



north wales economic ambition board  
bwrdd uchelgais economaidd gogledd cymru

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Launch of new business directory highlights manufacturing sector in North Wales**

The growing strength and depth of North Wales' advanced manufacturing sector and its potential to bring huge economic benefits to the region is highlighted by a new business directory, as job creation and world-leading research and development drives skills development and innovation within the sector.

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) is pleased to announce the official launch of the second edition of the Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Directory, continuing its work to promote the regional economy since the NWEAB's first edition of the directory in 2014, and the publication of the Energy and Environment Directory for North Wales in 2016.

With 153 companies currently listed, the **new Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Directory** clearly illustrates the breadth of the sector in terms of geography and size of workforce; ranging from small specialist micro businesses and SMEs, to larger employers of regional, national, and international significance.

The directory aims to introduce the reader to the range and scope of excellence that exists within the advanced materials and manufacturing sector across North Wales, encouraging inward investment and serving as a useful reference point for businesses, associated supply chains, education providers, amongst others.

The Directory's primary functions can be summarised as:

- A tool to promote North Wales as a prosperous region for inward investment;
- Raise the profile of North Wales as an excellent location for businesses in the manufacturing sector to prosper;
- Facilitate greater business-to-business contracting and supply chain activities;
- Encourage regional networking and collaboration between the private and public sectors;
- A source of information for education and training to inform the skills pipeline.

The NWEAB worked with employers across the region via representation from each of the six Local Authorities in North Wales, who collaboratively sourced the business information and provided links with, and details from, specialist and key employers from this sector for inclusion in the directory.

Niall Waller, Service Manager for Enterprise and Regeneration at Flintshire County Council, who chaired the Working Group stated:

*"Continuing to update this Directory further cements the strong and established presence of the AM&M sector in North Wales. In addition to it being an important sector in its own right, it also supports our wider economy, in terms of supply chains and skills developments.*

*The role of the AM&M Directory as a freely available resource promotes the increased partnership working and joined-up approach between the public and private sectors across North Wales to support, sustain and develop the sector across all of North Wales."*

According to the NWEAB's Regional Skills and Employment Plan, 34% of all people within the advanced manufacturing sector across Wales are employed in North Wales. Projects such as a new £30m Advanced Manufacturing Research Institute in Deeside are expected to drive growth and jobs within the sector and associated supply chains.

With centres of excellence and Enterprise Zones to support industry and innovation across the region, alongside our world-renowned landscape and environment, it is easy to see and appreciate why the growing innovation of our economy and its skills, continues to attract inward investment alongside the expansion of existing employers, in this, and other key sectors.

Iwan Thomas, Skills and Employment Programme Manager for the North Wales Economic Ambition Board stated:

*"The skills and employment opportunities this sector brings to communities across the region, illustrate the importance of having a directory such as this, to capture the breadth of expertise, innovation, and opportunity that exists. As the Regional Skills Partnership for North Wales, we continue to support, facilitate and promote our education and training providers as they continue to build and sustain excellent working relationships with employers across this key sector. Working in partnership across the public and private sectors as we have done with the Directory, further demonstrates the commitment collectively in North Wales to promote the opportunities for both the current and future workforce of this sector across the region."*

The Directory is available as an on-line 'flipbook' which will be routinely updated, with a limited initial print run of bilingual hard copies for circulation.

#### **NOTES:**

- The North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) comprises partners from across the private and public sectors. The NWEAB works to promote economic growth across North Wales, driving investment in skills by developing responses based on local and regional need.
- The electronic directory flipbook can be accessed at: [manufacturingnorthwales.co.uk](http://manufacturingnorthwales.co.uk)
- The first edition of the Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Directory was published in 2014 and led by Flintshire County Council on behalf of the NWEAB
- The NWEAB published a second business directory in 2016, the Energy and Environment Directory for North Wales ([energyandenvironmentaldirectorynorthwales.co.uk](http://energyandenvironmentaldirectorynorthwales.co.uk))

- The Directories provide a bespoke regional overview of priority sectors, which complements work undertaken by Welsh Government on a national perspective, and the NWEAB continues to work with Welsh Government colleagues on this area of work
- Flintshire Council will continue to lead the work on the maintenance and updating of the Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Directory on behalf of regional partners
- The NWEAB publishes an annual Regional Skills and Employment Plan, which identifies demand for skills and labour within key and growth sectors, and the foundation economy, both now and in the future. The third Regional Skills and Employment Plan for the region was submitted to Welsh Government on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017, and was launched at the Regional Skills Summit in Venue Cymru on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017 ([regionalskillsandemploymentplan.co.uk](http://regionalskillsandemploymentplan.co.uk)).