

PRESS RELEASE

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£1.4m investment for firm transforming public sector IT

A Manchester company which helps public sector bodies to achieve digital transformation has secured a £1.4 million investment, including £750,000 from [NPIF - Mercia Equity Finance](#), which is managed by Mercia Fund Managers and is part of the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund; £500,000 from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and £150,000 from internal management.

[Shaping Cloud](#) enables the NHS, local authorities and other government departments to adopt cloud technology to deliver their digital transformation strategies. The company's focus for growth is now on its software business and SPINR product, which provides a platform upon which new digital services and streamlined processes can be built. The benefits for public sector bodies is that it provides the ability to easily transact and share data without incurring the capital cost of replacing existing systems.

Established in 2010 by Carlos Oliveira, Shaping Cloud currently employs 18 people and serves clients including NHS Digital, Lancashire and Oxfordshire County Councils, Manchester City Council, the Universities of Sheffield and Nottingham, Homes England, Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership and the Northern Care Alliance.

The funding will allow the company to continue to innovate and develop its cloud products and step up its sales and marketing activity. It is expected to create over a further 12 jobs in the coming months.

Carlos Oliveira, CEO, Shaping Cloud, said:

“Our ambition as a company is to be part of making digital transformation within the public sector a reality. With ambitious targets set out in the government's transformation strategy and health and social care integration agenda, our experience and products, we believe, make us well placed to support these objectives and transform the digital services delivered by public sector bodies.

This investment will therefore enable us to continually develop and promote our SPINR product so our customers can benefit from not only service improvements but cost, operational and efficiency advantages as well.

“The additional support will also allow us to invest in and grow the team and become part of the growing number of innovative businesses based in Manchester and driving change.”

Will Clark, Fund Principal at Mercia Fund Managers, said:

“Public sector organisations face the challenge of trying to build digital services while running many of their core functions on legacy systems. Shaping Cloud helps them to deliver a modern front end solution whilst also increasing efficiency and reducing costs. This additional funding will allow the company to further develop its products and take advantage of the growing market demand.”

Grant Peggie Director at British Business Bank, said:

“Shaping Cloud is a fantastic business that is supporting public sector organisations, whose digital transformation strategies are often stymied by old technology, adopt and take advantage of cloud based solutions. The business is in great shape, and this funding will only help it grow even further as it looks to bolster its headcount and develop new products.”

Shaping Cloud was advised by Rupert Wingate Saul of FWS Advisory who was instrumental in ensuring the right investment support was achieved.

Rupert Wingate Saul, of FWS Advisory, said:

“Shaping Cloud is clearly an ambitious company. This investment will enable it to work with public sector bodies to help them deliver the more citizen-centric services that an increasingly digitally literate population is now demanding. Shaping Cloud is one of the leaders in a new generation of companies which will cement Manchester's place as a major technology hub over the coming years.”

Jan Winstanley of Kuits provided legal advice to Shaping Cloud whilst the Fund was advised by Melanie Yeomans of Manchester-based Ward Hadaway.

The Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund project is supported financially by the European Union using funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020 and the European Investment Bank.

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About Mercia Fund Managers

Mercia Fund Managers provides both equity and debt finance to small businesses based in the UK regions. The Group has more than 300 businesses in its portfolio, a strong record including 11 IPOs and manages in excess of £375.0million of third party funds, including Mercia EIS Funds.

- Mercia Fund Management Limited is authorised and regulated by the FCA under firm reference number 524856
- Enterprise Ventures Limited is authorised and regulated by the FCA under firm reference number 183363

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About The Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund

- The Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund will invest in Microfinance, Business Loans and Equity Finance sub-funds which will offer financing ranging from £25,000 to £2m, specifically to help small and medium sized businesses secure the funding they need for growth and development.
- The Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund is operated by British Business Financial Services Limited, wholly owned by British Business Bank, the UK's national economic development bank. Established in November 2014, its mission is to make finance markets for smaller businesses work more effectively, enabling those businesses to prosper, grow and build UK economic activity.
- The Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund is supported by the European Regional Development Fund, the European Investment Bank, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and British Business Finance Limited, a British Business Bank group company.
- The NPIF covers the following LEP areas: Tees Valley Combined Authority, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Warrington, Cumbria, Liverpool City Region, Lancashire, Humber, Leeds City Region, Sheffield City Region, York, North Yorkshire and East Riding
- The project is receiving up to £140,359,192 of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund. Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>.
- The funds in which Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund invests are open to businesses with material operations, or planning to open material operations, in, Yorkshire and the Humber, the North West and Tees Valley.
- The British Business Bank has published the Business Finance Guide (in partnership with the ICAEW, and a further 21 business and finance organisations). The guide, which impartially sets out the range finance options available to businesses and provides links to support available at a regional level, is available at www.thebusinessfinanceguide.co.uk/bbb

About Shaping Cloud

Shaping Cloud was founded in 2010 by CEO Carlos Oliveira, Chair of techUK's Local Public Services Committee and the Institute of Directors North West Young Director of the Year.

Shaping Cloud works with the NHS, local authorities and other government departments to enable the adoption of cloud technology to support the delivery of their digital transformation strategies. As Microsoft Gold Partners and one of the UK's leading Azure experts, they deliver software and services to public sector organisations that enable them to drive application innovation, unlock insights from data and transform their data centres to support digital transformation.

Its consultancy business has been working with a range of public sector bodies in helping them to understand the role that public cloud can play within their future technology strategy. Its software business has developed two SaaS based products for the sector. The first is its Hybrid Integration platform SPINR which provides an open API platform upon which new digital services and streamlined processes can be built. The second is FOIPRO tool that greatly simplifies and improves the process of managing Freedom of Information requests.

Its customers include NHS Digital, Lancashire and Oxfordshire County Councils, Manchester City Council, the Universities of Sheffield and Nottingham, Homes England, Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust, Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership and the Northern Care Alliance.

For further information visit: <https://shapingcloud.com/>