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Item 3

LIPF Bid status

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Refresher Context

- Competed Strand: Up to £20 million per place for **high-potential innovation clusters** outside the earmarked regions.

- Application Requirements:
  - Must be submitted by a **'triple helix' partnership**

- Proposals should demonstrate a **compelling portfolio of activities** supporting the growth of high-potential innovation clusters

- Objectives:
  - Support the scaling and deepening of impact in **established clusters**
  - Aid the growth and maturation of **emerging clusters** with significant potential to drive future economic value

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Progress to Date

- Reviewed DSIT data to understand cluster mapping across Worcestershire:
  - AgriTech
  - Advanced Manufacturing
  - Life Sciences
- Reviewed guidance and joined UKRI webinars on eligibility and subsequent UKRI engagement
- Commissioned sector profiles with Research Team
- Commenced registration process with UKRI for access to online application portal
- Commenced data room collation of materials/information required for ‘anchor entity’ registration
- Conversation with Warwick University and Wychavon DC about emerging ‘Healthy Food’ proposal
- Scoping session with UoW focused on Life Sciences (Health and Care) proposals
- Intel gleaning from WMCA geography on their LIPF proposals to ensure complementarity
- Conversations with third party about potential bid writing support

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Advanced Manufacturing

- Least developed proposal locally
- No discussions with academic institutions currently
- Have met with local manufacturer about LIPF opportunity more generally - Morgan Ceramics
  - Previously successful with Strength in Places Fund (£80m)
  - Morgan Ceramics is home to Ceramics Centre of Excellence in Stourport (7-8 scientists working on vast range of technologuies, advanced materials research and application)
  - Operate across a range of industries including manufacturing, health and care, aerospace – semi-conductor supply chain
  - Links with University of Birmingham – recruitment of staff
- West Mids intel:
  - WMCA – developing three bids with one around Advanced Manufacturing – automotive (especially electrification), aerospace, manufacture of energy-based tech like heatpumps, windfarms etc and then modern methods of construction. Potential inclusion of advanced materials in here as well
  - Staffordshire – developing a bid around ceramics – so opportunity to check if Morgan Ceramics engaged due to wider operational presence across rest of UK

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Agri Tech

- Met with Professor Richard Napier from Warwick University
  - Crop Centre – National Veg Research Station
  - Have access to land which they intend to become innovation campus for University – currently in planning process
- Discussed emerging LIPF bid proposal with Vale of Evesham cluster as a primary focus
- Potential consortium involving:
  - Warwick University
  - Harper Adams University
  - Hartpury University College / Worcestershire???
- Marches geography have a separate Agri bid too – more focused on water and energy resilience – Marches not inclined to join-up and collaborate on wider Midlands geographical bid for Agri
- Warks/Wychavon proposal focus on two clusters:
  - Food Systems
  - Logistics and Supply Chains
  - Would cover things like logistics, distribution, chilled food, fresh food, and livestock (via Harper involvement)
- National alignment opps around food security, productivity, sustainability and Net Zero

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Health & Life Sciences

- Proposed focus on Health & Life Sciences has identified two sub-sector cluster specialisms on **Health Care and Adult & Social Care**
  - **Health Care** innovation area sees us well placed to lead in areas such as digital health, diagnostics, medical devices, telehealth, and AI-enabled care solutions
  - **Adult and Social Care** innovation area is critical given demographic trends and workforce challenges. Innovation opportunities include assistive technologies, workforce productivity tools, and data-driven service models
- UoW has several R&D strengths in Health & Social Care – which are ***strongly applied*** – including Association for Dementia Studies, Biomedical Research Group, Digital Innovation and Intelligent Systems, Living Well with Long-term Conditions Research Group, Rural Mental Health Unit and others
- UoW also offers strong relationships with Health and Social Care bodies across Herefordshire and Worcestershire – quadruple helix potential and wider cluster geography
- Potential complementarity with the larger West Midlands Life Sciences cluster which is worth £3.81 billion p/a in turnover

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Assessing the Options

Key Guiding Principles for LIPF Bid

- Needs to be explicitly evidence-led
- Aligns to national policy and local strategy
- Reflects real delivery capability locally
- Creates a clear, defensible narrative for Government

Matrix Development

- Sector Profiles - business base, employment, GVA contribution
- Growth potential (size of the prize)
- Key Businesses in Cluster
- Proposed Projects
- Geographic complementarity

Criteria for assessing the Evidence Base

- **Assets** – Existing firms, facilities, supply chains, 'innovation active' assessment
- **Anchors** – Named, credible organisations or institutions, academic alliances
- **National Fit** – Alignment to IS-8 and national priorities
- **Deliverability** – Ability to mobilise within 12–18 months
- **Differentiation** – Why Worcestershire is distinctive

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Matrix

- **Advanced Manufacturing** – least developed; limited capacity on specialisms. See as a supporting sector.
- **Agri-Tech** – strong momentum, but confused geography and competing bids across Marches and Wales - risk of Worcestershire being a secondary geography.
- **Health & Life Sciences** – strongest alignment to local assets, delivery readiness and LIPF intent across triple helix.

- **RECOMMENDATION: Health & Life Sciences**

	Advanced Manufacturing	Agri-Tech	Health and Life Sciences
National significance			
IS-8 sector?	Yes	No	Yes
Local Significance			
Plan for Growth sector?	Yes	Yes	Yes
HE expertise / assets			
FE expertise / assets			
No. of Enterprises	2,070 (8.0%)	1,855 (7.2%)	1,105 (4.3%)
GVA contribution (£m p/a)	2,297 (13.1%)	386 (2.2%)	1,693 (9.7%)
No. of Jobs	28,610 (10.9%)	13,600 (5.2%)	42,170 (15.9%)
Innovation Active	33%	2%	60%

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Why Health & Life Sciences option is the strongest fit for LIPF

Alignment to LIPF funding intent

- Near-to-market R&D, adoption and diffusion
- Clear commercial and service delivery pathways (NHS and LA commissioning)

Clear cluster narrative

- Named research anchor
- Identifiable innovation pipeline of projects
- Strong public service demand-side opportunity

Strong delivery logic

- Testbed, evaluation and adoption opportunities
- Clear role for NHS/ICB and local authorities

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Project Portfolio Development

- The categories of LIPF activity vs current WLEP potential projects are listed as below:

- **Business growth / development initiatives = BetaDen:** accelerator cohorts providing structured commercialisation (regulatory and reimbursement readiness, real-world evidence planning, IP), proof-of-concept support and brokerage to early customers in the sector.
- **Talent and skills development = Worcestershire Growth Hub:** employer-aligned innovation academies, short-course bootcamps and leadership programmes addressing skills gaps e.g. in digital, AI/data, and regulatory affairs.
- **Business growth / development and cluster leadership = Worcestershire Growth Hub:** cluster/sector account management, cluster brokerage with tailored engagement, supply-chain matchmaking, investor/export readiness and procurement clinics
- **Seed-corn funding = Catalyse Angel Network:** milestone-gated pre-seed/seed facility to crowd in local angels, link follow-on to evidence plans, and bridge ventures to grant awards and scale-up investment.

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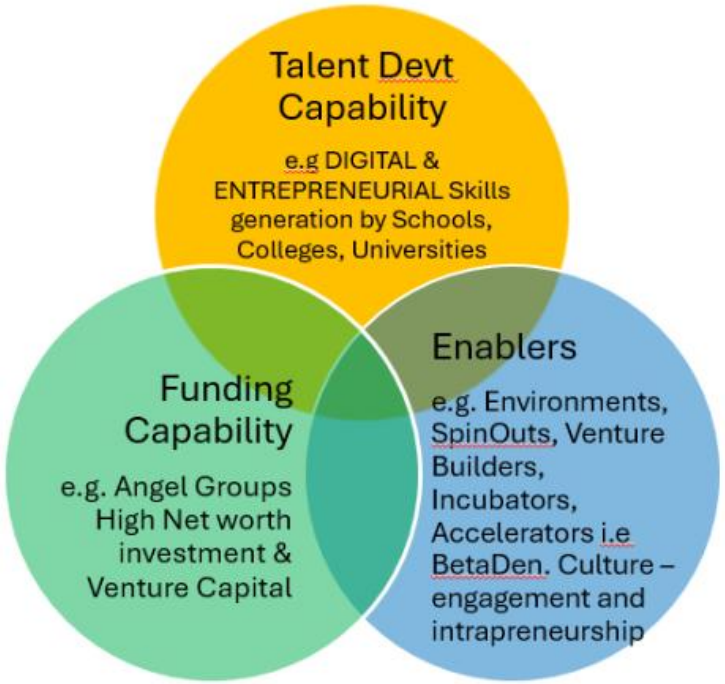
Aligning LIPF with Innovation Strategy

- Ensuring strategic alignment with Innovation Strategy by focusing activity against the three circles framework through the lens of selected cluster development



- Known project areas within LEP ecosystem
- To be bolstered with projects / activity from final cluster consortium partners (sector-specific)
- Co-creation with UKRI (EoI acceptance pending)

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Key Milestones

- Friday 28 November – WLEP Board review (complete)
- 31 December – Deadline for WLEP Board Comments on innovation strategy and LIPF proposals
- 30 January – Innovation Board meeting on recommendation of final LIPF bid
- W/C 2nd February – Endorsement of LIPF bid from WLEP Board
- 6 February – Deadline for stakeholder engagement and additional project engagement
- W/C 9th February – Submission Week
- 12 February – Deadline for EOI submission

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