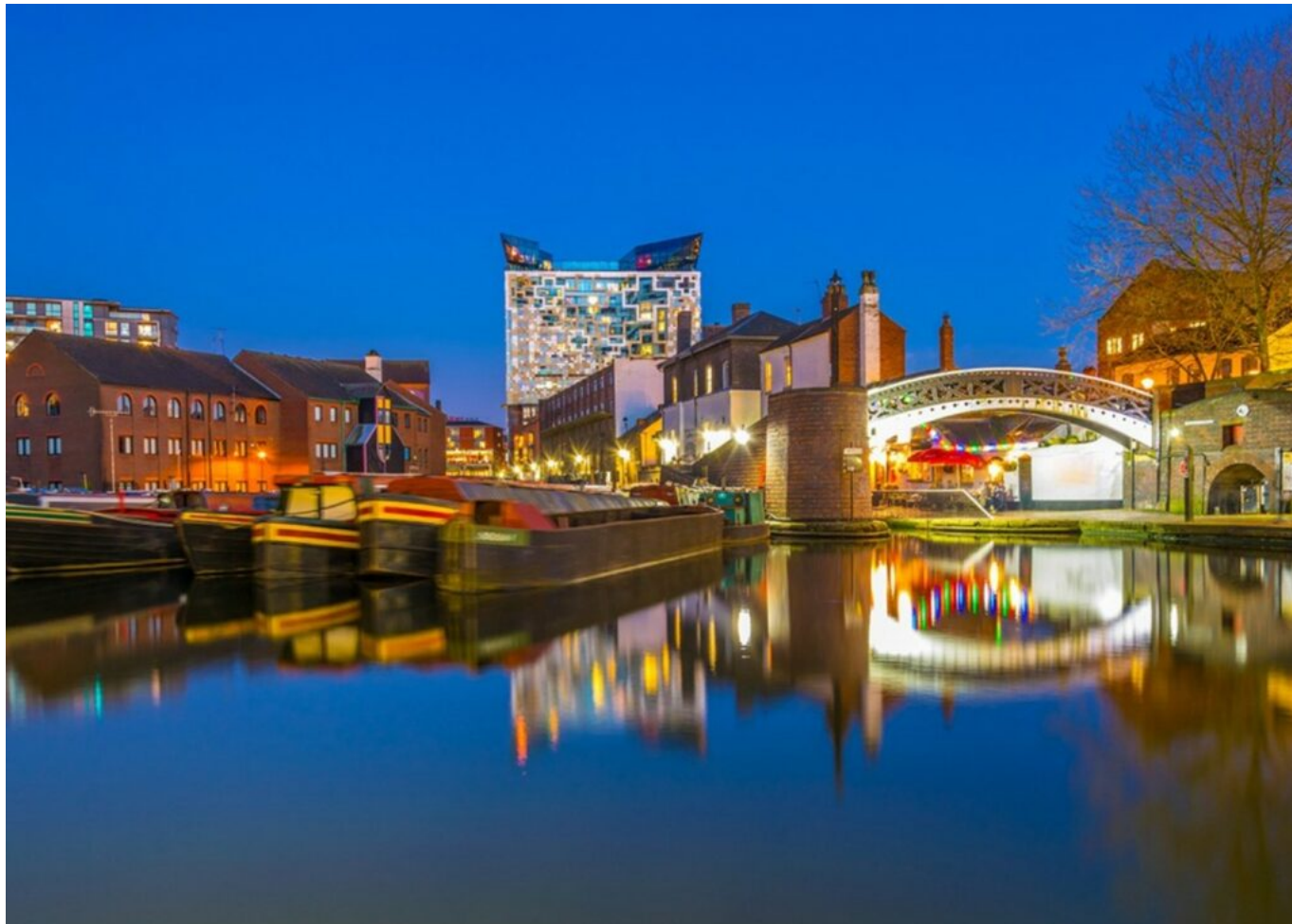


BCIMO to deliver West Midlands 'Clean Futures' project with industry partners

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Black Country Innovative Manufacturing Organisation (BCIMO) will partner with Connected Places Catapult and Coventry University to lead Clean Futures, a project launched as part of The West Midlands Innovation Accelerator.

Established with new Government innovation funding for The West Midlands, the Accelerator is geared towards making the region a centre of excellence in health tech, med tech and clean tech.

Two projects, DIATOMIC (Digital InnovAtion TransfOrMative Change) and Clean Futures, are set to draw on its unique strengths, creating new opportunities for commercial, public and academic partners.

Led by UK innovation accelerator for cities, Connected Places Catapult, in partnership with BCIMO and Coventry University, Clean Futures will develop the West Midlands' innovation eco-system, boosting industry engagement and acting as a catalyst for the commercialisation of local SMEs.

More specifically, it will support the development of the region's transport sector, helping manufacturing and its associated supply chains to transition from fossil-fuelled solutions to clean tech. SMEs will receive funding to develop and demonstrate these clean tech transport solutions, working in partnership with Tier 1s, OEMs and the wider ecosystem.

A Clean Futures Academy is expected to bring together the West Midlands' innovation community, which will work to improve sustainability and deliver social benefits in the longer term. This, in turn, will create jobs and drive growth, as well as bringing new investment to the region and enabling buyers and suppliers to tackle the challenges associated with clean transport – an area of focus for BCIMO.

BCIMO representative said: "We are delighted to be delivering Clean Futures alongside our partners, Connected Places Catapult and Coventry University. This transformation project is closely aligned with one of BCIMO's key objectives – to facilitate the development of cleaner, more cost-effective transport technologies."

Both projects are in their initial phase, with the Clean Futures team set to identify key clean tech challenge areas, before inviting SMEs to apply for funding and support. Further details will be available in the coming months.

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands and chair of the WMCA, added: "I'm delighted to see the Innovation Accelerator fund finally land in our region which will unlock a further £150m of private sector co-investment. The funding will inject momentum into the delivery of the West Midlands Plan for Growth which sets out how we will unlock hundreds of thousands of new jobs and be home to major global companies in this decade. "One of my key mayoral missions is to restore our status as the fastest growing region outside of London – just as we were pre-pandemic. Innovation is central to achieving that mission."

Nicola Yates OBE, CEO at Connected Places Catapult, concluded: "The West Midlands has an extraordinarily rich history of innovation and I'm thrilled that Connected Places Catapult will be deepening engagement across this region. These projects will work to support local innovators, attract investment and realise the benefits of inclusive innovation for the community.

"By understanding a place as a whole, working in partnership, and making choices that are right for this region, we can maximise the jobs and growth that innovation unlocks."

Photo credit: BCIMO