

## Scattered neutrons land close to home

A high-tech business in Science Vale is playing a critical role in one of the UK's largest science projects.

Large research facilities at the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus issue contracts for millions of pounds of equipment and services every year. For local businesses like Prototech, based in Sutton Courtenay, working with world-class experimental facilities such as STFC's pulsed neutron and muon source, ISIS, can offer long-term financial stability, an improved cashflow and opportunities to expand their manufacturing skills so they can tap into new markets.

After winning a competitive tender, Prototech is manufacturing moderators for ISIS – sophisticated components critical to the successful performance of this facility. Each part of the moderator must be delivered to exacting standards, requiring up to 40 inspections during the manufacturing process. Each moderator costs £45,000.

“The idea that small companies cannot work with big research facilities is wrong,” says Prototech MD John Greenaway. “Small businesses can see huge benefits from the long term contracts on offer. Winning work from large world-class facilities such as ISIS gives us the confidence to pitch for other large contracts. And because our formal relationship with ISIS is set for four years, we can enjoy valuable long term stability at a time when the future of the UK economy is so uncertain.”

For ISIS, being located close to Prototech has reduced the cost of the project – the engineers have been able to problem solve in person rather than over the phone. As ISIS Engineer, Sean Higgins explains “This was an incredibly complex piece of manufacturing and we are very lucky to have such skills available in the UK. But it is up to facilities such as ISIS to identify, and put them to good use. If we don't – we may lose them. ”

For more information:

Prototech: [www.prototech.co.uk](http://www.prototech.co.uk)

ISIS: [www.isis.stfc.ac.uk/index.html](http://www.isis.stfc.ac.uk/index.html)

STFC: [www.stfc.ac.uk](http://www.stfc.ac.uk)

Harwell Science and Innovation Campus [www.harwell.org.uk](http://www.harwell.org.uk)

