

ASK: To ensure the enhancement of the Thames Valley region's Health and Life Sciences sector to secure its reputation as a global leader in the field

Introduction

The Thames Valley region, encompassing Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Swindon, is at the heart of the UK's 'golden triangle' - the UK's world-leading health and life sciences (HLS) cluster connecting London, Oxford, and Cambridge,

The Thames Valley's HLS working group is a region-wide, business led, stakeholder group bringing together industry leaders from global corporates, SME's, spinouts and recently established inward investors with academics, industry groups, health practitioners and hospital trusts, to represent the sector. Leveraging the strength and depth of the group to identify and address the challenges facing the sector are vital components of our focus in supporting the UK government fulfill its ambitions as a science and technology superpower and global leadership in the sector.

We continue to articulate the importance of the Thames Valley as a for this sector and continue to assist in providing the necessary support to ensure its growth and success. By doing so, the government can enable the Thames Valley region to secure its reputation as a global leader in the field. Collaborating with local stakeholders, academic centres of excellence and organizations like the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce is essential to ensuring the support aligns with the specific needs and priorities of the region moving forward.

Our 5 key asks for the next government are:

ASK 1: Leadership in HLS

Value the region's leadership and invest in its HLS companies. Enable us to convene, connect and catalyse – providing opportunity for academia, healthcare professionals and business across the region to come together. Advance Thames Valley's leadership in HLS, grow the industry and bring value to the healthcare system and improve patient lives.

ASK 2: Increasing the flow of HLS inward investment (by volume and value)

Capitalising on our position within the HLS 'golden triangle' support efforts to unlock the real potential of the Thames Valley to attract greater volumes and higher value foreign direct investment. Ensure the government understands and values the need to invest in the success of the Thames Valley and its HLS sector.

ASK 3: Showcase the Thames Valley region to policy-makers

For our government to endorse the work of our working group (as they have in the Life Sciences Vision) so we can effectively showcase the Thames Valley's contribution to the health and life sciences sector and wider HMG ambitions to be a science and technology superpower.

ASK 4: Continue investing in health and life sciences skills

Our work in leading the Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) for [Berkshire](#) and [Oxfordshire](#) has highlighted the need for education and Higher Education to have significantly closer links to industry and workforce skills. The working group have led the establishment of a dedicated Workforce Development Partnership (WDP) for HLS. With HMG support we will continue to (i) strengthen relationships between providers and employers to generate further partnership solutions; (ii) promote the expansion, development, and delivery of provision in skills across HLS; ; (iii) Invest research and funding into society and community infrastructure to enable gender equity and ensuring women enter STEM subject education and remain active in the workforce.

ASK 5: Addressing procurement challenges

Assist in funding partnership focused innovation opportunities e.g., HealthTech, investing in clinicians research and innovation. Building a strong 'knowledge exchange framework', encouraging SME's and larger companies to collaborate and deepen commercial relationships. Support the continued relationships between industry and the regions universities e.g., University of Oxford, Reading and Royal Holloway. Through these academic networks, invest in clinician/industry placements and programs with hospitals e.g., University of Reading Clinical Training Suite with RbFT. Assist in the strengthening of the two-way dialogue with Health Innovation Networks (see [Oxford and Thames Valley](#)).