

Press release: World-leading cyber centre to be developed in London's Olympic Park

A new world-first £13.5 million cyber innovation centre, located in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, will help secure the UK's position as a global leader in the growing cyber security sector.

The London Cyber Innovation Centre will boost the thriving East London digital cluster and spur the development of cutting-edge technology to keep the nation safe from online threats. Estimates suggest it could also help create 2,000 UK jobs in cyber security.

Startups chosen for the scheme will work with large firms as they identify cyber security challenges critical to their businesses. This will help make sure the UK's leading entrepreneurs are creating solutions large firms need as well as securing commercial contracts and crucial investment.

A tech company was formed every hour in London in 2017 and firms attracted almost £3 billion in venture capital investment. The centre will act as a catalyst for startups and help the UK increase its slice of the global cyber security industry forecast to be worth £69 billion in 2018.

Margot James, Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries, said:

"London is the undisputed leader of European tech, with billions of investment flowing in every year and world-leading firms developing groundbreaking innovations.

"This new centre in the Olympic Park will build on the site's legacy of excellence and spark a wave of creativity to develop the cyber security technology of the future and help protect the nation's industry."

The new centre will be run by Plexal from its Here East headquarters, and is being funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as part of the Government's five-year, £1.9 billion investment to keep the UK safe online.

The centre will offer a tailored programme of support to at least 72 companies over three years and is open to firms from across the UK. Other startups not on the programme will also be able to access the centre's support and facilities.

Those chosen for the scheme will benefit from dedicated technical and engineering support from some of the world's leading authorities on cyber security, state-of-the-art technology facilities and mentoring and professional business advice. They will also have access to an international

network of cyber clusters to bring trade and investment opportunities on a global scale.

Claire Cockerton, CEO and founder of Plexal, said:

“The UK has a strong heritage in tech innovation and a fertile business environment for start-ups to grow. But our future international standing as a world-leading digitally-enabled economy depends on a robust and forward-thinking cyber security sector.

“The centre will help this to develop by delivering bespoke business development programmes, engineering resource, professional services, access to corporate buyers and ambitious investors. Our mission is to bring the whole industry together to accelerate innovation, entrepreneurship and business growth for UK PLC.”

Robert Hannigan, former director of GCHQ, said:

“The London Cyber Innovation Centre will be the launch pad for a whole generation of new cyber security companies, benefiting both the UK’s economy and its security. By combining academic excellence, expertise in innovation and access to investment, the Centre is uniquely placed to secure this country’s preeminent position in cyber security.”

Alan Foreman, CEO B-Secur, said:

“I am thrilled to hear about the creation of the London Cyber Innovation Centre. It will offer a great platform for start-up in the cyber sector. Centres of this nature will be instrumental in the growth of cyber security innovators across the UK and I really look forward to getting involved in LCIC.”

Further info and notes to editors

- Plexal, which operates London’s largest innovation space, will run the centre. The firm specialises in helping high-tech startups in artificial intelligence, augmented reality and the Internet of Things. It recently launched Plexiglass, a development programme for women-led startups, with Barclays and the London Legacy Development Corporation.
- Plexal opened in June 2017 and joined a growing tech community in the Olympic Park, including University College London’s Robotics Lab, Ford’s Smart Mobility Innovation Office, the Advanced Propulsion Centre and Loughborough University. Transport for London and HMRC have also announced they will open new headquarters on the Stratford site.
- The firm will partner with the Centre for Secure Information Technologies at Queen’s University Belfast, the UK’s Innovation and Knowledge Centre (IKC) for secure information technologies, and Deloitte. This will help develop a pipeline of talent and the

commercialisation of research.

- It is one of two new centres being developed by government to grow the UK's cyber security sector and make sure the UK is the safest place to live and do business online.
- An innovation centre in Cheltenham opened in early 2017 with the launch of the GCHQ Cyber Accelerator programme. Seven startups have graduated with a further nine companies currently taking part in an extended nine-month programme.
- This initiative is part of the Government's £1.9 billion investment to significantly transform the UK's cyber security. The 2016-2021 National Cyber Security Strategy sets out how the UK Government will deliver a UK that is secure and resilient to cyber threats, prosperous and confident in the digital world. The National Cyber Security Programme managed by the Cabinet Office coordinates the work undertaken to implement the UK's National Cyber Security Strategy.
- London is also home to the headquarters of the National Cyber Security Centre.
- Firms in the programme will have access to international cyber security networks via the Global Ecosystem of Ecosystems Partnership in Innovation and Cybersecurity (Global EPIC).
- Sources: Tech Nation 2017 and PitchBook data sourced by London and Partners. Gartner Forecast Information Security , Worldwide, 3Q17 Update (<https://www.gartner.com/newsroom/id/3836563>)
- Media enquiries – please contact the DCMS News and Communications team on 020 7211 2210.