

---

**Report to:** Business Innovation and Growth Panel

**Date:** 24 May 2018

**Subject:** **Massachusetts Institute of Technology Regional  
Entrepreneurship Acceleration Programme**

---

**Director(s):** Liz Hunter, Interim Director Policy and Strategy

**Author(s):** Sarah Bowes

---

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To update the BIG Panel about a University of Leeds led Massachusetts Institute of Technology Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration (MIT REAP) programme application.

## **2 Information**

- 2.1 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 small senior teams of five to eight participants that must represent 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, funded by private sector contributions 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, the Combined Authority and others, the University of Leeds has submitted an exploratory application into the programme, the outcome of which will be announced in May. The bid has been led (and the majority of the cost met by) the University of Leeds. In order to ensure the programme is focused and is outcome-driven, the focus initially will be on specific initiatives to implement within the city of Leeds. However, having the LEP as part of the stakeholder team will ensure that learnings and outcomes are disseminated to the wider city region. As the programme progresses the ambition is to bring in other key stakeholders to contribute to shaping and delivering other innovation initiatives across the region.
- 2.7 This project aligns strongly with the City Region's innovation objectives, developing and strengthening the existing eco-system and improving innovation collaboration across and beyond the City Region.

### **3 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications for the Combined Authority arising from this report.

### **4 Legal Implications**

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

## **5      Staffing Implications**

- 5.1      There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

## **6      External Consultees**

- 6.1      Discussions have taken place to date at Knowledge Transfer Directors and with University Vice Chancellors

## **7      Recommendations**

- 7.1      That the Panel note the contents of the report.

## **8      Background Documents**

None.

## **9      Appendices**

None.