

## Heather Cooke

---

**From:** Michael O Dowd <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 23 January 2019 12:38  
**To:** RSES  
**Subject:** Submission to Draft

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

The North East Regional Skills Forum wishes to make the following submission:

Page 95 of the Draft Strategy states that among the Sectoral Opportunities in the region are :

*'Advanced manufacturing, smart manufacturing, pharma/bio, food and engineered products.'*

Along the M1 corridor there has been a number of significant FDI investments in companies that will require smart/ advanced manufacturing capabilities.

The North East Regional Skills Forum is of the view that an Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre ( Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence) would be an important addition to the economic assets in the region and consequently believe that this should be reflected in the final plan.

The advantages are :

The establishment of an Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence will provide employer-led sector specific advanced manufacturing programmes for current and future workers.

These Training interventions will help Industry test-bed and implement smart technology industry solutions through simulated production environments.

These Training interventions on industrial robotics and automation operating skills will be identified from actual projects for better training and upskilling of current and future employees. These training courses will include industrial robotics, smart manufacturing systems, automation operating skills and 3D up to QQI Level 6 levels.

In support of this proposal The National Skills Bulletin -2018 highlighted the following:

*Operatives & Elementary Occupations n.e.c*

Industry accounts for over half of the employment in these occupations (e.g. manufacturing of food products and pharmaceutical products), with employment also in the wholesale/retail and accommodation and food sectors (e.g. cleaners). These occupations are likely to be impacted by the automation of manufacturing processes, which will lead to a demand for upskilling of existing workforce to evolve with new digitalisation and automation requirements.

I trust this submission will be considered favorably.

Michael O'Dowd

North East Regional Skills Forum manager