

Innovation Launchpad Network+



National research Network to launch new round of funding in April

The £6.75 million Innovation Launchpad Network+ has been established to accelerate innovation by bringing together universities and the Catapult Network.

Following on from the [announcement of the Innovation Launchpad Network's second tranche of funding](#), the Network is pleased to invite academics to a hybrid launch event on **Thursday 20th April 2023**.

The event will take place at Belfast's Ormeau Baths at 11am-1:30pm, with an online option also available for academics to join. The morning will see a welcome from Innovation Launchpad Network's director Pete Osborne, an introduction to each of the 9 Catapult Centres that make up the [Catapult Network](#) plus a variety of other speakers that will be announced in the run up to the event. Following the event, those who attend in person will have the chance to chat with Catapult colleagues about future collaboration. [More information can be found on the event page here](#). Physical attendees are encouraged to grab your ticket as soon as possible as the venue is limited to just **75 places**.

The national research and innovation group's first phase attracted more than 120 enquiries from 30+ different academic institutions across the UK, with all three key themes (NetZero, Resilience, Healthcare and Wellbeing) and all 9 [Catapult Centres](#) represented in a fascinating portfolio of applications.

Dr Peter Osborne, Director of the Innovation Launchpad Network+ and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Sheffield's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) said: "The first round of the Researcher in Residence scheme attracted some really strong proposals across all three themes. In tranche 2 we hope to build on this initial interest and we would like to encourage applications from an even broader cross section of researchers from all four of the home nations. If you have some underpinning research that you would like to develop further with one or more of the Catapults then we would like to hear from you."

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Jacinthe Nourrit, the Digital Catapult's Senior Policy Research Manager, added: "We received high-quality applications for the first tranche of the RiR scheme and we are looking forward to receiving new Expressions of Interest for tranche 2 very soon. The event in Belfast will be a fantastic opportunity to welcome academics into our Network."

Brendan Lowry, Senior Innovation Partner at Digital Catapult added: "The RiR scheme is a fantastic opportunity for academia and researchers to work alongside the Catapults, I look forward to welcoming academics from the region to our network."

Our first phase attracted more than 120 enquiries from 30+ different academic institutions across the UK, with all three key themes (NetZero, Resilience, Healthcare and Wellbeing) and all 9 Catapult Centres represented in a fascinating portfolio of applications.

The second round of funding demonstrates our commitment to creating new links between individuals or groups and the Catapult Network, and is on track to delivering more than 100 world-class Researchers in Residence programmes which will have a huge impact on the UK government's NetZero, Resilience and Healthcare and Wellbeing strategies.

[Book your place.](#)

Professor Ben Hicks

Co-Investigator for Resilience for the Innovation Launchpad Network+

"Recent global crises have highlighted the need for more resilient systems and underlined the important role that resilient systems play in meeting societal challenges. Residences in this theme will explore approaches, tools and technologies to improve the resilience of products, services and sociotechnical systems – thereby enabling them to anticipate, manage, recover and transform from unexpected events."

Professor Fiona Charnley

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Co-Investigator for NetZero for the Innovation Launchpad Network+

“It has been fantastic to see so many high-quality applications from our first round of Researcher in Residence applications and the motivation and ambition around the themes of Net Zero and the circular economy is particularly evident. We are looking forward to pushing this agenda even further in our second call for applications.”

Professor Alejandro Frangi

Co-Investigator for Healthcare & Wellbeing for the Innovation Launchpad Network+

“The first tranche of applications showed us there is a huge amount of technology, know-how and expertise out there in academic institutions that hasn’t been tapped into by industry. There’s a gap between what academia is doing and what industry is doing, and we need to bridge that gap. Researchers need support in bringing their technologies further within academia before they are at a stage where they will be attractive to industry.

“Engage early on and don’t leave talking to the Catapult Centres until the last minute. I’m absolutely convinced that when that connectivity between academia and the Catapults has happened well before submission, it has resulted in some really great proposals.”

Professor Ash Tiwari

Co-Investigator for Resilience for the Innovation Launchpad Network+

“Resilience as a research topic requires inter-disciplinary, cross-TRL collaborations across a number of areas covered by the Catapult Network. The Innovation Launchpad Network+ provides a unique opportunity for academic researchers to co-locate themselves with the

Catapult Centres and contribute to enhancing the resilience of complex real-life systems in areas such as manufacturing, infrastructure and healthcare. This theme also provides exciting opportunities for translation of research up the TRL scale using the industrial-scale facilities available at the Catapult Centres.”

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Additional information

About the Catapult Network

The Catapult Network is composed of nine world-leading technology and innovation centres established by and working in partnership with Innovate UK. They support businesses in transforming great ideas into valuable products and services. They deliver impact across the UK economy, enabling businesses to thrive in global markets.

For more information visit the [Catapult Network](#).

About the Researchers in Residence Scheme

The Research in Residence (RiR) scheme promotes academic engagement and is designed to enable researchers to work within the Catapult environment as part of one or more centres, undertaking a project or activity in an area of strategic importance for Catapults. As well as increasing knowledge exchange and co-creation between academia and the Catapults, these awards allow the researcher to gain deeper application-specific knowledge across a range of sectors and nurture the talents and skills development across both research and Catapult.