

New digital skills centres to be set up in Norfolk and Suffolk in £14.5 million investment

Written by editor

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Four new projects to boost digital skills in Norfolk and Suffolk which involve new education and training centres in Ipswich and Norwich have been announced by New Anglia LEP in a new £14.5 million capital growth funding package.

At the University of Suffolk, a new £6.5 million digital skills & innovation accelerator will be set up as a 'nationally significant' ICT research and training centre with 1,600 sq m of space. Working with BT and the Adastral Park tech cluster, it envisages some 520 new students, 145 apprentices and 36 new jobs. Meanwhile, at City College Norwich a new £6.1 million 'digi-tech factory' (photo, right) will involve a new 2,780 sq m building focused on education, with innovative workshops and IT facilities for some 477 students, 100 new apprentices and local SMEs.

Meanwhile, a £1.6 million digital & technology skills hub at Suffolk New College will serve local SMEs and around 264 new students and 28 new apprentices in a new 462 sq m building near the college's Ipswich campus. A new £440,000 Norfolk & Suffolk Innovation Network will also be set up to focus on Internet of Things technology, creating 75 new jobs.

Paul Winter, chair of the New Anglia Skills Board, said: "Evidence gathered for our digital tech sector skills plan tells us our two counties will need 10,000 new highly skilled workers in the sector by the middle of the next decade. But that number quadruples when you include skilled digital jobs serving other sectors. These projects will help address that need with leading edge resources, whilst also providing the environment for our next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs to thrive."