

Press release: Home Office awards millions to help tackle worldwide slavery

Projects to protect vulnerable girls from trafficking in Ethiopia and improve care standards for victims of modern slavery in Nepal are among those receiving part of a £4 million funding boost from the Home Office.

The Modern Slavery Innovation Fund (MSIF), which supports international projects to trial innovative ways of stopping modern slavery, has awarded up to £800,000 each to projects across the world.

The first 6 projects which have been chosen for funding are:

- Anti-Slavery International – to improve the working conditions of migrants working in Mauritius
- United Nations University – to develop an online platform to gather global data to support modern slavery policy development
- Stronger Together – to run workshops to raise awareness of modern slavery in South Africa
- The Freedom Fund – will work in India and Nepal to enhance victim care of frontline workers
- Retrak – provides support and education to vulnerable girls in Ethiopia who have been victims of, or are at risk of, child sexual exploitation or domestic servitude
- Ethical Trading Initiative – will help inform workers in Malaysia about their rights and provide access to remedy where they have suffered abuse

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins said:

Human trafficking, forced labour and exploitation are sadly not evils of the past, but are with us today. The government is leading the way through its work to end the horrors of modern slavery across the globe.

The projects being funded today will help protect some of the most vulnerable people on the planet and encourage more innovative approaches to identifying victims and pursuing those who would exploit them.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

Modern slavery is one of the most heinous crimes imaginable. It impacts on some of the most vulnerable people in the world, but also funds organised crime at home in the UK.

UK aid will support the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund to trial new ways to stop this crime. By working across government and with businesses to end trafficking, we will create a safer and more prosperous world for us all.

This is the aid budget working twice as hard – both around the world and helping here at home too.

Lynnette Kay, Country Director for Ethiopia at Retrak, said:

We are pleased to be able to continue our work to support child victims of domestic exploitation in Ethiopia. We support the girls to regain self-esteem, to return to their families and to develop skills to resume education.

We will extend our innovative approach of bringing together employers and domestic workers to ensure domestic work is legal and respects workers' rights. The Modern Slavery Innovation Fund grant focuses attention on a problem that is largely invisible and a cultural blindspot.

Jasmine O'Connor, CEO of Anti-Slavery International, said:

With the UK Home Office Modern Slavery Innovation Fund grant, we aim to build networks of support that will help migrant workers ensure decent working conditions and provide safe mechanisms to raise grievances. Thanks to this work, workers migrating to Mauritius will be better equipped with valuable practical knowledge about their rights and protected against exploitative practices.

We're looking forward to working with retail brands, their Mauritian suppliers, local unions and authorities to fully protect migrant workers from exploitation.

Dr James Cockayne, director of the Centre for Policy Research at United Nations University, said:

United Nations University is honoured to receive the support of the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund.

This funding will support Delta 8.7, the global online knowledge platform on ending modern slavery by 2030 – Target 8.7 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. With this valuable funding we will use computational science and artificial intelligence to accelerate understanding of what works, and creative data visualisation, new languages and direct outreach to policy actors around the globe to encourage them to act on that

understanding.

Jantine Werdmuller von Elgg, managing director at Stronger Together, said:

Stronger Together are delighted to have been awarded funding by the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund to build on and expand our innovative collaborative programme tackling forced labour in South Africa's agricultural supply chains.

Wine, fruit and other products grown and produced by people in South Africa are consumed by people around the world. Our programme in collaboration with our local partners supports responsible businesses across the global supply chains and key stakeholders in South Africa to play the necessary and critical role in reducing the vulnerability of those working in their businesses and supply chains, by providing them with the straightforward guidance, training, tools and opportunity for dialogue and collaboration they need.

Owain Johnstone, Modern Slavery Adviser at Ethical Trading Initiative, said:

ETI is very grateful for the award which will help vulnerable migrant workers in Malaysia to access support and remedy via a new online platform. These workers are often far from home, do not speak the local language, do not know their rights, and are highly vulnerable to exploitation, including modern slavery.

ETI will also work with global businesses in their supply chains worldwide so that they are able to improve working conditions for migrant workers and provide remedy for workers where they have suffered abuse.

Nick Grono, CEO of the Freedom Fund, said:

Together with our frontline partners, we are providing essential support to victims of child labour, early marriage, forced labour, debt bondage and sex trafficking in high-prevalence areas of India and elsewhere.

This grant will enable us to develop and roll out a highly innovative, victim-centred joint service delivery model that combines the most effective anti-slavery approaches with international social care best practice. It will allow groups of grassroots organisations, as well as government agencies, to co-ordinate more effectively and provide greatly improved personalised care to victims and their families.

The funding marks the second phase of the fund and will run until 2021. The first phase of the fund totalled £6 million and supported 10 projects between Spring 2017 and March 2019.

Schemes supported in phase one included:

- projects to raise awareness of trafficking, which reached more than 21,000 across Nigeria and the Philippines and 16,000 in Vietnam
- a project to support more than 200 girls who experienced or were at risk of exploitation received health and educational support in Ethiopia
- hundreds of businesses in South Africa committed to take steps to tackle forced labour in their supply chains

This builds on the work the government is doing internationally to lead the fight against modern slavery. The government has committed a total of £200 million in UK aid to combat modern slavery, of which the Modern Slavery Innovation Fund is just one part.

Through the £33.5 million Modern Slavery Fund, managed by the Home Office, the government is focusing on high risk countries from where we know victims are regularly trafficked to the UK.

We have committed £5 million to our programme in Nigeria, £3 million in Vietnam, and £2 million in Albania. This money complements work being done within the UK and will help to catch offenders, support victims and stop people falling into slavery in the first place.

[Press release: British success stories Wallace & Gromit and Peaky Blinders to feature in next generation entertainment experiences](#)

- Government backing for new projects by Oscar and BAFTA winning companies putting users in the thick of the action
- investment will put UK creative industries “at the cutting edge” of latest virtual and augmented reality technologies
- modern Industrial Strategy in action to ensure home-grown talent remains world-leading for the next generation

The brains behind British success stories Wallace & Gromit, and Peaky Blinders, are joining ambitious new projects led by industry leaders in the games and immersive entertainment sectors to blaze a trail into the world of virtual and augmented reality entertainment – backed by millions of pounds of government investment.

Award winning Aardman, the brains behind Wallace & Gromit, are part of a consortia with developers Tiny Rebel Games, digital specialists Potato, creative agency Sugar Creative and the University of South Wales. Together, they will build on successes of Academy Award-winning films including The Wrong Trousers and A Close Shave by taking the characters into the future of storytelling.

The consortia will be benefiting from £4 million investment to develop new immersive storytelling experience based on their famous creations which will put fans right at the heart of the action, enabling people to join adventures with Wallace & Gromit, looking in any direction, and see and feel part of the action.

A further project is a new virtual reality drama game based on BAFTA-award winning Peaky Blinders using Artificial Intelligence technology: launching in 2020, it will mean that for the first time, characters will respond according to the players' gestures, movement, voice, sound and body language. The project is being led by London-based immersive VR studio, Maze Theory.

Thanks to creations like Peaky Blinders and Wallace & Gromit, the UK's creative industries reached a combined value of over £100 billion in 2017.

Through its modern Industrial Strategy, the government is investing £33 million to ensure the UK's immersive technology industry cements its place as a world-leader in film, TV and game productions for the future, remaining at the cutting edge of the latest technologies and creating thousands of highly-skilled jobs.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Success stories like award-winning Wallace & Gromit and BAFTA-winning Peaky Blinders are part of the reason why our creative industries are truly world-leading – attracting audiences both here in the UK and internationally and helping create a sector already worth some £100 billion to our economy.

It's why through our modern Industrial Strategy we're investing to build on this huge global demand for UK creative content and ensure we lead the world in the next generation of entertainment.

This backing will also give our home-grown talent the opportunity to lead the way in creating and using virtual and augmented reality technologies, remain at the cutting edge and create thousands of highly-skilled jobs.

Aardman and the consortium are behind one of the 21 projects benefiting from government investment in the creative industries – receiving a share of £12 million of the £33 million Ministers have made available.

Other projects that the government is investing in include:

- Improving theatre experiences for a more diverse audience, including personalised sign-language displays for British Sign Language (BSL) users, translation captions for non-English speakers and audio descriptions for visually impaired people. The project led by the National Theatre will research the technical and production means to deliver these initiatives to improve accessibility.
- Making it possible for people to meet their heroes, with personalised storytelling and conversation through virtual reality. Forever Holdings will bring together a research group to transform these immersive encounters, by improving filming techniques and boosting voice interaction.
- Offering businesses immersive learning solutions for employees where they can use virtual and mixed reality headsets to learn at their own pace and repeat tasks as often as required. Holohub would make this platform available to businesses for them to distribute it to staff and track performance.

Creative Industries Minister Margot James said:

The £150 million Creative Industries Sector Deal is helping to drive forward our modern Industrial Strategy and maintain the UK as a world leading destination for creative talent.

Immersive technology is changing the way in which we consume entertainment, and the Audience of the Future programme will demonstrate how we can take people closer to the action than ever before.

UKRI Challenge Director for Audience of the Future, Prof Andrew Chitty said:

It's fantastic that we complete our line-up of audience facing demonstrators with this hugely ambitious collaboration between Tiny Rebel Games, Potato, Sugar and the creators of Wallace and Gromit.

Their aim to revolutionise Augmented Reality gaming along with the advances in AI, haptics, audience interaction and film production technologies from our other competition winners means the public will be able to try out some truly ground breaking experiences over the next 18 months.

The announcement comes on World Intellectual Property Day which celebrates IP rich industries in economies around the world.

The Creative Industries Council (CIC) which negotiated the Creative Industries Sector Deal on behalf of the sector is also welcoming 8 new members as part of a review to ensure the Council is fully representative of the UK's world leading Creative Industries. New members include Alex Mahon of Channel 4, Kanya King from MOBO and Debbie Bestwick from Team 17.

- For more information and updates on the programme please see www.ukri.org/audience-future
- The programme aims to pioneer immersive experiences across the creative industries and was announced in March 2018 in the Creative Industries Sector Deal. It is anticipated that the Audience of the Future Challenge could lead to a significant boost of immersive content in the UK, cementing the UK's position as a dominant market leader in the creative immersive sector.

Industrial Strategy

[The Industrial Strategy](#) sets out a long term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how we are building a Britain fit for the future – how we will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

Creative Industries Sector Deal

Since launching the [Creative Industries Sector Deal](#) in March 2018, key commitments have been delivered:

- The Creative Industries Council (CIC) which negotiated the Creative Industries Sector Deal on behalf of the sector is welcoming 8 new members as part of a review to ensure the Council is fully representative of the UK's world leading Creative Industries. New members include Alex Mahon (Channel 4), Kanya King (MOBO), Debbie Bestwick (Team 17), Annette King (Publicis UK), Stephen Page (Faber and Faber), Lee Brooks (Production Park), Michael Dugher (UK Music), and Andrew Thompson (AHRC).
- All individual demonstrator projects from the Audience of the Future challenge have now been announced, enabling creative businesses to harness the power of immersive technologies to create content, products and services, with companies creating the next generation of entertainment for people around the country.
- The £39 million Creative Industries Clusters Programme has been launched, and nine new R&D partnerships around the UK have been established: Dundee, Edinburgh, Belfast, Yorkshire, Leeds, Cardiff, Bath/Bristol and two in London.
- The £20 million Cultural Development Fund is supporting creative clusters in Wakefield, Grimsby, Plymouth, Worcester and the Thames Estuary area. The clusters will invest in creative, cultural and heritage initiatives that will lead to economic growth and productivity.
- The Creative Local Industry Partnership scheme has been established, which meets regularly and convenes leading industry bodies such as the Creative Industries Federation, Creative Industries Council, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Combined Authorities and partners in the Devolved Nations.
- A Creative Industries Trade and Investment Board has been established, targeting a 50% increase in creative industries exports by 2023.
- The Creative Careers Programme has been launched, which aims to ensure there is a larger and more diverse intake of talent and a broader range

of routes into the creative industries.

- Investment of £2 million has been committed over three years in the Get it Right campaign that educates consumers on the dangers of copyright infringement and direct them towards legitimate sources of creative content online.
- A £4 million Creative Scale Up investment readiness programme has been launched, aimed at increasing the profitability, scalability and productivity of creative industries businesses by supporting scale-up firms so they are better placed to access finance.
- The Creative Industries Council has recently recast its membership to better support delivery of the commitments in the Sector Deal.

UK Research and Innovation

UKRI is a new body which works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities, and government to create the best possible environment for research and innovation to flourish. We aim to maximise the contribution of each of our component parts, working individually and collectively. We work with our many partners to benefit everyone through knowledge, talent and ideas. Operating across the whole of the UK with a combined budget of more than £7 billion, UK Research and Innovation brings together the Arts and Humanities Research Council; Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council; Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council; Economic and Social Research Council; Innovate UK; Medical Research Council; Natural Environment Research Council; Research England; and Science and Technology Facilities Council.

[Press release: Minimum wage underpayment on the rise, Low Pay Commission finds](#)

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Commission finds

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Press release: Minimum wage underpayment on the rise, Low Pay Commission finds

In April 2018 439,000 people were paid less than the hourly minimum wage they are entitled to, a new report from the Low Pay Commission (LPC) finds. Of these, 369,000 were workers aged 25 and over paid less than the National Living Wage (NLW): this equates to 23% of those paid at or below the rate. This is an increase of around 30,000 on the previous year's level of underpayment of the NLW, or a 2 percentage point rise in the share of workers entitled to the rate. 135,000 people were paid below £7.20 per hour (the 2016 introductory NLW rate). These estimates are subject to several caveats (see notes 1-3 below) but are consistent with a trend of increasing underpayment since the introduction of the NLW in 2016.

LPC Chair Bryan Sanderson said:

Our analysis reveals that a worrying number of people are being paid less than the minimum wage. We recently celebrated 20 years of the minimum wage – it has raised pay for millions of workers, but it is essential that people receive what they are entitled to. It is also vital for businesses to be able to operate on a level playing field and not be illegally undercut on wages.

The Government has made real progress with its enforcement of the minimum wage, but more needs to be done to ensure employers comply in the first place and workers know how to enforce their rights.

The LPC's new report looks at the most up to date statistical evidence on the extent of non-compliance with the minimum wage and uses evidence from stakeholders and the Government to reflect on the policy responses to non-compliance.

Women are more likely than men to be paid less than the minimum wage. Underpayment is also higher for the youngest and oldest workers. The largest numbers of underpaid individuals work in hospitality, retail and cleaning and

maintenance; childcare is the occupation with the highest proportion of underpaid workers.

Enforcement of the minimum wage by HM Revenue and Customs has benefited from increased funding, with a record number of workers identified as underpaid, arrears repaid, and fines levied on non-compliant employers in 2017/18. But other important measures – for example, the numbers of cases opened and closed – stood still, and the overall figures were driven by a relatively small number of cases. The LPC welcomes the Government's continued focus on minimum wage enforcement, but we note the continuing challenge in making sure resources are targeted as effectively as possible.

The LPC recommends that the Government continues to invest strongly in communications to both workers and employers around minimum wage compliance and enforcement. The report makes specific recommendations around information for workers and trade unions, guidance for employers and publicity around the enforcement regime.

Measuring the full extent of minimum wage non-compliance remains a significant challenge. The LPC urges the Government to use all available opportunities to improve the measurement of underpayment, and to investigate new methodologies for assessing the scale of non-compliance.

Notes:

1. The estimate of 439,000 workers paid less than the minimum wage is derived from analysis of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). It is not a true estimate of non-compliance for a number of reasons. Some cases of underpayment can be legitimate: for example, because of the Accommodation Offset; commission and bonuses; piece rates; and because the data may fail to identify workers as apprentices.
2. Equally, some underpayment – for example, resulting from deductions to pay through salary sacrifice – will not be shown in ASHE. In addition, employers who are knowingly non-compliant are unlikely to admit this in the survey. And importantly when discussing estimates of underpayment, ASHE is unlikely to include data on the informal economy, where we would expect to find a large share of non-compliance.
3. Analysis of Labour Force Survey (LFS) data also shows an increase in underpayment. This is an unreliable measure of absolute levels of minimum wage pay or non-compliance but does show the pattern of underpayment across the year. Nevertheless, LFS measures of underpayment were higher in 2018 than previous years, and did not fall by as much over the 6 months following the minimum wage uprating.
4. Chart data available on request.
5. The National Living Wage is the statutory minimum wage for workers aged 25 and over. It was introduced in April 2016 and has a target of 60% of median earnings by 2020, subject to sustained economic growth.
6. Different minimum wage rates apply to 21-24 year olds, 18-20 year olds, 16-17 year olds and apprentices aged under 19 or in the first year of an apprenticeship. Rates for workers aged under 25, and apprentices, are lower than the NLW to reflect lower average earnings and higher unemployment rates. International evidence also suggests that younger

workers are more exposed to employment risks arising from the pay floor than older workers. Unlike the NLW (where the possibility of some consequences for employment have been accepted by the Government), the LPC's remit requires us to set the rates for younger workers and apprentices as high as possible without causing damage to jobs and hours.

7. The Accommodation Offset is an allowable deduction from wages for accommodation, applicable for each day of the week. In April 2019 it will increase to £7.55 per day.
8. The National Living Wage is different from the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage. Differences include that: the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage are voluntary pay benchmarks that employers can sign up to if they wish, not legally binding requirements; the hourly rate of the UK Living Wage and London Living Wage is based on an attempt to measure need, whereas the National Living Wage is based on a target relationship between its level and average pay; the UK Living Wage and London Living Wage apply to workers aged 18 and over, the National Living Wage to workers aged 25 and over. The Low Pay Commission has no role in the UK Living Wage or the London Living Wage.
9. The Low Pay Commission is an independent body made up of employers, trade unions and experts whose role is to advise the Government on the minimum wage. The rate recommendations contained in the 2018 Report were agreed unanimously by the Commission.
10. The nine Low Pay Commissioners are:
 - Bryan Sanderson (Chair)
 - Professor Sarah Brown
 - Professor Richard Dickens
 - Kate Bell
 - Kay Carberry
 - Simon Sapper
 - Neil Carberry
 - Clare Chapman
 - Martin McTague

National Minimum Wage rates

Minimum wage rate	Rate 1 April 2018-31 March 2019	Rate from 1 April 2019
National Living Wage	£7.83	£8.21
21-24 Year Old Rate	£7.38	£7.70
18-20 Year Old Rate	£5.90	£6.15
16-17 Year Old Rate	£4.20	£4.35
Apprentice Rate	£3.70	£3.90
Accommodation Offset	£7.00	£7.55