

NEWS RELEASE

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SEEDA Chief Exec says RDAs will invest £1billion in innovation over next three years at Innovate 09

England's nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) will invest £1billion in supporting innovation over the three years to March 2011* says Pam Alexander, Chief Executive of the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). In her speech at this year's Innovate 09, the Technology Strategy Board's annual conference and showcase, she highlighted the role of RDAs in driving innovation to increase the UK's international competitiveness.

SEEDA speaks for the RDAs on innovation, which is critical to bringing the UK strongly through the recession and positioning it as a leader in future markets. RDA investment will be focused on creating strong infrastructure to support innovation, such as science campuses, as well as funding innovative collaborations and supporting new skills and knowledge transfer between business and universities, alongside the Technology Strategy Board. Half of the £1billion will be invested in these new collaborations to develop and commercialise new solutions.

RDAs are playing a key role in exploiting the potential of innovation in key sectors to fuel the economic upturn by focusing on high tech and high growth industries, as laid out in Government paper - *New Industry, New Jobs*. Over the past two years common priorities around innovation have been agreed that build on the different strengths of the knowledge base across the UK. This has resulted in combined innovation programmes that are helping to maximise the UK's international competitiveness.

Pam Alexander highlighted successful RDA partnerships that demonstrate how value is being added and growth stimulated:

- Printable Electronics Technology Centre – One NorthEast, NWDA and Yorkshire Forward secured £20m funding through the Advanced Manufacturing Strategy to create 1,500 jobs nationally and 250 in the North East
- Alphasat satellite – SEEDA, EEDA and LDA invested £36m in Inmarsat to enable it to win a €500m contract with European Space Agency to build the most advanced civilian satellite
- CABLED electric car project – Advantage West Midlands is working with Birmingham and Coventry City Councils and 12 private companies on testing over 100 electric cars.

Pam Alexander, SEEDA Chief Executive, said: "RDAs are working across the country to drive forward high tech opportunities to ensure we stay ahead of international competition and create high value and skilled jobs in the industries of the future. The Innovate conference is a key event in the calendar to help us maintain leadership in this

area. It not only showcases cutting edge technologies but is an opportunity for innovators and those working to support them to share knowledge and ideas.”

* This figures includes some of the RDA investment in *New Jobs, New Industry* priorities over the next 18 months.

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Notes to Editors

Pam Alexander is available for interview on request.

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About the RDAs

- The RDAs are business led organisations set up by Government in 1998 to promote sustainable economic development in England. They work with key public and private sector regional partners to increase the economic performance of the regions and reduce social and economic disparities within and between regions.
- The RDAs take it in turns to manage the collective work of the RDA network for a six month period. From 1 October AWM took over as Chair of Chairs for the RDA national network. This means that AWM represents the network to Government and other stakeholders on a wide range of issues. The role of Chair of Chairs rotates around the RDA network each six months and AWM's tenure ends on the 1 April 2009.
- For more information on England's Regional Development Agencies please go to www.englishrdas.com