

News Release

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SIR JACKIE STEWART OBE LAUNCHES YORKSHIRE FORWARD'S NEW INNOVATION TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

Yorkshire Forward's Innovation Technology Centre (ITC), the latest development on South Yorkshire's Advanced Manufacturing Park, was officially opened today (Thursday) by triple Formula 1 champion, Sir Jackie Stewart OBE.

The £9.75 million environmentally efficient flagship building has been developed to provide a hub at the heart of the Advanced Manufacturing Park for the advanced engineering technologies industry, providing high quality offices and workshops for up to 20 start-up and growing companies.

The ITC is managed by the UK's leading operator of innovation centres, Oxford Innovation, and offers access to specialist technical advice and a business support programme for companies within and associated with the Centre.

Six forward-thinking companies have already been attracted to the centre, including Bromley Ice & Snow Sport Technologies, which produces performance enhancing ice and snow sport products, and LIFE-IC, Europe's first business incubator specialising in assisting early stage clean energy technology companies.

Terry Hodgkinson, chair of Yorkshire Forward, said:

"It's the early years that are hardest for start-up businesses. By providing support and accommodation for those vital first three years, we can help new companies to grow and develop. Many of the companies in the ITC will collaborate on new technologies to develop lighter materials, simplified manufacturing methods and advanced machining that will help to create a manufacturing future based on the knowledge-worker economy."

Sir Jackie Stewart said:

"I am delighted to support the launch of this new centre which will help to boost the chances of success for the next generation of innovative engineering, materials and manufacturing companies. These companies also benefit from a prime location on the Advanced Manufacturing Park, with access to expertise in materials and manufacturing technologies from world-leading research organisations."

Dr David Kingham, Chief Operating Officer of Oxford Innovation said:

“We are absolutely delighted to be managing the ITC on behalf of Yorkshire Forward. Our ambition is to develop a leading innovation centre that is a hub of entrepreneurial activity and a key enabler for the development of high technology in Yorkshire and Humber, building on the tradition of innovation and engineering excellence for which this region is renowned.”

Professor Kristan Bromley, Managing Director of Bromley Ice & Snow Sport Technologies said:

“The ITC allows us to punch above our weight as it provides a professional environment that supports growing companies. We benefit from high quality office and meeting room facilities in a superb location at the heart of the Advanced Manufacturing Park. We are thriving here, and we hope to be able to expand to a larger unit to accommodate our environmental test facility.”

Notes to Editors

Companies located in the ITC include:

Bromley Ice & Snow Sport Technologies, founded by Professor Kristan Bromley, an Olympic skeleton competitor, and his brother, Richard Bromley. The Company applies the latest technological know-how from the aerospace industry to enhance the performance of ice and snow sports products used in competitions and to improve the function of models designed for leisure use.

LIFE IC Ltd is Europe’s first business incubator focused on assisting early stage clean energy technology companies. LIFE IC manages a specialist incubator facility within the ITC to support the growth of organisations developing sustainable energy products and technologies including fuel cells, wind energy, wave/tidal energy and bio-fuels.

Ncapsa is a start-up company with ambitions to become the supplier of a new generation of software development tools for the embedded systems market, such as software for machine controllers, automotive and consumer electronics and communications devices.

Comocri designs and manufactures advanced filtration systems. Founded by John Beddis, who has over 25 years engineering experience in the food industry, Comocri has developed and tested a fully-automatic, self-cleaning filtration system for cooking oil that can reduce operating and labour costs during food production while improving the quality of food products

The Manufacturing Advisory Service helps manufacturing businesses to access free and grant funded practical manufacturing expertise with the aim of boosting efficiency and productivity levels in manufacturing businesses. MAS is co-funded by the DTI and Yorkshire Forward, and operates across the whole of the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Aspire Creative is a design agency that specialises in providing marketing, new media, 3D and graphic design services to manufacturing and technology companies.

The Innovation Technology Centre

The Innovation Technology Centre (ITC) is located on the Advanced Manufacturing Park between Sheffield and Rotherham. The environmentally efficient building offers 27,000 sq ft of ready-to-use offices and workshops, in a range of unit sizes, arranged over three floors. The ITC also offers: conference and meeting rooms with audio-visual presentation equipment; high speed internet and telephone connections; a receptionist service; and a low-cost virtual office service.

Yorkshire Forward

Yorkshire Forward is the Regional Development Agency for Yorkshire and Humber. Over the past year, Yorkshire Forward has created and safeguarded more than 27,312 new jobs; helped create and attract more than 1,179 new businesses, provided nearly 66,000 learning opportunities and attracted £333 million private sector finance, achieving or exceeding all of the targets it was set. Yorkshire Forward's investment across the region is maximised by attracting European Regional Development Funding from the Objective One and Two programmes.

Oxford Innovation

Oxford Innovation provides services to innovative start-up companies, and to government bodies that promote enterprise. The company operates 13 Innovation Centres that provide flexible office and laboratory space to over 400 technology, knowledge-based and creative companies, and manages four highly successful Investment Networks. For further information: www.oxin.co.uk

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