Innovation Study

A report prepared for *emda*

CM International

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This document forms part of the *emda* Knowledge Bank

East Midlands Development Agency:
Innovation Study

...driving innovation

Final Report

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1. Introduction

This report presents findings from CM International's study of generic innovation[1] support in the East Midlands and options for further development. It has been conducted on behalf of the East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*) with the aim of informing the development of a coordinated response to innovation needs outside of the region's priority sectors of food and drink, healthcare and bioscience, sustainable construction and transport.

The context for the study is the recently published Innovation Strategy for the East Midlands 2010-2013 (the Strategy). This identifies progress made in implementing the region's iNets, focused around the priority sectors, but also recognises the need to do more to support companies falling outside these sectors. The context for the study is also shaped by limitations in available funding at the regional (and sub-regional level in the East Midlands) for new advisory capacity, and the presence of a wide range of sub-regional innovation support measures that have been developed in recent years, including innovation centres, incubators, science parks and so on. Here the Strategy recognises the potential to use the existing support and expertise in such centres to extend, coordinate and raise the profile of innovation investments.

This invitation to tender identified three specific objectives for the research:

- Review sub-regional and local innovation centres and programmes

- Categorise the support services on offer, review other innovation support models

- Produce a range of options for regional support to coordinate a framework for delivering generic innovation support

In order to address these objectives CM International's methodology incorporated mapping of sub-regional innovation centres and support programmes[2], supported by comparative practice desk research and a workshop with *emda* and sub-regional partners.

The findings from this report are set out in the remaining sections. This begins with an outline of sub-regional innovation centres and programmes (2), and comparative practices (3). The report then moves on to identify key issues and principles for a generic innovation service in the East Midlands (4). The final section (5) provides our conclusions and

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[1] Generic innovation support is the term used to reflect support that falls outside the region's priority sectors, as defined by the iNets - healthcare and bioscience, sustainable construction, food and drink, and transport.

[2] The term 'innovation centre and programmes' is used in this report to summarise the full range of innovation assets in the region, including innovation centres, incubators, science parks and programmes.

recommendations for next steps in the development of an East Midlands generic innovation support service.

2. Research methodology

The research for this project was conducted over a six week period, and largely based on desk research as the primary method. The key features of the approach adopted are summarised below:

Stage 1 Scoping

The first stage of the project focused on confirming and understanding *emda's* aims, objectives and expectations for the research. This incorporated an initial launch meeting, collection of background reports and information on sub-regional innovation centres and programmes across the region, as well as details of the emerging East Midlands Innovation Strategy. Alongside these initial research activities further discussion was undertaken with selected *emda* innovation team members with a focus on clarifying challenges and the likely requirements for a generic innovation support service.

Stage 2 Review and mapping

The second Stage of the project conducted a desk-based review of all regional innovation centres and programmes in the region. In mapping these innovation support assets the research focused on developing detailed picture of sub-regional activity. This comprised literature review and web research of centres and programmes, and sought to understand the precise nature of specialist innovation advice and support available to companies through these centres and programmes, as well as gaps. It also examined the degree of networking coordination evident within sub-regional centres and programmes, and opportunities for further extending this as part of a generic innovation support service. Details of the centres and programmes mapped can be found in the annex of this report.

Stage 3 Comparative practices and options

This Stage comprised a review of comparative approaches adopted by UK and European regions and sub-regions. The focus, here, was one of examining comparative practices and potential lessons for the East Midlands rather than evaluation and wholesale 'model transfer' *per se*. In this respect the primary method adopted was one of desk research, supported by selected project manager interviews.

In developing options for the East Midlands it was recognised that these should not be solely driven by the experiences of practices adopted outside the region. Options for development of a generic innovation service were therefore developed to take account of precise conditions in the East Midlands, combined with lessons from other regions. These options, described in section 6, are also appraised in light of strengths and weaknesses.

To validate and finalise the emerging options a half day interactive workshop was held with *emda* staff and sub-regional partners. This provided an opportunity for the options to be discussed and refined before drawing up the final report.

Stage 4 Final reporting

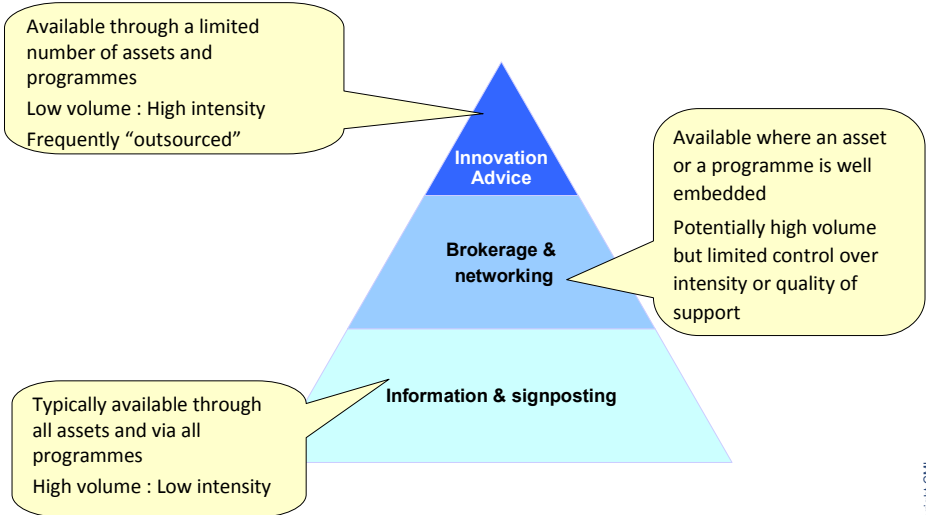The final work package drew together all results of the Study, including:

- The review and categorisation of sub-regional innovation centres and programmes
- Validated options
- A database of key *emda* innovation stakeholders

It also developed and set out our recommendation on a preferred option and next steps in the development of a generic innovation support service.

3. Sub-regional innovation assets

The main goal for this review was to gain a better understanding of the nature of support available within the innovation centres, and via the sub-regional innovation programmes. To this end the following segmentation of innovation support services was developed to guide the mapping.

A segmentation of innovation support services

Available through a limited number of assets and programmes
Low volume : High intensity
Frequently "outsourced"

Innovation Advice

Available where an asset or a programme is well embedded
Potentially high volume but limited control over intensity or quality of support

Brokerage & networking

Information & signposting

Typically available through all assets and via all programmes
High volume : Low intensity

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This model highlights the varying intensity of innovation support and advice potentially available within a generic support system. In this respect the largest group of support (by volume of companies assisted) is 'Information and signposting' (denoted by the light blue

colour). Such support is often available within most sub-regional innovation centres and programmes, and provided via routes such as centre managers, help lines and portals (for example, Business Link), onsite documentation and so on.

The second largest group of support measures is 'Brokerage and networking' (denoted by the mid blue colour). Such supports help to link innovators and companies into pre-existing networks of innovation support. They also provide a more 'hand's on' form of support in navigating to support. Such support can also be relatively 'high volume' in its focus, and typically available where a centre or programme is well embedded in a regional business support network.

The final group, at the pinnacle of the support triangle, is 'Innovation advice' (denoted by the dark blue colour). This represents the highest intensity of innovation expertise and support and is, as a consequence, often delivered to a low volume of potentially high-impact clients. Such advice tends to be provided by experienced professional advisors, and often outsourced to private sector providers/consultancy teams. Typically many of the Solutions for Business[3] advisory products would be found in this segment of support.

The following analysis examines provision in each of the sub-regions in more detail.

3.1   Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire is characterised by the region's largest concentration of sub-regional innovation centres and programmes. This support encompasses the full range of innovation centre types – innovation centres, incubators, science parks and programmes – many of which are developed by and in association with Nottinghamshire County Council and the sub-region's two universities – University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University. Nottingham is also one of the UK's designated Science Cities.

Coordination mechanisms are relatively well developed across the sub-region with organisations such as the Greater Nottingham Partnership (GNP)[4] and Nottingham Development Enterprises (NDE)[5] managing / overseeing activities across the area.

A map of current provision is set out below:

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[3] http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/

[4] GNP was created to improve partnership working across Greater Nottingham, and aims to facilitate further growth and investment in the area.

[5] NDE provides secretariat services to Nottingham Science City, and manage a local innovation centre manager network as well as providing some innovation mentoring services.
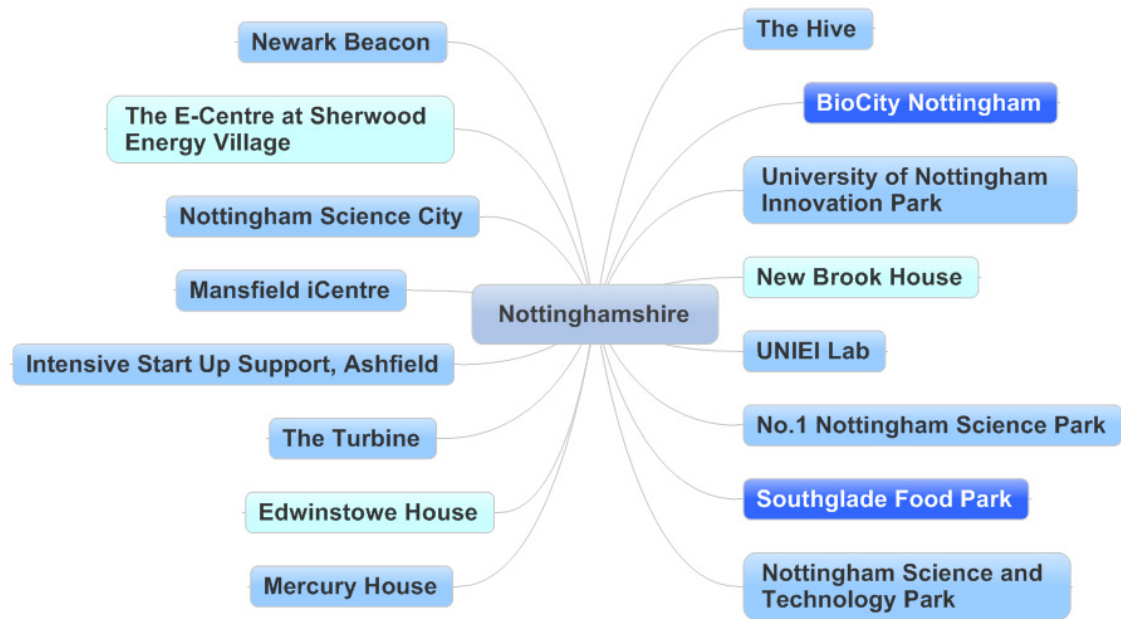
The vast majority of innovation support identified in Nottinghamshire falls within the 'Information and signposting', and 'Networking and brokerage' categories. A number of examples of specialist innovation advice are evident, including Biocity and Southglade Food Park. These centres, however, are closely associated with the region's iNets, and support is therefore not likely to be 'generic' in focus.

Elsewhere CM International understand that Nottingham County Council has piloted an Innovation Advice and Guidance service based around three of its centres: Mansfield iCentre, Mercury House and Newark Beacon. This pilot funding has now come to an end, but feedback has been positive. The Council is also examining ways to better coordinate these centres together.

3.2 Leicestershire

Leicestershire has a substantial number of innovation centres and programmes. This again encompasses most categories of innovation support assets, with local authorities and universities (De Montfort University, University of Leicester and Loughborough University) at the forefront of many initiatives. Leicestershire is the home to a strong cluster of support targeted at creative industries, creativity and design (for example, Design Leicestershire)[6].

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[6] A number of these supports can b

In relation to the support typology used in this study the vast majority of support is targeted at Networking and brokerage as well as at Information and signposting. No specific examples of specialist innovation advice were identified, however, we are aware of services such as LATI which despite operating on a limited budget, are arguably at the boundaries of this category.
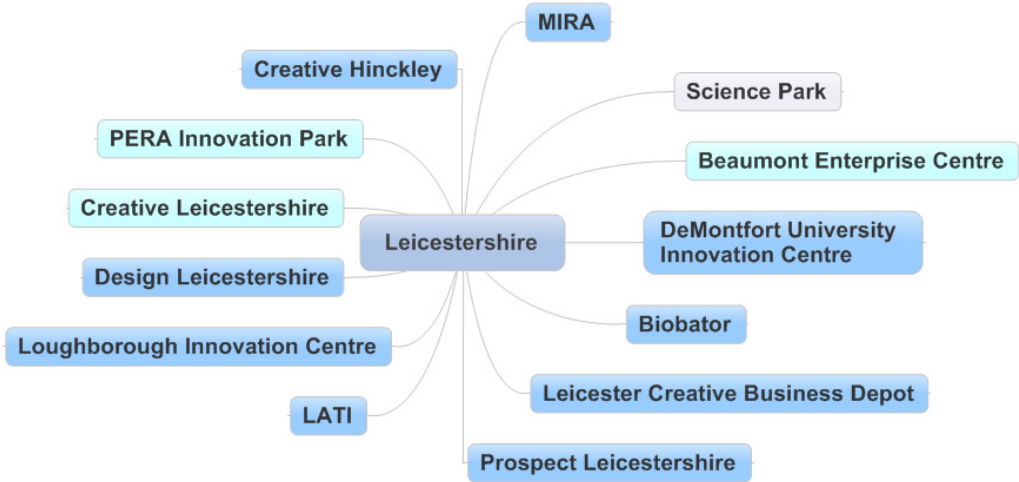
In relation to networking and brokerage mechanisms there are several networks that link creative industries activities throughout Leicestershire, including Creative Leicestershire, Creative Hinckley and Design Leicestershire. In addition, and due to the strong presence of universities in the sub-region, many of the other innovation support measures are linked through their academic bases.

3.3   Lincolnshire
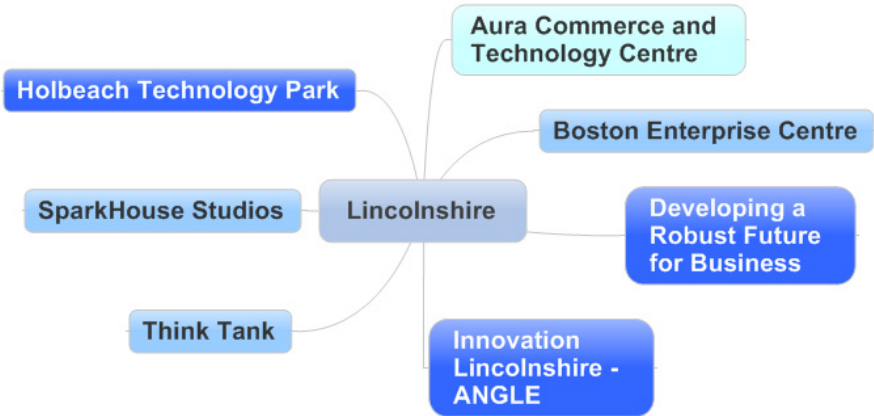
On the face of it Lincolnshire has a relatively small number of innovation centres and programmes. This, however, reflects the strong coordination model adopted for innovation

support - most clearly illustrated by the Innovation Lincolnshire programme (including its strands operated by ANGLE and the University of Lincoln)[7] and its innovation centre manager network. This range of support has, in part, been developed in response to perceived limitations on iNet presence in the region and the need to develop localised networks of support for businesses in the sub-region.

The Innovation Lincolnshire programme aims to promote and develop an innovation culture in the sub-region by increasing the numbers of businesses investing in innovation; raising business investment in innovation; improving the effectiveness of commercialising ideas; building business resilience and productivity. To this end the programme (delivered by ANGLE) provides tailored innovation support in three main areas: 'awareness' (for example, events), 'stimulating innovation' (including a business innovation diagnostic – 70% of clients are said to be at this point currently), and increasing 'innovation capability' (a longer term bespoke mentoring phase). This is developed by a team of ten specialist innovation advisors, who provide advice within the Solutions for Business framework.

Funding for the programme is provided by Lincolnshire County Council, *emda* and European funding. The cost for the programme is more £2.6 Million over 3 years, and Lincolnshire County Council has advised that sustainability of the activity is a key issue for the programme.

Lincolnshire also benefits from a further source of Innovation Advice and Guidance (also accredited by Solutions for Business), established and delivered by the University of Lincoln. This service is designed to establish a 'knowledge pool' of University and professional Services staff from the county, produce regular research informed briefings to assist the understanding of the economic changes impact across the county, and to support 'forward looking' firms to plan their emergence from the economic downturn. It will also organise a programme of awareness-raising based on analysis and dissemination of these research informed briefings[8].

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[7] http://www.innovationlincolnshire.co.uk/

[8] http://www.innovationlincolnshire.co.uk/IAG.asp?ContentID=101&ID=103

3.4   Northamptonshire
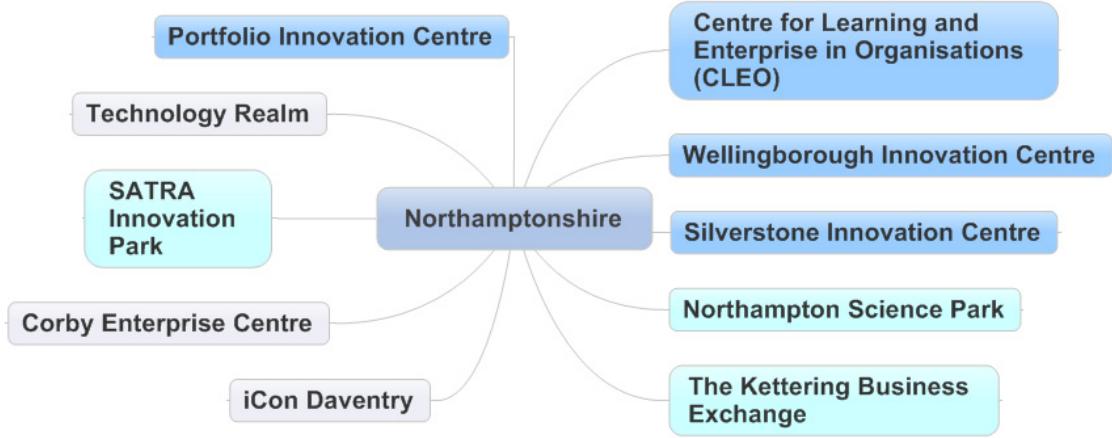
Northamptonshire also has a range of innovation centres and projects developed by key stakeholders such as Northampton County Council and the University of Northampton. This includes a number of centres under development including the sustainable construction iHub based at Icon Daventry – which is likely to house specialist innovation advisors by 2011.

The innovation support currently available in the sub-region is largely focused on Information and signposting, and Networking and brokerage.

3.5   Derbyshire
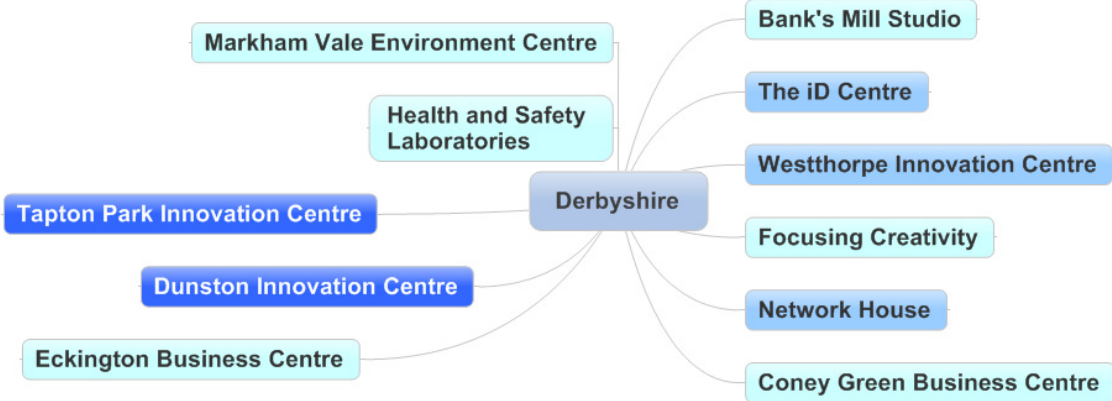
Derbyshire has a good range of innovation and business centres, with a number having a specific thematic focus (for example the Markham Vale Environment Centre). Much of this support falls within the Information and signposting, and Networking and brokerage area. It does, however, have two examples of innovation/technology advice (but as yet not Solutions for Business accredited): Tapton Park Innovation Centre, and Dunstan Innovation Centre.

Both centres have been developed by Chesterfield Borough Council, and provide support to tenants in areas such as specialist financial and technology advice. This arrangement also provides a degree of coordination in the region's innovation centres, as does the University of Derby's management of Bank's Mill, Network House and iD Centre with assistance and guidance provided over the three sites.

3.6   Rutland
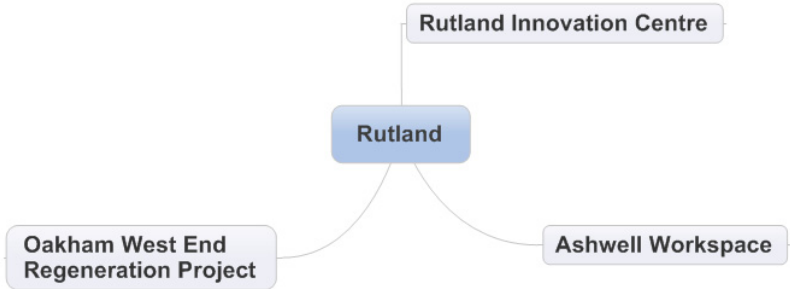
Rutland currently has no innovation centre or programme in place. It does, however, have early stage plans (awaiting a new funding round) in place for a Rutland Innovation Centre.

3.7   Cross regional activities
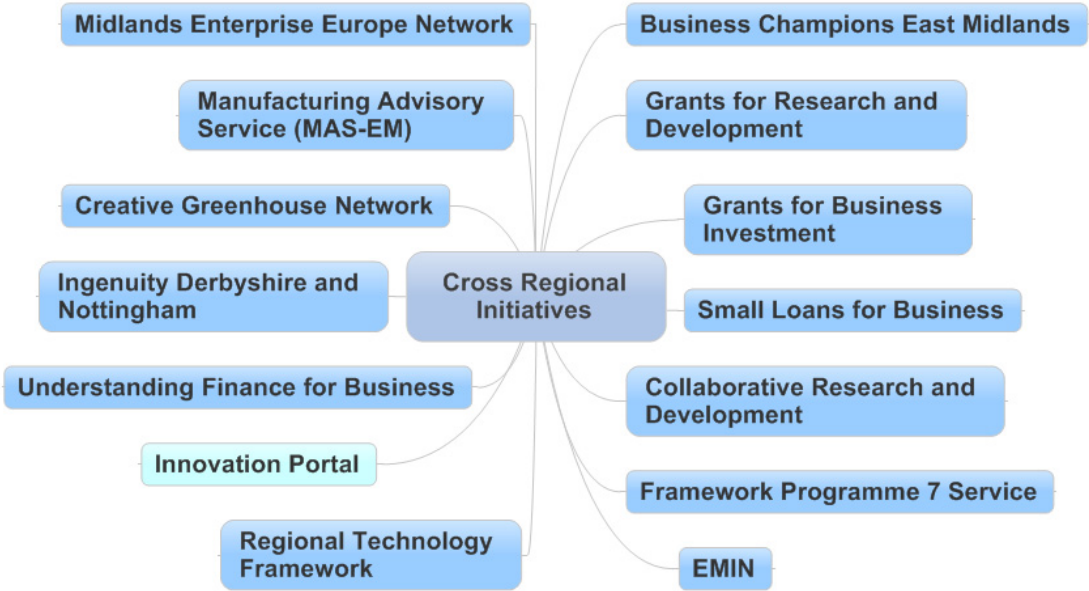
The primary cross-regional innovation support mechanisms in the region are the iNets. These, as noted above, are firmly aligned to the region's priority sectors and are not included as a consequence. The mapping set out above, however, suggests that there are a

comprehensive number of region-wide programmes that fall within the category of 'generic innovation support' (i.e. not focused on the priority sectors). Many of these supports are typically delivered by *emda* within the framework of the Regional Innovation Strategy. These include generic support for innovation in areas such as:

- R&D Funding (e.g. Grants for R&D and Collaborative R&D Grants)

- Accessing European framework funding (e.g. FP7 Service, Enteprise Europe Network)

- Innovation and technology information and signposting (e.g. East Midlands Innovation portal)

In addition to these supports a number of region-wide programmes are potentially relevant to a generic innovation support, most notably financial support measures (Understanding finance for Business, Grants for Business Investment, and Small Loans for Business) and business advice measures such as Business Champions and the Manufacturing Advisory Service EM.

Alongside *emda*'s coordination and partnership role in the region's innovation infrastructure, other forms of cross regional coordination include East Midlands Incubation Network (EMIN) - a not for profit organisation run by on behalf of the Universities of Derby, De Montfort, Leicester, Lincoln, Northampton, and Nottingham Trent. This has a membership of business incubators across the region, with their aim being to increase the volume, value and survival rates of new start up businesses in the East Midlands.

Other potentially relevant regional coordination / partnerships mechanisms include the Business Innovation Centre (BIC) network. Here the region has three accredited full members - NE Group, Nottingham Development Enterprise, and Tapton Park Innovation Centre, with a further associate member (GRACE).

Finally, the iNets also form part of the region's cross regional innovation support. While these iNets are not identified on the diagram due to their specific focus on the priority sectors - healthcare and bioscience, sustainable construction, food and drink, and transport - they are able to provide some support in relation to signposting. This is most evident in those scenarios where a company or individual approaches the iNet, but whose need is found to fall outside the iNet competencies. Here the iNet advisor will signpost such cases to more appropriate support services.

3.8   Summary

In summary, the mapping of innovation assets and programmes suggests that the region is characterised by a wide range of sub-regional generic innovation assets encompassing:

- innovation programmes

- ■ Innovation centres

- ■ Incubators

- ■ Science parks

- ■ managed workspace

There is substantial variation in the intensity of sub-regional innovation support, with the majority of supports providing Information and signposting and Networking and brokerage. There appears, however, to be growing interest and movement towards Solutions for Business accreditation, and within this examples of specialist Innovation Advice and Guidance (Innovation Lincolnshire's has two such services).

In relation to coordination amongst innovation centres a number of relevant regional networks existing through organisations such as EMIN, and as well as (potentially) the BIC network. At the sub-regional level Innovation Lincolnshire is a leading example, with its sub-regional support programme for innovation, and networking activities between centres. Nottingham is also looking at opportunities to better network its centres. Such activities, however, are not evident in other sub-regions, indeed it appears that many centres have been developed on a largely ad hoc basis with little attention to sub-region coordination. As a consequence there appears to be a continuum of partnership approaches evident in the sub-regions – ranging from strong sub-regional coordination models, through to more dispersed arrangements. A generic innovation support service will therefore need to respond clearly to this local variation.

4. Comparative practices

In order to further consider the potential to build generic innovation support around sub-regional innovation centres and programmes in the East Midlands a review of comparative practices was undertaken. This, it should be noted, was not an evaluation of good practices, but and identification of models with potential for drawing out lessons for the region.

In broad terms the review (which comprised desk research and a number of interviews with programme managers) found that RDA innovation support models tend to have a mixed focus comprising elements of generic support such as (Solutions for Business) Innovation Vouchers, Grant for R&D and Innovation Advice and Guidance. This support tends to be provided alongside sector/technology focused initiatives and targeted at the regional, rather

than sub-regional level. Examples here include Yorkshire Forward's virtual Innovation Hubs[9] and ONE North East's Centres of Excellence[10].

The remainder of this section identifies current models of provision for specialist advice and guidance in the UK, and reviews a range of different approaches to sub-regional innovation partnerships.

4.1 Specialist innovation advice and guidance

The role of Business Link has also grown in importance in relation to specialist innovation advice and guidance. Here a number of regions have recently launched specialist services under the Solutions for Business framework, with advisors employed by the Business Link contractor organisations directly, including Yorkshire Forward[11], Advantage West Midlands[12] and North West Development Agency[13]. Such approaches provide a relatively straightforward, if costly route[14] for regions to develop flexible and generic innovation support advisory capacity.

The UK's devolved administrations also tend to deliver generic innovation support through internal advisor-led services. The Welsh Assembly Government's Business Innovation Programme[15], for example, provides specialist advice across a wide range of technology and sectors through a team of 10 Innovation Managers. This programme also includes a team of sub-contracted manufacturing managers, providing tailored innovation advice and support. Scottish Enterprise has similar arrangements, and is currently developing a team of more specialist technology focused advisors[16].

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[9] http://www.yorkshire-forward.com/helping-businesses/improve-your-business/innovate/innovation-strategy

[10] http://www.strategyforsuccess.info/page/centres_of_excellence.cfm

[11] http://www.yorkshire-forward.com//sites/default/files/documents/OBP_Innovation%20Specialists%20Service.pdf

[12] This service is targeted at manufacturers. Details can be found at http://www.advantagewm.co.uk/news-media-events/news/2010/westmidlandsmanufacturerssettobenefitfrominnovationservice.aspx

[13] www.nwda.co.uk/working-with-us/supplying-nwda/current-tenders/innovation-advisory-service-pr.aspx

[14] The Yorkshire Innovation Advisory and Guidance service has recently been contracted for £1.28 million.

[15] http://fs4b.wales.gov.uk/

[16] Scottish Enterprise is currently tendering for a Scotland-wide specialised market and technology advisory service to Scottish SMEs and Start up companies, who are active in the low carbon built environment (LCBE).

4.2   Sub-regional partnerships

In relation to sub-regional partnerships and coordination of support the review found no directly comparable models of generic innovation support currently in operation in the UK (sharing a co-ordination / partnering focus rather than funding focus on generic innovation support). There are, however, a range of UK regional programmes that share the focus on building sub-regional innovation networks through collaboration with sub-regional partnerships, using physical facilities as a 'hub'. Examples of comparative practice here are set out below:
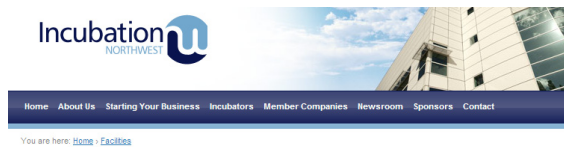
In relation to **strategic coordination** of innovation centres both the South West and North West region have been particularly active, with the development of regional incubation strategies. These strategies were initially designed to set out a framework for new incubation developments across the region. They were also informed by the desire to bring greater coordination and quality standards to the incubators. In the South West, for example, this has encompassed an incubator manager network, operated by UKBI, as part of the strategy (although no longer funded). In the North West support is currently focused around the Incubation Northwest portal (see figure). This provides information and signposting services for the centres.

Innovation portals and online tools such as the North West Incubation are becoming more prevalent, with most regions now providing companies with access to information and signposting services via regional portals. Outside of the East Midlands examples include The London Innovation Map – an interactive, map-based, portal providing sub-regional information and signposting for west London knowledge transfer and innovation assets. A similar map is also available for businesses in the Greater South East region (comprising the East of England, London and the South East).


There are signs, however, that portals may be moving towards Networking and brokerage functions also. Here, again, the North West Development Agency is currently in the process of commissioning a new innovation culture support programme that will make strong use of

an online assessment tool, alongside Business Link referrals, to identify SMEs with a 'willingness to become more innovative'. This will be identified through self-assessment using in the on-line 'Innovation Matrix tool' available through the Business Link North West (BLNW). While the North West's movement towards online brokerage and signposting services is relatively novel in RDA terms the private sector has developed a wide range of (on and offline) tools suitable for innovation self diagnosis and management. Examples here include the Innovation Navigation online tools.

In relation to support programmes for *sub-regional innovation support and coordination* a number of examples are evident:

SEEDA's Innovation and Growth Team (IGT)'s programme demonstrates a strong sub regional focus. This activity built on a number of existing investments in the region, including Enterprise Hubs, and more recently an Innovation Advisory Service. The IGT model was designed to bring a stronger sub-regional and partnership focus to innovation support in the region, by bringing together key stakeholders (local authorities, research establishments, economic partnerships, Business Link, local business leaders and specialist providers of services) to champion business growth and innovation in their area. This was further intended to bring together all relevant delivery arrangements aimed at business growth and innovation within each sub-regional area, incorporating:
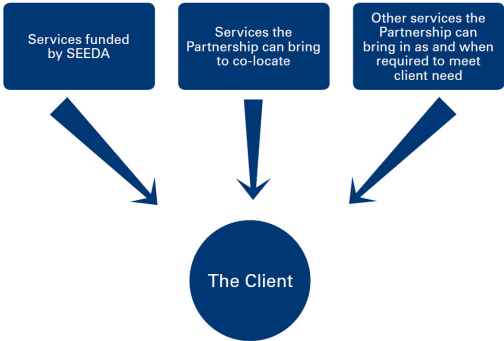
The IGTs provide tailored, specialist and technical business expertise to highly targeted businesses and only support a relatively small number of high growth potential businesses across the region. Mainstream businesses will be directed via Business Link to other more appropriate services that meet their needs. Grant funding has been provided in the region of £750K and £1m per annum and per IGT, for a three year period, with the intention that bring in a minimum of 20% leverage funding.

Another example of a strong sub-regional approach is EEDA's Enterprise Hubs model – a network of 18 innovation and enterprise centres across the region. These Hubs were designed to spread innovation and technology networks and support across the East of

England, and build on the success of key 'hotspots' such as Cambridge. The Hubs are largely focused on specific sectors, with funding from EEDA and local authorities. They were also established to strengthen existing networks and create new networks across the region by increasing links between innovation centres and other research organisations, as well as increasing the reach of specialist expertise to companies.

In recent years EEDA, recognising budgetary constraints, has cut funding for new infrastructure development, and focused its efforts on promoting sustainability. It has also sought to maximise the impact of the Hubs and support greater sub-regional and national networking by the Enterprise Hubs. To this end EEDA has begun to put more emphasis on the Enterprise Hubs creating their own self organised networks. It has also seen EEDA pump prime a number of sub-regional innovation networks centred on particular Enterprise Hubs. In this respect funding has been limited and targeted on those sub-regions and centres that wish to drive integration with other intermediaries and sub-regional coordination (for example in Cambridge). Indeed EEDA does not wish to impose a 'one size fits all' approach.

A further sub-regional model reviewed is ONE North East's Innovation Connectors programme. This concept seeks to build on the Agency's investment in a range of innovation Centres of Excellence, which are designed to provide a focal point for the commercialisation of regional science in key areas:

- CELS - the Centre of Excellence for the Life Sciences
- Codeworks - the Digital Centre of Excellence
- CPI - the Centre for Process Innovation
- NaREC - the New and Renewable Energy Centre

Other initiatives identified as potential Innovation Connectors include Newcastle Science City and NetPark – a science and technology park and incubator in Sedgefield.

The driver for the Innovation Connectors programme was the strong belief that ONE North East's existing innovation investments were meeting their objectives, but were not linking well with wider regional partners and stakeholder networks. The Innovation Connectors concept was therefore developed to explore the potential for connecting the Centres to a range of sub-regional stakeholders and the development of new approaches to research/application and explicit links to regeneration, employment, education and access.

To further the concept ONE supported a programme of consultation with sub-regional partners, structured around each of the Centres of Excellence. This comprised a range of sub-regional stakeholder workshop sessions designed to scope out areas for collaboration, and potential delivery models. ONE North East subsequently called for sub-regional partnership proposals for ERDF Competitiveness funding, and to date has supported a

number of activities, including community awareness raising for science and technology (Newcastle Science city), and investment in micro generation technology development and business advice (NaREC).

The key points from this review of generic innovation support models can be summarised as follows:

- RDAs have developed mixed models targeting both generic and specialist innovation support measures

- Generic innovation support is typically provided through products such as Grants for R&D, Innovation Vouchers, and increasingly delivered through RDA-funded Innovation Advisory Services

- Sub-regional innovation support partnerships are developing across a number of regions, underpinned by modest RDA pump priming

- Local conditions and partnerships tend to shape the precise nature of the sub-regional coordination model adopted

- Online portals and tools are emerging as a complementary delivery routes for generic innovation support

5. Key issues and principles for generic innovation supports

In taking account of the current provision of innovation centres and sub-regional innovation programmes in the East Midlands, a number of clear issues emerge for the development of a generic innovation support service. These issues fall into three main areas: content, delivery routes and quality, and formed part of the workshop discussions held during the project.

5.1   Content issues

Innovation advice is at the heart of most generic innovation support models reviewed during this research, and a key element in addressing innovation needs across a range of sectors. Such advice is increasingly delivered by many regions under the Solutions for Business Innovation Advice 'banner', and delivered by the regional Business Link services. This model, as noted earlier, also relies on the recruitment of specialist advisors and can therefore be at the higher end of costs for such models.

The East Midlands has adopted a model which primarily delivers innovation advice and guidance through the sector specific iNets. There are, however, a range of other sources of innovation advice in the region which have the potential to form part of a generic innovation service. There are also a wide range of innovation centre staff and business advisors that may with further support and CPD be capable for providing innovation advice.

Knowledge base links are a similarly important element of innovation support, linking companies to a wide range of knowledge and expertise. Here the East Midlands is characterised by a range of universities and associated support measures (for example the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, Ingenuity Programme and East Midlands Knowledge Network). Equally important, the region's universities have also been active in developing innovation centres and networks. Clear potential exists, therefore, to ensure that this support forms part of a generic innovation service.

Innovation funding is typically well developed as an area of innovation support in most of the regions reviewed. This addresses the market failures associated with R&D investment, particularly in SMEs. The East Midlands has a number of support measures here with its Grant for R&D, and Collaborative R&D grants. Similarly, sources of more general business investment and readiness supports are also available. These initiatives are relatively generic in their focus and could therefore make an important contribution to generic innovation support in the region.

Networks build on the well established premise that *'companies learn best from each other',* and provide opportunities for companies to interact, to exchange knowledge, and work in partnership to innovate. In the East Midlands the iNets are the core innovation networks operating alongside a range of university innovation networks and programmes; plus coordinating networks such as Innovation Lincolnshire. A number of the region's universities also have programmes of business/innovation activities and events that provide opportunities for innovation networking. Ensuring that these networks are linked into a generic innovation service will therefore be important.

Signposting and information is a key feature of 'no wrong door' approaches to business support, operating on the principle that every part of the business and innovation support system should have a signposting capability. In the East Midlands there are a number of models in place with Business Link as the core entry point. In the area of innovation, however, there are also sources of information and signposting such as the East Midlands Innovation portal, as well as other sources of sub-regional information (including the websites of innovation centres). It will be vital that common or compatible signposting routes or mechanisms are used

5.2 Delivery routes

In delivering generic innovation support across the region there are a number of potential routes:

Physical nodes of innovation support are most clearly evident in the form of the region's many innovation centres and incubators. These provide a prominent focus to innovation in

the (sub)regions, particularly where these physical nodes contain support within their boundaries. As noted in the mapping of current provision there is variability in the intensity of support within the region's innovation centres and no agreed set of standards. Potential exists therefore to harness such centres as core assets within a generic innovation support service. This, however, will need to address the variations in competency noted above.

Programmes for (generic) innovation support take the focus beyond physical nodes and provide the potential for a coordinated response to innovation needs. Such a focus to sub-regional innovation support is clearly exhibited in approaches adopted by regions such as the South East of England. In the East Midlands the main delivery routes for innovation support are the regional iNets. There are, however, prominent examples in the East Midlands such as Innovation Lincolnshire. While the long term sustainability of the advisory support in this model is currently an area of consideration, the sub-regional partnership aspects of this approach does appear to hold potential for other sub regions.

Virtual nodes are important complements to physical nodes with a number of regions such as the Greater South East and North West developing supports in this area. Such on-line portals can complement physical innovation assets, providing complementary signposting and access to support remotely. Portals can also increase the range of innovation support tools and materials that companies can access. The East Midlands Innovation portal is a well established brand in the region and CM International understand that plans are underway to achieve better coordination with partner content and agenda, and this would clearly go some way to supporting the goals of generic innovation support.

Finally **Networks,** as noted above, are good practice routes for encouraging company knowledge exchange and joint innovation projects. Such networks have also been promoted by RDAs looking to build sub-regional responses (e.g. ONE North East Innovation Connectors, EEDA Enterprise Hubs, SEEDA IGTs). Examples of varying forms of networks are in place in the East Midlands, based around universities, and business groupings and there is clear potential for these to contribute towards generic innovation support.

5.3 Quality and competency

Quality and competency are important for any support service and as a result action will be needed in three main areas:

Materials related to information, signposting, networking, advice and so on will form an important part of a generic innovation service. It will be important therefore that a degree of consistency and shared ownership is achieved in these materials. Ensuring quality is the key issue here and important questions such as who defines the materials and who monitors the materials will be important early issues to address.

Advisors will also be a key delivery route, with the potential to build on a wide and range of regional advisors and skills. Here, the region's advisory base is likely to be characterised by differing competencies and innovation capability / specialism. A key issue for a generic innovation service will therefore be one of ensuring appropriate development frameworks and (CPD) supports are in place to maximise the support availability to SMEs in the sub-regions. In this respect a competency framework[17] would be well suited to supporting development of the advisory bases. These frameworks offer a similar, but more flexible, approach than accreditation, offering various degrees of established standards rather than a simple pass/fail standard. This allows traceability of progression rather than simply signposting the achievement of one high standard.

Gatekeepers such as the region's iNets and other innovation brokers are important gatekeepers to innovation support. Their sectoral focus suggests that careful consideration of their role is needed. Similarly Business Link East Midlands is the central gateway to business support. This service, however, has limited innovation expertise. Innovation centre managers are also potentially important gatekeepers. In ensuring quality such gatekeepers need to have some 'ownership' of the overall model of delivery and the quality of the support. Awareness of the innovation support available within the system will also need to be enhanced.

5.4   Summary: key principles

In considering the full range of content, delivery and quality issues the following Key principles for a generic innovation service have been developed:

SERVICE DELIVERY

Information:	Universal access and provision
Signposting:	"No wrong door"
Networking:	Well informed and high quality
	Maximising use of existing networks
Advice:	Direct delivery where possible

SERVICE CONTENT

Information: High quality, consistent and accessible

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[17] An example of a competency framework is set out in the annex.

Signposting: Consistent and accessible referral routes

Networks: Networks that are "appropriate" to their members

Networks that allow "talking together" not just "talked at"

Advice: High quality interventions from high quality advisors

At least Solutions for Business standard

Offering practical routes to innovation funding

SERVICE QUALITY

Competency based – linked to an agreed Competency Framework and CPD support[18]

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[18] This point, in particular, was one that emerged from the *emda* / sub-regional partner workshop held as part of this study.

6. Options for delivery

The objective of the research was to produce a number of options for *emda* to consider in relation to a coordinated generic innovation service for the region. These options take account of the current position of centres and programmes in the region, comparative practices and the key principles noted above. Each option begins by outlining the key features of the option, following by an analysis of the 'pros and cons' of each.

6.1 Option 1 - 'Hand's on'

The first option considered is for *emda* to adopt a 'hand's on' approach to generic innovation support. This would be based around an *emda* funded and managed innovation support and guidance service. The service would probably be delivered through Business Link or directly by the employment of a team of innovation advisors. By employing advisors to cover key sectors outside of the (iNet) priorities *emda* would go some way to opening up innovation support to non-priority businesses across the region. Furthermore, by procuring this service *emda* would be able to set the quality and delivery standards with partners and physical asset 'owners' to ensure delivery nodes throughout the region

The **Pros** for such a service would be:

■ A potential instant solution to front-end advisory services and referrals – enabling region-wide coverage of all key sectors

■ Clear responsibility for content, quality and delivery – assigned to *emda*

■ Flexibility to respond to demand across the region – scope could be provided within the contact to flexibility and ensure sub-regional focus

The **Cons** would be:

■ Probably beyond *emda's* budgetary capabilities at present – *emda* has indicated that the funding of staffing costs would not be possible

■ Effectively minimises the role and influence of regional and local partners – by assigning funding and contractual responsibility for the service to *emda* sub-regional involvement and influence would be limited

■ Poor prospects for long term sustainability - given the degree of funding commitment required

6.2   Option 2: - 'Hand's off'

In this option *emda* would adopt a more 'hand's off' approach to the generic support service. This would allow it to channel its efforts through a robust online portal. This could, at relatively low costs, be built around the East Midlands Innovation portal with enhanced signposting to sub-regional partners. It could also embed networking and diagnosis online tools (for example the North West's Innovation Matrix concept) and make links to information sources and tools from outside the region where relevant.

The **Pros** for such a service would be:

- Builds on existing innovation portal / brand – East Midlands Innovation

- Responds to budget limitations - not staff posts created in this model thus reducing overheads

- Clear responsibility for content, quality and delivery – by assigning this to a single organisation (*emda*) the potential to ensure consistency is greater

The **Cons** would be:

- Of limited strategic focus and does not offer face-to-face advice – a portal driven solution would severely limit the scope of the service

- Minimises the role and influence of regional and local partners – *emda* takes the lead through the portal but is hand's off vis-à-vis the partners

- Poor prospects for long term sustainability – without partner involvement and input long term success would be jeopardised

- *emda* may lose control over liability issues and the ability to respond to complaints

6.3   Option 3: - 'Hand to hand'

In the third option *emda* would work with local authorities and university partners to create a strategic delivery framework. This could include the establishment of collaborative measures to ensure that content, quality, and delivery routes meet required standards. At the heart of this mechanism would be a competency framework(s) for innovation centre managers, advisors and so on, which would set out the competencies required for participation in the generic innovation service, and importantly, the route ways and support available to achieve particular capabilities competencies. A further important feature of this model would be the potential for each sub-regional area to identify the most appropriate delivery model and partners, supported by a regional innovation portal.

The **Pros** for such a service would be:

- The opportunity for partners to work together in an effective strategic partnership – this would enable partnership working on a more equal footing

- Builds on existing innovation portal / brand – East Midlands Innovation

- Shared responsibility for content, quality and delivery – producing shared 'ownership' of the service

- Maximises the use of existing investments, assets and budgets – maximises the regional budgetary capacity for innovation support in a time of fiscal challenge

- Enables a differentiated sub regional response, taking account of local needs and conditions

The **Cons** would be:

- Relies on the willingness of partners to work together at a strategic level

- Relies on partners being able to determine and 'deliver' effective local delivery routes

7. Conclusions and next steps

This section draws together the findings from CM International's generic innovation support study. The findings draw on a six week programme of work designed to identify the current provision of sub-regional innovation assets, comparative models of sub-regional innovation support, and options for developing a coordinated service in the East Midlands.

The findings from this study suggest that the East Midlands has a wide range of existing innovation centres, incubators, science parks and sub-regional programmes and networks that are capable of providing the basis for a generic innovation service in the region. There is, however, substantial variation in the intensity of sub-regional innovation support, with relatively few examples of innovation advice and guidance services, and a comparatively greater number of information and signposting and networking and brokerage services.

The research also suggests that there are a number of sub-regional partnerships and coordination mechanisms that a generic innovation service could be developed around, with Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire at the forefront of activity and thinking in this area. Outside of these areas, however, the research also reveals a picture of innovation centres which have been developed on a largely ad hoc basis with little attention to sub-region coordination. In relation to delivery model for a generic innovation service it will be important, therefore, that it responds to and addresses these differing local conditions and needs.

In reviewing the approaches adopted by other regions in the UK the findings suggest that the majority of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have, understandably, sought to develop region-wide innovation capacity. There are, however, some emerging examples of support models with a stronger sub-regional focus. Here regions such as the South East and East of England have begun to support sub-regional innovation network models through pump-priming. Local conditions and partnerships are important principles, shaping the precise nature of sub-regional coordination models adopted. Online portals and tools are also emerging as potential and complementary delivery route for generic innovation support.

A number of key principles emerge from the research, highlighted under the headings of 'service delivery', 'content' and 'quality'. In terms of 'Service delivery', key principles include ensuring universal access to generic innovation support through a 'no wrong door' system, and availability at all business support outlets. It also suggests well informed, high quality generic innovation advice, and maximised use of existing networks.

A further key area is 'service content'. This, the research suggests, should be based on high quality and accessible information and referral routes. It should also utilise networks that are appropriate to members, with a focus on companies learning from each other. Advice is

also a key route, and should be based around high quality advice and advisors, offering practical routes to innovation funding (to at least Solutions for Business standard). Finally, 'service quality' will also be key and should be linked to competency framework and CPD support.

In drawing these findings together the analysis considers three options for *emda* to support the coordination of a generic innovation support service.

1. 'Hand's on' – creating a new innovation advisory service for the non-priority sectors,

2. 'Hand's off' – supporting the creation of a limited Innovation portal offering information, advice and brokerage. It recommends, however, that option

3 - 'hand to hand' - a strongly partnership based model in which *emda* would work closely with local authorities, universities and other sub-regional partners in creating a strategic delivery framework.

CM International's preferred option is 'hand to hand'. In taking this option forward, however, the **next steps** will need to fully engage sub-regional innovation partners. This should include consideration of the following:

- Dissemination of the findings from this work to all relevant sub-regional partners

- Sub-regional workshop discussions to identify the most appropriate delivery model and partners

- Direct verification of support availability within the sub-regional innovation centres and programmes

- Identification of the cohort and profile of businesses that the generic innovation service should support

- Creation of a strategic delivery framework through a strategic partners 'board' to consider content, quality and delivery routes meet required standards

- Development of competency frameworks to allow advisors and innovation assets to develop greater capabilities and competencies, ensuring this is tailored to the sub region

CM International believes that the interest and support for the concept of a generic innovation support service was clearly demonstrated at the workshop held during this study. It will be important, therefore, that *emda* builds on the momentum generated and moves quickly in a structured process of engaging the sub-region's both individually, but also collectively in the form of a strategic partner 'board'. This 'board', we believe, will be a vital component in ensuring quality and competency standards, and ensuring the appropriate focus of cross-regional delivery routes such as the portal.

Annexes

Annex I.   Comparative practice interviews

- SWRDA – Lorelei Hunt

- Yorkshire Forward – Richard Smith

- EEDA – Henk Koopmans

- SEEDA – Marilyn Wills

Annex II.   Innovation Centre and Programmes database

Infrastructure name	Location	Brief descripton	Ownership details	Catagorisation
Bank's Mill Studio	Derbyshire	Set up to retain Graduate level skills in the Derby Area, offers business and professional development support. Is creative industries focussed.	University of Derby	Signposting and awareness
Coney Green Business Centre	Derbyshire	Has the physical infrastructure to offer support, with learning suites, workshop units and conferencing facilities available	North East Derbyshire DC, supported by emda, ERDF, Alliance SSP.	Signposting and awareness
Dunston Innovation Centre (part of Chesterfield Innovation Centre)	Derbyshire	Within Dunston Technology park; offers business, financial and technological advice.	Chesterfield Borough Council, emda, ERDF, Tapton Park	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking, Innovation advice
Eckington Business Centre	Derbyshire	Offers business support and advice, as well as conferencing facilities	Eckington Development Company	Signposting and awareness
Focusing Creativity	Derbyshire	No specified geographical location as is a specialist support service for the creative industries.	Derbyshire Enterprise Agency, Derbyshire County Council, Arts Council England, Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership	Signposting and awareness
Health and safety Laboratory	Derbyshire	Set up by the Health and Safety Executive to test the health and safety of a variety of products and systems	Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	Signposting and awareness
Markham Vale Environment Centre	Derbyshire	Environmentally friendly business centre based and the Markham Vale Business Park.	Derbyshire County Council with funding from the ERDF, EMDA, Alliance SSP and North Derbyshire Charity for Education and Training	Signposting and awareness
Network House	Derbyshire	Incubator units for new small businesses, provides a number of services including mentoring and drop in surgeries	University of Derby, emda, ESFUK, Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Tapton Park Innovation Centre (part of Chesterfield Innovation Centre)	Derbyshire	Provides specialist services including research and development, prototyping, product/process viability testing and funding advice.	Chesterfield Borough Council, North Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, and North Derbyshire TEC.	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking, Innovation advice
The iD centre	Derbyshire	Provides onsite business advice as well as a range of other business support programmes and activities.	University of Derby, ERDF	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking

Westthorpe Innovation Centre	Derbyshire	Offers higher level learning through its onsite learning centre, arranging a number of variously targeted courses.	North East Derbyshire DC, emda, ERDF, Alliance SSP	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Ingenuity Derbyshire and Nottingham	Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire	Knowledge Transfer Links; also provides guidance to businesses in implimenting new systems and processes.	Delivered by the University of Derby, The University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University; funded by EMDA	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Beaumont Enterprise Centre	Leicestershire	Offers only managed workspace, does not appear to have its own direct website	Leicester City Council	Signposting and awareness
Creative Hinckley	Leicestershire	Is both an incubation centre (under development) and an affiliation of creative professionals across the borough of Hinckley. Prev the Atkins Creative Innovation Centre - Creative Industries only	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Councils, Arts Council East Midlands	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Creative Leicestershire	Leicestershire	Acts mainly as an advisory and signposting service, though does offer guidance on aspects of business development, networks, funding and business premises.	Joint funded by the Arts Council, England; Leicester City Council, Blaby District Council, Charnwood Borough Council, the District of Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, Melton Borough Council, NorthWest Leicestershire Borough Council, Oadby & Wigson Borough Council, Rutland County Council	Signposting and awareness
DeMontfort University Innovation Centre	Leicestershire	On site business support and advice, knowledge transfer links	DeMontfort University	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Design Leicestershire	Leicestershire	Creative Industries Only. Produces a book which acts as a means to showcase the work of designers	Loughborough University, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, DeMontfort University, University of Leicester, UKT&I and private sector	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
LATI	Leicestershire	Technological and scientific industries only; membership organisation based at Loughborough Innovation Centre providing networking opportunities and promoting high technology industries.	Loughborough University and Charnwood Borough Council	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking

Leicester Creative Business Depot	Leicestershire	Creative industries only due to it's intent of offering internal networking throughout the premises. Also provides exhibition space to tenants.	Leicester City Council, emda, ERDF, Leicestershire Economic Partnership	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Leicester Science Park	Leicestershire	Under development	Leicester Regeneration Company	Under development
Loughborough Innovation Centre	Leicestershire	Offers office and laboratory space, links to Loughborough University academia and onsite business support and mentoring	Loughborough university (supported by emda)	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
MIRA	Leicestershire	Automotive industries only. Provides product engineering, testing, consultancy and certification.	Private	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking, Innovation advice
PERA Innovation Park	Leicestershire	Conferencing facility to encourage innovation	PERA (Private)	Signposting and awareness
Prospect Leicestershire	Leicestershire	offers generalised business assistance, though also operates a specific innovation service for medium to large sized businesses	An economic regeneration company supported by Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Biobator	Leicestershire	Promotes knowledge exchange and commercial activities resulting from bioscience research at the University of	University of Leicester	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Aura Commerce and Technology Centre	Lincolnshire	Provision of business and management support services.	Private	Signposting and awareness
Boston Enterprise Centre	Lincolnshire	Provides managed office space including business support and conferencing facilities	Managed by NE Group on behalf of Boston Borough Council	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Holbeach Technology Park	Lincolnshire	Food manufacturing industry; offers innovation support, knowledge transfer with the University of Lincoln and the use of a development kitchen for research and development of new products	Lincolnshire CC & University of Lincoln	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking, Innovation advice
Innovation Lincolnshire	Lincolnshire	Innovation advice and guidance service (Solutions for Business compliant, provided by Angle) accessible via Business Link	East Midlands Competitiveness Programme, ERDF, emda, Lincolnshire County Council, Angle. Based at Think Tank Innovation Centre	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking, Innovation advice
Developing a Rubust Future for Business	Lincolnshire	Innovation advice and guidance service (Solutions for Business compliant, provided by the University of Lincoln), accessible via Business Link	University of Lincolnshire, supported by supported by Lincolnshire County Council and East Midlands Development Agency	Singposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking, Innovation advice

SparkHouse Studios	Lincolnshire	Offers virtual office services and some signposting. Due to the sector specific nature of the site can claim to facilitate informal networks.	University of Lincoln, emda, Lincolnshire Enterprise, Hefce, East Midlands Incubation Network	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Think Tank	Lincolnshire	Houses and is part-owned by Innovation Lincolnshire	EMDA, ERDF, City of Lincoln Council, Lincolnshire Entreprise, Lincolnshire County Council, Innovation Lincolnshire	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Centre for Learning and Enterprise in Organisations (CLEO)	Northamptonshire	Specialises in applied research that enhances business based learning. Centre seeks to develop Small and Medium sized Enterprises through knowledge transfer, research and the provision of practical business support. Incubation facilites are available.	University of Northampton	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Corby Enterprise Centre	Northamptonshire	Under Development; scheduled to be open August 2010		Under development
iCon	Northamptonshire	Under development; will house sustainable construction firms as part of the Sustainable Construction iNet. *Due to be finished end of 2010		Under development
Northampton Science Park	Northamptonshire	Only offers admisistrative support; no innovation/business support	Private (Richard and Chris Weatherley)	Signposting and awareness
Portfolio Innovation Centre	Northamptonshire	Creative Industries only. Due to sector specificity can claim to offer internal networks and informal advice. There are also provisions for mentoring and training, as well as specifically designed and equipped offices and studios.	University of Northampton, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, Arts Council East Midlands amd Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
SATRA Innovation Park	Northamptonshire	Run in conjunction with Kettering Business Exchange	SATRA / Kettering Business Exchange	Signposting and awareness
Silverstone Innovation Centre	Northamptonshire	Motoring industry only; provides networking through the Oxford Innovation extranet.	Managed by Oxford Innovation, owned by the British Racing Driver's Club.	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Technology Realm (Northampton Observatory)	Northamptonshire	Under development	Partnered with Northamptonshire County Council and University ofNorthampton	Under development
The Business Exchange	Northamptonshire	Workspace only		Signposting and awareness

Wellingborough Innovation Centre	Northamptonshire	Offers Innovation Center Extranet between all the companies in Oxford Innovation's chain	Oxford Innovation and Tresham College of Further Education	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
BioCity	Nottinghamshire	Offers innovation support through the Health and Biosciences iNet, but also runs a number of events to help nurture innovation, has a number of academic links and prodides a great deal of signposting.	Nottingham Trent University & Nottingham University; Berryman, Deloitte, Oval, PKF and Potter Clarkson. Sponsored by Fisher Scientific and Pall Life Sciences.	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking, Innovation advice
E-Centre at Sherwood Energy Village	Nottinghamshire	Within Sherwood Energy Village, offers workspace only.	SEV is the estate and the trading name of the not-for-profit company that owns it	Signposting and awareness
Edwinstowe House	Nottinghamshire	Offers some busniess support and training facilities.	Nottinghamshire Enterprises	Signposting and awareness
Intensive Startup Support	Nottinghamshire	financial support of up to £3000 in match funding for new SMEs in the Ashfield area.	Solutions for Business Product	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Mansfield I-centre	Nottinghamshire	The site has 'innovation links' to other organisations, but no direct link with any one university.	Mansfield District Council (managed by Angle Technology)	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Mercury House	Nottinghamshire	BIC accredited. Offers business start up services and business advice.	Lincolnshire County Council, managed by Nottingham Business Venture	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
New Brook House	Nottinghamshire	Offers business mentoring and a number of services for business support.	Nottingham Business Venture	Signposting and awareness
Newark Beacon	Nottinghamshire	Provides business and administrative support	Newark and Sherwood District Council, emda, Alliance SSP and Nottinghamshire County Council	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
No. 1 Nottingham Science Park	Nottinghamshire	links to Nottingham University (with access to resources) and Nottingham Science City	Blueprint (joint venture between igloo, emda, Homes and Community Agency and Aviva Investors	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Nottingham Science & Technology Park	Nottinghamshire	Offers strong links to Nottingham University's academic facilities including joint business promotions, collaborative research, consultancy, testing and training.	Nottingham City Council & Nottingham University	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking

Nottingham Science City	Nottinghamshire	Whilst does not provide any funding and/or advice and mentoring, does provide links to other organisations which do so	Nottingham Trent University, The University of Nottingham, Nottingham City Council, EMDA, Great Nottingham Partnership, Nottinghamshire County Council, NDE, >lsc, Nottingham Regeneration Limited, Boots	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Southglade Food Park	Nottinghamshire	Units, specialist technical and business support. The centre provides a series of events and training sessions for its tenants and external businesses	Nottingham City Council (managed by Food and Drink Forum)	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking, Innovation advice
The Hive	Nottinghamshire	Initiative to faciltate start-up and support growth of new ventures at an embryonic, pre-operational level	Nottingham Trent University	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
The Turbine	Nottinghamshire	Provides business advice and mentoring, research and development initiatives and risk finance.	Nottingham County Council	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
UNIEI Lab	Nottinghamshire	Sited on Nottingham Science & tech park; aimed specifically at students and graduates.	University of Nottingham (part of Business School)	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
University of Nottingham Innovation Park	Nottinghamshire	Offers strong connections with and use of the University of Nottingham's academic facilities.	University of Nottingham, ERDF	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Creative Greenhouse Network	Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire	Creative Industries only. Provides business support and advice, active collaboration guidance, events, seminars, advocacy, showcasing and talent nurturing.	Alliance SSP, Ashfield District Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Groundwork Creswell Ltd., Mansfield District Council, Newark and Sherwood District Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, North East Derbyshire District Council	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Ashwell Workspace	Rutland	Under development	*	Under development
Oakham West End Regeneration	Rutland	Under development	*	Under development
Rutland Innovation Centre	Rutland	awaiting funding for development	*	Under development
Business Champions East Midlands		Voluntary network organised to offer business expertise through coaching and advice.	EMDA initiative	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking

Collaborative Research and Development		emda based programme to match business experience with businesses in need of guidance.	Solutions for Business Product	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Enterprise Europe Network (Midlands)		Branch of the EEN, providing help and support for businesses attempting to expand into Europe.	Nationwide scheme	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Framework Programme 7 Service		emda initiative to provide advice regarding available funding through the FP7 programme.	EMDA initiative: through EM Innovation	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Grants for Business Investment		A solutions for business product offering grants for businesses to support sustainable investment in England	BIS Initiative	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Grants for Research and Development		A solutions for business product providing grants for various aspects of research and development.	BIS Initiative	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Innovation Portal		emda website used to direct businesses to various points of assistance for innovation programmes.	EMDA initiative	Signposting and awareness
Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS)		Local branch of a national initiative to aid businesses in the manufacturing sector through support and advice.	BIS Initiative	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Regional Technology Framework		emda initiative to develop a supportive environment for technology development and exploitation throughout the region.		Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Small Loans for Business		Loans of between £3,000-£20,000 for small businesses to start up or grow	Solutions for Business Product	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
Understanding Finance for Business		Advisory service for businesses to better understand finance and financial options	Connect Midlands, supported by emda	Signposting and awareness, Brokerage and networking
EMIN Enterprise Solutions		EMIN provides business and technical services to businesses across the region, linked to its University partners	Universities of Derby, De Montfort, Leicester, Lincoln, Northampton and Nottingham Trent	Signposting and awanress, Brokerage and networking

Annex III: A sample competency framework for innovation centres

Innovation Support	Management Arrangements	Strategic Focus	Competency Level
▪ Full on-site provision of support ▪ On-site or proximate centre of innovation or technology excellence ▪ Hosting iNet Team ▪ Hosting Innovation Networks ▪ Outreach to sub-region	▪ Dedicated on-site centre management ▪ Transparent entry/exit criteria linked top innovation needs of businesses ▪ Flexibility on space & terms	▪ Defined technology or sector focus ▪ iNet Hub ▪ Innovation 'branded' ▪ Incubator or grow-on space on site ▪ Significant at a regional level	I
▪ Partial support available on-site ▪ Explicit link to identified innovation & technology centre of excellence ▪ Part of an iNet ▪ Occasional hosting of innovation network events	▪ Shared managers ▪ Market-led entry/exit criteria applied	▪ Tenants / clients are innovation or technology-led or driven ▪ Significant at a sub-regional level	II
▪ Linked to 3rd party support providers ▪ Access offered to innovation networks	▪ Remote managers ▪ No or infrequently enforced entry/exit criteria	▪ No clear sector, technology or innovation focus ▪ Tenants / clients are not innovation driven ▪ Locally significant	III