

Press release: Call for new green innovations to tackle climate change

- Britain's brightest brains will be invited to launch projects – from digital sensors to monitor the environment, to new software to help us adapt to low carbon technologies
- funding announced by Business Secretary Greg Clark as part of Industrial Strategy comes during the first ever Green GB Week, a nationwide week of action on climate change

Britain's best innovators and researchers will be invited to pitch their ideas to help tackle the effects of climate change on towns, cities and the countryside as part of modern Industrial Strategy.

Business and Energy Secretary Greg Clark today (19 October) announced 4 new research programmes to boost the UK's resilience to climate change, develop digital environments, promote clean air and investigate how to use our land to boost health outcomes.

The £60 million funding pot was announced during the first ever [Green GB Week](#) – a government-led week of campaigning to encourage businesses, communities, funders and academics to renew their efforts to confront the global challenge of climate change.

The government has put clean growth at the heart of its modern [Industrial Strategy](#), setting out ambitions to reduce carbon emissions while supporting a thriving green economy. Earlier this week the UK became one of the first major industrial economies to ask climate change experts for advice on setting a target for achieving [net zero greenhouse gas emissions](#) from across the economy.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Companies are capitalising on the UK's world leading position in the greener economy as we transition to a greener, cleaner economy and is one of the greatest industrial opportunities of our time.

The UK is a world leader in tackling climate change, cutting our emissions more than 40% since 1990 while growing our economy. When you combine Britain's leadership, innovation and determination it is an unbeatable combination – exactly what our Industrial Strategy and Green GB Week are supporting and encouraging.

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive, Professor Sir Mark Walport, said:

The recent IPCC report is a timely reminder of the challenges we face in tackling climate change. Storm Callum has highlighted the

impact that extreme weather events can have on our communities.

It is vital that the evidence generated by research is used effectively to navigate and mitigate the effects of climate change, and new technologies are developed to support a move to a low carbon economy.

The Strategic Priorities Fund is important in supporting UKRI's mission, allowing us to bring collective expertise from a wide range of disciplines and sectors to bear on addressing important matters affecting all of society.

The programmes, administered by UKRI, will bring together a broad range of research disciplines, ranging from mathematics and biology to climate science and technology development to:

- produce better data on climate risks to the UK
- build a digital picture of our natural environment for greater monitoring and analysis of the impact of climate change
- cut air pollution and protect vulnerable groups from its effects
- use our land better, for the benefit of the environment and communities
- developing ways for the UK to adapt to climate change

Chief Scientist of the Met Office, Professor Stephen Belcher, said:

These programmes will allow the Met Office and our partners to make real progress in two areas of significant environmental impact: air pollution and climate change.

Working together with other world-leading scientists from the UK's academic community, we will be able to deliver tools and services which will benefit the lives and livelihoods of people across the UK.

Competitions for the programmes will open in the coming weeks. Researchers and innovators can visit the [UKRI website](#) for updates.

The funding comes as part of the Strategic Priorities Fund, delivered by UKRI to drive an increase in high quality multi- and interdisciplinary research and innovation. It will ensure that UKRI's investment links up effectively with government research priorities and opportunities. Further programmes will be announced in the coming months.

Notes to editors

1. The 4 research programmes are:

UK Climate Resilience

- NERC and the Met Office with EPSRC, ESRC, DEFRA, The CCC Adaptation Sub-

Committee

- funding: £18.7 million

The programme will harness multidisciplinary expertise to deliver robust climate risk and solutions research, which ensures the UK is resilient to climate variability and change, and powerfully positioned to exploit the opportunities of adaptation and green growth. Coming together with policymakers and industry, the programme will bring impacts that benefit the UK economy and safeguard the public.

Clean Air: Analysis and Solutions

- NERC and the Met Office with EPSRC, ESRC, Innovate UK, MRC, NPL, DEFRA, DHSC, DfT
- funding: £19.6 million

Air pollution is responsible for up to 40,000 early deaths and a cost of up to £20 billion to health services and businesses every year. This programme will develop solutions to air pollution to help policymakers and businesses protect health and work towards a cleaner economy. The programme will predict future air quality challenges, identify the most vulnerable groups in society, improve new technologies and policies for reducing air pollution, and create a system for providing robust consistent advice to decision makers.

Constructing a Digital Environment

- NERC with EPSRC, Innovate UK, DEFRA, Cabinet Office
- funding: £10.4 million

This programme will apply the latest technologies to environmental data from sensor networks across the UK, to deliver information in unprecedented detail. This will enable the construction of an integrated, digital picture of our natural environment, bringing benefit to policy-makers and other users by enabling better decision-making across a range of sectors, and increasing the opportunity to gain value from natural resources and mitigate environmental challenges.

Landscape Decisions

- NERC with AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, DEFRA
- funding: £10.5 million

This programme will develop a new understanding to help individuals, communities and country make the best choices regarding land use in the UK. Experts from the environment, biology, health, social, and arts and humanities will research together, supporting real world decisions with solutions for the informed use of land, and deliver improvements to our health, well-being and economy.

2. UK Research and Innovation 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 £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation brings together the [7 Research Councils, Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England](#).

Press release: Secretary of State celebrates Welsh businesses as the “great engines of growth”

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will use a major awards ceremony tonight (19 October) to hail the nation’s business owners as “the great engines of growth for the future that we are building for Wales”.

Mr Cairns will address an audience of over 900 business leaders and entrepreneurs at the Wales Fast Growth 50 dinner at the Motorpoint Arena in Cardiff. The awards ceremony celebrates its 20th anniversary this year and recognises the achievements of the most dynamic companies in the country.

Since its inception, it is estimated that the businesses featured on the annual lists have created 40,000 jobs and generated an estimated £22 billion for the Welsh economy. Previous winners have included aircraft and spares services firm Aerfin from Caerphilly – also recognised in the Sunday Times Fast Track 100 list in 2017 – and Wrexham based Village Bakery.

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns is expected to say:

Small businesses are the great engines of growth for the future that we are building for Wales.

Without you we wouldn’t have some of Britain’s biggest, best, most dynamic and most exciting companies proudly promoting the ‘Made in Wales’ stamp on their products and services all around the world.

Mr Cairns will tell the awards dinner that the UK Government is creating the right climate for businesses to grow through measures like the abolishing of the Severn tolls, the roll-out of high speed broadband and its ambition to deliver City and Growth Deals that cover every part of the country.

He will say:

There is no denying that combining dedicated, dynamic entrepreneurs with a pro-business, pro-growth government has really delivered results.

As we prepare to leave the EU, we must have the ambition to broaden our horizons, and take advantage of the opportunities that the new fast-growing markets around the globe present – and I want small businesses to lead the way in this.

So keep talking to us. Don't stop telling us what more you think we can do to help your businesses succeed. Because that is what every single minister in the UK Government wants and is focussed upon.

You can read about the background to the Wales Fast Growth Awards by visiting [Wales Online](#)

[Press release: £60 million competition to find the next Grange Hill, Peppa Pig and Byker Grove](#)

Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright has today announced that the Contestable Fund which aims to halt the decline of UK produced children's content and reverse the growing trend of airing repeats, will also include:

More support for programming in indigenous UK languages such as Welsh and Gaelic; A multi-million pound boost for commercial radio; and A special fund to help fledgling production companies develop and pitch their original ideas to make them a reality

In December 2017 plans for a pilot fund were announced and following further engagement with industry including broadcasters, producers and other interested parties [the final elements of the initiative have been unveiled today](#).

Minister for Digital Margot James said:

Young people in the UK deserve high quality content that entertains, informs and reflects their experiences growing up across the country today.

The UK broadcasting and production sectors are world renowned, and

a success story to be proud of. This innovative project is an instrumental part of our support for the UK's vibrant media sector and will help it continue to go from strength to strength.

Production levels of new children's content have declined over the past decade, with public service broadcasters spending roughly 40% less than they did in 2006. As a result a significant amount of children's programming on children's channels now consist of repeats.

In 2016, 98% of children's content on commercial children's channels and 91% on public service broadcasters were repeats. To directly combat this decline in content for younger people in the UK, £57 million will be invested in to a Young Audiences Content Fund, administered by the BFI. This will focus on funding a new influx of creative and distinctive content that represent UK children and teenagers today. Five per cent of the Young Audiences fund will support production companies develop their ideas.

Additional features of the £60 million Contestable Fund include a welcome boost to indigenous UK languages programming, with an aim to invest five per cent of the total fund on this.

Ben Roberts, Director of Lottery Film Fund, BFI said:

We're excited to be working with Government to deliver the new Young Audiences Content Fund to help support UK companies to create exciting and distinctive new programmes for young people. It goes hand-in-hand with the BFI's own mission to connect audiences with the widest possible range of content. We look forward to making the most of this new opportunity to back talent to create bold and original programming and expand the choices available for young people.

John McVay OBE, Chief Executive of PACT said:

Pact welcomes the contestable fund pilot and is pleased that the government has listened to industry feedback to help shape the fund. Pact championed the need for development funding and the focus on children's content and is pleased this has been recognised. This will help bring new voices into the industry and people's lives.

Also announced today as part of the Contestable Fund is a £3m Audio Content Fund which will encourage greater innovation and experimentation in the commercial radio sector.

Currently, examples of public service content (aside from national and local news) on commercial radio are rare due to commercial pressures. By removing the necessity for commercial stations and producers to seek as much

sponsorship and advertising revenue, the fund will provide significant support to radio producers to try something different, particularly with new voices who do not have an established relationship with broadcasters and therefore access to funding.

Will Jackson, Managing Director of AudioUK, said:

We are delighted that the government accepted our case for an audio element to this fund. This will create many exciting new partnerships between commercial radio and audio producers, and increase the number of diverse new voices both on and off-air. The many production companies based around the UK will be keen to take this new opportunity to make high-quality public service radio content for a range of stations.

Siobhan Kenny, Chief Executive at Radiocentre, said:

“Commercial radio stations are always looking at new ways to serve their listeners, but sometimes the financial reality makes it difficult to do everything they would like. The Audio Content Fund has the potential to provide a significant boost in public service content for audiences, as well as a great opportunity for commercial radio broadcasters to broaden the range of output they provide.”

Further guidance, including how to apply to both of the funds, will be published by the fund administrators in the new year. The pilot will then be open for applications in April 2019.

Notes to Editors

- The Government has today outlined the final scope of the Contestable Fund in a [policy paper](#).
- The BBC is now the dominant buyer and broadcaster of UK children’s content, accounting for 87% of all first-run UK originated children’s programming by public service broadcasters. Whilst the BBC already shows high quality content through CBBC and CBeebies, this fund aims to increase plurality and support new voices, ideas, and content on a broader range of channels and platforms.
- PACT is the trade association representing the commercial interests of UK independent television, film, digital, children’s and animation media companies.
- The Young Audiences Content Fund will be administered by the BFI. The

Audio Content Fund will be administered by an independent not-for-profit organisation created by Radiocentre and AudioUK.

About the BFI

The BFI is the lead organisation for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of UK and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class filmmakers in the UK – investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting UK film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI is a Government arm's-length body and distributor of Lottery funds for film. The BFI serves a public role which covers the cultural, creative and economic aspects of film in the UK. It delivers this role:

- As the UK-wide organisation for film, a charity core funded by Government
- By providing Lottery and Government funds for film across the UK
- By working with partners to advance the position of film in the UK

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter. The BFI Board of Governors is chaired by Josh Berger CBE.

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Speech: Urging Substantive Peace Talks to Lead to a Two-State Solution

Madam President,

I wanted also to join others in thanking the Special Coordinator Mr Mladenov for his briefing and also for the work that he and his team do on the ground. I wanted also to thank Mr El-Ad. Like the French and Swedish representatives, we think it's important that the voices of civil society can be heard in this chamber, and you were invited by the Council.

I do want, if I may, Madam President, just to digress to make a point about these non-Council member speakers, building on the one I made yesterday. This is an open debate. It vitiates the point of an open debate if we cannot understand what is said in the chamber, no matter who it is said by. So I would like to know at some point please what the Israeli PR said to Mr El-Ad in Hebrew and I would also like to make a generic point Madam President, that if speakers use a language for which there is no interpretation that the Presidency of the day stop them and ask them to speak in the Council's or the UN's authorised six languages. Thank you.

Turning to the substance, I think Mr Mladenov is absolutely right to remind us that every month we come here and we talk about the same things while everything in the region that we've heard today shows quite how desperate and unsustainable the situation is and there are terrible, cruel and sad stories of deaths and injuries on both sides. These underscore the need for urgent progress to end what is a useless cycle of violence and a heart-breaking waste of life and ruined families. And on terrorism, to quote a famous poet, "The gunmen are not dying for the people; the people are dying for the gunmen." And we ought to bear that in mind as well.

Madam President, we fully respect Israel's right to security. At the same time, as many speakers have said today, the situation in Gaza is unsustainable. There needs to be immediate improvement in the humanitarian situation. We need political resolve to make these improvements. The reconciliation agreement of 2017 was a good start, but now all the Palestinian factions must implement that agreement. We strongly support the efforts of Egypt and the wider international community to secure this goal with some urgency. And we strongly support the return of the Palestinian Authority to administer Gaza and we continue to encourage all parties to work together to ensure this objective is met.

With other speakers, we remain deeply concerned by the planned demolition of the village of Khan al-Ahmar. And I take this opportunity again to call on the Israeli government not to go ahead with its plans to demolish the village. The decision of the Israeli Supreme Court did not mandate demolition. Demolition remains at the discretion of the Israeli government, and so we appeal to them not to proceed with demolition of this village which is located in an area of strategic importance for the contiguity of a future Palestinian state. Its demolition threatens the prospects for a two-state solution with Jerusalem as a shared capital because as others have said it would pave the way for settlement building in Area E1.

We've heard a lot of common themes from the speakers today so I won't rehearse some of those. I will just say that the Special Coordinator asked us to echo his calls: on both sides to step back from the brink; to uphold the 2014 ceasefire; for Hamas to stop its provocations; on the Israeli side, to

restore the delivery of critical supplies, and use proportionate responses in live fire; and on the Palestinian Authority side, not to disengage from Gaza. And I am happy to throw the UK's voice behind his calls today and to make it crystal clear how strong our support is for you, Special Coordinator.

Madam President, UNRWA was raised, so I will just say that we welcome the increase in donor contributions that was announced on 27 September. These will help meet the immediate needs of the Palestinian people but in the longer term, UNRWA itself needs to continue to prioritize the implementation of cost-saving reform measures, and we will continue to work closely with UNRWA and other donors on the continuity of the essential services.

In conclusion Madam President, like France, we consider ourselves a friend of both Israelis and Palestinians. And like France, we believe that the destinies of these two people are inextricably intertwined. Substantive peace talks between the parties leading to a two-state solution based on 1967 borders, which includes the West Bank and Gaza, is the best way to end this conflict and ensure a sustainable peace. It is the best way to ensure Israeli security, which is absolutely vital, and to achieve a just, fair, agreed, and realistic solution to the Palestinian refugee question in line with the Security Council Resolution 1515. The United Kingdom will continue engaging meaningfully to help bring this about.

Finally Madam President, just to say that I have concentrated today on this subject matter that the Special Coordinator raised and I think that's right, but other speakers did touch on wider matters. I don't have time now to go into the issue of child soldiers, but I would just like to put on record that the United Kingdom shares the concerns about these child soldiers.

Thank you very much.