



L-R: Professor Michael Young, University of Sunderland; Professor Karen O'Brien, Durham University; Professor Chris Day, Newcastle University; Professor Andy Long, Northumbria University; and Professor Paul Croney, Teesside University.

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North East universities awarded £8.9m to boost regional research commercialisation

A new project to strengthen collaboration between universities and businesses and others to drive growth and create jobs in North East England has received major funding from the UK Government.

The North East Strategic Commercialisation project, a five-year programme involving Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside universities and other partners, has been awarded £8.9 million from Research England.

Building on the foundations of the Northern Accelerator spin-out programme, the project will grow the North East's capacity and capability to commercialise impactful university research.

Led by Durham University, the initiative aims to further support the region's spinout businesses and also link-up collaborative research and development (R&D), licensing and other forms of commercial activity with business partners.

Professor Karen O'Brien, Vice-Chancellor and Warden, Durham University, said: "North East England's universities have a shared drive to ensure academic research benefits local communities, through creating new businesses and new and better jobs.

"The project will be a game-changer for research commercialisation, bringing in more businesses, more public sector bodies, and more academic researchers in finding innovative, profitable solutions to pressing challenges."

Over the five-year programme, the project will deliver in seven areas focused on addressing specific opportunities and barriers to expanding the commercialisation of university research across the region.

The first of its programmes will see dedicated resources, capacity and leadership to support deeper collaboration between the partner Higher Education Providers. It will deliver enhanced and more structured engagement with more businesses.

The funding comes as the five universities continue to build their collaboration through Universities for North East England (UNEE).

Professor Andy Long, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University who represents UNEE on the North East Business and Innovation Board, commented: "As a group of North East universities we are strongly committed to strengthening our economic and social impact through policy,

advocacy and delivery activities.

“Creating intellectual property and delivering this into the economy through creation of new technology businesses or in partnership with corporate partners and regional SMEs is one of our priority areas of focus. Through this funding we will be able to increase our impact across the region.”

Working with an existing portfolio of 60 spin-out businesses, UK Government and investors, project partners will promote exporting and enhancing the investment finance available in the region.

A dedicated team will work collaboratively across the universities to drive forward and establish ways to sustain enhanced regional commercialisation.

Research England is investing £30 million into four ambitious regional projects through its University Commercialisation Ecosystem initiative.

The funding forms part of Research England’s wider work to support research commercialisation across the country. It builds on the Connecting Capability Fund (CCF) and the Research England Development (RED) Fund, which aim to drive innovation by supporting collaboration and strengthening commercialisation capacity.

Find out more:

Read the [UK Government's full announcement](#).

Find out more about [Universities North East England](#) (UNEE).

Discover more about [Northern Accelerator](#) and learn more about Northern Accelerator’s [economic impact](#).

Full image caption:

From left: Professor Michael Young, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at University of Sunderland; Professor Karen O'Brien, Vice-Chancellor at Durham University; Professor Chris Day, Vice-Chancellor and President at Newcastle University; Professor Andy Long, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive at

Northumbria University; and Professor Paul Croney, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive at Teesside University.

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