

SHIFT

LONDON'S LIVING TESTBED

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The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games were a catalyst for change and a platform to regenerate part of East London. Ten years on, a group of organisations based at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park have come together to form a new, inclusive innovation district, that will help create better urban futures.

SHIFT, the new identity for the innovation district, reflects the collective shift that society needs to make to accelerate a thriving, fair and resilient future in our cities. We hope that individuals, groups and organisations near and far will share and join us on this mission.

SHIFT will become the UK's first living urban testbed of its kind, uniting innovators from community, business and academia. It brings together world-class partners: UCL, Lendlease, UAL's London College of Fashion, Loughborough University in London, Here East, Plexal and London Legacy Development Corporation. And we are all focused on tackling everyday problems facing cities and their citizens today. Like the urgent changes needed to cope with the climate emergency; addressing health and wellbeing challenges in cities and looking at how people and goods will move around urban environments in the future. Located in the growing and diverse heart of east London, SHIFT will explore, test and improve these kinds of everyday issues.

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park provides the physical layer of our living testbed. It offers a real urban setting with 560 acres of green spaces, waterways, sport and leisure facilities, public realm, roads and routes and homes, along with a range of academic, business and cultural spaces. This is an ideal place to pilot initiatives, from zero carbon micro-mobility trials to urban farming and new recycled timber materials and so much more.

SHIFT represents a powerful collective of partners who want to work together and with others to change our cities for the better. We will listen and respond to locally identified priorities that have the potential to scale and transfer to other places too. Our collaboration is not new but has been growing. We've already supported the likes of East London Inclusive Enterprise Zone (ELIEZ), an accelerator programme focused on entrepreneurs and design thinkers who are disabled or whose work focuses on disabled people. As well as an affordable workspace challenge to create an adaptable fit-out model that reduces property costs and waste.

Based on the principles of inclusive innovation, our aim is to create a series of formal and informal networks. These will bring together researchers, community groups, citizen scientists, innovative businesses, tech and creative start-ups, government and investors. They will be built around specific missions to explore key challenges.

We will make sure our approach is based on good growth and sustainable outcomes by:

- putting climate resilience, clean air and net zero at the heart of business plans

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- putting the public at the heart of innovation, so that research and development focuses on the needs of the local community as well as sustainable business
- ensuring fair and good work practices and developing diverse talent pipelines to support emerging-sector opportunities and future jobs
- encouraging a creative culture that supports entrepreneurship, investment and innovation and values skills, diversity, inclusion and connectivity
- maintaining a thriving, vibrant public place to attract individuals, families and communities to contribute, learn, work, live and enjoy.

Our mission is ambitious. We will need the help and support of a wide range of partners to make tangible differences in the lived experience of people in east London and beyond. If you are interested in getting involved in SHIFT's work or would like to join us in striving towards better urban futures for our citizens and their city, please email hello@shiftlondon.co.uk

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