



STFC's support for start-ups accelerates business growth

Oxford nanoSystems (OnS) develop novel surface coating technologies that improve heat transfer in components. This lowers both the size and cost of components used in many applications including industrial, transport and electronics platforms.

The Challenge

When Alex Reip, CEO of Oxford nanoSystems Ltd, joined the company at its founding in 2012, he knew they faced a sizeable challenge as a start-up in the space industry. The challenge for OnS was finding a suitable base for its operations that could facilitate product development and business growth. Fortunately, Alex had heard of STFC's innovation support at the Harwell Campus, right on his doorstep.

The Solution

- Affordable and flexible access to equipped laboratories
- Connections into STFC and campus networks
- Access to funding opportunities
- Dedicated facilities for product development
- A place in two STFC-managed Business Incubation Centres (BIC) ran on behalf of the European Space Agency (ESA BIC UK) and CERN (STFC CERN BIC)

The Benefits

The company benefitted from frequent workshops and networking events, organised by ESA BIC UK and Harwell Campus, helping to build connections and find new sources of funding. This resulted in over £1m of equity investment and over £2.5m worth of grants being raised from multiple sources, helping to accelerate the company's growth.

Following successful technological progress whilst on the ESA BIC UK programme, OnS decided to take advantage of the STFC CERN BIC offering. This provided 40 free hours use of the STFC labs, enabling the company to enlist the help of a world-class thermodynamicist and further improve its technology.

Since graduating from the STFC CERN BIC in 2015, OnS has remained at Harwell Campus, going from strength to strength; winning both the 'Oxford Innovation Scale-up for the Future' competition and 'Entrepreneur of the Year' award from the Oxford Trust in 2018. Now employing 10 people, OnS is working hard on developing heat exchangers in radar systems, after winning a contract with a Defence and Security Accelerator.



"We would not have been able to grow and develop without the support that we have received from STFC over the past six years. Having access to state-of-the-art equipment and facilities for affordable rates make STFC hugely ideal for launching successful tech start-ups."

Alex Reip, CEO, Oxford nanoSystems

Image credit: Oxford nanoSystems

About us

Science and Technology Facilities Council offers entrepreneurs, start-ups, SME's and corporates the facilities, environment and people needed to de-risk innovation and accelerate business growth.

Through access to large-scale science facilities, complementary technologies and IP, and a flourishing network of science and industry experts, companies become part of a collaborative innovation ecosystem.

From securing funding, to carrying out product development and finding solutions to key industrial challenges, STFC helps high-tech businesses in many sectors, from space to health technology, to thrive.

Find out more:

Email: innovations@stfc.ac.uk Twitter: [@STFC_B2B](https://twitter.com/STFC_B2B)

Bridging the gap between pioneering science and business