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vendor insights

UK Advanced Manufacturing Sector Plan (2025)

What the UK Advanced Manufacturing Sector Plan means for companies that support manufacturers, and how to adjust your go-to-market.

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The home of this briefing, with a summary and related reading: nickleeder.com/resources/uk-advanced-manufacturing-sector-plan-vendor-insights/

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Executive summary

Why this strategy matters to you

The UK Government's Advanced Manufacturing Sector Plan marks a fundamental shift in how the UK positions itself in the global industrial economy.

With £4.3 billion in direct public funding commitments and an ambition to nearly double business investment in the sector, from £21 billion today to £39 billion by 2035, it is a signal that advanced manufacturing is no longer just an industry: it is a national growth engine.

For companies supporting manufacturing clients, this plan is both a roadmap and an opportunity.

The policy's scale, specificity and funding depth make it a valuable reference point when framing ROI, risk reduction and resilience narratives for customers. Critically, it offers language, metrics and case studies that your clients are likely to hear from government and trade bodies, so aligning your value proposition accordingly can differentiate you fast.



The plan in numbers

£4.3B
Direct public funding commitments

£39B
Business investment ambition by 2035, up from £21B today

£160M
For each Investment Zone over 10 years

Key highlights for awareness and positioning

Clear policy commitment to industrial modernisation

The plan outlines a long-term partnership with industry across four pillars:

- Reforming the business environment
- Prioritising six "frontier" industries
- Driving regional manufacturing clusters
- Deepening public-private co-investment

For the first time in over a decade, the UK industrial strategy integrates economic resilience, technological leadership and regional regeneration into a single, funded and monitored plan, backed by regulatory reform and sector-specific incentives.

Six frontier industries are in focus

The government is channelling investment, regulation and exports into:

- Automotive (EV, CAM, ZEV)

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/ Batteries
/ Aerospace
/ Space
/ Advanced materials
/ Agri-tech

Solution providers serving these domains can expect increased R&D, factory upgrades and new greenfield projects needing digital infrastructure, from IoT and AI to data platforms and PLM.

Focus on SME digital adoption

The Made Smarter Adoption programme (now national) and a £99 million expansion will support SME manufacturers to adopt industrial digital technologies (IDTs). That includes:

/ AI and robotics
/ Predictive maintenance
/ Digital twins
/ MES, PLM and ERP platforms

This creates a timely opening for vendors to scale SME support models and advisory services around digital maturity and implementation readiness.

£27.8 billion National Wealth Fund and £4 billion growth capital

Funding is not theoretical: capital is flowing. UK public finance institutions are aligned to unlock strategic private investments in:

/ Robotics adoption hubs
/ Smart factories and CAM and PLM systems
/ Green supply chains and UK-origin content

Consultants and technology providers who can help clients navigate grant access, define investment cases or connect operational tech to funding outcomes will be more valuable than ever.

Regional clusters are a growth vector

Investment Zones (for example, West Midlands, North East, Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire) each get £160 million over 10 years. These hubs focus on automotive, aerospace, batteries and clean energy. This opens the door for:

/ Localised digital transformation programmes
/ Supplier enablement initiatives
/ Site-specific solution deployments (for example, EV gigafactories, carbon fibre facilities)

You should anticipate more demand for “cluster-conscious” offerings: tools and services that scale across ecosystems, not just single plants.

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What to say to manufacturing customers now

01

A £30B+ reset

"This isn't another policy white paper. It's a £30+ billion reset of the UK manufacturing growth model." Use this to position your solutions as aligned to national industrial priorities and critical to unlocking ROI.

02

Digital-first funding

"Government funding will favour digital-first, resilient operations." Help clients see how digitisation connects to funding eligibility, especially in areas like Made Smarter, NWF, UKEF and sector-specific initiatives.

03

Skills and systems

"Skills and systems are the new capital." Encourage readiness investments (data strategy, workforce digital skills and interoperable systems) to prepare for upcoming regulatory and export shifts, such as Battery Passports, CBAM and SAF mandates.

04

Traceable, green, productive

"Being in the supply chain is no longer enough. You must be traceable, green and productive." This is a moment to introduce solutions for traceability, lifecycle analytics and circular economy metrics.

How to adjust your business messaging

Align your language with government strategy

Use terms like resilience, Made Smarter, frontier industries, export readiness and supply chain security. These mirror what your customers are hearing from trade bodies, banks and investors.

Map solutions to the four delivery pillars

Frame your offerings against:

- Business resilience (energy, cybersecurity, reshoring)
- Innovation scaling (R&D to factory-floor execution)
- Workforce transformation (skills platforms, digital upskilling)
- Regional impact (cluster programmes and localised adoption)

Lean into co-investment and incentive strategy

Position your firm as a trusted guide to help manufacturers co-navigate grant processes, use public funds well and plan roadmap-linked tech adoption. Create packaged services aligned to funding milestones.

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Prepare for vertical specialisation

Expect stronger sector splits in demand and maturity. Customise go-to-market strategies for aerospace, automotive and agri-tech, as each will evolve differently under this plan.



Practical moves for your go-to-market strategy

/ **Create customer content:** “What the UK Advanced Manufacturing Strategy means for your business”.

/ **Train your sales teams:** on the six frontier sectors, Made Smarter outcomes and funding-linked value articulation.

/ **Build advisory offerings:** for SME digitisation readiness or supply chain resilience audits.

/ **Collaborate locally:** identify cluster-aligned partners and build integrated solution sets (software plus services).

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Final thought

This is not just a policy shift. It is an operating environment reset. For the first time, UK industrial policy speaks to supply chains, systems and skills in the same breath.

UK Advanced Manufacturing Sector Plan

The UK Government's plan for advanced manufacturing, with £4.3 billion of direct public funding and an ambition to raise business investment in the sector from £21 billion to £39 billion by 2035.

The businesses that win in this new era will not be those with the best tech, but those who connect tech to outcomes that matter: resilience, jobs, investment and growth.

Align your go-to-market to the industrial strategy

Nick Leeder & Co can help you lead that conversation. If you would like help aligning your go-to-market to this industrial strategy, book a conversation.

Book at meetings.nickleeder.com
hello@nickleeder.com / +44 (0)1275 772 422

Scan to book

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Questions this briefing answers

What are the six frontier industries in the plan?

Automotive, batteries, aerospace, space, advanced materials and agri-tech.

How does the plan support SME digital adoption?

Through the Made Smarter Adoption programme, now national, and a £99 million expansion supporting industrial digital technologies such as AI, robotics, predictive maintenance, digital twins and MES, PLM and ERP.

What should vendors do now?

Create customer content on the plan, train sales teams on the frontier sectors and funding-linked value, build advisory offerings for SME readiness, and collaborate with cluster-aligned partners.

About the author

Nick Leeder is the founder of Nick Leeder & Co. An engineer by background, he has led, and been accountable for, transformation programmes in senior management roles at Dyson, SKF and Philips, across Europe, North America and Asia. He is certified in the Smart Industry Readiness Index (SIRI) and its CoSIRI framework, and is recognised by organisations including the World Economic Forum. Nick Leeder & Co is a multi-award-winning advisory and coaching business that helps manufacturing leaders turn enabling technology into measurable operational results.

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Complexity delivers nothing.

At Nick Leeder & Co, we exist to restore clarity, confidence and control for manufacturing leaders navigating digital transformation.

Our mission is to help industrial businesses unlock the real value of enabling technologies, not through hype, but through practical action that improves productivity, profitability and sustainability.

We have seen too many businesses fall into the pilot trap. Too many strategies built on buzzwords instead of business outcomes. We believe manufacturers deserve better. So we help leaders cut through the noise, uncover what really matters and build a transformation path they can trust, so they get results that stick.

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