



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Innovation: Resource Sheet for Food and Drink SMEs

This document includes information on where to go for support on innovation and resources that you can use. If you have any questions or feedback on the resource, please email foodanddrinkpromotion@defra.gov.uk.

Food and Drink Innovation Gateway

- The Food and Drink Innovation Gateway is a one-stop shop that gives food and drink manufacturers of all sizes an opportunity to unlock access to the adoption of automation, digitalisation and new technology.
- Through a free consultation with the UK's world-leading experts, we will work with you to identify challenges, large and small, and offer technology-based, cost-effective solutions that can help to grow your business.
- You can access the Innovation Gateway here: [Innovation Gateway | The Food & Drink Federation \(fdf.org.uk\)](https://www.innovationgateway.org.uk/)
- The Innovation Gateway has been developed by the Food and Drink Federation (FDF). The FDF are a membership organisation – to learn more you can go to their website: [FDF | The Food & Drink Federation](https://www.fdf.org.uk/) or contact: membership@fdf.org.uk.

Innovate UK KTN

- Innovate UK KTN provides business support, funding and connections to help businesses on their innovation journey. You can find out more about the support offered here: [How we help - Innovate UK KTN \(ktn-uk.org\)](https://www.innovateuk.com/ktn/)
- Their website includes resources such as:
 - **Grant Funding Application Guide:** This is a guide to help businesses prepare applications for grant funding. While the guide has been produced with Innovate UK programmes in mind, the advice is transferable to most grant funding applications. You can access the guide here: [KTN-Good-Application-Guide.pdf \(ktn-uk.org\)](https://www.ktn-uk.org/ktn-good-application-guide.pdf)
 - **Innovation Canvas Tool:** This is a tool that helps businesses to identify the most important challenges in developing an innovative product, service or

process. You can use it to prioritise next actions and seek other views or advice. You can access the tool here: [Home – Innovation Canvas \(ktn-uk.org\)](https://www.ktn-uk.org/)

Made Smarter Adoption

- Made Smarter Adoption is focused on boosting the competitiveness, productivity, and growth of manufacturing SMEs through the adoption of industrial digital technology (IDT).
- The support available for SMEs through this programme includes impartial advice, diagnostic and technology road mapping, as well as digital internships, leadership and management training, and match funded grants for equipment.
- Made Smarter Adoption is currently running in the North West, North East, Yorkshire and Humberside, West Midlands and East Midlands in England.
- You can find out more about the programme here: [UK Digital Manufacturing advice & innovation | Made Smarter](#)
- You can also view case studies from SMEs who have used the programme such as:
 - [English lakes ice cream case study.pdf \(madesmarter.uk\)](#)
 - [Firstplay dietary foods case study-1.pdf \(madesmarter.uk\)](#)

Innovate with food and drink products for the elderly

- The innovating food for seniors website has open access training and guidance for SMEs looking to innovate with food and drink products for the elderly. You can access the website here: [Home - Innovating Food for Seniors](#)
- It includes resources such as:
 - **A Good Practice Guide for SMEs:** This is a training tool for SMEs to get a complete view of commercial examples driving the opportunities for innovation in food and drink products for the elderly in Europe. You can access the guide here: [Good Practice Guide for SMEs - Innovating Food for Seniors](#)
 - **A self-assessment tool** to determine how prepared your company is to innovate nutrient-enriched food products and services for seniors. You can access the tool here: [PIFS Assessment \(brilliantassessments.com\)](#)

Local support on innovation

Check with your Local Authority about what innovation support is available locally. For example, **the below support is available for SMEs from Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.**

- The University of Nottingham offers free support through workshops, collaborative research, development projects and consultancy services for SMEs in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.
- The Food Innovation Centre has already supported over 170 food and drink manufacturers in the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire area.

- The support can take many different forms from help with product development and packaging, measures to adopt a more sustainable approach to production, ways to switch to online sales or making the most of a new consumer trend, such as nutritious food.

You can go to their website [here](#) to:

- Find out more about the services that they offer
- Access case studies from businesses that have used their services such as:
 - [Case study - Tambinis - The University of Nottingham](#)
 - [Case study - Distil - The University of Nottingham](#)
- Access free reports and factsheets on healthy eating and sustainable production