

IT ALL STARTS 2013

THE BEGINNING

In the summer of 2013 a range of public and private organisations signed up to a manifesto to support the growth of the creative & digital* economy in Dorset

*DEFINITION

Businesses using digital technologies as a key component of their work - Including: Advertising & Marketing; Architecture; Design (product, graphic and fashion design); Film, TV & Video; Gaming; Publishing; Software & Computer services

UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES

Arts University Bournemouth, Bournemouth and Poole College & Bournemouth University

COUNCILS

Borough of Poole Council, Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Council, Dorset County Council & East Dorset Council

PARTNERSHIPS

Local Enterprise Partnership

THE NEXT STEPS

With support provided by the manifesto signatories, four local digital business people, establish Silicon South - as a not-for-profit entity - to help realise this vision

ONWARDS & UPWARDS

Silicon South is born - November 2013

WHO

David Ford, Bright Blue Day, chairs the board alongside John Dale, LIMETOOLS, Steven Neal, Kingston Smith; Nuno Almeida, Nourish

THE SIGNATORIES

The Manifesto signed by:

THE AMBITION

3500+ high-skilled jobs to be created in Dorset by 2020.

Each board member dedicates 1 day per week, (voluntarily) to establish firm foundations for the organisation

THE INCEPTION

ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME DEVELOPED

Silicon South provides some small-scale, direct support to industry - with a focus on brokering relationships to enable more significant help

MENTORING

Offering direct mentoring to local entrepreneurs especially startups - with over 30 companies receiving mentoring from the board and/or other local digital leaders who generously donate their time and expertise

LOBBYING & FUNDING

Silicon South engages in ongoing promotion of the sector to regional partners and wins a contract to deliver a series of feasibility studies

STEERING GROUP

Established with both public and private sector participation. Monthly meetings are held to share insights and highlight opportunity from across industry. Silicon South runs industry consultation sessions, to help determine demand-led strategy

BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

Could supporting a startup Accelerator programme lead to new jobs. Association established with Dorset Business Angels.

REGIONAL FILM DEVELOPMENT

How can local film be supported and can international interest be developed through the establishment of a major film studio?

FEASIBILITY STUDIES

SiSo commissioned to undertake research to develop a platform of information, data and opinion from which a view of Dorset's local landscape could be built. SiSo worked with local, national and global experts to consider these questions:

VFX DEVELOPMENT

Could Dorset capitalise on AUB and BU's talented VFX / 3D / Animation graduates to establish jobs in Dorset? Despite industry interest, research demonstrates that employment generally leads to roles in London studios

INCUBATION

Can an incubator support the sector and lead to job creation? SiSo awarded £1m from LEP to support co-development of incubator with THAT Group. This, ultimately, leads to foundation of THIS Workspace in Bournemouth Echo building

REGIONAL CAPACITY & COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

How is the local digital* sector regarded outside the region, and how can Dorset embrace lessons from other regions' success?

INWARD INVESTMENT

Silicon South fields enquiries for companies interested in setting up in Dorset

SUPPORT & SPONSORSHIP

Supporting some leading regional events such as: BFX, Silicon Beach & Digital Wave

It hosts deputations from a number of international operators from USA, Asia and Europe, including Google, and UKTI's Inward Investment teams from embassies around the world

THE EXPLORATION

DEFINITION

Our definition of Digital is expanded to include 'Applied Digital' to take on board the application of tech in industries across all sectors - such as healthcare and financial services

MARINE

European Maritime Day - Poole

APPLIED DIGITAL INITIATIVES

Silicon South supported the growth of Applied Digital applications in Dorset through the following:

HEALTH

Help to establish the NHS - Dorset Clinical Commissioning group's Innovation Lab - "Wired"

HACKDAY

Support MIND Hackday

PROMOTING THE INDUSTRY

Manifesto signatories ask for a brand to support the region - Silicon South logo is created

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT & PUBLIC SECTOR BIDS

Multiple tenders written and funding sought for sector support

THESE INCLUDED

The British Film Institute, Arts Council, Arts and Humanities Research Council and...

INNOVATE UK

Silicon South lead consortium bid to Innovate UK Internet of Things for which they were shortlisted. They were also shortlisted for the Innovate UK Launchpad initiative

JP MORGAN DIGITAL HORIZONS

A £300k 2-year programme to help disadvantaged students discover potential career paths in digital sector. Working with x4 schools in most disadvantaged areas of Bournemouth plus Bournemouth and Poole College

CREATIVE ENGLAND

SiSo secures £300k to invest into startups from Creative England

THIS LEAD TO:

5000+ student interactions
Large increase in digital apprentices locally
130+ workplace experiences given - thanks to amazing support from local businesses

FIRST BOURNE

Digital accelerator First Bourne is launched in partnership with Creative England

SILICON SOUTH™

The board later adopts 'SiSo' as a distinct, separate name - for delivering activities such as workshops and events

THE FOUNDATION

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Brings additional funding of £600k - as part of overall £1.2m programme. This supports a wide range of business support activities

PRE-ACCELERATOR

Intensive support and mentoring for 8 local startups

WORKSHOPS

A series of workshops aimed at supporting early stage businesses

10TH DEGREE

One day intensive one-to-one mentoring sessions from 10 experts

GRANTS

Up to £300k in grants provided to more established companies to accelerate their growth plans. Consultancy to apply for other funding such as Innovate UK and Horizon 2020 also offered

MENTORING

6 month programme of one-to-one advice sessions from successful entrepreneurs

ACCESS PASS

Providing funding for businesses to attend conferences and events

COMMUNICATIONS

Promoting local business achievements, events and activities

THE FUTURE

Ongoing programme of activities continues into 2019. Board expands to include greater representation of sector interests

THE APPLICATION