

23 November 2017

VitalSix confirms major new partnership to drive innovation in the Thames Valley

[Innovation Catalyst](#) is a collaboration between [VitalSix](#), specialists in supporting businesses to scale up, and [Thames Valley Science Park](#) supported by [Barclays Eagle Labs](#)

Together with VitalSix, through their support of Innovation Catalyst Thames Valley Science Park (TVSP) and Barclays are helping entrepreneurs to take flight and grow the Reading and Thames Valley entrepreneurial business community

Innovation Catalyst launches formally in March 2018. Open innovation and intensive Accelerator programmes will be delivered, designed to shape and scale the next generation of Reading and Thames Valley businesses, with access to extensive resources including expert mentoring. The first sixteen week Accelerator will be supported by Barclays and applications will be accepted soon.

A 60 seat co-working space at TVSP's new Shinfield campus Reading, supported by Barclays Eagle Labs, will be an integral part of a comprehensive offer to innovators. This shared space is to encourage collaboration and foster innovation among Reading and the Thames Valley's entrepreneurial business community. Reading is the fifteenth Eagle Lab Barclays has opened, after success in locations such as Bournemouth, Salford, London and Cambridge.

The partnership aims to take advantage of its location in one of Europe's largest tech cluster and knowledge bases drawn from more than 8,000 technology-led companies in the region, and in doing so, provide Thames Valley start-up and scale-up communities a crucial boost.

Susan Elliott, Managing Director of VitalSix Ltd said: "Innovation Catalyst was founded to make a difference in helping to bring to life new ideas and support scale up businesses to go further, faster. Reading and Thames Valley is thriving with a booming start-up scene driven by ambitious independent entrepreneurs, and we work with businesses of all sizes and at all stages of growth from early stage through to large corporates. We are therefore delighted to secure this partnership with TVSP and Barclays Eagle Labs and look forward to combining great ideas and ensuring that the right expertise and sources of funding are available on the doorstep."

Stephen Grenfell, Barclays' Area Business Manager, for Reading and Thames Valley said: "We're pleased to be partnering with Innovation Catalyst to deliver our Accelerator programme which creates a platform for experimentation with entrepreneurs, to build new products, services and platforms. The Eagle Lab will take our relationship with local entrepreneurs one step further, providing them with access to our specialist high growth team, and the tools and resources that will help them grow. We're committed to this customer-focused approach, so that businesses are able to innovate at scale and we look forward to working with Innovation Catalyst and the first cohort of entrepreneurs starting in February 2018."

David Gillham, Executive Director of Thames Valley Science Park said: *“The Thames Valley is renowned internationally as a centre for innovation and knowledge companies. As a partner in Innovation Catalyst, Thames Valley Science Park shares the vision to create a much needed anchor for innovation; it is the physical centre of a virtual community to bring closer together businesses, the University of Reading, investors, expertise and more. At TVSP we take a supportive, flexible approach; specialist facilities and the dynamic mix of companies already here make this an exciting place for ambitious companies to grow.*

The Innovation Catalyst partnership will bring the additional benefit of access to a national network of Barclays Eagle Labs providing a wealth of opportunities to allow businesses to expand beyond Thames Valley as well welcoming businesses from other locations.

Thames Valley Science Park’s Shinfield Campus is set to become a thriving community of innovation and is ideally situated close to the M4 motorway, with fast links to the recently improved Reading railway station, Heathrow airport and London which gives easy access to customers, supply chains and financial markets.

Those wishing to take part in the Barclays Accelerator programme and find out more about Innovation Catalyst should contact the VitalSix team at hello@vitalsix.co.uk.

www.innovationcatalyst.co.uk

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Notes to Editors

About VitalSix

VitalSix has a long track record of working with the leaders and top teams of high growth companies to more effectively innovate, scale up and secure investment. The VitalSix team has started, grown and sold their own businesses so they have the practical knowledge to help businesses get it right first time. VitalSix has worked with the University of Reading and Henley Business School for many years; we deliver strategic business scale up programmes in partnership with Henley Business School and we are a delivery partner with Henley Business Angels.

As well as working with Barclays to deliver its Accelerator programme, VitalSix is managing Innovation Catalyst to facilitate and coordinate the services brought to the Thames Valley through this partnership.

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About Barclays

Barclays: Barclays is a transatlantic consumer, corporate and investment bank offering products and services across personal, corporate and investment banking, credit cards and wealth management, with a strong presence in our two home markets of the UK and the US. With over 325 years of history and expertise in banking, Barclays operates in over 40 countries and employs approximately 120,000 people. Barclays moves, lends, invests and protects money for customers and clients worldwide.

For further information about Barclays, please visit home.barclays

Eagle Labs: Barclays Eagle Labs are co-working and innovation spaces set up by Barclays to help businesses network, collaborate and grow. There are now thirteen locations across the UK, where entrepreneurs can reside, access mentoring, funding and events. Other locations include Bournemouth, Cambridge, Brighton, Salford and Sheffield. For Barclays Eagle Labs please visit: labs.barclays

For further information on Barclays Eagle Labs, please contact: Julia Husband on [07775 555626](tel:07775555626) or julia.husband@barclays.com

About Thames Valley Science Park

Thames Valley Science Park. The £35 million 'Gateway' building, which is set to complete late this year with tenants moving in from early 2018, will provide 70,000 square foot of space for around 20 companies who are to be the first tenants of the Science Park.

The Thames Valley Science Park will eventually deliver approximately 800,000 square foot of flexible laboratory and office space in a campus style setting designed to encourage collaboration. Once completed, the Science Park will have the potential to provide up to 5,000 new jobs.

The initial investment in the 'Gateway' building includes £30 million from the University of Reading and £5 million from the European Union's European Regional Development Fund.

Over 70 companies have already chosen to locate at TVSP's Whiteknights campus and many more will be located at TVSP's Shinfield campus from January 2018. They represent a diverse range of technologies and sectors from digital media to pioneering medical diagnostics. The University of Reading's investment in TVSP is a key mainstay of a strategy that reinforces the University's vision to ensure graduates are well placed to meet the needs of leading-edge businesses and that its research has relevance and impact to individuals and enterprise growth.

For more information on the Thames Valley Science Park, visit www.tvsp.co.uk

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