

GLASGOW KELVIN COLLEGE

Learning and Teaching Committee Meeting - 07 May 2025

College Local Innovation Centres (CLIC)

Report by Director of Student Experience and Enterprise

1. Executive Summary

The College Local Innovation Centres (CLIC) Project is a pioneering regional initiative led by Glasgow Kelvin College and funded by Innovate UK through the Further Education Innovation Fund (FEIF). Launched in April 2024, CLIC is the only programme of its kind in Scotland and one of just nine funded college innovation pilots across the UK. It aims to place colleges at the heart of regional innovation by supporting employers to adopt digital technologies aligned to economic priorities.

The partnership comprises six colleges across the Glasgow City Region, each leading a local innovation centre with a distinct specialism. In its first year, the project exceeded all engagement targets, supported 280 employers, and improved digital maturity levels in businesses by over 27%. A second year of funding at the same level (£1.2m) has now been secured for 2025–26.

2. Project Overview

Project Name:	College Local Innovation Centres (CLIC)
Lead Institution:	Glasgow Kelvin College (Centre for Digital Enablement)
Funding Body:	Innovate UK (FEIF)
Pilot Funding:	£1.2 million for 2024/25
Extension Funding:	£1.2 million confirmed for 2025/26
Start Date:	April 2024
End Date (Pilot):	March 2025
End Date (Ext):	March 2026

CLIC brings together:

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|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| • Glasgow Kelvin College | – | Centre for Digital Enablement |
| • Glasgow Clyde College | – | Centre for Digital Creativity |
| • City of Glasgow College | – | Centre for Innovation Leadership |
| • West College Scotland | – | Centre for Advanced Manufacturing |
| • New College Lanarkshire | – | Centre for Digitally Enabled Health |
| • South Lanarkshire College | – | Centre for Sustainable Development |

The project aligns with Glasgow City Region's Innovation Strategy and supports five priority industry clusters: Health & Life Sciences, Energy & Net Zero, Digital Creative Industries, Advanced Manufacturing, and Enabling Technologies.

3. Project Execution and Methodology

Planning began in late 2023, following an invitation from Innovate UK. The partnership was formed rapidly—within eight weeks—building on collaboration through the Regional

Innovation Action Group. A key bid differentiator was the shared commitment to a joint model, rather than fragmented individual college bids.

CLIC used project funds to design and implement a new digital maturity assessment toolkit based on the Institute of Innovation & Knowledge Exchange's framework. This enabled colleges to benchmark businesses' digital readiness and design targeted support.

Key delivery mechanisms included:

- Innovation Accelerator programmes
- Sector-specific digital training
- VR tools in healthcare and sustainability workshops
- Customised employer support plans

Glasgow Kelvin College: Centre for Digital Enablement – Programme Delivery Overview

As part of its role as the Centre for Digital Enablement, Glasgow Kelvin College successfully delivered a comprehensive suite of programmes aimed at supporting digital capacity building across a range of employers from different sectors. These programmes included a combination of pre-existing offers and bespoke courses developed specifically for CLIC.

The portfolio of short courses delivered included:

- Introduction to CAD & 3D Printing
- Introduction to 3D Printing Software and Hardware
- 3D Printing Immersion
- Webinars: Introduction to Digital Marketing & Promotions
- Digital Capabilities for CO₂ Technologies

In addition to these short-format learning opportunities, the College also delivered a seven-week Innovation Accelerator programme. Developed in partnership with the University of the West of Scotland, the programme leveraged the University's global digital expertise and resources. The Accelerator was specifically designed for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with a focus on:

- The effective use of digital tools to drive innovation within SME environments
- Developing critical competencies through practical, hands-on learning to support digital innovation in both product and process development

Participation Summary:

- 35 businesses overall engaged in the GKC programme
- 21 businesses and 48 employees engaged with the short course offerings
- 14 employers participated in the Innovation Accelerator programme.

This activity reflects the College's strategic commitment to enhancing digital skills and promoting innovation-led growth among regional employers and their workforces.

4. Key Outcomes and Impact (2024–25)

Employers engaged

Target: 200 → Achieved: 318

Employees supported

Target: 200 → Achieved: 400+

College staff trained

Target: 20 → Achieved: 23

Employers becoming more innovative

Target: 60 → In progress; positive indicators

Digital Maturity Impact:

Average business digital maturity score increased by **27.8%** (from 34.4 to 44.0). This is evidenced through the innovation framework dashboard.

Sector Reach:

CLIC supported employers across 21 sectors, including Aerospace, Finance, Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Construction.

Public Recognition and Endorsements:

- Continued funding by Innovate UK
- Invitation to present innovation assessment model and overall project approach at Innovate UK national showcase
- Invitation to present CLIC to Association of Colleges national event
- Featured in *The Herald* and *The Scotsman*
- Strategic endorsement from Glasgow City Council

Testimonial Highlights:

*“Our partnership with **Glasgow Kelvin College** has not only provided high-quality training, upskilling and apprenticeship but has provided support to dozens of our supply chain partners, crucial in supporting the demand and technology changes in our sector.”*

Ross Hammell - McTaggart Construction

“It is a mark of confidence in the six colleges – and a testament to their ability to deliver across the initial year of funding – that Innovate UK has chosen to provide a further year’s funding for CLIC. Glasgow City Region will continue to work closely with CLIC in the year ahead and looks forward to more success with them and to making the case for more funding from national governments for this vital area.”

Dr Duncan Booker, Group Manager Innovation, in Glasgow City Council's Chief Executive Office:

CLIC has been shortlisted for two Herald Higher Education Awards namely; Outstanding Business Engagement in Colleges and; Innovate Use of Technology. The award ceremony is on the 29th May.

5. Strategic Impact

CLIC has redefined the role of colleges as drivers of innovation, positioning them alongside universities in supporting business growth. The model challenges traditional perceptions of digital innovation as solely the domain of high-tech industries, making it accessible to SMEs and mainstream sectors.

Institutional Outcomes:

- Glasgow Kelvin College has been invited to co-chair the Education and Skills Implementation Group for the Regional Innovation Strategy.
- Stronger partnerships with regional stakeholders including innovation districts, universities, and Glasgow City Council.
- Enhanced public and employer recognition of the college sector’s value in innovation.

6. Next Steps

- Deliver Year 2 of CLIC (April 2025–March 2026) with increased strategic focus
- Integrate CLIC delivery into faculty planning cycles
- Expand innovation training across academic and support staff
- Further develop the innovation assessment model as a national benchmark
- Deepen cross-sector partnerships and diversify employer engagement
- Build the case for long-term sustainable funding
- Evaluate long-term outcomes for employers supported in Year 1

7. Impact on the Student Experience

Feedback from CLIC participants is highly positive. Continued development of CLIC will expand support for employers and indirectly benefit students through enriched teaching and curriculum.

As staff deepen their understanding of innovation, this knowledge will be embedded in learning across departments, enhancing student access to emerging technologies and practices.

8. Resource Implications

CLIC requires significant staff time, which is covered by project funding. This commitment will be factored into the 2025/26 operating plan.

9. Risk and Assurance

No significant risks are identified at this stage. Risks will continue to be reviewed through project governance and quarterly review meetings with Innovate UK.

10. Equalities

No equality implications identified. Equalities considerations will remain under review throughout delivery.

11. Data Protection

No data protection issues identified. Data handling follows institutional and project partner protocols.

12. Environmental and Sustainability

No specific environmental implications are identified. Opportunities to embed sustainability will be explored where relevant.

13. Recommendations

The Learning and Teaching Committee is asked to:

- Note the significant achievements of CLIC in Year 1
- Endorse continued strategic and operational support for CLIC in Year 2

14. Further Information

For further details, please contact Alastair McGhee, Director of Student Experience and Enterprise, amcghee@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk or Robin Ashton, Vice Principal Curriculum, rashton@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk

Glasgow Kelvin College
AMcG, May 2025