

Celebrating 25 Years

of Innovation, Growth,
and Impact



For a quarter of a century, Harwell Innovation Centre has stood at the heart of Harwell Campus, one of the UK's most dynamic science and technology campuses, nurturing bold ideas and supporting the growth of pioneering businesses. From fledgling startups to thriving scale-ups, the centre has been a launchpad for innovation, collaboration and commercial success.

This booklet celebrates the remarkable journeys of companies that have called Harwell Innovation Centre home. Each case study is a testament to the power of vision, resilience, and the supportive ecosystem that Harwell provides. These stories reflect not only individual achievements but also the collective spirit of innovation that defines our community.

As we mark this milestone anniversary, we honour the past, celebrate the present, and look forward to a future filled with even greater possibilities. Thank you for being part of our journey.



“Harwell Innovation Centre highlights the power of innovation centres to build communities of SMEs, drive local economic growth, and support the development of groundbreaking technologies.”

Jo Stevens, Managing Director of Oxford Innovation Space

Digostics' world first home screening test for diabetes developed at Harwell Innovation Centre

According to Diabetes UK, it is estimated that more than 1.3 million people are living with undiagnosed diabetes in the UK. Digostics Ltd – a med tech company based at the Harwell Innovation Centre in Oxford – is on a mission to support the accurate and timely diagnosis of all types of diabetes with its new simple to use home testing kit, GTT@home.

A revolutionary new diagnostic solution, GTT@home is a user-friendly kit that contains everything required for a patient to easily complete a remote oral glucose tolerance test OGTT. It analyses fingerprick blood samples instantly to mitigate the risk of sample degradation to give the most accurate test data possible and enables patients to send that data to their healthcare team immediately, using a smartphone app.

Suitable for use with different patient groups, Digostics' home test has been initially launched to detect gestational diabetes during pregnancy and it has now been adopted by two NHS trusts to replace in-clinic testing. The company has also completed a pilot with the Medical Research Council for Type 2 Diabetes screening, a pilot monitoring people with Cystic Fibrosis and is involved in a project with the University of Oxford to develop screening for Type 1 Diabetes in children.

All the Research and Development (R&D) for the product took place at Harwell Innovation Centre, which has played a key

role in supporting the Digostics team on their innovation journey.

Digostics founder, James Jackson, originally moved into Harwell Innovation Centre in 2002, shortly after setting up SmartSensor Telemed Ltd. Over the years, he has occupied various offices in the building – including Winston Churchill's old office – as he increased or decreased space in line with the needs of his business. In 2019, James formed Digostics to take the new home testing product to market, and the company took on the IP of its predecessor, SmartSensor.

James Jackson, CEO and founder of Digostics, explains: "I don't think we would be where we are today if we hadn't been located within the Harwell Innovation Centre, as it has exposed us to a vibrant science and technology ecosystem. Everything has been on our doorstep, enabling us to easily access all the elements we needed to succeed. Without centres like this, innovators would be isolated in little silos. The centre plays a vital role in connecting the science community and fostering collaborations.

“The fact I’ve been located at Harwell Innovation Centre for over 20 years is testament to how good it is. The team are very supportive and always go out of their way to help. For example, when we were setting up for our clinical trial with Oxford University, the centre team helped us recruit part-time employees and sorted us out with additional space. Our Finance Director also came to us through an introduction from the centre.”

When James first moved into Harwell Innovation Centre, which is managed by Oxford Innovation Space and based on the world-renowned Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, it was just himself and

two part-time employees. Today, Digostics employs 10 staff as well as specialist contractors and has established a presence in New York to facilitate a screening study in Type 1 Diabetes at Yale Medical School.

With an eye on the global market, the company has also opened Digostics Middle East in Dubai, securing regulatory approval in United Arab Emirates (UAE) and its first customers. Add to this the launch of Digostics Asia in Singapore and the company’s future on the international stage looks bright.

James concludes: “We want to become the ‘go to’ diabetes testing technology with our GTT@home test and alongside that we are building a digital logistics platform that could be used to detect other conditions including preeclampsia in pregnancy and post-natal depression.”



For further information on Digostics Ltd, visit www.digostics.com

Friendship, ambition and early stage support from Oxford Innovation Space helps Planet IT rocket to success

Started by childhood friends Gavin Jones and Sean Smith in 2003, Planet IT has grown from its humble begins at Harwell into a leading IT company, which now employs almost 100 staff and boasts a prestigious international client base.

Co-founders Gavin and Sean demonstrated their entrepreneurial flair at aged 12, when they started a car washing business to earn money for a Nintendo Game Boy. As they grew up, they did various jobs together on market stalls and in supermarkets until they both embarked on careers in the IT sector.

In 2003, aged 24, they decided to start a business together following their frustration from working for IT companies who were more about profit than client satisfaction. Just over a year later in 2005, they moved out of their home office into Harwell Innovation Centre. Planet IT became the 50th business to move into the centre, which has now supported over 300 businesses.

Sean Smith explains:

“When we looked around the Harwell Innovation Centre, we were new to business and very nervous about signing a contract for an office. However, the team was very supportive and put us at ease. They made the entire process a positive experience for us.”

“The help Oxford Innovation Space gave us, especially in the early days was essential to our success. Being in the Harwell centre meant our clients received a professional first impression of our business. For example, we were based at Harwell when an important client, the Royal Household, came to inspect us as part of the due diligence process. The centre team went above and beyond to support us that day, and were integral to us securing that contract.”

Planet IT were able to benefit from admin support from the centre team and networking events, which provided them with valuable introductions to key people and the opportunity to learn about other businesses. As the business grew, they were able to easily upgrade their office space three times to accommodate their needs. Eventually in 2018, having grown to a team of 30 staff, they graduated from the centre and moved into their own premises at Milton Park.

Today the business has almost 100 employees, supporting clients across the UK and Europe. Clients that include the BBC, the Royal Household, the National Portrait Gallery, the Imperial War Museum, Conde Naste and Oxford City Council, to name just a few.

A photograph of three people, two men and one woman, standing outside a brick building with large windows. The man on the left is Black with dreadlocks, wearing a black polo shirt and jeans. The woman in the middle is white with blonde hair, wearing a bright green cardigan over a black dress. The man on the right is white with grey hair, wearing a blue denim shirt and grey trousers. They are all smiling. A yellow and green diagonal graphic element is on the left side of the image.

Gavin Jones adds:

“We’ve grown beyond our expectations. Some of the clients we have now, we never dreamt we’d be working with when we first started out. What we learnt at Harwell Innovation Centre helped us fill in the gaps in our knowledge and accelerate us as business owners. We wouldn’t be where we are today without that early support.”

Testament to Planet IT’s success is the growing number of accolades they have won over the years. These include being named Kaspersky Reseller of the Year 2006, receiving an AAA star award from a Global Medical Company in Singapore, being named as Sophos EMEA Partner of the Year in 2022, becoming an approved Crown Commercial Service (CCS) supplier and being recognised in the top five best tech companies to work for in the UK.

Gavin continues: “Our time at Harwell Innovation Centre was also instrumental in helping us develop our own company culture. We saw how the centre team instigated introductions, developed partnerships and created a nurturing environment. Similarly, we wanted to build a business with a safe, encouraging culture. Our first employee, Adrian Sweeney, is now our Chief Commercial Officer, and this year we have six staff celebrating 10 years with us.”

The co-founders are also committed to helping young people develop a career in IT and supporting their local community. In 2013, they began a partnership with a local college to provide apprenticeship opportunities. More recently, they have donated 200 laptops to their old school, Oxford Academy.

Talking about their longstanding business partnership, Gavin says: “It is a gift to have been on this journey with someone you trust. We’re ridiculously lucky to have such a great friendship and our differences make us stronger as a team. I’d definitely advise people to find a partner to start a business with as it can be quite lonely as a solo business owner.”

Sean concludes: “It can be stressful starting and running a business, but those challenges change over time. All the plaudits we receive today are for all the things we earned in the early days. Those first few years were the most testing, but the team at Harwell helped us through them and were a key element in our journey.”

Planet IT’s growth story shows how innovation centres can accelerate progress by offering tailored space and dedicated business support.

For more information on Planet IT, visit www.planet-it.net

The future is bright for RedWave Labs thanks to the flexible support of Harwell Innovation Centre



RedWave Labs has been going from strength to strength since it moved into the Harwell Innovation Centre almost 13 years ago. The flexible and comprehensive support offered by Oxford Innovation Space, which manages the centre, has been a key factor in the company's growth, enabling it to be more agile and connecting it into the wider community on the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus.

Founded in 2004 by Dr Dmitri Permogorov, RedWave Labs design and manufacture high quality custom electronics, specialising in photonics – the science of light waves and their generation, detection and manipulation.

Initially starting with a virtual office, RedWave Labs moved into its first physical office in the Harwell Innovation Centre in 2012 with two employees. Today, the company employs 20 staff and occupies eight rooms of different sizes in the centre, using a couple of the rooms as optic labs with equipment and blackout blinds. The ability to have self-enclosed separate rooms was essential for the team as they work with lasers.

“We chose to take an office in the Harwell centre as it had the best mix of location, service and flexibility to grow,” explains Dr Nadia Permogorov, Director of RedWave Labs. “If you suddenly need an extra room its easy to scale up space. This flexibility has allowed us to be more agile as a business, expanding at short notice when a project has required it, without having to move or find space elsewhere.”

RedWave Labs was established to provide electronics and optics design, development and pilot production using the latest technological developments. The company now has an international customer base with clients in defence, aerospace and many academic institutions, varying in size from start-ups to large international corporations.

Nadia continues: “Our work is quite specialised but there is this openness and culture of collaboration in the centre. The centre team are always willing to facilitate your needs and they have introduced us to other relevant businesses. In the early days, they also used to answer phones for us and now they organise meeting rooms and catering for us. This support has allowed us to focus on delivering our core strengths and taken away a lot of little distractions.”

Continuing on its growth trajectory, RedWave Labs has moved into the commercial quantum space. Bringing outcomes of research projects to life, the company is bringing its first products in quantum technology to market.

The success of RedWave Labs highlights the value of innovation centres, which combine flexible, specialist space with expert in-house business support services.

For more information on Redwave Labs, please visit www.redwavelabs.com

T-Squared establishes firm foundations for growth at Harwell Innovation Centre



The UK leader in the design and build of fast-track complex facilities for high-tech industry sectors, T-Squared has established solid foundations for growth at Harwell Innovation Centre over the last three years.

Having moved into the centre, T-Squared found the ideal location from which to accelerate their business.

Connor McAleer, Director at T-Squared, explains: "For us, taking space at the Harwell Innovation Centre is a stepping stone to establishing an onsite presence on the wider campus. Being here, you are part of a thriving cluster of science and technology businesses working at the cutting-edge of their respective fields. Given the nature of our work and client base, it is a logical place for us to be."

"We've grown locally as a business in the last few years and being located in the innovation centre has had a role to play in that growth. The location couldn't be better for us as we are in a good place to partner with future customers of the wider Harwell Campus and support the requirement of their complex facilities."

Established 20 years ago, T-Squared makes high performance, highly specialised facilities for innovators who change the world. Providing end-to-end solutions, the company designs and builds high-spec facilities for high-tech sectors like life sciences, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, electronics, quantum and space.

Talking about the benefits of being based in the innovation centre, Connor says: "We've

been introduced to other occupants of the centre and the campus through various onsite events, which has helped us to raise our profile and make new contacts. And it works both ways. We've also introduced a client to the centre, so they can take space there while we complete their new facility.

"As well as providing affordable and flexible accommodation, the centre offers additional administrative support through the reception team. We've also met with the centre's innovation director, who has provided us with additional business support services and introduced us to other businesses in their network."

T-Squared has a growing number of clients on the Harwell Campus, including Oxford Nanopore Technologies. T-Squared was able to provide a turnkey design, construction and validation service for Oxford Nanopore, taking an empty shell to a validated cleanroom in just seven months. It delivered a 3,200m² production facility, which incorporated high-grade ISO classified cleanrooms, product laboratories, packaging suite, offices and warehousing. More recently, the company has been working on the design and fit-out for Quera Computing Ltd on the new Tech Edge Development.

For more information on T-Squared, please visit www.tsquared.co.uk

Harwell provides a winning fusion of flexible space and specialist support for Woodruff Scientific

One of the most recent companies to graduate from the centre is Woodruff Scientific, which was founded by Simon Woodruff in 2022. But Simon didn't just launch one company at the centre —he launched three, all focused on accelerating the commercialisation of fusion energy.

Woodruff Scientific develops expert cost models for fusion energy, creating precise data-driven models to help streamline the path to commercial fusion power. Fusion Advisory Services (FAS) specialises in providing detailed fusion company and technology reports for venture capital firms, investors and industry leaders. Meanwhile, nTtau Digital is a trailblazing engineering software design company, focused on revolutionising fusion power plant design through AI.

Originally from Manchester, Simon had been working in the US for 25 years. When he relocated back to the UK in 2022, he was keen to find suitable office space. On visiting Harwell Innovation Centre, he knew he'd found the ideal location to realise his ambitions.

Simon explains:

“Harwell Innovation Centre gave us the ability to grow as we were building our teams. The way the centre is operated and designed offered us the flexibility we needed, which was fortunate as we outgrew our first two offices within the first year.”

There are also great amenities on the wider Harwell Campus and the proximity to UKAEA was a benefit. Many of our customers are in the US and the Harwell Campus has international recognition, so there is added prestige from being based there.”

Beyond the physical space, Simon also highlights the in-house support and sense of community at the centre:

“The team at the centre were exceptionally supportive and good at connecting companies. For me, it was helpful to be at a place that fostered innovative thinking and offered opportunities to collaborate with likeminded business.”

Since moving into the centre, Simon has expanded his team to 20 staff across the three companies and upgraded his space to six offices. In February 2025, he and his team graduated from Harwell Innovation Centre and moved into Grassroots – another centre in Oxfordshire operated by Oxford Innovation Space.

“Although it was sad to leave Harwell Innovation Centre, there was also a sense

of achievement as it marked a milestone in our progress. The experience we had at the centre we wouldn't have had anywhere else. Co-locating with other innovative businesses, and the regular interactions that leads to, is invaluable for early-stage businesses.”

Today, all three of Simon's companies have secured their first commercial customers and are targeting 30% annual growth. Their success story is a testament to the power of innovation, ambition, and the right environment – something Harwell Innovation

Centre continues to provide for the next generation of pioneering businesses.

“Harwell Innovation Centre provided us with a vibrant environment, where we could establish ourselves, develop our own company culture and implement good workflows. The centre is innovative, supportive and first-class!”



For more information, visit www.woodruffscientific.com,
www.fas.energy and www.nttaudigital.com

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