

LYVA Labs Annual Report 2025-2026

From innovation to impact across Liverpool City Region

LYVA LABS

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

METRO MAYOR LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

Welcome to LYVA Labs Annual Report 2025-26, showcasing how we deliver economic growth through commercialisation of innovation; inspiring ideas, creating partnerships and attracting investment.



CEO's Report



Lorna Green
CEO LYVA Labs

The past year brought the launch of our Innovation Zone Incubator and Accelerate programmes, enabling LYVA Labs to provide tailored support alongside pre-seed investment to over 20 SMEs based in Liverpool City Region. We also delivered the national Future Medicines Accelerator for Innovate UK in partnership with leaders in the Health and Life Sciences sector from across the UK.

During the year we invested over £1.6m, taking our portfolio to 30 SMEs in the health and life sciences and deep tech sectors, and cumulative co-investment in the portfolio reached £8m. Supporting SMEs to secure R&D grants is central to the success of early-stage SMEs and to date we have helped to bring over £20m in R&D grants into the region.

Our talent programme continues to expand. We created 40 learning placements and internships for graduates and starters and delivered 13 workshops on innovation and entrepreneurship, reaching 278 students. LYVA Labs has a diverse team and we continue to invest **>50%** of our Challenge Fund into SMEs led by underrepresented founders.

Our ecosystem work has highlighted significant regional opportunities in biomanufacturing and multiple stakeholders across both public and private sectors are now involved in taking this forward. We published our Microbiome Discovery to Commercialisation report exploring how microbiome science is shaping the future of health, sustainability, and economic growth – and showcasing the world-leading strengths that exist in Liverpool City Region.

We became a partner on the iiCON programme, cementing four years of collaboration with Prof Janet Hemingway and the iiCON team, and have partnered with LSTM to deliver the Research England funded BRITE programme to deliver a pre-spinout incubator for the translation of biologics. Our strategic partnerships with Liverpool Health Partners and Health Innovation Network North West Coast to develop an open innovation ecosystem for health have led to several exciting collaborations with the pharma industry to bring innovations to address health inequalities and improve care.

We ended the year with more good news, having been approved as a provider to the renewed Innovate UK Biomedical Catalyst Accelerator programme.

Over the coming year we will continue to work to deliver our mission to increase investment in innovation across the region to build on these successful collaborations and deliver impact for the region.

We're extremely grateful to the partners and collaborators who help deliver our programmes, our funders Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Research England and Innovate UK, and our board and investment committee members who continue to support us with their knowledge, experience, and expertise.

I would also like to thank the amazing founders and entrepreneurs who inspire us, challenge us and encourage us to keep building. We look forward to supporting their continued success.

Our impact in 2025-26

Driving measurable impact across businesses and the Liverpool City Region

£1.6m invested in 17 LCR companies

Across health & life sciences, deep tech and clean tech

£5.55m co-investment secured

By LYVA Labs portfolio companies

£7.3m investment in R&D

By LYVA Labs-supported businesses, with £5.44m in grants direct to companies

5 innovation programmes delivered

Including 2 accelerators, 1 incubator and 2 demo days

16 co-investors

Included across our portfolio deals this year

375 young people reached

Through events, innovation workshops and 18 work experience opportunities

11 new collaborations established across LCR

Including Liverpool Health Partners, iiCON and 9 innovation partnerships

4 companies attracted to LCR

Relocating to access LYVA Labs innovation support

LCR microbiome report delivered

Commercialisation: Developing the LCR Innovation Ecosystem



A message from our Chairman, Steve Stuart

As LYVA Labs moves into its fifth year, the impact of focused investment across Liverpool City Region is becoming increasingly clear. By backing high-potential ideas with investment, specialist support and strong partnerships, we are helping innovators turn early promise into practical progress, economic opportunity and long-term benefit for the region.

This year has shown what becomes possible when funding is targeted around shared priorities and matched with the right expertise. Through the Innovation Zone Incubator and Accelerate programmes, we now have a stronger route to help high-potential SMEs access guidance and support at a crucial stage.

Our work with Innovate UK, iiCON, LSTM, Liverpool Health Partners, Health Innovation Network NWC, and partners across the wider ecosystem is also helping Liverpool City Region grow as a place where health, life sciences and deep tech innovation can thrive. Just as importantly, this connected approach is helping companies scale, attract more R&D funding into the region, significantly increase the amount of co-invested capital from new partners, create new routes into innovation and support more inclusive growth.

I am especially proud of how the entire LYVA Labs team has risen to every challenge. Their dedication is delivering meaningful impact across LYVA Labs and the wider innovation ecosystem. Looking ahead, we want to keep this momentum going and support more ambitious innovators. That means continuing to build the resources, partnerships and funding routes that help early-stage companies take their next steps with confidence.

I'm excited about what lies ahead and confident that, together, we can keep opening new opportunities within Liverpool City Region and further afield.

Liverpool City Region Mayor, Steve Rotheram

LYVA Labs launched in 2021, with £10.5m funding from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.



“From the very beginning, we wanted LYVA Labs to help turn brilliant ideas and research into businesses, jobs and investment here in the Liverpool City Region.

Five years on, it’s clear that ambition is becoming a reality.

LYVA Labs is backing some of the most exciting businesses and innovations coming out of our region, helping them access the finance, expertise and connections they need to grow. Just as importantly, it is helping us build an innovation-led economy that creates good, high-value jobs and keeps more of the benefits of our world-class research right here in the Liverpool City Region.

We backed LYVA Labs because we knew that investing in innovation was an investment in our future. It’s decisions like this that have made us the UK’s innovation capital.

There is a huge amount more we can achieve, and I’m looking forward to seeing ambitious businesses grow, attract investment and put the Liverpool City Region firmly on the map as a place where the ideas of tomorrow can become the success stories of today.”

Steve Rotheram
Mayor of the Liverpool City Region

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Investment Fuelling Future Growth

We have accelerated growth across the Liverpool City Region innovation economy, investing more than £1.6m into 13 new portfolio companies and helping businesses unlock more than £5.44m in non-dilutive grant funding, alongside £5.55m in leveraged co-investment.

This is turning regional research strength into investable companies, skilled jobs and long-term economic value. By combining capital, commercial expertise and strategic connections, we are helping founders scale locally, attract follow-on investment and keep high-potential intellectual property anchored in the region.

Powering Innovation Across the Liverpool City Region

We sit at the heart of the Liverpool City Region's innovation ecosystem, connecting founders, investors and leading institutions to turn world-class research into high-growth businesses. Based in the Knowledge Quarter, we help accelerate innovation, create skilled jobs and drive regional economic growth.

Supporting entrepreneurs from idea to investment, we help founders validate opportunities, build investable propositions, access funding and partnerships and bring breakthrough technologies to market.

A partnership-led approach

Our investment model is built on a foundation of partnership. Working alongside founders, universities, research institutions, and co-investors, we help transform promising technologies into commercial success stories.

As a not-for-profit, we reinvest returns into future ventures and programmes, combining investment capital, grant funding, and scale-up expertise to deliver both commercial outcomes and regional impact.



Akshay Bhatnagar
Head of Investment, LYVA Labs

"Our approach at LYVA Labs is rooted in partnership. By investing in high-potential technologies emerging from a world-class IP base, and collaborating with founders, institutions and co-investors, we're accelerating innovation that delivers both strong commercial returns and meaningful regional impact."



Highlights from Across Our Portfolio

LYVA Labs invested £125,000 in **Medcotec** in July 2025 to support product development and delivery of its MVP, becoming the company's first investor.

As part of LYVA Labs' first Accelerate cohort, Medcotec received support across marketing, market access, regulatory strategy and supply chain readiness through LYVA Labs' network and Consultant Panel. This helped strengthen its route to market, contributing to an oversubscribed seed round and significant grant funding.



Mike Taitt

COO and Co-founder, Medcotec

"Since investing, the team has provided invaluable strategic and practical support, including access to an experienced board observer, expert guidance on grant funding applications, introductions to investor networks, participation in investor pitch events, and a comprehensive business review through their Accelerate programme... Through opportunities facilitated by LYVA Labs, Medcotec has successfully secured an oversubscribed seed funding round and substantial grant funding, both of which have been instrumental in accelerating our growth."

Spotlight Pathology develops AI tools to support faster, more accurate diagnosis of complex blood cancers. LYVA Labs first invested in Spotlight Pathology in July 2024 across two funding rounds, providing support that helped the company relocate to Sci-Tech Daresbury and secure a £0.9m Innovate UK grant.

Building on this momentum, Spotlight Pathology went on to raise a £1.4m seed round in January 2026 alongside Liverpool Seed Fund, AXM Capital, Deepbridge Capital, River Capital, UKI2S and EHE Startup Factory. The funding is supporting the commercialisation of Spotlight's AI tools and will create six new jobs in the Liverpool City Region.



Samantha Perona

CEO, Spotlight Pathology

"We have been working with LYVA Labs now for 2 years and have found all members of the team to be engaged and supportive in our journey. The team has helped us to access grants, showcase Spotlight Pathology and connected us directly to suitable investors for our next raise. Thank you to the team at LYVA Labs; it's a pleasure to be part of your portfolio".

Backing University of Liverpool spinouts

We work closely with the University of Liverpool and the wider innovation ecosystem to support the commercialisation of research-led ideas.

As an active investor in university spinouts, we support the journey from breakthrough research to market adoption. This includes support to test commercial assumptions, build investable propositions, access specialist networks and secure the funding needed to progress from laboratory innovation to real-world application.



Explore our Investment portfolio

A landmark year for investment spinout success stories:

Invested £615k into 4 UoL spin-outs

Helping accelerate innovation and growth.

£4.3m in follow-on investment and grant funding unlocked

Providing hands-on portfolio support and successful grant applications.

Helping researchers become founders

Prepared founders for investment and connected them with national investors through Demo Days.

Emma Nolan

Head of Enterprise Team, University of Liverpool



"Successful spinouts require more than great research. They need entrepreneurial support, investment and strong industry connections. The University of Liverpool works closely with partners such as LYVA Labs, whose venture-building and investment expertise complements the work of the University's Enterprise Team. As the gateway for academics exploring commercialisation and venture creation, Liverpool Enterprise helps transform research into high-growth businesses. Together with LYVA Labs, we are strengthening Liverpool's innovation ecosystem and helping the most promising ventures scale and deliver economic and societal value."

Harry Chrimes

Investment Manager, LYVA Labs



"The University of Liverpool produces world-class research that can translate into commercially viable businesses capable of delivering economic and societal impact. We provide founders with the investment, commercial support and networks they need to move from promising research to scalable ventures, helping ensure high-potential innovation is developed and retained here in Liverpool."

Spinout investment

Plasma Fresh is advancing cold plasma sterilisation technology that helps producers of high-value, delicate goods decontaminate products more efficiently, while cutting energy use and downtime.

In June 2025, LYVA Labs co-invested in Plasma Fresh's £1m seed round alongside Northern Gritstone's NG Studios and Deepbridge Capital, with additional funding from Innovate UK.

The funding will support product development, commercial pilots, team growth and further R&D to expand the platform's applications.



Mike Lodge
CEO, Plasma Fresh

"LYVA Labs recognised both the scientific strength of the technology and the opportunity to build a commercially valuable spin-out from it. Investment has been critical to our development. It has supported product development, technical validation, IP development, customer engagement and the transition from academic research into a more commercially focused business."

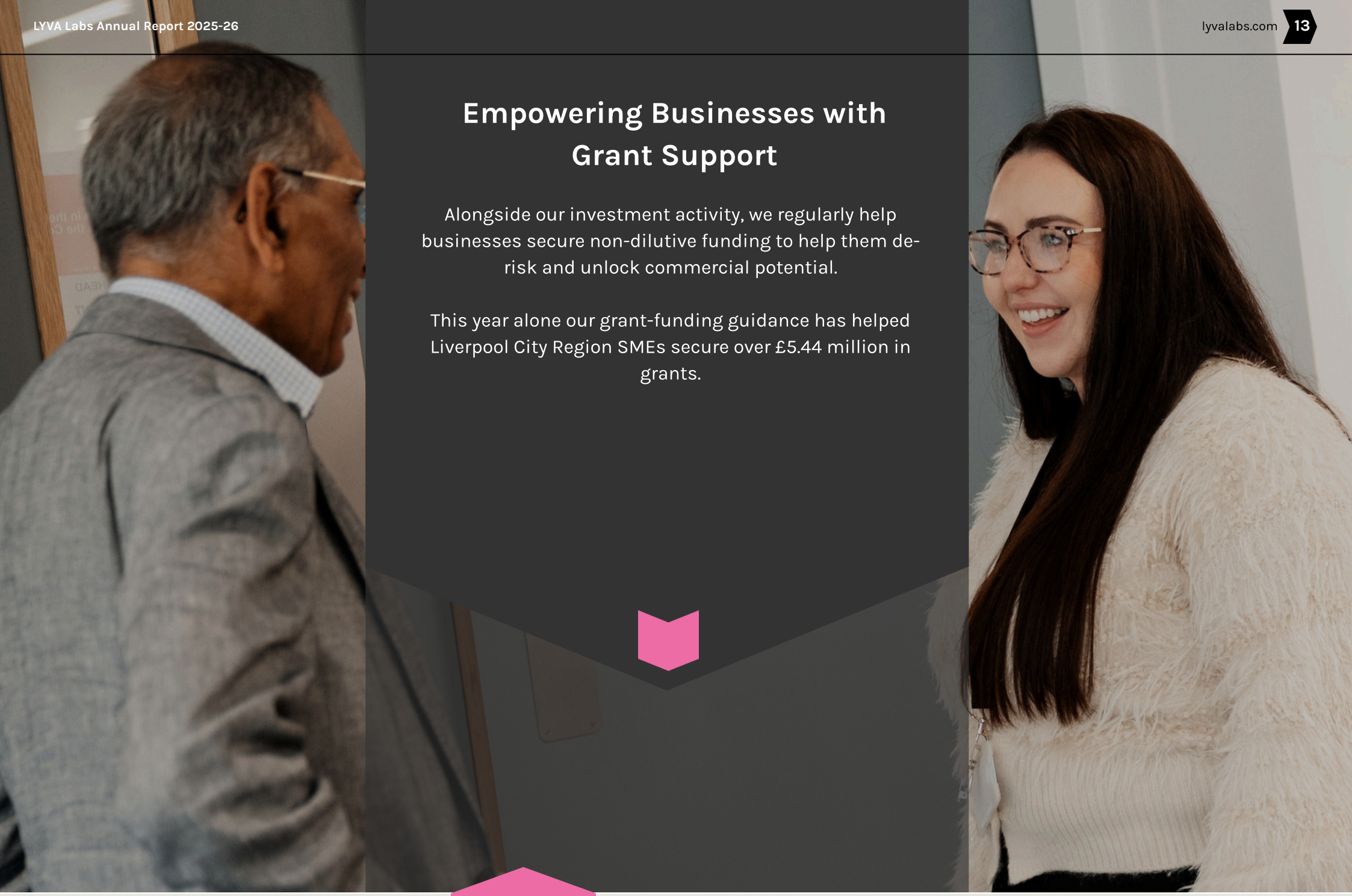


Rania Maklad
CEO, OCUWELL

"We are delighted to have secured this investment to support us on our journey to democratise access to quality eye care. OCUTOP® was developed in response to a direct request from the market, and the team has worked tirelessly to deliver the initial vision. We are looking forward to the next phase of our journey and to delivering the planned pipeline of products."

OCUWELL Ltd, a pioneering eye-care technology company and University of Liverpool spin-out, received investment in August 2025 from LYVA Labs, alongside the University of Liverpool, Deepbridge Capital and Northern Gritstone.

The funding has supported the commercialisation of its corneal topography system, combining the OCUTOP® handheld imaging device and OCUGRAPH® analysis software. Built on more than 25 years of research by Professor Ahmed Elsheikh, the technology aims to expand access to high-quality eye diagnostics and improve patient care worldwide.



Empowering Businesses with Grant Support

Alongside our investment activity, we regularly help businesses secure non-dilutive funding to help them de-risk and unlock commercial potential.

This year alone our grant-funding guidance has helped Liverpool City Region SMEs secure over £5.44 million in grants.

Rachel Lawless
Innovation Growth & Funding Manager



"It has been a privilege to support so many local businesses on their innovation journeys, helping them secure the funding needed to accelerate commercialisation and growth. The responsiveness and drive demonstrated by the companies we work with have been key to their success. We are incredibly proud of what has been achieved over the past year and look forward to helping even more businesses access the funding they need."

Grant Support

Over the past year, we have continued to help LCR businesses and institutions secure grant funding from a range of sources. As competition for grants has intensified, our role has been to identify relevant funding opportunities and guide innovators through the process, strengthening applications, helping to secure funding that enables growth, accelerates development and builds the region's innovation capability.

The result is a year of funding wins:

In 2025-26

£5.44m

grants secured for LCR SMEs

plantsea
HARKER
tou
haptiv8
respiosa
GUTSEE
GUILFORD STREET Laboratories
Plasma Fresh
Plasma2X
edcotec

Development of PD Predict™ for Parkinson's Disease

The impact of this support is best seen through the projects it has helped move forward. One example is **Guildford Street Laboratories'** PD Predict™ programme, where grant funding is enabling a promising diagnostic innovation to progress from scientific development towards clinical validation and real-world healthcare use.

Supported by a £2.17m NIHR Invention for Innovation (i4i) Product Development Award, Guildford Street Laboratories in partnership with the UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and LYVA Labs, is advancing PD Predict™, a blood-based prognostic test for Parkinson's disease. The project aims to:

- Clinically validate PD Predict™ and prepare it for integration into healthcare practice.
- Support earlier, more accurate diagnosis of Parkinson's disease once the test is validated and regulated.
- Help improve care pathways for patients and clinicians by moving precision diagnostics closer to standard practice in neurology.

The programme shows how grant funding can connect clinical need, academic expertise and innovation delivery.



Antony Shimmin
COO, GSL

"Rachel's contribution to the bid writing process proved instrumental in securing the grant, her ability to help convey our ideas and ambitions to the reviewers really helped shape the successful submission, in the project delivery phase Rachel has allowed the team to focus on the innovation whilst ensuring our contractual and reporting obligations are met with the monitoring officer".

LYVA Labs supported the successful £2.17 million, three-year grant application and has managed programme delivery since December 2025.



Providing the connections, funding, and commercial advice to drive success

LYVA Labs programmes and services - including our Incubator, Accelerate and R&D partnership grants - provide tailored support for businesses and organisations at every stage and scale. Through expert partner introductions, follow-on funding support, and commercial strategy guidance, we help turn innovative ideas into new business growth.





Joe Cooke,
LYVA Labs Client Services Manager

Funded by UK Government

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"LYVA Labs programme and service offerings have been able to deliver with even greater scale and impact in the last 12 months. Securing funding through the Life Science Innovation Zone has enabled us to continue evolving our Incubator programme, extend our support for later stage startups with the Accelerate programme, and build an annual Demo Day showcase that is now attracting investors from across the UK.

That is alongside our continuing consultancy and grant support for more established SMEs in the Liverpool City Region. The number of projects converting into successful innovation partnerships and transformative growth engines for those businesses has been extremely encouraging to see."

LYVA Labs programmes and services are all driving towards the same outcome – helping businesses achieve greater success in commercialising their innovation.

Each offering is carefully tailored for the stage and scale of the businesses it serves. Core to LYVA Labs' approach is the level of bespoke support provided. Every business that works with us has a dedicated commercial advisor, matched based on their expertise. They provide hands-on business support, constructive challenge and network introductions to unlock new opportunities.

Who our programmes and services are for, and how they're designed for growth

Incubator: For early-stage startups with a prototype stage innovation. The Incubator provides intensive 1:1 commercial and investment guidance, alongside core venture-building modules such as finance, brand, sales, and IP.

Accelerate: For later-stage start-ups with an MVP ready for market. Accelerate conducts deep-dive diagnostics to uncover the key barriers to commercialisation and matches specialist advisors to close the gaps.

R&D Partnerships: For established SMEs looking to develop new products and services. Up to £15k match-funded grants for use with external experts, helping to de-risk and accelerate the development of their innovation projects and determine how best to support new business growth.



Matt Wicks
General Manager, Doorstore Wirral Ltd.

"The world around us is changing quickly, and we want to make sure Doorstore changes with it. With the support of LYVA Labs, this project is helping us explore new ways of serving customers while preserving the personal service, expertise and local trust that have always been central to our business."

R&D Partnership Grants: Unlocking new business model exploration

Helping Independent Retail Adapt to a Changing World

Doorstore is an established independent doors and windows retailer operating in a rapidly changing retail environment. Customers continue to value the opportunity to see, touch and compare products before making important home-improvement decisions - but increasingly expect the convenience and accessibility of digital retail.

Through the R&D Partnerships fund, Doorstore has collaborated with specialist partners to investigate new approaches to the showroom and customer experience - examining how physical product displays, digital visualisation and more self-directed ways of accessing information can be combined to create a more flexible, customer-led buying journey.

LYVA Labs support and funding has enabled Doorstore to test and develop ideas that would have been difficult for a small business to explore alongside day-to-day operations: examining customer needs, assessing potential technologies and considering how a digitally enabled retail experience can complement - not replace - the reassurance and expertise of showroom staff.

The project is providing valuable evidence for future investment and helping Doorstore understand how independent retailers can respond to changing customer expectations while preserving the trust, local knowledge and personal service that set them apart.

Funded by UK Government

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Helping Insecticide Spray Teams Get It Right First Time

iiDiagnostics, a subsidiary of Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, is developing a handheld device designed to improve indoor residual spraying (IRS) programmes used to prevent diseases such as malaria. In many countries, trained teams spray insecticide onto the inside walls of homes to reduce the spread of disease-carrying insects. To be effective, the correct amount of insecticide must be applied. Too little can reduce protection, while too much wastes valuable resources and increases costs.

Currently, verifying spray coverage can be slow and costly: samples are sent to labs for analysis, delaying results and preventing issues being identified during spraying campaigns.

iiDiagnostics is developing the IRS-Sensor to simplify this process. Held against a treated wall, the device provides a near-instant result, with a colour-coded indicator for the level of insecticide (too low, too high or in range). Designed for field use, it allows spray teams to check coverage in real time.

The R&D Partnerships fund provided £15,000 for iiDiagnostics to work with local experts DefProc Engineering to advance the technology towards commercial deployment. Five near-production devices of a refined design will be produced for field trials planned in Southeast Asia in early 2027.

By helping iiDiagnostics move from prototype to product, the R&D Partnerships fund is supporting an innovation that will improve quality control, reduce waste and strengthen the effectiveness of disease prevention programmes worldwide.

Funded by UK Government

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Professor Patryk Kot
Head of the Infection Innovation Technology Laboratory (iiTECH) at iiCON

“The R&D Partner Fund has enabled iiDiagnostics to advance the development of this innovative sensor tool which will help to save and improve lives. We’re delighted to have worked with the LYVA Labs team on this project, which harnesses regional innovation and capability to benefit communities globally and we look forward to moving to the next stage of development, which will involve validating the product in the field.”

Incubator Programme

LYVA Labs' Incubator is a six-month LCR Innovation Zone business support programme for early-stage businesses across the Liverpool City Region, with a focus on health & life sciences, clean tech for health and deep tech.

To date, the programme has supported 18 start-ups and spinouts with tailored investment and business development support. This includes up to £25k investment on day one, one-to-one mentoring in grant writing, business planning and pitching, access to resources and expertise through our talent programme and mentor network, cohort learning sessions, and an investor demo day.

Graduates of the programme leave with a clear route to market. Many have gone on to secure competitive grant funding and attract follow-on venture capital investment – with up to £250k in matched funding available at the discretion of our investment committee. Companies supported through the programme have so far raised £2.93m in co-investment, and £1.87m in grant funding.





Rebecca Leche

CEO, TOU App

"LYVA Labs has been at the coal face, having to not only keep us on track, but to help us find the track. We are so grateful to them for their help and expertise over the last few months. LYVA Labs provided a sounding board, an expert eye on the needs of an investor, indeed, all stakeholder needs, and the ability to provide solutions to close any gaps, all with a personal touch and a genuine desire for our success."



Rob Sims

CEO, Sum Vivas

"From day one, the energy around the cohort was positive, practical, and forward-looking. There was never any fluff; LYVA Labs focused on what would actually move the dial for our business, whether that was sharpening the proposition, challenging assumptions, or opening doors to the right people. Most importantly, I always felt LYVA Labs were in our corner. I'm proud to say we've been part of the LYVA Labs Incubator, and I'm looking forward to staying connected as we grow."

2025-26 Incubator companies

Accelerate Programme

LYVA Labs launched its LCR Innovation Zone Accelerate programme in September 2025, extending our support for early-stage founders across the Liverpool City Region beyond the six-month Incubator model. Accelerate is for founders who are ready to commercialise their innovations, with a continued focus on health and life sciences and deep tech.

Nine companies joined our inaugural cohort in September 2025. Each worked through one-to-one commercialisation advice, using the Triple Chasm® framework to identify gaps across engineering, investment, and commercial readiness, and were matched with specialist advisors and investors to help close those gaps.

A clinician-led pivot driving rapid expansion

Wellbeing Doctors joined Accelerate as part of Cohort 1. The company's product, Helfy®, delivers wellbeing workshops and doctor-advised health and wellbeing blood tests to employees of client companies.

Our diagnostic work identified a key growth opportunity: a clinician-facing version of the product. To support the pivot, we funded a regulatory consultancy to help Wellbeing Doctors achieve Class 1 medical device certification.

Since then, the company has integrated with 11 UK clinics, won the Isle of Man Innovation Challenge, and advanced towards healthcare system integration in the Isle of Man. Now a certified clinical health tech company, Wellbeing Doctors is exploring an R&D collaboration and platform redesign to enhance its product and support the next stage of growth.

Watch the full interview with Wellbeing Doctors here.

The Wellbeing Doctors™



Dr Edward Lynch

CEO, helfy®

"LYVA Labs' support helped us identify an opportunity beyond our existing corporate offering. The regulatory guidance was central to our progress, without Class I certification, engagement with a national healthcare system would not have been possible."

With a second cohort confirmed for 2026, LYVA Labs' focus is on establishing Accelerate as a permanent part of its business support offer alongside the Incubator programme. The ambition is for Accelerate to become the natural next step for Incubator graduates to get closer to market, creating a seamless pathway from early-stage support to investment-ready growth across the Liverpool City Region.

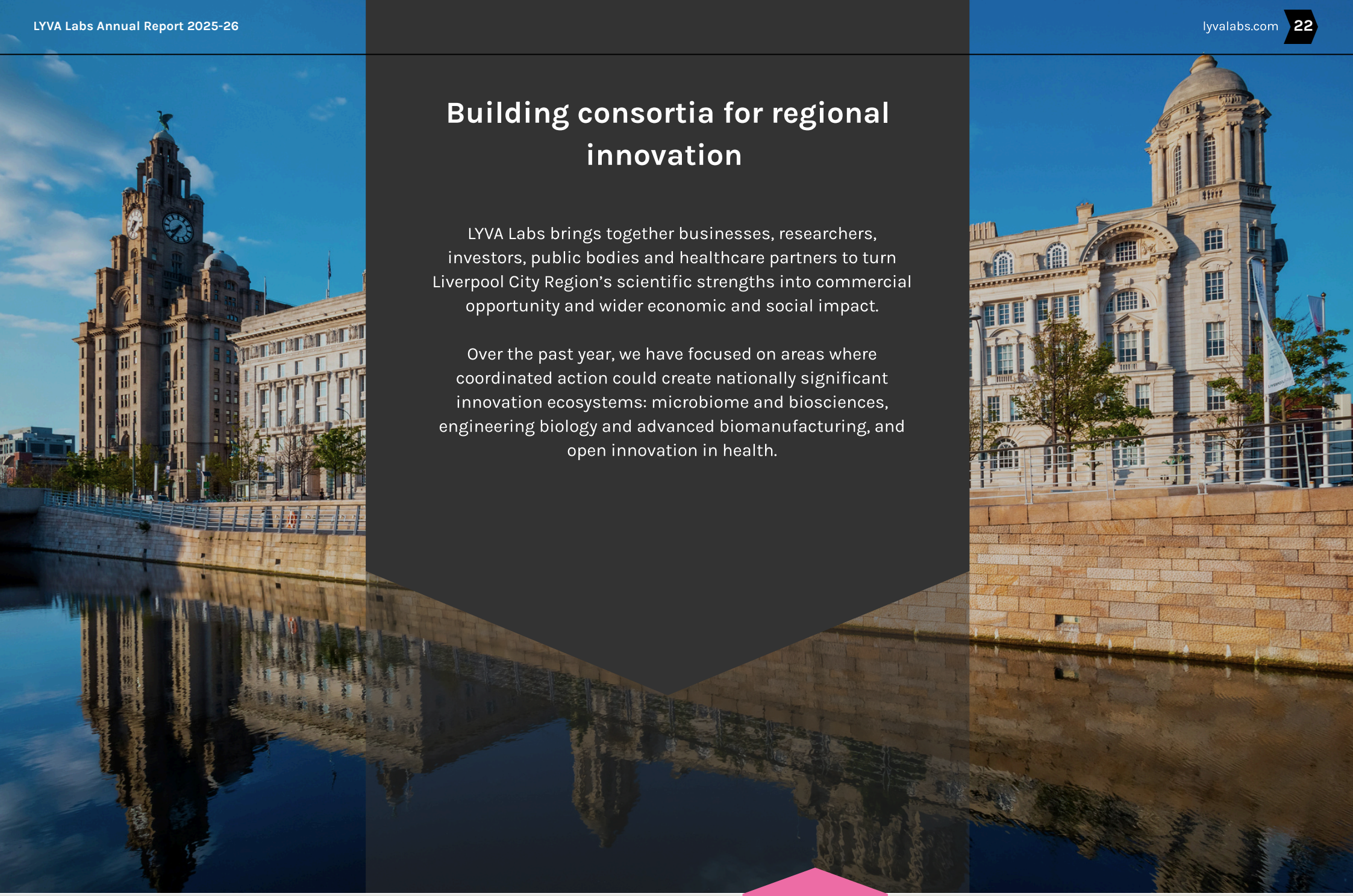


Ike Cooke

Commercial Advisor, LYVA Labs

"It's been incredibly valuable to extend our support beyond the Incubator programme. Through one-to-one commercial support with Accelerate, we can tailor our approach to each business and connect founders with specialist advisors and investors to help close gaps and barriers that businesses face."

Accelerate Programme



Building consortia for regional innovation

LYVA Labs brings together businesses, researchers, investors, public bodies and healthcare partners to turn Liverpool City Region's scientific strengths into commercial opportunity and wider economic and social impact.

Over the past year, we have focused on areas where coordinated action could create nationally significant innovation ecosystems: microbiome and biosciences, engineering biology and advanced biomanufacturing, and open innovation in health.



Farhad Ahmed
Head of Strategic Partnerships

"Place-based innovation has risen in prominence which makes our work developing ecosystems more relevant than ever. From the national conversations I've been having this year, there has been greater interest and recognition of our distinctive approach to unlocking economic growth through scientific innovation."

Developing and enhancing the ecosystem through regional partnerships

LYVA Labs continues to work closely with regional and national partners to turn shared ambitions into practical activity.

In February 2026 we joined the Infection Innovation Consortium (**iiCON**) as a core consortium partner. Working with a global network of almost 1,000 organisations, iiCON enables industry access to world-leading infection R&D facilities and expertise. It has supported 36 new products to market, with over 5 billion units of life-saving products and treatments reaching communities across the world.

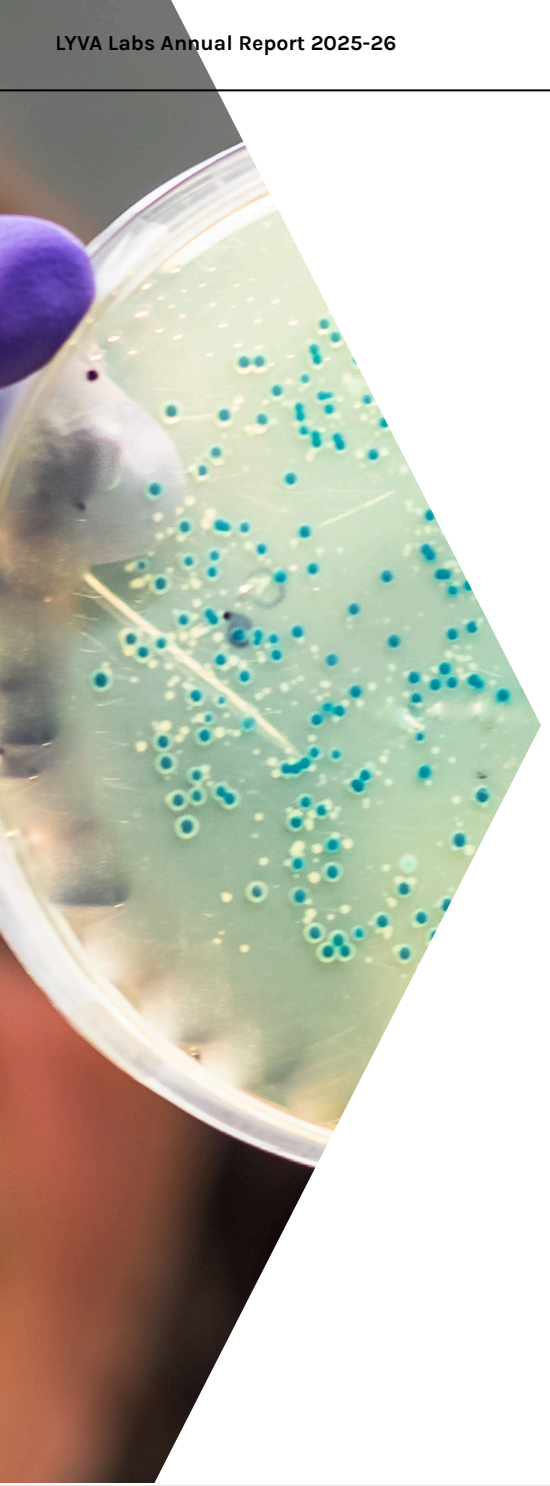
Under the new agreement, the two organisations will pool knowledge and resources to deliver key programmes of activity to strengthen innovation-led growth across the Liverpool City Region, nationally and globally, including our work to explore new opportunities in microbiome.



iiCON
infection innovation consortium

Professor Janet Hemingway
iiCON Founding Director

"LYVA Labs has had an incredible impact on the Liverpool City Region since it launched four years ago — playing an important role in expanding and strengthening the regional ecosystem and scaling innovation-led activity. "iiCON and LYVA Labs have jointly delivered a number of impactful programmes to drive forward innovation-led growth over the years and our organisations benefit from significant synergies. Welcoming LYVA Labs as a core member of our consortium formalises this partnership."



From microbiome research to commercial opportunity

Funded by **iiCON** and **UKRI**, we engaged over 130 stakeholders from industry, research, healthcare, government, regulators and investors to inform the platforms, industry partnerships and translational infrastructure needed to convert world-class science into commercial and societal impact. The Microbiome Discovery to Commercialisation report provides a comprehensive assessment of the region's microbiome assets, capabilities, commercialisation challenges. It highlights growth opportunities and setting out practical recommendations for developing a more connected cluster.



Steve Paterson

FRSB Professor of Genetics, Centre for Genomic Research, NERC Environmental Omics Facility and Microbiome Innovation Centre, Institute of Infection, Veterinary and Ecological Sciences

"The LYVA Labs team has been invaluable in understanding the potential for the new science of microbiomes to deliver new products, commercial opportunities and investment in the region. We hope to create a multi-partner and multi-sector innovation ecosystem and LYVA Labs will be essential in bringing that together."

Building an advanced biomanufacturing proposition

LYVA Labs has also worked with regional and national partners to strengthen the evidence base for a coordinated regional approach to engineering biology and advanced biomanufacturing.

Working with partners including **Croda, LSTM, the University of Liverpool, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the University of Manchester**, we have mapped relevant capabilities and explored opportunities spanning bioprocessing, biologics, clinical trial material, cell therapies and commercial-scale manufacturing, helping define where LCR can compete and where further collaboration and investment are needed.

Open Innovation for Health and Inclusive Growth

We continue our work with **Liverpool Health Partners and Health Innovation North West Coast**, connecting healthcare expertise, innovators and industry around opportunities to improve health outcomes, address inequalities and attract investment. Our long-term ambition is to build a practical, system-wide innovation open-innovation approach and to establish trusted collaborations with industry and entrepreneurs to improve the health of our population and reduce pressures in our care systems.



Discover more about BRITE

LYVA Labs' work to strengthen Liverpool City Region's biologics ecosystem and improve the commercialisation of scientific innovation led to our invitation to join BRITE: the Biologics Regional Innovation Technology Ecosystem. Led by Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, BRITE is a three-year collaborative programme funded with £4.74 million from Research England.

BRITE Programme

BRITE is a cross-sector partnership launched in mid-2025 to build critical biologics manufacturing capacity in the Liverpool City Region. It brings together academic, industry and civic partners to address facility and capability gaps, support the scale-up of new therapies, and strengthen the regional biomanufacturing ecosystem.

By supporting locally developed therapeutics and diagnostics, BRITE aims to improve health outcomes while also creating skilled jobs and contributing to economic growth across the region.

LYVA Labs led on creating a comprehensive map of the regional biologics ecosystem, covering discovery, development and manufacturing capacity across the Liverpool City Region. This included industry and SME engagement, reviews, user interviews and process mapping, alongside assessments of BRITE Higher Education Providers' biologics capacity, capability and assets.

The findings have informed discussions on the potential for cluster development, building on key regional strengths in research and biomanufacturing to exploit rapidly expanding market opportunities.

In 2026, LYVA Labs will launch the BRITE pre-spin-out incubator to support academics to assess the commercial opportunities emerging from their research, explore routes to market, and develop translational pathways for promising biologics innovations. Through this support, academic teams will build the commercial awareness and investment readiness needed to progress ideas beyond research and towards scalable products, services and therapies.

The first cohort will include researchers from the **University of Liverpool, Liverpool John Moores University and Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine**. Projects span innovative biologics for contact lens therapeutics, enhanced antiviral and antifungal monoclonal antibodies, a vaccine for river blindness, milk-derived antibody therapeutics, a DNA nanoparticle vaccine platform for cancer therapy, and monoclonal antibody therapeutics for snakebites.

Future Medicines Accelerator

Funded by Innovate UK, The Future Medicines Accelerator was designed to support early-stage companies developing innovations within the future medicines and radiopharmaceuticals sectors.

Following the award in August, we onboarded 33 companies in November 2025 through a pre-accelerator supported by programme partners, Bionow, Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, Medicines Discovery Catapult, UK National Nuclear Laboratory, Microbiome Innovation Centre, Infection Innovation Consortium and Future Medicines Institute.

17 of these companies progressed to the full Accelerator programme, where founders received tailored support, technical expertise and funded project opportunities to strengthen their innovations, validate market potential and prepare for investment and grant funding.

The programme concluded in Liverpool in March 2026 with a pitch bootcamp that included industry insights and pitch feedback from AstraZeneca, investment workshops led by the LYVA Labs investment team and an investor dinner, followed by a final Demo Day for the companies to pitch for investment, attended by investors, programme partners and sector leaders.

The programme demonstrated the strength of the UK life sciences ecosystem, helping innovative companies accelerate growth and unlock new funding opportunities.

Four months after the programme, the cohort has continued to demonstrate strong impact, including:

£170,000 in additional grant funding leveraged

18 jobs created

£23,516,500 in investment secured



Wider Activity

Making a difference beyond our core work: A taste of wider activity from the LYVA Labs team during 2025-26:

Supporting regional talent, contributing to our communities, investing in local businesses, championing regional strengths, continuously learning and developing, and working alongside like-minded partners to achieve more together.



Talent Programme

The Talent Programme supports young people throughout the year by developing innovation skills, broadening awareness of career opportunities, and inspiring the next generation of talent. Delivered as part of our commitment to strengthening the region's future workforce, the programme achieved several key milestones this year:

- **Experience the Workplace:** In June 2025, LYVA Labs partnered with All About Futures to deliver innovation and entrepreneurship workshops to more than 100 students. The sessions introduced participants to key skills, entrepreneurial mindsets, and career pathways within the innovation sector.
- **University of Liverpool School of Biosciences:** Students took part in a healthcare innovation competition designed to develop creative problem-solving and collaborative working skills. The winning team was awarded a one-week placement at the University, providing valuable hands-on experience in a real-world environment.
- **Hooper Quinn Student Incubator Competition:** This initiative encouraged entrepreneurial thinking and innovation among students. The winning participant received a £2,500 prize, along with ongoing mentoring and support from Hooper Quinn and LYVA Labs to help develop their idea.
- **KQ Futures:** Through a series of engagement sessions, the programme inspired young people and highlighted opportunities within innovation-led industries. In addition, LYVA Labs hosted an intern for a three-week placement, providing practical experience and valuable insight into potential career pathways.

Codi Ellis

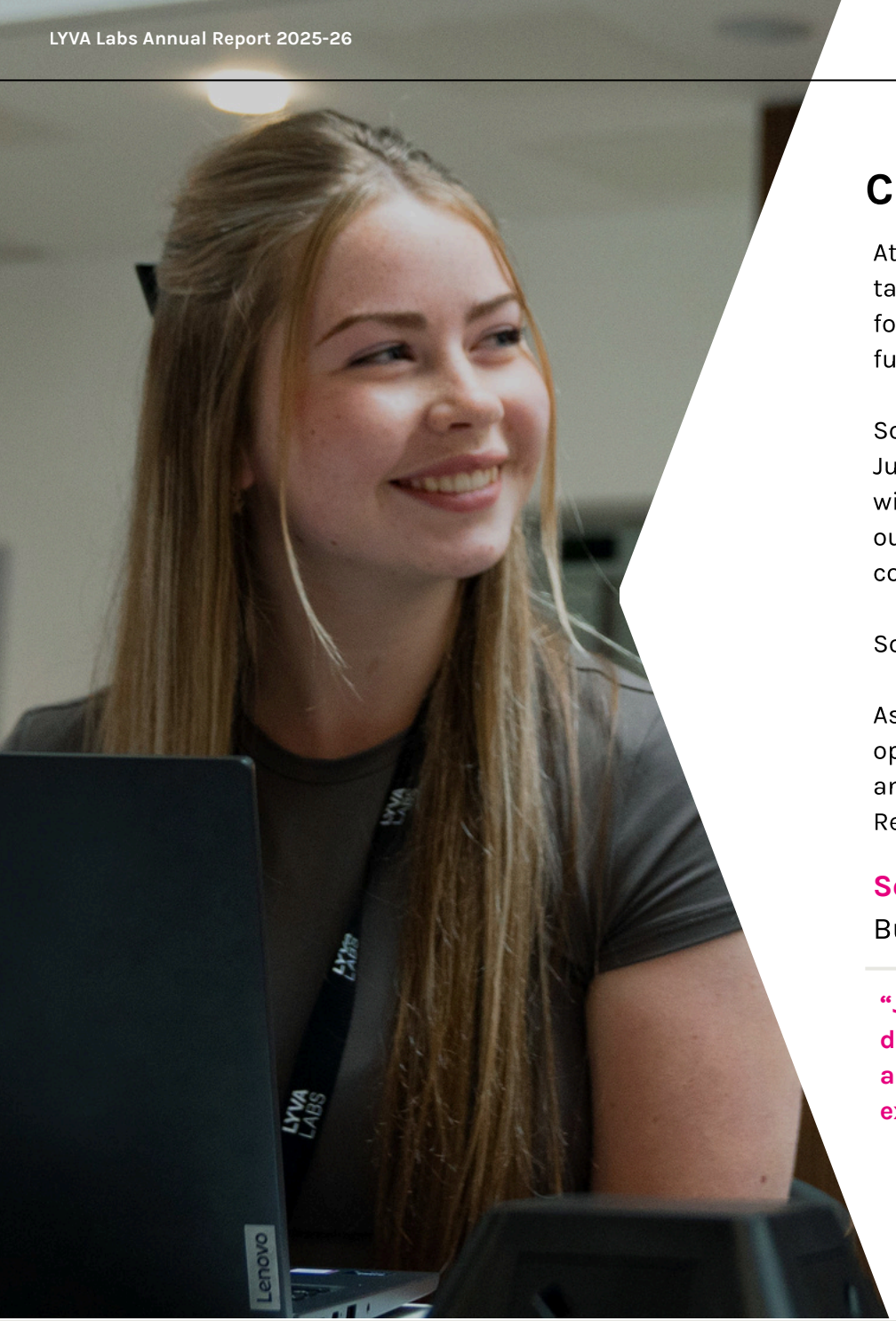
Skills Project Coordinator at KQ Liverpool

"LYVA Labs have been a fantastic partner on the KQ Futures programme, inspiring our young people to think differently about their futures and what is possible. Their sessions have helped students develop entrepreneurial skills, creativity, teamwork and confidence, while showing them that there is no one path to a successful career".

18 work experience opportunities created between April 2025 and March 2026.

375 young people engaged through events and innovation workshops.

More than 100 students reached through Experience the Workplace in June 2025.



Creating Opportunities Through Apprenticeships

At LYVA Labs, we recognise the important role apprenticeships play in developing future talent. They provide an opportunity for individuals to gain practical experience alongside formal learning, while helping employers develop the talented workforce needed for the future.

Sophie Duke joined LYVA Labs as a 17-year-old Apprentice Business Administrator in June 2025 through an apprenticeship delivered by Northwest Education and Training, with support from the Liverpool City Region Employer Brokerage Service. Since joining our organisation, Sophie has developed professionally while making a valuable contribution to our day-to-day operations.

Sophie is on track to complete her apprenticeship in August 2026.

As the Talent Programme grows, we remain committed to developing talent by creating opportunities for young people and strengthening links between education, innovation and industry, helping more students stay, develop and thrive in the Liverpool City Region.

Sophie Duke

Business Administrator at LYVA Labs

“Joining LYVA Labs through an apprenticeship has given me the opportunity to develop valuable skills and grow in confidence. Completing my apprenticeship alongside my role has allowed me to continue my studies while gaining workplace experience and to apply what I learn in my role.”

Entrepreneur Club

In September 2025, in direct response to feedback from our alumni, which highlighted a clear need for ongoing support from the LYVA Labs team, we launched the **LYVA Labs Entrepreneur Club,** bringing together alumni from across our programmes and portfolio for quarterly events designed to address the real challenges founders face as they grow their businesses. Each session combines expert-led workshops with practical, actionable advice, ensuring founders leave with clear next steps that matter to investors and customers.

Our first session focused on becoming grant-ready, equipping alumni with the knowledge and tools needed to develop strong, competitive funding applications. **Led by LYVA Labs CEO, Lorna Green,** the **masterclass** covered identifying funding opportunities, strengthening applications and avoiding common pitfalls. Participants then took part in a hands-on workshop with LYVA Labs advisors, using a grant application template to refine work packages, identify potential partners and enhance their proposals through tailored one-to-one support. The second masterclass, delivered by **Mark Errington** moves on to developing a go-to-market strategy to drive customer acquisition and commercial traction.

Future sessions will cover topics including partnerships and collaboration, scaling, founder burnout, project management, sales pitching, and investor readiness. We are also exploring opportunities to expand the Club through networking events and founder mixers, creating even more opportunities for collaboration, knowledge sharing and peer support across the LYVA Labs community.



Yearly Highlights

A look back at the standout moments, milestones and successes we celebrated across the year, showcasing the strength of innovation across the Liverpool City Region.



Innovation Zone Delivery

Starting the year on a high: on the **1st April 2025** Liverpool City Region Combined Authority approved £4.24m of Innovation Zone funding for a new business support programme, Innovate, Grow, Accelerate and Partner (IGAP), led by LYVA Labs. The five-year initiative will help early-stage and scaling businesses to develop and commercialise cutting-edge health and life sciences technologies.

Delivered through three workstreams – Incubator, Accelerator, and the Challenge Fund – IGAP will plug gaps in early-stage investment, providing vital technical, financial, and business support for local start-ups, spinouts, and SMEs.



Haptiv8 was an Innovation Award Winner at the Paediatric Health Innovation Sprint 2025

On the 3rd April 2025, our portfolio saw another fantastic win as Nicki Allen, CEO of Haptiv8, received the Innovation Award at the Paediatric Health Innovation Sprint 2025.

The sprint, organised by NIHR Health Tech Research Centre Paediatrics and Child Health, Health Tech Enterprise, the University of Cambridge and Cambridge University Hospitals, gave each innovator access to experts in IP, regulation, MedTech and industry. The experience helped shape Haptiv8's business strategy, route to market, commercialisation and IP approach.

Yearly Highlights



Tech Climbers 2025

2025 Tech Climbers celebrated the top-performing, product-led tech businesses making an impact across the region and many LYVA Labs clients and portfolio companies were once again recognised for both their potential and growth.

We were especially pleased to see MyCardium AI, a developer of diagnostic cardiac AI technology, scored the highest in the innovation category. Moreover, portfolio company Heatio, a data-driven home energy management technology company, came out on top in the impact category.



Liverpool City Region Innovation Investment Summit 2025

LCR Innovation Investment Fortnight continues to grow as an annual showcase of the distinctive approaches, world-leading assets, and £2bn investment opportunities that put the Liverpool City Region at the UK forefront of place-based innovation. This year's summit event was held on 15th October. Hosted by LYVA Labs Chairman Steve Stuart, the summit championed the region's ambition to become a UK innovation powerhouse. Lorna Green, CEO, also led a panel discussion with the vice-chancellors from the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University.

A real highlight was the keynote from Jaspreet Grewal, a global life sciences expert and Board Member of the Canada-UK Chamber of Commerce. Drawing on nearly two decades of experience across healthcare, life sciences and venture capital, Jaspreet shared valuable insights on how innovation ecosystems can grow, connect and thrive.

Yearly Highlights



LYVA Labs Demo Day

On 13th November 2025, we delivered our annual Demo Day at Hope Street Hotel, Liverpool, showcasing exciting early-stage businesses from across the Liverpool City Region.

The event brought together investors, partners and founders, highlighting the region's innovation ecosystem and the progress of start-ups supported by LYVA Labs.

Networking sessions helped attendees explore collaboration, funding and commercial opportunities.



Bionow Outstanding Contribution Award

The **2025 Bionow Awards** dinner took place on 5th March 2026 at the Concorde Conference Centre, bringing together leaders and innovators from across the life sciences sector to celebrate outstanding achievement.

We were proud to see our CEO, Lorna Green, win the Bionow Outstanding Contribution Award, recognising more than two decades of support for the life sciences sector and her continued impact across the Liverpool City Region ecosystem.

We were also delighted to see portfolio company **Spotlight Pathology** win the Bionow Technical Service Award.

LYVA LABS

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