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## Local Enterprise Partnership – Creative and Digital Industries – current strategy and issues

The LEP's main purpose is to support economic growth (and well-being) by providing strategic leadership and direction to efforts to grow the economy.

This involves all the sectors in the region – manufacturing, tourism, construction, low carbon, health etc..

Structural factors – SMEs are often the target for growth stimulation, particularly start-ups but the failure rates are high (60%+ in IT).

The CBI has identified that Medium Sized Businesses (MSBs – 50 – 500 employees) form a much lower proportion of the UK business landscape – half the proportion to be found in USA, Germany etc. We need to turn successful SMEs into MSBs to generate growth quickly.


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## What are the drivers for economic growth?


The two main aspects are through innovation and improved sales and marketing.

Innovation accounts for about 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of private sector growth. This innovation contributes to both increasing efficiency as well as promoting growth – new markets, new products and services.

The UK's innovation index (0.62) is at a medium level alongside France, Austria, Belgium, Holland etc.

High innovation countries include Finland, Sweden, US, etc. with figures around up to 0.83.

Barriers to innovation – lack of qualified people and raising finance. For the former access to the universities could be a key factor – both staff and students.


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## Universities, innovation and growth


The universities are major players in R&D in the UK. Gross Expenditure on R&D (GERD) by the universities in the UK (26.5%) is twice what it is in US and Japan, and 50% more than in Germany.

In the Sheffield City Region the universities are a major potential source of innovation. Many of the critical research areas in CDI are strong in our 2 universities.

How can we capitalise on these strengths?

Current university developments – jointly UoS and SHU:

New centre in Assistive Technology and Healthcare systems – includes software etc.  
 New Centre in Robotics


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## • Possible further areas where university expertise could be captured

- Advanced testing and transformation
- Security and privacy
- Digital exclusion issues
- Data analytics
- Public sector transformation

An Advanced Digital Research Centre – like the AMRC?

• Digital and other sectors. The CDI sector could support significant modernisation, digitisation etc. in most of the other sectors. This is now a key objective for the LEP.

Setting up small teams of experts to visit companies and study in depth their operations, business processes, technological needs as a precursor for collaborating in setting up specific projects to modernise, evaluate technology and deliver new ways of doing things


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## Other proposals

- Public sector systems transformation.  
 For many years the public sector in the UK has been very generously funded compared with many other European countries. This has now changed dramatically. We need to look to Europe to see how they have achieved the transformation to very cost-effective and high quality ICT systems.

Open source solutions (OSS). These are now serious contenders. The UK Government is pushing this – see their toolkit webpage.

- Cloud and data centres. Cloud is coming fast – some predict that by 2013 30% of SMEs will be using it.

Large cloud facility is being planned for the region