the scale required to deliver the HCC nature recovery strategy, National Environment Improvement Plan and Global Biodiversity and Climate Framework targets due to three critical gaps:

- **Technical Gap:** Lack of suitable infrastructure, advanced technologies and skilled workforce;
- **Financial Gap:** A \$700 billion /yr biodiversity & NbS funding gap (UNEP, 2022);
- **Knowledge Gap:** Insufficient data to quantify ES and attract investment.

The SRIC will bridge these gaps through 4 delivery pillars.

- 1. Scaling Marine NbS:** Provide infrastructure and partnerships for connected restoration at landscape and seascape scales.
- 2. Blue Workforce & Skills Pipeline:** Train the skilled workforce required to meet biodiversity and climate targets.
- 3. Restoration Innovation Hot-House:** Test, de-risk, and develop systems for regenerative aquaculture and effective restoration.
- 4. Marine Technology & Nature-Positive Finance:** Advance marine monitoring systems, providing data to underpin finance for marine NbS.

Located at the Institute of Marine Sciences, the Seascope Restoration and Innovation Centre (SRIC) will feature:

- **Seascope Restoration Hub:** café, education centre, meeting and business spaces.
- **Seascope Innovation Lab** housing state-of-the-art seawater systems and laboratories to test, develop and monitor NbS.
- **Aquaculture Systems** for propagating, culturing and on-growing, facilities to scale up NbS.

Solar panels and greened infrastructure will make this a low carbon site.

SRIC will provide end-to-end delivery from science → pilots → skills → finance. A **place-based, but globally-relevant** centre with **cross-sector governance** embedded from the outset, SRIC will deliver **investment-ready NbS** that is scalable, effective and world-leading.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- The current building is 1970s MOD build and not fit for purpose. There is demand from SMEs and NGOs for business space on the site, which will enable them to access the research facilities that are there.
- Learning provision will include marine biology degrees with specialisms in restoration and nature-based solutions, and vocational pathways e.g. aquaculture technician.
- There is potential for community involvement. There is also potential to benefit from corporate giving, and from biodiversity/nitrate/carbon credits.
- The partnership will operate across the whole of Hampshire.
- Globally, blue economy markets are projected to reach \$3 trillion and 40 million jobs. SRIC will facilitate this growth through research, innovation and training.
- SRIC will apply for other public funding for research and innovation projects, alongside commercial partnerships.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
42	South of Romsey Town Centre	Test Valley BC	£2,000,000	£23,000,000	Jun 26	Mar 30

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

The South of Romsey Town Centre project is an enabling regeneration intervention located at the southern edge of Romsey town centre. Space is limited in this historic market town, so the subject site is one of the last opportunities to create a legacy for the town that delivers on the community's aspirations.

At the heart of the project is the recognition that town centres have evolved, and that to maintain their vitality and viability, a mix of uses in attractive settings that are easily accessible needs to be provided. The project would see a new, larger community hall, a new bus station with increased public realm, increased public car parking, and a commercial element on land currently occupied by Crosfield Hall, the existing bus station, and surface car parking. These uses are identified within the adopted South of Romsey Town Centre Masterplan (2020) and the Romsey Future programme as critical to the regeneration of the southern town centre

The existing arrangement of surface parking and transport infrastructure constrains the redevelopment of this strategically important town-centre site. The decked car park (or MSCP) will consolidate parking provision, providing approximately 285 parking spaces (an increase of 85 spaces), including disabled bays and electric vehicle charging, thereby releasing development parcels for higher-value uses. The additional car parking spaces proposed will help to meet an existing deficit in the town.

The temporary re-provision of public car parking and the delivery of the new bus station represents the essential first phase of the wider regeneration strategy. Without this the new community facility, commercial and public realm cannot be delivered in a comprehensive or coordinated manner. Once the new hall is open the existing facility (Crosfield Hall) can be demolished to provide decked car parking. The project therefore functions as enabling infrastructure rather than a standalone development.

The construction cost is derived from the Development Options Report, ensuring a conservative and robust cost basis that reflects enhanced design quality, durability and integration with the historic townscape.

On completion, the project will improve accessibility and connectivity, support sustainable transport, unlock development land, and provide the physical platform required for long-term economic, social and environmental regeneration within Romsey town centre. Details of the South of Romsey Town Centre masterplan can be found here: [The Masterplan | romseyfuture](#)

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- LLR funding would pay for an improved bus station (with the counterfactual being a like-for-like replacement for the current bus stands plus a cycle facility). This includes a waiting shelter, real time information, integration with the surrounding public space and routes into town. It would transform the experience of the bus station, and support further work in future to promote modal shift and active travel.
- The LLR funding would also improve the viability of the scheme overall. The project also includes an improved plaza, green spaces, connection to Holbrook Stream, and a new community facility. Of the total project cost, the car park accounts for £7m and the community facility for £4.5 to 6.5m. The project will contribute to the health of the town centre and increase opportunities for enterprise.
- TVBC funding would come from capital receipts from disposals elsewhere in the borough, Community Infrastructure Levy, and business park income. The project would increase car parking income, although only one third of the car parking places are additional capacity.
- Romsey is a growing town and does not have enough car parking; it serves a rural area, and public transport is not viable for all.
- TVBC would ensure that apprentices were employed on the project. The community facility could also be a venue for learning; TVBC aims to shift the user demographic to cover all age groups.
- The project is aligned with “A Vision for Romsey: 2022-2042” and TVBC’s “Economic Development Strategy (2024-2029)”. It supports the ambition for a connected, sustainable, inclusive and thriving town centre, by creating a more attractive gateway to Romsey from the south, encouraging sustainable travel behaviour and increasing town centre footfall. By making it easier for people to access work, services and facilities in the town, it will support Romsey businesses to prosper and grow.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
44	Microbial Innovation Centre	University of Southampton	£2,570,000	£9,330,000	Sep 26	Aug 29

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Economic challenge and opportunity: Biofilms - communities of microorganisms attached to surfaces - present significant economic challenges and opportunities across health, infrastructure, industry and the environment. They drive healthcare-associated infections and antimicrobial resistance (AMR), contaminate water and wastewater, reduce manufacturing efficiency, and increase maintenance and asset-failure costs across transport, energy and the built environment. The economic burden attributable to biofilms in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight alone is estimated at £1.41 billion per annum.

Unlocking commercial capability to harness and control biofilms represents a unique, first-of-its-kind opportunity for the UK, with the potential to drive economic growth across multiple high-value sectors.

Problem Statement: Companies seeking to commercialise microbial technologies face structural barriers that limit product development and scale-up. Businesses need access to specialist facilities, testbeds, regulatory experience and clear routes to validation, regulation and market entry. The absence of this infrastructure and practical support creates high technical and financial risk, delays adoption and leads to missed opportunities and loss of economic value from the region.

Hampshire Strength: In addressing these challenges, Hampshire has a distinctive and nationally recognised capability as the founding location and host of the National Biofilms Innovation Centre (NBIC), established by UK Research and Innovation to nucleate a new UK industry with market potential exceeding £1 billion. NBIC is the only national centre focused on biofilms, positioning Hampshire at the centre of a strategically important, high-growth innovation domain.

Proven Impact: Since 2017, NBIC has built a national innovation ecosystem linking 72 academic institutions across the UK, with over 300 industry partners. Independent evaluation shows an initial £16 million public investment generated approximately £204 million in economic impact between 2017 and 2022, representing a return on investment of more than 13:1. NBIC has enabled over 50 new products and services, supported 15 spin-out companies, and created more than 100 high-skill jobs.

Action: The capital (£2.57M) will create the Microbial Innovation Centre (MIC) within the flagship new (completion Q4-2026) £25M Infinity Labs development at the Southampton Science Park. The funding will fit, equip, establish and accredit the MIC, which will be an accessible service facility that supports companies from early translation through to scale-up. The centre will provide specialist testbeds for de-risking and validating technologies, flexible grow-on accommodation, enabling services and professional training, operating as a market-facing, enterprise-led facility focused on accelerating time-to-market.

The MIC will be a place-based delivery asset within the National Biofilms Innovation Centre framework. NBIC will remain the national coordinating body, while the MIC will act as a place-based delivery facility that anchors a nationally proven innovation ecosystem to

generate regional economic value. The MIC will position Hampshire as a national exemplar for how a UK-wide innovation platform can be converted into regional growth.

This infrastructure will attract collaboration, inward investment and commercialisation activity, while reducing barriers for scaling companies. By converting nationally proven biofilm capability into practical support for innovators, the MIC will accelerate adoption and create sustainable and locally anchored economic growth for Hampshire.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- Examples of economic burden due to biofilms include: drag on ship hulls due to “biofouling”; microbially-induced corrosion of pipelines resulting in oil spills; chronic infections and decreased patient outcomes in healthcare; persistent plant contamination in food processing (e.g. inability to eradicate persistent biofilms led to the closure of a sandwich factory with the loss of hundreds of jobs) etc. Biofilms are hard to kill, hence the need for innovation.
- Examples of potential commercial applications include: technology to address contamination of cruise ships’ water systems; technology to clean biofilms from water systems for livestock; delivering cost and energy savings in the wastewater treatment system; improving service life and reducing maintenance costs for vehicles and infrastructure etc. The MIC will provide a testing facility, needed to unlock investment.
- The MIC would be within the new Infinity Labs building, which is due to be ready for occupation in early 2027. LLR funding would be used to fit out part of the building for this project. Match funding includes the Infinity Lab lease, NBIC funds already invested in the project, and NBIC funds over the next two years. NBIC has funding from UKRI, and some from private sources. Match funding will cover all revenue components of the project.
- MIC will charge SMEs. Income streams will include fees for running trials. In some cases, MIC may co-create IP with an SME. Firms choosing to co-locate at Infinity Labs will pay rent.
- This project is complementary with the bacteriophage facility project. The latter is primarily investment in a manufacturing facility, which is very distinct from this project, but complementary because bacteriophage can help to tackle biofilms.
- The project has already identified several spin-outs and other companies developing a range of biofilm-related innovations, that the MIC could support to grow.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
45	Securing the Future of the New Forest Tour	New Forest NPA	£2,270,000	£3,720,000	Oct 26	Oct 28

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

The project enables the sustainable long-term future of the New Forest Tour by investing in a new generation of modern, zero-emission, accessible, low-emission open-top buses. The Tour is a commercially viable, long-standing, accessible and well-used seasonal service that has significant economic and environmental benefits for the New Forest National Park and its communities.

The Tour has operated since 2005 in the peak summer months, providing hop-on, hop-off access across the National Park and surrounding towns and villages, starting with one route and growing to three routes in 2014. It supports the visitor economy by enabling car-free access to attractions, hospitality businesses, rural communities and employment locations, helping preserve the National Park by reducing congestion and environmental pressures associated with high seasonal car use. On average over 40,000 passengers are carried during a 10-week season. The Tour is one of the strongest-performing experience providers featured on the official destination website for the New Forest, receiving 124,556 impressions. The Tour plays a significant role in shaping visitor itineraries and encouraging car-free exploration.

The project will deliver:

- A reliable and resilient fleet capable of sustaining and growing the Tour for the next 10 years and beyond
- Over 3,500 tonnes of carbon equivalent emission savings (equivalent to annual emissions of 1300 homes)
- Modern electric buses that will be used on the Bluestar 6 route outside of the Tour season, which links the New Forest with Southampton
- Improved passenger experience, accessibility and inclusivity, including step-free access and modern information systems
- Reduced impact on the National Park and reduced emissions by replacing car journeys and also through zero/low-emission buses
- Greater confidence for businesses and communities in the long-term viability of the service

The project comprises:

- Purchase and conversion of three new electric open-top buses (£450k purchase and £80k body conversion each - £1.59m total)
- Year-round operation for at least 10 years
- Electric charging infrastructure at Lymington, future-proofing electrification of the fleet (£480k total)
- New branding, fit-out, audio commentary and project management (£110k)
- Contingency (5% - £110k)

The project safeguards and grows an established visitor transport service that supports 40,000 journeys each year and underpins local spending in hospitality, retail, attractions and accommodation. The investment will directly support jobs in tourism and transport and

indirectly support employment across the wider visitor economy by improving access. The Tour helps to deliver National Park objectives and, being an exemplar in low-carbon transport use, provides an example of delivering on the Landscapes Review call for sustainable transport in National Parks. The project will provide modern electric buses to be utilised on the Bluestar 6 route outside of the peak summer months and other school holidays. This will increase the benefit of the investment significantly, through growing the use of the important strategic route from Lymington to Southampton, providing access to employment, education and services.

Without this investment, there will be loss of visitor spend, increased congestion, and negative impacts on rural businesses and employment. LEP legacy funding represents a targeted capital intervention that protects and grows an existing economic asset.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- The partnership between the New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) and Go South Coast has been going for 20 years.
- This is both an economic growth project and an environmental sustainability project.
- The higher cost of an electric bus over diesel (£500k versus £290k) and the cost of putting in place charging infrastructure means that this is not a commercial proposition. Following this investment, operational costs would be two thirds lower, helping to ensure the sustainability of the service.
- The investment in charging infrastructure will lower the cost of other electrification in future.
- The age of the current buses is now causing reliability issues. Second hand electric buses either use outdated technology, or are not available.
- NFNPA will be the grant recipient. The ownership of the buses is to be confirmed.
- Existing jobs will be preserved as a result of this investment. The business case assumes 10% service growth as a result of electrification and marketing.
- The project would work with Hampshire skills providers to meet the skills needs of the project.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
47	Alton Adult Learning Hub	HSDC	£180,000	£240,000	Feb 26	Ongoing

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

The **Alton Adult Learning Hub** is a targeted intervention designed to tackle 'worklessness among the over-50s' in East Hampshire, a group comprising 85% of local benefit claimants. The project transforms a dedicated area of Alton College into a '**Professional Exchange**', a business-like co-working and learning environment that moves away from traditional classroom models to validate the experience of older learners.

Upon completion, the project will deliver:

- **A Physical Skills Hub:** A modern, tech-enabled space featuring a **Digital Manufacturing Lab** (for CAD training) and a **Logistics Simulation Software Suite**.
- **Sector-Specific Certification Pathways:** 4–6 week intensive 'Micro-Credential' modules in **Advanced Manufacturing and Health & Social Care**, designed for rapid transition into employment.
- **Industry Placement Network:** Direct recruitment pipelines with local anchor employers, providing guaranteed interviews for Hub graduates.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- HSDC receives enquiries from students' parents, interested in undertaking learning. They would look to work with Jobcentre Plus to engage long-term inactive people. They have evidence of interest in care skills. The hub would be targeted at "adults" and would support adults under 50, as well as over.
- The hub would offer an adult-only space, with simulation suites and software relating to warehousing and logistics, health and care, and manufacturing. Participation might typically be for two days per week, for four to six weeks. HSDC would have the ability to offer provision in the evening and at the weekend. Employers would visit the hub.
- HSDC has consulted with employers and has interest from specific employers. Micro-credentials would be co-designed with employers. There would also be potential to work with employees requiring upskilling within their existing organisations.
- The capital works would take approximately five months from the point at which funding was approved.

No.	Project name	Applicant	Funding requested	Total project cost	Start date	End date
48	Tech+Tour Hampshire Rollout	South Hants College Group	£400,000	£518,000	Jun 26	Mar 27

Applicant's response to the question "What is your project and what will it deliver upon completion?"

Tech+Tour Hampshire is a scalable, high-impact education and skills outreach programme designed to inspire young people, adults and NEETs, raise aspirations and awareness of priority sector-relevant skills, and address persistent workforce shortages across Hampshire. The initiative builds on the exceptional success of the Solent-based Tech+Tour model, launched in 2023 and already firmly proven. To date, the existing vehicle has delivered over 200 events and engaged more than 28,000 learners of all ages. Post-event evaluation demonstrates clear behavioural impact: 70% of surveyed visitors say they are now considering a career in one of the region's priority sectors, evidencing both strong demand and the model's effectiveness in shaping career ambitions and strengthening talent pipelines.

This success also highlights a critical limitation: capacity. With only one vehicle, demand from schools, community organisations, employers and NEET-support partners routinely exceeds availability. Areas beyond the Solent cannot currently benefit from access to the service. The introduction of a second, modernised roadshow vehicle is therefore timely and essential. This investment will increase delivery capacity, improve operational resilience and enable equitable countywide access, including in districts experiencing high deprivation, lower skills levels and limited exposure to employer-led careers activity.

Between January and July 2026, the partnership aims to double the number of delivery partners, expanding curriculum breadth and enhancing alignment with Hampshire's priority LSIP and IS-8 sectors. This growth will increase reach, relevance and impact while enabling more diverse employer-engagement activities.

Tech+Tour Hampshire will be delivered through a robust collaboration led by South Hampshire College Group, with confirmed delivery commitments (thus far) from Brockenhurst College, City of Portsmouth College, Isle of Wight College, HTP Apprenticeship College, Sparsholt College Group, Farnborough College and the South Coast Institute of Technology, supported by Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, Maritime Solent and LSIP. Collectively, partners bring extensive industry expertise across LSIP and IS-8 priority sectors including Maritime, Defence, Logistics/Transport, Health & Social Care, Digital/AI, Clean Growth, Energy, Advanced Manufacturing, Creative and Agri-Tech. This ensures content remains technically current, employer-aligned and reflective of genuine labour-market opportunities.

The new vehicle will provide a larger, more adaptable mobile learning environment equipped with VR, AR, sector-specific simulators and digital design tools. This enhanced space will elevate the immersive, hands-on workshop offer and enable high-tech demonstrations to be delivered directly into schools, NEET groups, youth hubs, community venues and public events. By removing travel and cost barriers, Tech+Tour will particularly benefit learners who may not otherwise access technical education or employer-engaged experiences.

Expanding to a two-vehicle fleet will allow simultaneous delivery across multiple districts, ensuring consistent provision, increased responsiveness and wider reach. The proven Solent model shows that the approach works. Scaling now will extend these outcomes across Hampshire, enabling more residents to access high-value career pathways while giving employers a stronger, more diverse future workforce.

By project completion, Tech+Tour Hampshire will deliver a fully operational two-vehicle fleet, a countywide programme of high-impact workshops, strengthened employer engagement and stronger alignment between education, industry and local priorities, supporting long-term economic resilience, social mobility and workforce development across Hampshire.

Hampshire County Council comments from presentation stage and follow-up questions

Hampshire County Council noted the following points:

- A typical visit to a school would involve one of the delivery partners (e.g. a college) delivering a 45 minute workshop focused on a particular sector. This explains how technologies (e.g. virtual reality headset, computer-aided design) are used, and students are given hands on time with these. The college talks about their courses at the end, and cross-referrals to other colleges are also made.
- It is anticipated that 10,000 learners will use the second vehicle. Out of 100 SME engagements, 25% are assumed to receive some form of further support from, or to collaborate with, one of the delivery partners.
- More delivery partners will be brought in; Sparsholt and Farnborough College of Technology have already confirmed interest. The project will continue to work closely with Hampshire Chamber of Commerce to promote careers pathways highlighted in the Local Skills Improvement Plan, and with employers to deliver workshops. The bus also provides work experience opportunities for students.
- The aim is for the existing bus to get out three times per week. The calendar for the Solent region is fully booked almost 12 months ahead; the bulk of this is school visits. There is demand from non-Solent colleges.
- Out of term time, the bus is used for industry events, community events etc. It is also used in the evening and at the weekend e.g. with Scouts/Guides, for adult learning and careers evenings.
- Delivery partners share the running costs of the project via a set of Service Level Agreements. Both vehicles will operate across the whole of the Hampshire and the Solent geography.
- There may be potential for one of the buses to be stored in the north of Hampshire, subject to provision of a suitable secure location and accessibility of this to drivers, in order to reduce mileage and emissions.
- Employers have been extensively engaged in developing the technology content of Tech+Tour. There may be potential for more corporate sponsorship in future.

Annex 4 – Overview slides provided by shortlisted applicants

After shortlisting, each shortlisted applicant gave a face-to-face presentation to Hampshire County Council officers, and for this purpose, provided a brief overview of their project in slide form. **These slides are contained in Annex 4**, which is attached as a separate file.