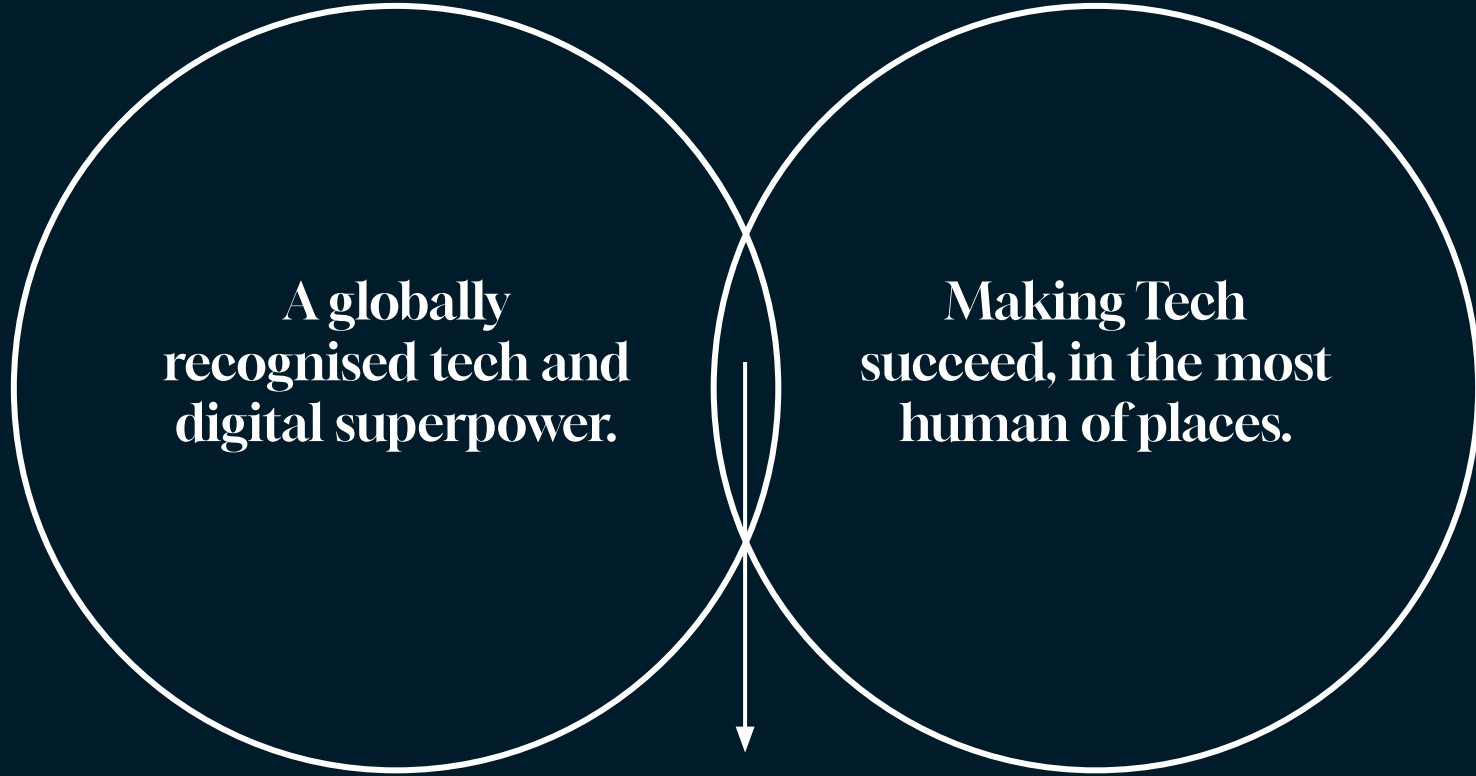


The West Midlands Digital Economy Playbook

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL AND GROWING THE REGION'S DIGITAL ECONOMY | APRIL 2024

MISSION

VISION



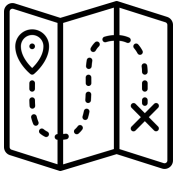
A globally recognised tech and digital superpower.

Making Tech succeed, in the most human of places.

GOAL: Worth £100bn by 2030



Plan for Growth pinpoints 8 economic clusters where the region can ignite above-forecast levels of growth. These are clusters where the West Midlands has comparative advantage and businesses are confident to invest. **These clusters are bound together by transformational digital technology.** [Read the Plan for Growth](#)



Digital Roadmap brings together the activities that will help enable the region to become a fairer, greener, healthier, better connected and more prosperous region for all. **Mission 4 of the Roadmap is: Realising the potential of digital to transform our economy and build economic resilience.** [Read the Digital Roadmap](#)



Digital Economy Playbook is designed to deliver on mission 4 of the Digital Roadmap. It does so by focussing on 3 core areas to enable our region's tech businesses achieve more and go global. **These are access to world-class talent, investment & funding, and business support.** [Read on to discover the playbook...](#)

A playbook designed by the ecosystem for the ecosystem.

This playbook has been written by TechWM, the voice of the West Midlands tech ecosystem and the region's appointed digital economy development agency. It's been created by working closely with our patrons, partners, stakeholders and, most importantly, by listening and understanding the needs of our region's tech businesses.

Throughout the process, we've worked closely with the West Midlands Digital Advisory Board, a group Chaired by the West Midlands Tech Commissioner and comprising of industry experts, including representatives from the WMCA, Microsoft and techUK.

This playbook is designed to provoke thoughts and ideas that will enable our tech sector to become a globally recognised tech and digital superpower by 2030 worth £100bn.



FOR THE
WORLD

**We are on a generational mission to make the
West Midlands a globally significant
tech & digital player.**

**We will accelerate the growth of our core tech
sector, drive economic regeneration and
resilience through benchmark digital adoption,
and become a magnet for the best tech talent.**

Martin Ward, West Midlands Tech Commissioner

**By 2030
the West Midlands
will be a globally
recognised tech and
digital superpower.**

The Largest and fastest growing tech
sector outside London - **worth £100bn**



5 priority missions



ONE REGIONAL VOICE

Encourage stakeholders to align behind a single vision and mission, reducing fragmentation and amplifying our tech credentials.



DIGITAL DIFUSION

Drive adoption of digital technology across sectors to maximise industrial productivity and competitiveness.



WORLD CLASS ECOSYSTEM

Create a well-functioning, self-sustaining tech ecosystem that originates, nurtures and scales world-class tech ventures.



A GLOBAL TECH POSITIONING

Project our tech & digital voice on a global stage, showing the world what we are capable of and making a critical contribution to the UK's success.



AI LEADERSHIP

Develop a unique leadership position in the practical application of AI for the benefit of our businesses community and citizens.

6 core principles



Inclusive

Creating the most supportive, diverse and inclusive tech ecosystem on the planet.



Impactful

Develop a world leading technology hub where every business is encouraged to have social impact.



High Quality

Be known as an internationally recognised hub for high-quality programmes, initiatives and innovation.



AI Enabled

Ensure every person and business across the region has access and opportunity to adopt core AI skills.



Collaborative

The most welcoming, collaborative and easy to access tech ecosystem in the world. Ruthless and strategic collaboration to drive economic growth.



Human Powered

Mobilising our best regional talent to drive digital transformation and technological innovation.

**Realising the potential of digital to
transform our economy and
build economic resilience.**

THE WEST MIDLANDS DIGITAL ROADMAP - 2024/2027



The West Midlands has the largest Tech sector outside of London, generating £15bn to the wider regional economy, with 2,400 businesses employing 144,000 people. The evidence reviewed shows that this growth is driven by the ability of the region to attract business in key sectors and clusters such as advanced manufacturing, healthtech, medtech and fintech.

However, our region has 1,300 fewer digital business start-ups per year compared to the national average. So, we must work hard to address this challenge.

The West Midlands Digital Roadmap

The West Midlands Digital Roadmap (2024-2027) brings together the activities that will help enable the region to become a fairer, greener, healthier, better connected and more prosperous region for all.

Mission 4 of the Roadmap is:

Realising the potential of digital to transform our economy and build economic resilience.

This playbook is designed to make this mission a reality, whilst looking further ahead into what the future of the region's tech sector could become.

3 Core Growth Pillars



Skills

The West Midlands, the best place in the world to attract, retain and develop tech talent and leadership.



Support

A world class support ecosystem, helping businesses through their entire journey - from inception to IPO.



Investment

The West Midlands, the best place in the UK to get investor support, readiness and access to growth capital.

Skills

**Our people are our superpower.
We must empower and enable them to fulfill the
region's potential and aspirations of becoming a
global tech superpower.**

**From early-years to adult education, our
mission is every person across the West
Midlands has the opportunity to acquire digital
skills and work in tech.**

UNLOCKING OUR REGION'S TALENT

We have the youngest population in Europe and one of the most diverse, a fantastic foundation to build upon. However, our region needs 280,000 more people to gain essential digital skills to be in line with the national average.

Mission

To ensure our amazing businesses have access to high-quality, local and diverse tech talent. A workforce that is reflective of the needs of companies, both now and in the future.

Vision

The West Midlands, the best place in the world to attract, retain and develop tech talent and leadership.



Objectives



Create New Tech Jobs

The creation of new jobs through scaling our region's tech businesses and attracting global firms.



Narrow Digital Skills Gap

Formation of a joined up regional digital skills strategy where organisation collaborate.



Retain & Develop Tech Talent

Ensure our region's best tech talent have the opportunity to become future leaders.

Recommendations



Capture insight and share across the ecosystem; transforming learning and training so we are always ahead of the technological curve.



Create a culture of continuous learning; from initial digital skills through to leadership.



Connect ecosystem collaborators; ensuring strategic goals and objectives are aligned.

Support

Creating high quality support for our tech businesses will enable their growth and scale up the West Midlands tech ecosystem.

Businesses will have the ability to navigate the ecosystem with ease, getting relevant support at every stage of their growth journey.

Janet Coyle CBE, WM Digital Advisory Board (Support Chair)

SUPERCHARGING BUSINESS GROWTH

We create more startups anywhere outside of London but we are still not seeing this translate into scaleups. In addition to this, our region has 1,300 fewer digital business start-ups per year compared to the national average.

Mission

To support every business across the West Midlands with personalised, high-quality and relevant help at every stage of their growth journey.

Vision

Drive business growth and economic impact from inception to IPO.



Objectives



Improve Startup Success

Ensure our tech and digital startups have access to the support they need to create successful ventures.



Create More Scaleups

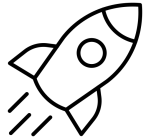
Nurture our most promising startups through high quality support and mentorship.



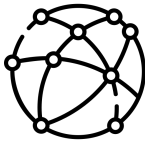
Enable Global Growth

Help our region's startups and scaleups go global by connecting them with international opportunities.

Recommendations



Establish a world-class tech accelerator; helping high potential tech businesses get access to high quality and relevant support.



Connect founders with a world-class network; giving them access to mentors, angel investors and innovation opportunities.



Enable international expansion; helping our local tech businesses expand across the world and enter new markets through programmes and connections.

Investment

Getting investment to our region's high-potential tech firms will supercharge their growth and help them go global.

To do this we must ensure they receive the best investment advice, investment readiness support and, most importantly, connections to investors.

Paul Faulkner, WM Digital Advisory Board (Investment Chair)

INVESTMENT FUELLED GROWTH

Although we are the 3rd fastest-growing UK startup ecosystem for venture capital investment, we still have a long way to go to receive our proportional share of VC investment, so there's still a huge amount of work to be done.

Mission

To help tech businesses get access to investment opportunities at every stage of their growth journey.

Vision

The best place in the UK to
get access to growth
capital.



Objectives



Empower

Founders with investment knowledge and insight so they can make informed decisions.



Enable

Investment readiness at every stage of growth so businesses are fully prepared.



Engage

A global network of angels, VC firms and private equity companies.

Recommendations



Supercharge investment education and readiness; giving founders the knowledge to make informed decisions.



Attract new investors to the region; increasing the opportunities available to regional tech companies.



Connect tech businesses with relevant investors; ensure founders get in front of the right investors at the right time.

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