

Press release: Nationwide search begins for young space entrepreneurs

Artist's impression of a Galileo satellite. Credit: ESA-J. Huart, 2014.

The SatelLife Challenge, now in its second year, is looking for innovative proposals from those aged 11 to 22 which have the potential to use data collected from space to benefit our economy, health or the environment. Ideas from last year's competition ranged from solutions to help increase the survival rate of heart attack victims by using GPS trackers in fitness devices, to an app that warns people about impending natural disasters, guides them safely away and alerts emergency services.

Satellites support the economy and everyday life, and this competition gives young people the chance to test their ideas with industry experts and perhaps one day become part of the fastest growing sector of the UK economy. The UK space industry builds 40% of the world's small satellites and 25% of the world's telecommunications satellites. It supports 40,000 jobs and generates £14 billion in revenue across the country.

Science minister Jo Johnson said:

"Satellites are shaping our society and increasingly important for our economy. Every second they send information around the world, keep shipping lanes and flightpaths clear and help us get to where we want to be.

"Young people today will be an integral part of our mission to grow the UK's share of the global space market to 10% by 2030, as set out in our industrial strategy. We need to ensure the potential benefits of space are felt across the whole economy and encourage young British entrepreneurs to develop ideas that rival the best in the world."

The overall winner in 2017 was James Pearson from Lincolnshire, who came up with an app to provide information on coastal flood risks, went on to meet British ESA astronaut Tim Peake and is using his prize money to develop his idea.

James Pearson, 14, said:

"The competition was absolutely amazing for me. It has opened my eyes to the opportunities that are around us. I have really had to push myself to learn new things. The highlights included meeting Tim Peake but also the industry experts. So far I have continued to get my website operational, I've been scanning the satellites for more images and I've increased my computing power. I will continue to work hard until the website is complete. I have really enjoyed this competition as it has developed my confidence, I was thrilled to win and just to learn about the space industry and technology."

The competition, which aims to support the development of science, data

handling and technological skills, is split into three age groups, with overall prizes of £7,500 for the best individual and best team. A further seven entries from across the age categories will win £5,000, making a total prize fund of £50,000. The judging panel will be made up of experts including representatives from the UK Space Agency, the European Space Agency, the Satellite Applications Catapult in Harwell and industry.

Adina Gillespie, Head of Applications for Earth Observation and Science, at Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL), one of the expert judges, said:

“The SatelLife competition is a great initiative to encourage young people to think about satellite applications and consider future careers in the space industry – and we have a lot of fun along the way.”

Entries can be as teams or individuals and all prize winners will be able to pitch their idea to a panel of ‘dragons’ from the space sector who will offer prizes. In 2017 the competition winners were offered a mix of support including an offer to build a prototype, thousands of pounds worth of space on Amazon Cloud Services, access to data, business development advice and a visit to a satellite factory.

The competition closes on 25th February. Visit the SatelLife Challenge entry page [for more information](#).

News story: PHE launches Change4Life campaign around children's snacking

Public Health England (PHE) is helping parents take control of their children's snacking by launching the first Change4Life campaign promoting healthier snacks.

This is because half of children's sugar intake, currently around 7 sugar cubes a day, comes from unhealthy snacks and sugary drinks, leading to obesity and dental decay.

Each year children are consuming almost 400 biscuits; more than 120 cakes, buns and pastries; around 100 portions of sweets; nearly 70 of both chocolate bars and ice creams; washed down with over 150 juice drink pouches and cans of fizzy drink.

On average, children are consuming at least 3 unhealthy snacks and sugary drinks a day, with around a third consuming 4 or more. The overall result is that children consume 3 times more sugar than is recommended.

The new Change4Life campaign encourages parents to look for ‘100 calorie snacks, two a day max’ to help them purchase healthier snacks than the ones

they currently buy.

Selected supermarkets are supporting the campaign. As part of their wider work promoting good health, Tesco will help parents – instore and online – choose affordable, healthier snacks that are 100 calories or less. Co-op will also provide tasty and healthy snacking products, making it easier for customers to make healthier choices on the go.

Parents can also get money-off vouchers from Change4Life to help them try healthier snack options, including malt loaf, lower-sugar fromage frais, and drinks with no added sugar.

Many of the unhealthy snacks children consume regularly are high in sugar and also typically high in calories, for example:

- an ice-cream contains around 175 calories
- a pack of crisps contains around 190 calories
- a chocolate bar contains around 200 calories
- a pastry contains around 270 calories

The '100 calorie snacks, two a day max' tip applies to all snacks apart from fruit and vegetables, as children should also be encouraged to eat a variety of these to achieve their 5 A Day.

Dr Alison Tedstone, Chief Nutritionist at Public Health England, said:

The true extent of children's snacking habits is greater than the odd biscuit or chocolate bar. Children are having unhealthy snacks throughout the day and parents have told us they're concerned.

To make it easier for busy families, we've developed a simple rule of thumb to help them move towards healthier snacking – look for 100 calories snacks, two a day max.

Justine Roberts, CEO and founder of Mumsnet, said:

The volume of sugar kids are getting from snacks and sugary drinks alone is pretty mind-blowing, and it can often be difficult to distinguish which snacks are healthy and which aren't.

This rule of thumb from Change4Life will help parents make healthier choices, which can only be a good thing.

PHE's improved Change4Life 'Food Scanner' app also shows parents how many calories, sugar, salt and saturated fat is in their food to help make healthier choices easier. It can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play.

With a third of children leaving primary school overweight or obese, tackling obesity requires wider action and is not just limited to individual efforts

from parents. PHE is working with the food industry to cut 20% of sugar from the products children consume most by 2020, with work to reduce calories due to start in 2018.

Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on Iran

The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The UK is watching events in Iran closely. We believe that there should be meaningful debate about the legitimate and important issues the protesters are raising and we look to the Iranian authorities to permit this.

We also believe that, particularly as we enter the 70th anniversary year of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, people should be able to have freedom of expression and to demonstrate peacefully within the law.

We regret the loss of life that has occurred in the protests in Iran, and call on all concerned to refrain from violence and for international obligations on human rights to be observed.

Press release: 30,000 respond to ivory consultation ban during Christmas week

There has been a massive public response to the Government's proposed ban on ivory sales – with over 60,000 responses to the public consultation, making it one of Defra's most popular ever. Of the responses analysed so far the overwhelming majority support a ban.

In the past week more than 30,000 responses were submitted before the consultation closed.

Plans announced by Environment Secretary Michael Gove to impose a ban on

ivory sales will protect elephants and help combat poaching by removing opportunities for criminals to trade illegally-poached ivory.

Unlike previous proposals, these plans cover items of all ages, not only those created after a certain date.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

It is imperative we halt the decline in the elephant population to protect these wonderful animals for future generations. Ivory should never be seen as a commodity for financial gain or a status symbol and we are ready to take radical and robust action to protect one of the world's most iconic and treasured species.

It's incredibly heartening that so many people have contributed to our consultation. The response underlines that we are a nation which cares for wildlife. In 2018 the UK must be front and centre of global efforts to end this insidious trade.

Tanya Steele, WWF CEO said:

The scale of the public response – including over 60,000 who signed a WWF petition – shows just how strongly the British public feel about the need to end this mindless slaughter.

The UK Government must now act quickly. On average 55 elephants a day are killed. Every day we wait is a day too long.

The number of elephants has declined by almost a third in the last decade and around 20,000 a year are still being slaughtered due to the global demand for ivory.

The decline of elephants would also deprive some of the poorest countries in the world of their valuable natural capital, affecting economic growth and sustainable development.

As profits become ever greater, the illegal wildlife trade has become a transnational organised enterprise, estimated to be worth between £7 and £17 billion a year.

The ban would reaffirm the UK's global leadership on this critical issue, demonstrating the UK's belief that the ivory trade should become a thing of the past.

It comes as the largest market for ivory, China, has introduced a ban on all trading and processing activities which came in to force at the end of 2017.

This new ban builds on Government work both at home and overseas to tackle poaching and the illegal ivory trade. The UK military trains an elite force of anti-poachers in African countries, and Border Force officers share their

expertise in identifying smuggled ivory with counterparts worldwide to stop wildlife trafficking.

In October 2018, the UK will host a fourth international conference on the illegal wildlife, bringing global leaders to London to tackle the strategic challenges of the trade. This follows the ground breaking London 2014 conference on the illegal wildlife trade, and subsequent conferences in Botswana and Vietnam.

The Government will publish a response to the [consultation](#) shortly.

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