

Another city hosted by the Innova Foster project during the next study meeting was Oldham. The event took place on June 13 - 15.

Representatives from Estonia, Malta, Poland and Slovenia were among the visitors from six different locations across the continent who met with Oldham Council's strategic investment team and the Growth Company (GC) Business Growth Hub.

They are all members of an EU-funded project entitled Innova Foster which aims to help high potential start-up companies through spreading knowledge about innovative processes which are being used support growth.

Oldham Council and the GC Business Growth Hub plan to put the knowledge they gain to good use through their work with local companies.

Cllr Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader of Oldham Council, said: "It was fantastic to meet the members of the project.

"I'm sure we can all agree that it's a no brainer to get some funding support from the EU which will help us to gain more knowledge and share strategies which are working for businesses.

"There is a wealth of free business support available to businesses in or relocating to Oldham.

"This includes practical business start-up and growth advice, specific sector support and networks, help to find premises in the Borough as well as access to a range of grants and loans via the Oldham Enterprise Fund.

"If businesses in Oldham need our support they should contact the team and we will do everything we can to help."

Janine Smith, Head of Growth Services at GC Business Growth Hub, said: 'It's great to be involved in such a forward thinking project and to be able to showcase our thriving start-up and scale-up scene in Oldham and Greater Manchester.'

As well as meeting at the Civic Centre, the Innova Foster members will also meet with a number of people from Oldham's business community including Dave Benstead of Diodes Inc and representatives of Oldham Enterprise Fund and the Manchester Metropolitan University and the GC Business Growth Hub.

Funded by the EU, Innova Foster's members include Cork in the Republic of Ireland and Tartu in Estonia as well as regional development agencies from Poland, Malta and Slovenia.

It is led by Spain's INCYDE Foundation which supports entrepreneurs across the country.

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