

News story: New design innovations get up to £2 million funding

The funded projects – part of our design foundations competition – will help businesses identify high-value innovation opportunities and generate ideas for new or improved products, services or business models that align with customer demand.

Projects will begin by exploring human motivations and behaviour before identifying specific problems or opportunities to be addressed.

Ideas generated in response to those opportunities should then be quickly tested and refined with a focus on validating the quality of the customer experience, rather than developing the underlying technology.

User-centred design projects

Some of the successful projects from the first round include:

- [Baxi's](#) 'delivering warmth' project will look at how people heat their homes and use water. This will enable Baxi to develop tailored propositions and provide heating comfort for people in the UK
- [Bramble Energy](#) – a start-up manufacturing printed circuit board fuel cells – will broaden the approach to engineering fuel cells, which typically incorporates multiple design cycles. The company intends to go to users first, to develop new products that better meet customer needs and are quicker to market
- Cambridge Animal Technologies is exploring livestock farming, including monitoring, managing and taking care of the health of the herd. The project will generate a portfolio of conceptual design solutions, based on the principals of user-centric design
- [Comp-A-Tent](#) is leading a project to reduce the impact of abandoned tents at musical festivals, with more than one in 5 tents being left behind. It will leverage existing festival infrastructure to prevent abandonment and reduce environmental and economic costs
- [Hubl Logistics](#) with its 'delivery mate' project will put the recipient in control of their online shopping deliveries, whether they are a homeowner, business or public body. It should enhance the customer experience while reducing pollution and congestion
- [Thames & Hudson](#), a publisher and distributor of books on visual culture, will investigate how mobile technology can enhance and augment the physical experience of discovering, buying and experiencing illustrated books
- [The Future Care UK Ltd](#) will develop a wearable monitoring system for infants of less than 12 months. It will enable more efficient monitoring, to allow sick babies to live at home with their parents, as well as quicker and more accurate diagnosis. The designs will be tested with patients, parents/guardians and hospital staff

Putting people at the centre of the creative process

Ben Griffin, Innovation Lead, Innovate UK, said:

Great design puts people at the centre of the creative process, inspiring solutions that are not only technically feasible but also more desirable and useful. This is important because while technology can make new ideas possible, it is people that ultimately make them successful.

Design has greater impact and value when it's used early to clarify the opportunity, inspire the creative process, support decision making, improve communications and reduce the risk of costly late-stage discoveries and rework.

The UK has world-class design capability, but it's not always used to its best advantage, missing out on potential value and competitive advantage as a result. This competition aims to support businesses seeking to integrate human-centred design into their innovation process.