

Embargoed to 00.01 on 17 March 2014

Catapult announces three new Centres of Excellence

17 March 2014: The Satellite Applications Catapult, an independent technology and innovation company, is today announcing the launch of three new regional 'Centres of Excellence' in satellite applications. Each new Centre will act as a focal point for Catapult activity in its local area, consolidating the links between the science knowledge base and the business community.

Business Durham, University of Strathclyde and a consortium comprising University of Leicester, University of Nottingham and British Geological Survey, were each chosen to host a new Centre by a select team comprising Catapult and external advisors representing business and academia, after an open selection process which attracted more than a dozen proposals. Each Centre is tasked with enabling the development of applications and solutions, linking academics, large industry and SMEs, as well as engaging with the wider user markets.

Stuart Martin, CEO of the Catapult said, "We were delighted with the interest shown in our regional Centres concept, and these three proposals really stood out because of their expertise in specific areas: Business Durham offered an impressive partnership looking at opportunities to unlock a range of high-value market opportunities within the region; University of Strathclyde will focus on launching commercial opportunities in energy, future cities and other key growth sectors; and the University of Leicester and its partners will act as a focal point to support the acceleration of growth of satellite applications across the East Midlands".

Stuart continued, "These Centres of Excellence are an essential part of our national engagement strategy and will help us deliver our core objective: to help foster growth across the UK economy through the exploitation of space. Our central location in Harwell, with its unique concentration of space and other high-tech organisations, provides access to a wealth of expertise and facilities. Now, these Centres of Excellence will extend our reach throughout the UK, helping us support the national objective to capture a 10% share of the global space market by 2030".

Each Centre will commence activities from April 2014 with an agreed plan of actions, activities and events. Once the model is established and the value demonstrated, the Catapult plans to extend its network to include further Centres into other regions.

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About the Satellite Applications Catapult

Satellite Applications Catapult Ltd is one of a network of UK technology and innovation companies which aim to drive economic growth through the commercialisation of research. The vision of the Satellite Applications Catapult is to support UK industry through the acceleration of the growth of satellite applications and to contribute to capturing a 10% share of the global space market predicted by 2030. It aims to achieve this by exploiting the innovation-potential in the UK industrial and academic communities, by being a focal point where small and medium enterprises, large industry and end users can work together with researchers to challenge barriers, explore and develop new ideas, and bring these to commercial reality.

About Catapults

Catapult centres are being established by the Technology Strategy Board as a new addition to its range of programmes to stimulate innovation. They are places where the best of the UK's innovative businesses and researchers work together to bring new products and services more quickly to commercialisation. Focusing on areas with great market potential, Catapults will open up global opportunities for the UK and generate economic growth for the future. In addition to the Satellite Applications Catapult, Catapults for high value manufacturing, cell therapies, offshore renewable energy, the connected digital economy, future cities and transport systems are being established. *For more information, please visit www.catapult.org.uk*

About the Technology Strategy Board

The Technology Strategy Board is the UK's innovation agency. Its goal is to accelerate economic growth by stimulating and supporting business-led innovation. Sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Technology Strategy Board brings together business, research and the public sector, supporting and accelerating the development of innovative products and services to meet market needs, tackle major societal challenges and help build the future economy. *For more information, please visit www.innovateuk.org*