# **DigiMAKE:** Digital Innovation for SME Manufacturing Ecosystems

**Challenge:** What challenge or problem are you addressing? What is the need for the project?

It has been recognised that there is key failure in the ability of SMEs to commercialise research outcomes and deliver new technologies, products and services to the marketplace. Also, regional differences exist within NWE in terms of innovation potential and economic performance with increasing threats due to global competition in the manufacturing supply chain. The challenge therefore is to strengthen competitive advantage of SMEs within the region, in advanced manufacturing, by developing suitable mechanisms (SME ecosystems) that place collaborative, user-centric, design-led innovation at the core of delivering new products, processes and services.

**Objective of the project:** what your project aims to achieve/change

**DigiMAKE** (Digital Innovation for SME Manufacturing Ecosystems) will develop the region as an exemplar of excellence for manufacturing technologies in terms of SME collaborative R&I strategy, practice, output and impact. This will be achieved through the development of SME Ecosystems across the NWE region facilitated by multidisciplinary knowledge providers, linking innovation leaders with followers, exchanging knowledge and best practice to promote smart and inclusive growth through open innovation processes to cultivate long term innovation in the region.

**Need for transnational cooperation:**

The project will seek to establish a Manufacturing Innovation Roadmap to provide clear success pathways for SMEs operating within the manufacturing sector across the NWE region. Changes in consumer demand, the nature of products, the economics of production, and the economics of the supply chain have led to a fundamental shift in the way companies do business. innovative manufacturing models—distributed small-scale local manufacturing, loosely coupled manufacturing ecosystems, and agile manufacturing—are arising to take advantage of these new opportunities.

Key components will include:

- Provision of an **SME Innovation Platform** to test new R&I approaches such a design, prototyping, testing combined with knowledge sharing, skills development, and access to world class facilities
- **SME Ecosystems:** In the future it will be commonplace that customer or market demands will not be met by a single company but rather individual companies will be surrounded with partner networks, or ecosystems with open data sharing and knowledge exchange. Transnational cooperation through the implementation of appropriate support mechanisms (SME Ecosystems) will be central to the development of such partnerships.
- **Multidisciplinary teams** will be required to develop increasingly complex products. In practice, this will mean developing innovative business models that support new ways of working across multiple regions, with researchers, industry experts and policy-makers and the initiatives that collectively support them.

**What kind of partners you are looking for?:**

- Trade / industry bodies
- Chambers of commerce
- Areas with clearly defined regional strengths in advanced manufacturing e.g. Ruhr Basin Germany, Lille region in France, Sheffield UK

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