

Major companies such as Fujitsu have already been attracted to the site, with the company choosing it as the location for its regional headquarters.

The site also provides businesses with strong links to Manchester's higher and further education institutions. The NWDA provided support for One Central Park, a Knowledge Mill based at Central Park which is a collaboration between the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University and Salford University together with Manchester Science Park and The Manchester College. The centre is making a real difference in bridging the gap between academia and business by providing business incubation space alongside cutting-edge research, development and educational facilities.

One Central Park has already supported nearly 100 entrepreneurs helping them to establish thriving businesses. One example is Winning Pitch which, following support from the project, now employs seven people and is forecast to expand to up to 30 employees in the near future. This development will also boost Manchester's reputation as a Knowledge Capital, building on its strength in innovation, reputation for creativity, research and development and leading education facilities. The NWDA invested over £8m in the facility which is the first of its kind in the UK.

## Providing business support

A wide range of support is available to businesses in Manchester and the Northwest which is a major draw in bringing businesses to the region, increasing the number of new business start ups and in helping our existing businesses to grow and expand.

The NWDA manages and funds a number of business finance solutions and grant schemes, as well as a number of loan and investment initiatives.

Examples include the Grant for Research and Development (GRAND), which is administered by the Agency on behalf of the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR). The GRAND scheme is designed to help businesses and individuals carry out research and development work that will lead to technologically innovative products and processes that have a commercial market.

The Agency provides capital investment grants to businesses that are undertaking investment projects but need financial help to go ahead. Known as 'Selective Finance for Investment', these grants are available for projects in certain qualifying areas of the region and can be used for a range of assistance from launching a new business to introducing technological or other innovative improvements.

