

Theme:

techUK have been working with the Midlands to understand and improve digital innovation and develop the digital tech sector

Area of Focus:

Digital capital, the building blocks of the digital ecosystem, as key to post-pandemic recovery, but there needs to be greater understanding of the current situation

Key Findings:

Local Digital Capital allows for the development of strong clusters that deliver growth and better digital services to communities across the UK. But to do that, businesses, local authorities, and the tech sector need to understand what is available. techUK's Local Digital Capital Index, launched by West Midlands Combined Authority Mayor, Andy Street, will help businesses to understand core metrics about the digital infrastructure in the region.

This is the result of numerous discussions with leading tech and local government representatives about how digital can support recovery. The West Midlands had a report produced as one of the eight devolved nations or regions that examined the state of Local Digital Capital, and how each aspect can be improved. The eight inputs that make a strong Local Digital Capital are:

- Digital Skills
- Digital Adoption
- Data Ecosystems
- Digital Infrastructure
- Finance & Investment
- Research & Innovation
- Trade Support

The report focuses most on skills, adoption, finance & investment and collaboration & coordination.



Midlands Engine Impact:

- Although the report and work focuses on the West Midlands and other devolved authorities, the learning gained from the report and the implementation of recommendations can be applied across the whole Midlands area.
- The Midlands Engine region has notable academic expertise in digital skills and data analysis. Academics can support and inform the development of better digital infrastructure, research, innovation, and even investment and ecosystems.
- The roll out of 5G, significant tech hubs including Birmingham and Telford, a young population, significant digital health and tech startups, and COVID recovery makes the Midlands an ideal place to develop digital capital.

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