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# ANNUAL REPORT



↑UPSTREAM

work. play. grow. west.





Photo credit: Scale Space White City



# Foreword

**Upstream is a partnership between Hammersmith & Fulham Council (H&F) and Imperial College London. In the last four years, as part of H&F's Industrial Strategy, we have connected, supported and shone a light on the science, tech and creative sectors.**

Our work is driven by the belief that local networks that facilitate collaboration and learning, in both planned and serendipitous ways, can accelerate the growth of organisations and places.

Upstream's vision is for Hammersmith & Fulham to have an inclusive, thriving ecosystem of ambitious science, tech and creative organisations with the White City Innovation District (WCID) a global beacon of growth through innovation. Indeed, as I write, the WCID visual identity and [website](#) has just been launched - a real team effort across many stakeholders in the area!

We were also delighted to launch our Impact & Innovation 110 earlier this year - a weighty 160 page tome - which may explain why 2021's Annual Report is shorter than 2020's. From the White City Innovation District to Shepherd's Bush, Hammersmith and Fulham, the organisations featured in I110, including science, tech and creative businesses, universities and charities, have made a positive impact in their field, frequently through innovative research and its subsequent translation.

Presenting the I110 organisation with a platform to potential collaborators, employees and supporters is the immediate purpose of this publication. But we also hope to draw together and continue to build a strong, local network that in turn helps people, organisations and our borough thrive. Do check out the report [here](#).

**A brief reflection and call-to-action:** Upstream is in its essence, an enabler and a connector. As the pandemic ebbs and more people return to their workplaces, we know that rebuilding and recovering takes a village, a borough and much more. [Do join the Upstream network](#) as we help to connect people and organisations that can support each other to grow, to innovate, to achieve, to impact.

**Prema Gurunathan**  
Managing Director  
Upstream









# Leader's view

## **Inclusive rapid economic growth in the smartest sectors of the new world economy: tomorrow is being made here.**

We're a different kind of council. Inspired by the world's most successful economic ecosystems, my team and I set about building a powerful coalition with business, academia, educationalists and skills providers to transform Hammersmith and Fulham into a global economic hotspot in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine, media and the creative arts.



Five years on from the launch of our unique Industrial Strategy, H&F is now the sixth most competitive economy in the country. And White City, where incubator companies have since raised over £115m, is now a world-leading innovation district. Over 60 life science businesses have been created, grown or moved into our borough, alongside global multinationals, high growth anchor businesses and science and tech unicorns. Almost 6,000 new jobs have been created in growth industries like medicine and biotech, including 400 new jobs in our Green Economy, which has grown by 350% in just five years.

Opportunities like these should be open to everyone, so we're re-aligning our education system from nurseries upwards – recognising that knowledge-led inclusive growth relies on long-term investment in people.

Tomorrow really is being made here.

Hammersmith-based companies like causaLens are pioneers in human-centred intelligent machines that can think, and Achilles TX are using DNA sequencing to develop the cancer treatments of the future.

White City responded to the pandemic with innovations ranging from the high-speed COVID-19 test kits used in NHS hospitals to a ground-breaking device which reduces the mortality rate of COVID sufferers. White City start-ups are bringing new climate solutions – biotransformation technology making plastic fully biodegradable, smart materials for cleaning soil and water, and “bionic leaves” that clean the air.

Adam Smith, the economist, believed Britain secured its place as the world's wealthiest nation in the 18th century by creating the conditions for entrepreneurs to innovate. That's at the heart of our approach here.

### **Councillor Stephen Cowan**

Leader

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham





# COMMUNITY UPDATE

## SCIENCE, TECH & CREATIVE SECTORS IN H&F

The life sciences sector continues to grow across Hammersmith & Fulham, attracted by the presence of Imperial College London, Novartis UK and a thriving ecosystem, filled with startups and scaleups. New arrivals included Achilles Therapeutics in Hammersmith, George Medicines to the Imperial's I-HUB and Vivan to White City Place. In April 2022, we can expect wet labs of between 500 to 1000 sq. ft to be available at Scale Space White City, whilst there is eager anticipation as the new BioHotel (right image) opens its doors in the West Works building, offering flexible lab space.



At the end of 2020, we heard from a number of tech companies that had pivoted during the pandemic, either to tackle new challenges or because their previous market had become less viable. This trend continued apace in 2021, particularly as lockdown brought new entrepreneurs to the fore, seeking new challenges and hoping for an autonomy that better accommodates family commitments.

In a timely manner, we launched the Digital Creative Network West, partnering with the West London Alliance and West London Business in April 2021. Aiming to foster and strengthen relationships between large anchor organisations, startups and academia in West London, it has been well-received and brought to light existing and potential opportunities for collaborations. If anyone thought the pandemic have entirely ravaged the creative sector, they were in for surprise as time and again, we heard stories of resilience and entrepreneurialism. We were particularly struck and inspired by the work of Nasri Atallah (left image) at Last Floor Productions and Sarah Mosses at Together Films, respectively aiming to bring Arab voices and social impact films to a wider audience.

## Three key themes from our conversations with the Upstream community:

- **Organisations are exploring how to maximise the returns from hybrid working.** A key challenge is how to maintain company culture and attract new talent in this new environment.
- **In-person meetings are in vogue again** though remote has allowed interactions across a wider geographical area. For our Life Sciences Roundtable (see case study), this meant time-pressed senior executives were able to participate from different continents.
- Our HR roundtables revealed a **definite desire to improve DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) and talent attraction pathways.** Over the course of 2021, Upstream connected businesses to apprenticeship providers, schools as well as community-facing organisations who work with young people.







**Dr. Samin Saeed of Novartis UK, speaking at the III10 launch.**

**Photo credit: Jo Mieszkowski**



# HIGHLIGHTS

## HOW UPSTREAM HAS MADE AN IMPACT

### CASE STUDY 1: C-SUITE LIFE SCIENCES ROUNDTABLE

**Seeing the growing life sciences sector, we knew there was a role for Upstream to bring the sector together at a senior level, to galvanise connections. Indeed, half the attendees in the first session did not know of each other and, in some cases, of each others' organisations.**

With short (75 minute) quarterly gatherings, and a demonstrable impact from the first meeting, 94% of stakeholders invited remain engaged and meetings have seen a consistently high show rate.

Alongside a shifting agenda, each of 2021's four meetings has included:

- Targeted networking: Placing leaders together who have clear reasons to connect.
- Member spotlights: Allowing senior leaders to delve into the science behind their work, making it clear how they can collaborate.

### OUTCOMES

- **Improved awareness of equipment through an audit:** There is much sophisticated equipment available that can be accessed either through a simple booking system or a more collaborative effort. These range from world-class microscopy facilities to analytical instruments such as mass spectrometers and high performance liquid chromatography.
- **Opening the door to more collaborations:** Professor Oscar Ces, Head of Imperial's Department of Chemistry now runs a clinic for organisations to discuss with Imperial how they might be able to work together - and it's not confined just to his department.
- **Equipment for startups:** Kit is expensive and through the roundtable, DNAE was able to donate their surplus equipment to early stage startups in need.





Emily Carter of Emily Carter London & Dhivya Venkat of Esya Labs  
Photo credit: Jo Mieszkowski



## CASE STUDY 2: CONNECTING PEOPLE & BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

The connections that Upstream provides are a result of conversations, sometimes over the course of months and years, as organisational priorities and needs evolve. We made over 100 deliberate connections in 2021. Unsurprisingly, a senior stakeholder remarked "you're both my first port of call and also the go-to team if I don't know who else can help me".

**Regardless of sector, there are common challenges faced by the science, tech and creative industries. Yet, we know the silos within any sector are amplified across different ones.**

As 2021 felt gloomy and anti-social, our new podcast *Uplift* brought together two organisations each time, seeking to break down barriers and make new connections, whether it is between a biotech startup and a creative agency, people based in the same building, across the road, or on opposite ends of this very long, thin borough.



"Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens" said Jimi Hendrix. In one episode of Uplift, we brought together Prof. Dale Russell of the Royal College of Art (RCA) who made costumes for Jimi and put the torch in the Nokia phone. She discussed how to reconcile creativity and innovation with the bottom line with Lloyd Lee from Yoo Capital which is working on a magnificent redevelopment of London Olympia.

More recently, Uplift's guests were Dhivya Venkat, CEO of Esya Labs and fashion designer Emily Carter. From sustainable fashion to precision diagnostics for Alzheimer's, they delved into what it means to be a founder.

### OUTCOMES

- **Connecting people:** opening the door to collaboration, knowledge exchange and friendships.
- **Raising the profile of local organisations:** Podcasts are shared with our network and through partner organisations.







# HOW WE HELP

SUPPORTING, CONNECTING & SHINING A LIGHT ON  
THE SCIENCE, TECH & CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

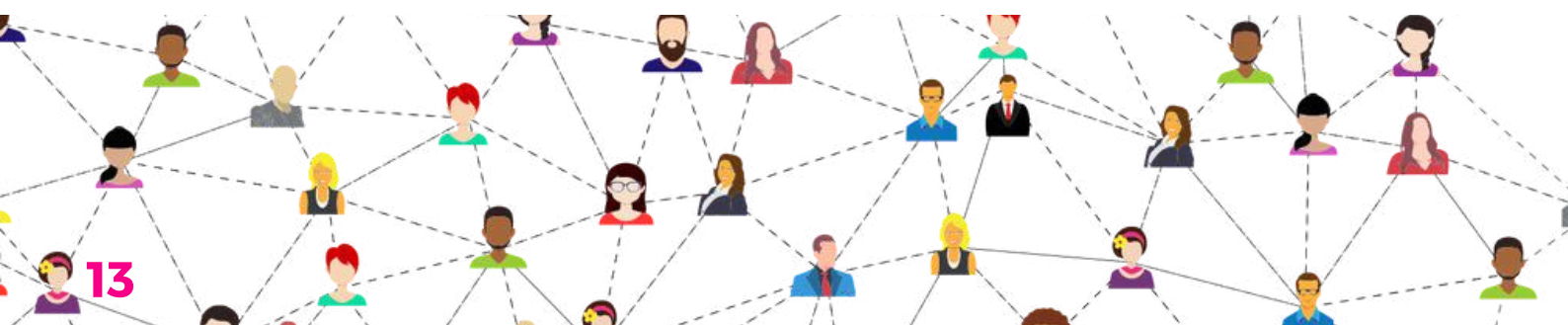
## **Our work has four key objectives:**

**I. Fostering professional connections**

**II. Convening organisations that can solve  
common challenges better together**

**III. Creating social and serendipitous  
opportunities for the community to interact**

**IV. Shining a light on innovative science,  
tech and creative organisations and sign-  
posting assets and amenities**





## I) Fostering professional connections

Upstream events allow organisations to connect with each other, to exchange knowledge, explore partnerships and business development opportunities and meet new talent. They're also a great context to test ideas and try out new pitches.

### HOW WE DO IT:

- 1-2-1 meetings
- Deep Tech Network (DTN) showcase & networking
- Invitation-only cluster & functional roundtables
- Digital Creative Network (DCN) showcase & networking



Photo credit:Imperial College London

## II) Convening organisations that can solve common challenges better together

Some challenges are best tackled together, so we bring together organisations to solve them, removing the hassle of pulling together a 'coalition of the willing'.

### HOW WE DO IT:

- Invitation-only cluster & functional roundtables
- White City employee value proposition (EVP) group



### III) Creating social and serendipitous opportunities for the community to interact

Personal connections, social proximity and serendipity play a massive part in business success and whilst some of us have battled with Zoom fatigue and Covid-caution in 2021, the Upstream community's demand for opportunities to connect is relentless.

#### HOW WE DO IT:

- Monthly coffee club
- Networking with every online and in-person event we run



### IV) Shining a light on science, tech and creative organisations, and signposting assets and amenities

Find the person you need and meet them at a great place.  
Profile-raising and banging the drums for organisations & the borough  
Signposting and highlighting the connections that can be made here, thereby attracting more businesses.

#### HOW WE DO IT:

- Building organic support for White City Innovation District (WCID)
- "My Entrepreneurial Journey" fireside chats
- Podcast series - Uplift launched in 2021





Stephanie Powell of Upstream at the W12 Festival  
Photo credit: Upstream

**Thank you to everyone who has supported and been part of the Upstream community.**

## Contact us

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# WORK OR LIVE IN HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM? WORK IN THE SCIENCE, TECH OR CREATIVE INDUSTRIES? JOIN THE UPSTREAM COMMUNITY TODAY!



## UPSTREAM

work. play. grow. west.

### Join a community of innovators, entrepreneurs and creators today



Meet experts and  
make friends



Accelerate innovation  
and collaboration



Grow your business



Sustainable community  
engagement



Attract top talent

**WE** are partnership between Hammersmith & Fulham Council and Imperial College London, a result of an Industrial Strategy co-produced by the two organisations.

**OUR WORK** is driven by the belief that strong local networks accelerate the growth of people & places.

**OUR VISION** is for H&F to have an inclusive, thriving ecosystem of ambitious science, tech and creative organisations, with the White City Innovation District a global beacon for growth.


**We:**

- Initiate and nurture meaningful connections
- Provide workshops and talks with experts, practitioners and influencers
- Offer 1-2-1 support
- Deliver events that boost your book of contacts

Our network includes organisations small or large: corporate, academic or not-for-profit. Our advice, support and connections are free; a small fee applies to some events.

### How to connect

 [www.move-upstream.org.uk](http://www.move-upstream.org.uk)

 [hello@move-upstream.org.uk](mailto:hello@move-upstream.org.uk)

 [@HelloUpstream](https://twitter.com/HelloUpstream)

**Sign up to the Upstream newsletter on our website to be the first to hear about news and events.  
We'd love to hear from you - do contact us for advice and connections if you think we can help!**