



Association of Directors of
Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport

ADEPT President's Awards 2022

Entry form

Award category:	Delivering Clean Growth
Title:	Somerset Innovation Centres – Driving Clean Growth
Entrant:	Somerset County Council
Main contact name:	James Gilgrist
Email address:	j.gilgrist@somerset.gov.uk
Partner/s (if applicable):	Heart of the South West LEP, Leonardo UK, EDF Energy, South West Manufacturing Advisory Service (SWMAS), UK Hydrographic Office, Somerset West and Taunton Council, South Somerset District Council, Digital Somerset.
Headline summary (150 characters, c. 20-25 words) This project aims to anticipate clean growth challenges and exploit clean growth opportunities across Somerset's key growth sectors by supporting industry innovation.	

Please note we need **at least one supporting image** per award submission.
Supporting images should be attached separately as jpg or png files.

Please paste links to any supporting video evidence here

Link 1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvll7mjxBYc (iAero Opening Event)
Link 2	

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500-word project outline (please ensure you do not exceed the word count and address all the judges' criteria – for more info see [here](#))

The [Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy](#) sets an ambitious target of reaching net zero by 2030, making clear the challenges and opportunities for businesses in doing so. The [Somerset Recovery and Growth Plan](#), whilst addressing the economic impacts of COVID-19, stressed the need to exploit Somerset's significant opportunities for clean growth in the key sectors of Clean Energy, Aerospace & Advanced Engineering, and Digital & Data. This project does just that, aiming to deliver clean growth through innovation.

Somerset County Council has invested £13million and secured external funding across Growth Deal (£14.2million), ERDF (£6.8million) and the Getting Building Fund (£5.7million) to deliver a network of innovation centres and a wrap-around innovation support service for Somerset's key growth sectors. Each element has been co-designed and delivered in close collaboration with industry, and in partnership with the Heart of the South West LEP, Government, neighbouring councils, key industry stakeholders, and business representative organisations.

The £19million, 6,100 square metre [Somerset Energy Innovation Centre](#) campus in Bridgwater is a hub for businesses to collaborate and exploit opportunities in the clean energy sector. Phase 1 of the campus (SEIC 1) was established to meet the needs of the multi-billion-pound construction of two new nuclear reactors at Hinkley Point C, creating a supply chain integration facility that ensured Somerset SMEs were well placed and supported to win contracts. Further evolution included two additional facilities (SEIC 2 and 3) to support SMEs to transition into the clean energy sector, including Floating Offshore Wind.

Leonardo UK and their extensive Somerset based supply chain were the driving force behind the [iAero Innovation Centre](#) in Yeovil, as was the industry imperative of cleaner aviation. Sat next to Leonardo, the £10million, 2,400 square-meter facility, [opened in early 2022](#), provides a 'front-door' to industry and space for collaboration and innovation among aerospace and high-value design and engineering SMEs. Leonardo is a strategic partner of iAero, as well as anchor tenant, with significant plans for collaborative SME activity on sustainable aviation, specifically around hybrid-propulsion and advanced autonomous systems.

Factory 4.0 and wider digitalisation now underpins nearly all our sectors and working with the UK Hydrographic Office it became clear that there was a requirement for a bespoke centre in Taunton, close to their headquarters, to grow the digital supply chain for marine autonomy. Once completed in March 2023, the Somerset Digital Innovation Centre will be an £11million, 2,613 square-metre facility supporting collaboration and innovation in the digital economy and providing a focal point for inward investment.

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Alongside centre-based support, the innovation centre network will benefit from a c. £800,000, multi-year, wrap-around innovation support service, delivering both sector specific and general innovation support to tenants and users of the centre, as well as other local SMEs within or looking to move into the clean energy, aerospace, or digital sector within Somerset.

This project, by delivering clean growth through innovation, will help to future-proof growth and jobs in Somerset, as well as delivery of our net zero ambitions. It will also help to redress Somerset's longstanding productivity challenges, whilst helping us to 'level-up'. Income from the centres will also support longer-term growth investment for the council.