



Scaling up to commercialisation with the North East BIC



The North East SME Innovation Programme provided Power Roll with the funding and support the Washington-based company needed to take its innovative, low-cost solar panel technology from concept to reality.

Co-founded by Chief Scientific Officer, Dr John Topping and Saul Joicey back in 2012, Power Roll was launched with the aim of transforming the energy market by developing and commercialising innovative solar technology with the potential to make solar energy significantly cheaper and more accessible to all.

Having initially funded most of its research and development (R&D)

activity through seed funding, the company engaged with the Innovation Programme in 2017 to find out how it could support it on the next stage of its business journey.

Working hand-in-hand with Innovation Adviser Gillian Middleton, Power Roll's business development and operational support specialist Paul Laidler created a structured and in-depth business case for funding and support, showcasing how its patented and award-winning technology could transform the global energy market and help make the world a greener, more eco-friendly place for all.

Paul said: "When I first met with Gillian, we had an initial chat and

the programme looked perfect for what we were doing. We were developing new products which were truly innovative in our field, so we went through the process with them, filled out the application and embarked upon our first project as a result.

"Once we secured the funding, we embarked on a specific development programme to look at how we could make the panels, who could help us in terms of suppliers and what expertise we could tap into, and that was the thrust of the project. Bringing all of those processes together allowed us to take our business to the next level, developing viable products and becoming ever closer to being market-ready.

“We created another five jobs as a direct result of the Innovation Programme and have continued to expand ever since. We had six members of staff prior the programme and now employ 17 people and are continuing to grow. It has also helped us de-risk what we were trying to achieve and has helped us secure further investment for

down-stream development activities.”

He added: “Based upon my experience of the Innovation Programme, I would most definitely recommend it to other companies.

If what you're developing is truly innovative, then the BIC will help you. Not only can they help you

tap into funding, but they also have a broad network of contacts, suppliers and partners who can give you further business support and help you think outside the box. It's a fantastic programme and we got so much out of it.”

For more information visit:
<https://www.powerroll.solar/>

The North East SME Innovation Programme

What you need to know...

The North East SME Innovation Programme is funded through ERDF, supporting a wide range of sectors including: manufacturing, digital, renewable energy and healthcare.

The aim of the programme is to support North East SMEs who are committed to developing and implementing innovative ideas and processes. Ideas may include (but are not limited to) those which:

- Broaden a product base
- Introduce a new service
- Introduce new markets
- Change operating methods
- Make better use of technology
- Ultimately reduce long term risk and increase sustainability.

The benefits

- The potential of 40% funding for innovative projects
- Project value between £5,000 and £40,000
- Signposting to other sources of innovative support.

The programme is available to North East based B2B SMEs that have traded for 12 months or more.

Get in touch

Visit: ne-bic.co.uk/supporting-innovation

Call: 0191 516 6039

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The North East Business and Innovation Centre (BIC) has received £899,250 of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund for the North East SME Innovation Programme 2 as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020.

