

April 2025

Dear Mayoral Candidate

Priorities for the Hull and East Yorkshire Mayoral Election Candidates

[Yorkshire Universities](#) (YU) is committed to driving the economic and social prosperity of Yorkshire through harnessing the collective contribution of the twelve higher education institutes (HEIs) it represents. We work closely with the region's local authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) in areas of shared interest. A [Memorandum of Understanding between YU and Yorkshire and Humber Councils](#) has cemented this partnership.

The University of Hull is a valuable member of YU, and a vital anchor institution in Hull and East Yorkshire. Each year, the University creates [£1.2 billion Gross Value Added](#) (GVA) and it supports over 14,000 jobs. The university's civic contribution has also been recognised nationally through its work to [support local communities, businesses and initiatives](#). As Hull and East Yorkshire looks to harness the opportunities that will be presented by devolution, the University of Hull is well placed to work with the new Mayor and MCA to play a pivotal role in helping to create local growth, jobs and development.

As part of your programme, should you be elected, we could encourage you to support three strategic priorities.

#1: Improving productivity and skills and training

It is important that the elected Mayor and local leaders work closely with the higher education sector to recognise the value of a whole and responsive local skills system. Importantly, Mayoral candidates should look to encourage and incentivise, using devolved and national funding, stronger collaboration between higher education and further education to tackle skills gaps in key sectors of the Hull and East Yorkshire economy. YU is leading work to strengthen graduate employability within and across Yorkshire, by [building relationships between universities and businesses](#). Principally, we believe that expanding and improving opportunities for the region's existing and future workforce requires a genuine partnership with business and industry to support and match the talent pipeline with jobs. As part of this, we would encourage the Mayor to champion the value of transferable skills. We would also encourage the Mayor to build on the rich experience contained in the [Regional Inclusive Recruitment Guide](#), published by YU, which illustrates the value to employers of employing graduates from all backgrounds and all communities.

We know that the Mayor will champion the case for better transport connections in Hull and East Yorkshire, and alongside other Mayors, improved transport within and across the wider Yorkshire and Humber region, and to other key markets in the north of England, and nationally. We would encourage you to consider joining the other Yorkshire Mayors who have come together to work in partnership under the [White Rose Agreement](#), as well as working in close collaboration with the new Mayor in Greater Lincolnshire on critical 'cross-Humber' issues. We would support Mayoral candidates making the case for new capital and revenue funding to improve transport infrastructure and ensure more accessible transport for all. It is vital that people in Hull and East Yorkshire can reliably access education and employment.

#2: Building a sustainable and prosperous future for our communities

For the region to continue to produce innovative solutions to and world-leading research we need to continue to create and nurture talent that can help attract international investment. We would encourage the Mayor to embrace the economic and social value of innovation, as well as the benefits of investing in research and development to tackle some of the enduring and complex challenges we face, including poor health, rising poverty and environmental degradation. Hull and East Yorkshire is ideally placed to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by new and substantial investments in green technologies to reduce emissions and improve health outcomes. We support a just transition to a low or zero carbon future that leaves no person or community behind.

#3: Championing Hull and East Yorkshire as a place primed for new investment, and a region to do business

Hull and East Yorkshire has amazing natural and physical assets that are the core ingredients needed to attract, embed and sustain international investment and jobs. The University of Hull, with its research and business support infrastructure, has a vital role to play, not least through the spinouts of new enterprises from the University, but also in helping to scale up local businesses. The University's applied technological knowledge and capabilities in the field of [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#) is world-leading, and it is a major draw for business, enterprise and industry. The University is committed, as a core partner in the coalition within Hull and East Yorkshire, to support the Mayor and MCA in promoting the region to national and international investors and businesses. YU is also ready to play its part in supporting this endeavour, because success in Hull and East Yorkshire is of benefit to the wider Yorkshire region.

Yours sincerely



Dr Peter O'Brien
Executive Director
Yorkshire Universities