
Report to: Business Innovation and Growth Panel

Date: 8 September 2020

Subject: **Leeds City Region MIT REAP**

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1 Purpose of this report

To update Panel members on the Leeds City Region MIT Regional Entrepreneur Acceleration Programme (REAP).

2 Information

- 2.1 In 2018 Team Leeds, representing Leeds City Region, embarked on a two-year programme to take part in MIT's REAP, ending in October 2021.
- 2.2 REAP methodology is underpinned by a multi-stakeholder model, comprising government, universities, corporates, entrepreneurs and investors, with a clear focus on globally scalable businesses (so-called innovation-driven enterprises or IDEs, a small but important subset of SMEs). It delivers a long-term strategy based on a region's comparative advantage and a 'backbone organisation' for sustainable collective delivery to accelerate the creation and scaling of IDEs, on the basis that these businesses have a disproportionate impact on economic growth.
- 2.3 Team Leeds's ambition is to inspire more entrepreneurs from varied backgrounds, championing their socially useful innovations to be globally scalable businesses that investors want to back. The strategy sets out the development and connection of new and existing City Region initiatives so that entrepreneurs have access to the tools and support they need wherever they are in their journey. A gap identified at ideation stage has led to a significant new intervention called Build (Where Ideas Take Shape) that works with entrepreneurs to refine and validate their ideas into ventures ready for customers and investment. A second intervention, Leap (Jump into Entrepreneurship), is a mentor-supported e-learning programme aimed at budding entrepreneurs, taking individuals experiencing a change in circumstance due to the COVID-19 pandemic through the first steps of validating a business idea. Whereas Build is targeted explicitly at IDEs, Leap

and the white-label ide@ community platform on which it sits are entirely open, as they are intended to drive a diversity of people and ideas at the first inspiration stage of an entrepreneur's journey. Build, Leap and ide@ have been devised and co-created by the Team Leeds Delivery Group and funded via Leeds City Council. Leap launched in August 2020, and co-design and piloting of Build – for the first half of 2021 – is currently being procured.

- 2.4 The West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Plan includes a focus on support for IDEs, as will the proposed Innovation Framework (see agenda item 11), as an important part of driving up the City Region's ambition and capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship, and therefore there is strong alignment with a targeted approach to supporting the creation and scaling of more LCR IDEs.
- 2.5 Team Leeds has outlined a plan to engage stakeholders on the scaling of MIT REAP across the City Region. This process began in June and will culminate by December in a single City Region MIT REAP strategy and a backbone organisation to sustain collective delivery beyond the 2-year programme. Discussions between Team Leeds and key City Region stakeholders are currently underway to determine: an appropriate multi-stakeholder model that maintains focus and momentum; how this could be funded; and how it could work with the Growth Service.
- 2.6 Martin Stow, Champion of Team Leeds, will attend the Panel meeting to provide a detailed update on progress.

3 Clean Growth Implications

- 3.1 There are no immediate clean growth implications arising from this report.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

6 Staffing Implications

- 6.1 There are no immediate staffing implications arising from this report.

7 External Consultees

- 7.1 No external consultations have been undertaken specifically on this report.

8 Recommendations

- 8.1 That the Panel notes the progress made to date and provides feedback.

9 Background Documents

None

10 Appendices

None