Innovation for Machinery: Round 3

Introduction to AMPI

The Advanced Machinery Productivity Institute (AMPI) is an industry defined initiative that will stimulate and support rapid growth of the UK's machinery manufacturing sector. AMPI is designed to support a coherent supply chain from research through to implementation, helping UK based machinery developers to bring new cutting-edge and sustainable products to market.

AMPI will increase the development and commercialisation of advanced machinery, related technologies, and know-how, along with a broader benefit to wider manufacturing sectors due to improved availability of advanced machinery and expertise.

AMPI is led by the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) in collaboration with SMEs, Universities, and local authority in Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire, and funded through UKRI's Strength in Places Fund.

AMPI's objectives are to:

- increase the competitiveness and productivity of the machinery manufacturing sector by improving innovation and supply chain.
- enable the wider manufacturing sector to access and collaborate with advanced machinery expertise to bring wider benefits to the sector.
- drive employment regionally by increasing direct and indirect employment by creating new post doctorates and apprentice opportunities roles.
- increase the commercialisation of new machines, related technologies, and know-how
- drive an increase in research and development (R&D) spend by companies participating within the AMPI programme.
- enable cross regional collaboration between public and private institutes to stimulate knowledge transfer.

Scope

The Innovation for Machinery (I4M) scheme provides SME businesses in Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire with access to advanced machinery expertise to accelerate the development of the next generation of machinery and create new jobs and growth in this sector.

The aim of this competition is to encourage the development of new manufacturing technology within advanced machinery, robotics, automation, or associated industries.

Your project must:

- focus on delivering **advancements in machinery for manufacturing**
- demonstrate innovation at an industrially relevant scale
- demonstrate clear market opportunity, an innovative project, and a credible route to market
- show clear benefit technically
- show clear benefit in creating or safeguarding jobs

You should also aim to:

- develop new technology for use in current or future products or manufacturing

- develop and disseminate best practices in technologies or processes to support industry
- demonstrate improvement in business productivity and competitiveness
- enhance capabilities within the broader advanced machinery industry

We will not fund projects that:

- are outside of the Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire regions
- do not meet the eligibility or scope
- do not collaborate with a university based inside the Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire regions
- are solely capital expenditure or infrastructure projects
- do not evidence the potential for their idea to lead to positive economic and regional impact, growth and scale-up of the business

Additional Information

The Research Route enables SME businesses to access machinery expertise at no cost from NPL or a university based in the Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire regions to support a machinery development project. The I4M scheme will provide funding of up to £50,000 direct to the selected university.

Applications can come from the lead SME business or participating university/NPL. If a company wishes to apply but does not have a research partner identified AMPI will seek to support the development of a collaboration. Universities and NPL must have already identified a lead SME partner before applying.

Types of projects that may be supported through I4M:

Target machinery industries *could* include:	Target technologies for machinery *could* include:
• machine tool manufacturers • robotics manufacturers • other machine manufacturers • machine control system manufacturers • providers of digitalisation systems for machinery, including sensing and control • machinery subsystems manufacturers • automation system manufacturers	• machine, robotic, and automation systems • advanced controllers and PLCs • in-situ and in-process measurement systems • intelligent software systems • on-machine sensor networks • true digital twins of machinery • hybrid and reconfigurable systems • sustainable machine development

How to Apply

All applications must be submitted through the AMPI I4M portal: https://ampiuk.org/enter-application/ by Friday 27th February 2026, and be prepared to commence project delivery on Monday 6th April 2026.

Should you require support in developing your project, submitting your application, or finding a collaborator, please contact AMPI at ampi.sipf@npl.co.uk.

This scheme is managed by the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) on behalf of the Advanced Machinery Productivity Institute (AMPI) and funded through UKRI's Strength in Places Fund.