



THAMES FREEPORT UNVEILS BOLD GLOBAL INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS

London, UK, 1 September 2025 - Thames Freeport today unveiled a bold programme of global innovation partnerships designed to create jobs, attract international investment, and cement the UK's leadership in AI-powered growth, signalling a major boost for the UK's innovation economy. In collaboration with L Marks, PUBLIC, MH&A and Rainmaking, Thames Freeport is spearheading initiatives that promise to deliver new jobs, attract investment, and position the UK as a leader in solutions driving new AI-powered growth. As one of the UK's leading Industrial Strategy Zones, Thames Freeport is uniquely placed to attract international investors and showcase UK innovation on a global stage.

A key highlight of today's announcement is the official launch of the Thames Freeport Connectivity Lab, delivered by L Marks, in collaboration with Cambridge Management Consulting as a groundbreaking initiative designed to advance AI, 5G, and smart infrastructure technologies in ports and logistics. This new Lab will identify and support scale-up of leading startups, and tech companies bringing innovative solutions to the forefront of the Thames Freeport ecosystem.

Backed by newly deployed multi-site private 5G networks from Verizon Business, the Connectivity Lab will serve as a testbed for advanced solutions that transform operations, strengthen competitiveness, and unlock real-world value for Thames Freeport and beyond.

Developed in partnership with DP World London Gateway, Port of Tilbury and Ford Motor Company Dagenham, the Connectivity Lab will connect innovative suppliers with industry leaders in a 10-week immersive programme. Participants will gain direct access to senior executives, hands-on mentorship, and the opportunity to pilot their technologies in real-world environments.

The programme will focus on three critical areas: tracking & monitoring, maintenance & efficiency and health, safety & security. A wildcard category will capture disruptive ideas with the potential to create breakthrough impact.

Applications for the Connectivity Lab are open until 12 October 2025 via [Thames Freeport - Connectivity Lab 2025](#)

The partnership with L Marks also includes their appointment as Thames Freeport's strategic innovation delivery partner, together with PUBLIC and MH&A for several other flagship projects encompassing healthcare, transport and food and drink that will be announced in the coming weeks. These initiatives underscore Thames Freeport's commitment to delivering practical, industry-focused advancements that create lasting economic and environmental benefits for businesses and communities.

Stuart Rimmer, Interim CEO Thames Freeport said: "This announcement marks a bold step in reimagining how ports and industrial regions can lead the future economy. By harnessing AI, advanced connectivity, and sustainable innovation, Thames Freeport is positioning the UK at the forefront of global change. These collaborations with L Marks and Rainmaking underline our commitment to delivering real-world impact, creating jobs, supporting businesses, and building a future-ready economy where communities prosper and new industries thrive. I am particularly pleased that L Marks will also be working with Thames Freeport as a strategic innovation delivery partner, ensuring we can deliver a pipeline of innovation across multiple sectors".

Tom White, Director of Innovation at Thames Freeport, said:

"The Connectivity lab and our wider partnerships give us the platform to mobilise new solutions at scale. Working alongside innovators, corporates and the public sector, we are building an ecosystem that delivers real impact for both businesses and communities. Together with technology leaders, investors and startups, we are seizing the opportunity to create a global hub of impact-led innovation, and the door is open to those ready to be a part of it".

Transforming the Region with Global and National Impact

Thames Freeport, strategically located along the River Thames, serves as the global gateway to Europe's most economically active consumer city. By combining advanced manufacturing, logistics, and sustainable construction with state-of-the-art infrastructure, the Freeport is creating a globally competitive environment for research and development. Offering tax incentives, and unparalleled connectivity, the Freeport has already secured £1.5 billion of investment, creating over 1,400 jobs and today's announcements are expected to accelerate that momentum.

Driving Innovation Across Industries

The Connectivity Lab will focus on developing place-centric 5G applications, smart infrastructure, and sustainable logistics. By identifying and partnering with promising technology innovators through the scouting process, the Lab

will foster solutions that deliver measurable benefits, such as improved connectivity, reduced emissions, and enhanced efficiency.

Lord Marks of Hale CBE, Chairman of L Marks, highlighted the vital role of innovation in delivering value to Thames Freeport and the wider region:

"The launch of these innovation partnerships at Thames Freeport represents exactly the kind of bold, industry-led collaboration that the UK is moving towards to demonstrate its global ambitions. By combining the strengths of world-class corporates, visionary entrepreneurs, and cutting-edge technologies, we are creating a platform that delivers commercial impact today while driving sustainable growth, and jobs for the future. As their strategic innovation delivery partner, L Marks is proud to play a central role in ensuring Thames Freeport becomes the reference site for how innovation can transform and future-proof industries, regions, and the national economy."

Delivering Jobs, Growth, and Sustainability

Thames Freeport's innovation partnerships are expected to generate new jobs, and support the UK's transition to a high-tech, low-carbon economy. With over 1,200 acres of development land, Thames Freeport is uniquely positioned to deliver long-term socioeconomic value.

These partnerships are a testament to how targeted innovation can address pressing challenges, from reducing logistical bottlenecks to creating sustainable supply chains. As the UK continues to prioritise innovation as a driver of economic growth, Thames Freeport is proud to be at the forefront of these efforts.

Revolutionising Construction Through Rainmaking Partnership

The Freeport has also launched a partnership with global innovation leader Rainmaking, working alongside partners Energiesprong UK, Ramboll, BE-ST, Tallarna and Eon, to develop a Sustainable Construction Innovation Lab. This groundbreaking initiative aims to revolutionise building practices, make homes and energy costs more affordable, and launch new cross-industry collaborations, aligning with the UK's national goals for sustainability and economic resilience.

Phill Roche, CEO of Rainmaking, praised the Construction Lab's potential:

"The Lab represents a huge opportunity to combine cutting-edge technology with sustainable practices. By working with Thames Freeport, we're creating a platform for innovation that will not only transform the

construction industry but also contribute to the UK's broader goals of decarbonisation and economic growth."

Rainmaking, a global innovation leader with experience running over 170 programmes worldwide, will play a pivotal role in connecting multinational companies, local businesses, and government bodies. This collaborative approach ensures that the initiative will deliver both local and national benefits.

About Thames Freeport

Thames Freeport is a transformative initiative strategically located along the River Thames. By integrating advanced manufacturing, sustainable construction, food and drink, green energy technologies, and circular economy practices, Thames Freeport aims to drive economic growth and innovation across Thurrock in South Essex and the London boroughs of Havering and Barking and Dagenham. Its mission is to catalyse job creation, foster technology adoption, and champion low-carbon solutions, shaping a leading industrial corridor for the 21st century.

About L Marks

L Marks is the global market leader in corporate innovation, trusted by many of the world's most well-respected brands and organisations to identify, validate, and implement transformative solutions. Through its global network spanning more than 80 countries, L Marks discovers over 10,000 startups and scaleups annually and has enabled over 480 to pilot with corporate partners, achieving an industry-leading deployment rate of 78%. L Marks alumni have collectively raised over \$3.6 billion in venture funding. With over a decade of experience in delivering 100+ award-winning innovation programmes across Europe, North America, and Asia, L Marks is embedding new structures and technologies, driving an innovative culture, and ultimately fuelling sustainable growth.



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