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University helping businesses to grow

The first Business & IP Centre outside London was developed as a pilot in Newcastle in 2011 and has now secured over £1.3m to provide a full-scale operational service to businesses.

Northumbria University is working in partnership with Newcastle City Council and Newcastle Science City to run the Centre which follows the success of the Business & IP Centre which opened in the British Library in London in 2006, with services adapted to meet the needs of local businesses, start-ups and entrepreneurs in the North East.

The Newcastle Centre was officially launched by Chi Onwurah, MP for

Newcastle Central last week. It is the first of a nationwide network developed with the British Library which will help businesses and entrepreneurs to grow their businesses, protect their ideas, and become commercially successful. The new service has been established following a positive pilot phase, where over 2,500 entrepreneurs and businesses attended a wide range of events.

The service is based in the flagship Newcastle City Library and offers free access to business and intellectual property (IP) databases and publications, support on commercialising IP, advice on start-up funding, market research, company data and information on patents, trademarks, design and copyright.

Through a series of events, workshops and one-to-one coaching sessions, experts will share their knowledge and experience in business development and intellectual property complemented by world class resources and staff support.

The Centre has secured funding of around £614,000 from the Competitiveness and Employment European Regional Development Fund Programme 2007 to 2013, alongside resources provided by partner organisations and private funding.

Business & IP Centre Newcastle builds upon Northumbria University and Newcastle City Council's commitment to enhancing services to the business community and Newcastle Science City's proven track record in delivering high growth, specialist business support.

Isabel Oswell, Head of Business & Research Audiences at the British Library, says "Our vision is to create an established network of Business & IP Centres across the UK by 2020, with the first wave of Centres in Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield complete by 2014 and working together to share services and spearhead business growth in their local areas.

"We're thrilled to celebrate the Business & IP Centre Newcastle's transformation into a fully-fledged Centre as the first major step towards achieving this goal and unlocking the potential of British entrepreneurs."

Professor Andrew Wathey, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University, said: "Business innovation and knowledge creation

are strong elements of Northumbria's civic mission as a research engaged, business-focussed, professional university.

Through the Business & IP Centre, Newcastle, Northumbria University will work with its partners to support businesses and entrepreneurs to realise their commercial potential, forging links and developing individuals to drive forward innovation and growth in Newcastle and the North East region."

Pat Ritchie, Chief Executive of Newcastle City Council, said: "Creating the right conditions for business growth is one of the critical roles of the council. This unique new service will help businesses and entrepreneurs grow and become commercially successful producing much needed new jobs and strengthening the regional economy."

Simon Green, Newcastle Science City's Head of Business Support said, "We're keen to encourage the region's entrepreneurs and innovative businesses to get involved with the Centre, to find out how we can help them exploit and develop their ideas, and fundamentally grow their business. We understand the challenges faced by high growth companies, and can provide the specialist support needed to overcome these challenges."

Visit the [Business and IP Centre website](#) for more information

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