

HELP TO GROW.

MANAGEMENT COURSE



WEBINAR DATE: 8 MAY, 2026

UNLOCKING GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR NORTH-WEST ENGLAND SMES RESOURCES



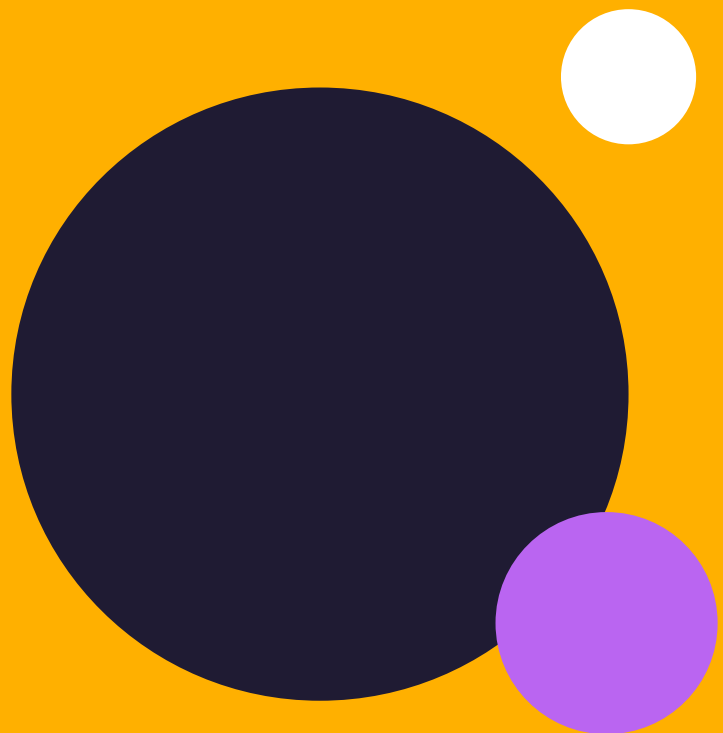
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Thank you for joining the Help to Grow Management Regional North West webinar today if you would like to watch again or missed the session a link to the webinar recording can be found [here](#).

This accompanying document outlines some of the current support, funding and expertise available to SMEs across the North-West of England, and how to access it. Support is available through Growth Hubs, Small Business Charter Accredited business schools and partner organisations.



GROWTH HUBS

The network of Growth Hubs across England exists to help ambitious businesses start, grow and scale, including developing new opportunities and routes to market.

Growth Hubs are part of the UK Government's Business Growth Service and act as a central point of access to business support.

What support is available

Across all Growth Hubs, you can typically access:

- Funding and finance support, including grants, investment readiness and connections to funding opportunities
- Innovation and R&D support helping you develop new products, services or processes
- Business advice and strategy support with growth planning, productivity and operations
- Skills and workforce development, leadership training, recruitment and workforce planning
- Access to networks and partners including universities, investors and sector specialists

Each Growth Hub sits at the centre of the local business support ecosystem, bringing together the best of public and private services. They act as a single go-to contact point for businesses of any size or sector to access advice and support.

You can find your local Growth Hub by using your postcode [here](#).

CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON GROWTH HUB

A central access point for businesses in Cheshire and Warrington, offering free, independent support across all stages of growth. Find out more and get in touch [here](#).

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH HUB

Supports businesses across the Liverpool City Region with funding, expert advice and high-growth programmes.

- Access High Growth business support [here](#)
- Liverpool City Region Seed Fund information can be found [here](#)
- Funding and support programme information can be found [here](#)
- [Sign up](#) to the newsletter for updates.

BOOST BUSINESS LANCASHIRE

Lancashire's Growth Hub, helping businesses navigate and access the right support at the right time.

- An online [business support directory](#) and helpdesk, including [private sector support](#)
- Events and networking opportunities can be found [here](#)
- Our [Knowledge Hub](#) for insights, advice and inspiration
- Start your #GrowthConversation [here](#).

CUMBRIA GROWTH HUB (ENTERPRISING CUMBRIA)

Provides a gateway to business support across Cumbria, helping businesses explore growth opportunities, access funding and develop new products or services. Register interest and find out more [here](#).

GREATER MANCHESTER GROWTH HUB

Provides tailored support to businesses across Greater Manchester, with a strong focus on innovation, commercialisation and scaling.

- Explore services [here](#)
- Latest funding opportunities can be found on our [website](#)
- Monthly funding roundup (May 2026) [here](#).

SMALL BUSINESS CHARTER ACCREDITED BUSINESS SCHOOLS

Business schools across the North-West of England offer a wide range of support for SMEs, designed to support businesses at different stages of growth.

Support includes:

- Leadership and management development programmes
- Innovation and product development support
- Access to academic expertise and research
- Student and graduate talent
- Opportunities for collaboration, consultancy and knowledge exchange

EDGE HILL UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

The Productivity & Innovation Centre (PIC), established in 2017, is a research-informed business support unit at Edge Hill University focused on unlocking the growth potential of established SMEs across the Liverpool City Region, West Lancashire, and Preston. Support is fully funded for eligible businesses (check the website for eligibility details)



Programmes and Opportunities

Innovation Sprint

A three-month, fully funded scale-up programme delivering around 60 hours of strategy development.

- Combines academic expertise, intensive workshops, one-to-one mentoring and rapid innovation tools
- Supports businesses to tackle growth barriers and pursue market penetration, market development or product/service innovation.

Find out more [here](#).

Skills for Growth

Connects businesses with Edge Hill students and graduates.

- Provides access to fresh talent and additional capacity for projects.

Leadership for Growth

Professional-body-accredited leadership and management training.

- Designed to strengthen the people-side of scaling.

Find out more [here](#).

Innovation Adoption Accelerator

Targeted support for businesses adopting new technologies.

- Helps identify, adopt and invest in new technologies.

LEEDS BUSINESS SCHOOL, LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

Leeds Business School, part of Leeds Beckett University, has a long-standing heritage dating back to 1898, and is committed to supporting the development of innovative, enterprising and resilient business professionals. With a strong focus on accessibility, innovation and regional impact, the school works closely with SMEs across the Leeds City Region to bring learning to life through practical support and collaboration.



Programmes and Opportunities

Peer Productivity Network

A fully funded peer-based programme supporting SME leaders across Yorkshire to improve productivity through practical action and shared learning.

- Monthly 2-hour facilitated peer sessions over 6 months
- Small, trusted groups focused on real business challenges and practical solutions
- Support to develop and implement Productivity Improvement Plans (PIPs)
- Emphasis on collaboration, accountability and measurable outcomes
- Designed for business owners and senior leaders at any stage of their productivity journey

Find out more [here](#).

LEEDS UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Leeds University Business School works in partnership with businesses to deliver practical, research-informed support that drives real-world impact. Through its External Engagement Team, businesses can access world-class research, emerging talent and tailored support for innovation and growth, including opportunities to collaborate on projects, develop workforce capability and address challenges such as sustainability, productivity and the future of work.



Programmes and Opportunities

Future Leaders Programme

An eight-week blended programme designed for professionals stepping into broader leadership roles.

- Combines in-person sessions, webinars and peer learning
- Focuses on decision-making, leadership approach and personal development
- Includes creation of a personalised Leadership Action Plan

Find out more [here](#).

Leading Business Transformation

A four-day executive programme supporting experienced leaders to deliver organisational change.

- Focuses on turning strategy into action across complex organisations
- Applies practical frameworks to real organisational challenges
- Develop a one-page transformation plan and 90-day implementation roadmap

Find out more [here](#).

Finance for Non-Financial Leaders

A three-day programme designed to build confidence in financial decision-making.

- Supports understanding of key financial drivers and performance metrics
- Helps leaders evaluate trade-offs and make informed decisions
- No prior finance background required

Find out more [here](#).

LIVERPOOL BUSINESS SCHOOL, LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

Liverpool Business School is currently the Times Higher Education Business School of the Year. It combines teaching, research, and partnerships to create impact for students, employers and communities. Its Executive Education and professional programmes focus on leadership and organisational development, using coaching and peer-led learning to support practical, real-world application.



Programmes and Opportunities

LBS Leadership Summer School

A free programme designed to support leaders and managers working in micro and small businesses across the Liverpool City Region.

- Running since 2022
- Builds capability, confidence, and agency through real-world leadership practice.
- Attend one or multiple sessions to fit around your business

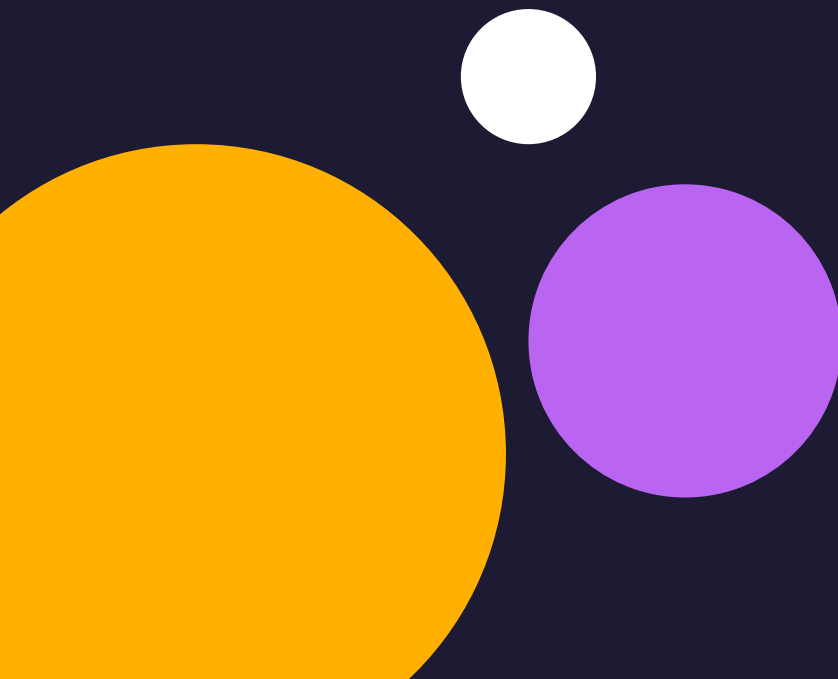
Find out more [here](#).

PG Cert Business Scale-Up and Leadership

An accredited programme designed with employers and grounded in real SME challenges.

- Supports leaders to manage growth, lead change and turn strategy into action
- Delivered face-to-face in flexible two-day blocks
- The programme focuses on practical leadership capability, innovation and sustainable growth.

Find out more [here](#).



MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

The Centre for Enterprise at Manchester Metropolitan University supports businesses to innovate, develop and validate new products and services, and adopt advanced and digital technologies through fully supported programmes. Its flagship offers provide structured, hands-on pathways that take businesses from defining challenges through to prototyping, validation and real-world implementation.



Programmes and Opportunities

The Innovation Retreat

A fully funded programme designed to shape, test and accelerate innovation to market. Structured 4-day delivery (including a 2-day residential)

- Covers problem definition, market validation, AI prototyping and action planning
- Hands-on, immersive approach to refining value propositions and engaging early adopters
- Focus on areas such as sustainable materials, AI & data, diagnostics and genomics

Find out more [here](#).

Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMMIC)

A fully funded pathway helping businesses to turn innovation challenges into market-ready solutions.

- Structured four-stage innovation process
- Covers problem framing, prototyping and implementation
- Access to expertise and facilities including additive manufacturing, automation, smart sensing and digital twins
- Designed to build internal innovation capability and a clear roadmap for next steps and scaling

Find out more [here](#).

Challenge AI Development Programme

A fully funded programme helping SMEs explore and apply AI in a practical way.

- End-to-end journey from problem definition, market dynamics, AI-enabled prototyping and action planning
- Hands-on, experiential learning using AI tools
- Focus on identifying high-impact opportunities across operations, products and customer experience
- Access to technical expertise and support

Challenge AI Co-Creation Labs

A collaborative initiative bringing together industry, public sector and academia to address complex challenges using AI.

- Focus on real-world, large-scale problems
- Uses co-design, rapid ideation and experimentation
- Develop clear concepts and partnerships to move solutions towards implementation and impact.

Bespoke Innovation Support

Tailored workshops for SMEs on workforce development and AI implementation.

- Workforce Development Masterclass (collaboration, workflows, innovation)
- AI Implementation Masterclass (practical AI adoption across operations, including AI safety)
- Flexible half or full-day formats

SALFORD BUSINESS SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

Salford Business School works with businesses of all sizes to support innovation, productivity and growth through access to research, specialist facilities and industry expertise. The school supports organisations looking to develop new products and services, scale operations, improve sustainability and upskill their workforce through practical, business-focused collaboration.



Programmes and Opportunities

Innovation Labs

A fully funded programme supporting Greater Manchester businesses to develop ideas, products and services through practical innovation support.

- Hands-on support, expert guidance and access to specialist facilities
- Focus on innovation, productivity and sustainable growth
- Designed to complement management and leadership development
- Supports businesses to develop and test new ideas and opportunities

Find out more [here](#).

UNIVERSITY OF LANCASHIRE BUSINESS SCHOOL

Membership of the Centre for SME and Enterprise Development provides an accessible route for SMEs to engage with the University of Lancashire Business School.

- Access networking opportunities
- Participate in collaborative projects
- Access funded programmes
- Attend workshops and masterclasses

Find out more [here](#).



UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

Transform your business with the support of world-leading researchers, empower your team with exciting career development opportunities and benefit from bringing our talented students into your organisation.

Programmes and Opportunities

- [Business Breakfast series](#) - Presentation or panel session on different topics with networking opportunities
- [Management Matters](#) podcast series
- [Project Partners scheme](#) - student consultancy-type projects offering free resource for businesses
- Free vacancy advertising platform used by 20,000 final year students and recent graduates
- Opportunities to raise business profile, including careers fairs, guest lectures and work shadowing
- Further support available through Executive Education opportunities.

Wider support

- [The Brett Centre for Entrepreneurship](#), focused on entrepreneurship research
- University Enterprise Team - [Innovation](#) Launch Fund



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