

Report to: Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board (LEP)

Date: 27 March 2018

Subject: MIT REAP

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1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To secure a mandate from LEP Board to progress an opportunity to take part in a University of Leeds led MIT REAP programme should their application on behalf of the City Region be successful.

2 Information

- 2.1 The MIT Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (MIT REAP) provides opportunities for communities around the world to engage with MIT in an evidence-based, practical approach to strengthening innovation ecosystems. Projects typically focus on increasing expertise and capacity across key players (using best practice from MIT) and develop interventions to strengthen the innovation support system available across an area.
- 2.2 By taking advantage of MIT's expertise in the development of entrepreneurial ecosystems, new member regions can participate in a 2-year programme enabling them to:
- Design and implement a REAP Acceleration Strategy to harness the power of innovation and entrepreneurship and accelerate economic and social progress.
 - Build an interdisciplinary Team to drive impact and regional strategy implementation.
 - Leverage understanding of key drivers of successful innovation-driven entrepreneurial (IDE) ecosystems to design and implement key programs and policies, informed by MIT research and global best practice.
 - Deploy MIT rigor and use frameworks to deepen analysis and evaluate the current regional entrepreneurial ecosystems.
 - Compare and learn from other regions globally.
- 2.3 A key benefit of undertaking this programme would be the strong multi-stakeholder commitment to the vision of the City Region's innovation work, and critically, to ensure that actions are joined-up and agreed as priorities for

all key stakeholders in the region. An advantage of the programme is that during the workshops participants will jointly, through analysis, decide the best actions for the City Region that are likely to have the biggest impact on innovation within our specific regional context. The opportunity to build on the strong stakeholder relationships by undertaking a programme with a proven track record of success, is an extremely attractive proposition for the region.

- 2.4 MIT REAP runs annually from July. During the programme teams of five to eight participants representing local/regional government, entrepreneurs, risk capital, universities and large corporations from a maximum of eight regions around the world collaborate with each other and with MIT faculty to devise effective approaches to developing their own innovation-driven entrepreneurship (IDE) ecosystems. The cost is \$300,000, which covers tuition for two years for the entire team of 5-8 participants.
- 2.5 So far from the UK regions Scotland, London and Wales have taken part in REAP. The Scotland team produced a comprehensive report on their experience and outcomes which can be viewed here <file:///H:/Downloads/REAP+Report+2014.pdf>
- 2.6 In discussion with the LEP, WYCA and others, the University of Leeds has submitted an exploratory application into the programme, the outcome of which will be announced in April. Whilst this a University of Leeds led project, as the nuances of the programme are developed, expertise from across the different Universities will be utilised within the programme.
- 2.7 This project aligns strongly with our innovation objectives, developing and strengthening the existing eco-system and improving innovation collaboration across the City Region.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are financial implications from taking part in the programme (\$300,000) however the bulk of this is being provided by the University of Leeds with a small amount of corporate sponsorship.

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

5 External Consultees

- 5.1 Discussions have taken place to date at Knowledge Transfer Directors and with University Vice Chancellors at their last meeting in October. BIG Panel have also been briefed on the opportunity.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That LEP Board supports the direction of travel, and provides a mandate to engage in further discussions around a City Region approach.

6.2 That if the application is successful, a further report confirming the arrangements and implications be brought to a future meeting.

7 Background Documents

None.

8 Appendices

REAP brochure