



# **INNOVATION ALLIANCE**

**Elsewhere in the IAWM & WMIP (Dec 2020)**

Pam Waddell - Director

# West Midlands Innovation Programme: The first year

- Aim of the full, 5 year WM Innovation Programme is to drive up levels of demand-led business innovation across all areas of the region and all sectors and markets in the WM LIS. Phase 1 is £3m, 3 year programme - building team and piloting ecosystem & cross sector activity
- Progress on people:
  - **Innovation Lead and support in WMCA** (Jamie Elliott), supporting Innovation Board, leading on 'Talent' and 'Intelligence'
  - **Support for Innovation Alliance WM** to lead on 'Networks and linkages' and 'Culture' and develop and convene:
  - **Building the Virtual Innovation Team**, so far comprising innovation experts in Low Carbon (SWM); Creative (with Create Central); Manufacturing/ Transport Tech (WMG) and Mobility (with Transport for WM). Interim posts establishing arrangements for construction and health/ life sciences.
- Progress on pilot activities/ projects
  - **Networks and linkages:** 25 events/ thematic working group meetings attended by 631 people
  - **Investment in pilot projects:** The Grid (virtual innovation platform); Regional retrofit scale-up; scoping on innovative public sector procurement; CITEC cross sector supply chain innovation... and several more in the pipeline
  - **Talent:** Ongoing discussions with WMCA skills
  - **Intelligence:** Regional team participating in MIT REAP programme; VIT provide sector intelligence
  - **Culture:** Innovation Tracker and 'New Faces of Innovation' listings on IAWM website



# Diversity and Inclusion in Innovation

- Two events in Birmingham Tech Week in October – launch of New Voices Campaign
- Innovation Policy and Practice event 19<sup>th</sup> November- discussion meeting starting from Innovate UK report *Supporting Diversity and Inclusion in Innovation*. See blog [here](#)
- Launch of the [New Voices of Innovation](#) listing and call for recommendations

# Venturefest West Midlands: 28 January 2021

- Online, morning of 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Free event focused on business growth through innovation, bringing together 100s of entrepreneurs, innovators and investors.
- Programme includes:
  - Keynote: Ben Francis, Founder of Gymshark
  - Minerva Birmingham PitchUp competition
  - Panel discussions, including Covid driven Innovation leading to better business long term; Opportunities in Green Growth
  - Informal discussion and networking
- <https://www.venturefestwm.co.uk>