

News story: Precision medicine in South Africa: apply for funding

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UK businesses can apply for a share of £1.5 million to work with South African partners on non-communicable diseases and child health.

Innovate UK has up to £1.5 million to invest in business projects to develop affordable gene-based diagnostics for non-communicable diseases and child health in South Africa.

The competition aims to encourage innovative partnerships between the UK and South Africa. It is co-funded by Innovate UK and the [South African Medical Research Council](#) (SAMRC).

Projects should seek to develop affordable gene-based diagnostic solutions and targeted treatments for one or more of the following health challenges in South Africa:

- diabetes
- cardiovascular disease
- cancer
- child mortality

The competition is administered by the [Newton Fund](#). Projects must demonstrate how they can have a positive social, economic and/or environmental impact on the wider South African population.

The Newton Fund is part of the UK's official development assistance. It uses science and innovation partnerships to promote economic development and social welfare of partner countries.

- the competition is open, and the registration deadline is midday 10 May 2017
- projects must be led by a UK business working with at least one South African business or research organisation
- we expect projects to range in size from £300,000 to £500,000 on the UK side and to last up to 36 months
- UK businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- South African partners will be funded by SAMRC
- a briefing event for potential applicants takes place on 3 February 2017

News story: Local alcohol action areas will tackle alcohol related harms

On the 27 January the Home Office launched a new phase of the programme to tackle alcohol-related crime and health harms and create a more diverse night-time economy. The programme initially launched in February 2014 covering 20 areas.

Each area will be supported by the government to implement their plan which will see local agencies including licensing authorities, health bodies, and police coming together with businesses to address problems caused by alcohol in their local area.

Sarah Newton, Minister for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Countering Extremism, said:

Local alcohol action areas demonstrate the government's commitment to work with industry, police, local authorities and other partners to make our streets safer.

Violent crimes involving alcohol have fallen over the last decade – but it is clear that alcohol misuse has a significant impact on communities across the country.

Our pubs, bars and restaurants make a valuable contribution to our economy and our society and it is important that people are able to enjoy them without the fear of becoming a victim of crime.

Alcohol-related crime and disorder costs an estimated £11 billion per year in England and Wales, and the government wants to support local communities in reducing the scenes of drunkenness and violence that blight communities, particularly at night.

The first phase of LAAA saw a variety of interventions introduced to reduce street drinking, vulnerability and violence. These ranged from club hosts patrolling bars to offer help to those who are vulnerable, to mandatory safeguarding training for taxi drivers, increased trading standards activity on underage sales of alcohol, to a triage service for street drinkers, and even a non-alcoholic bar for teenagers.

The 33 new areas will be supported in developing and implementing their plans by specialist support managers. They will receive support and expertise in crime prevention, licensing and public health from the Home Office, Public Health England, the Welsh government and Nightworks, a company that specialises in diversifying the night-time economy.

Sarah Hanratty, Interim Chief Executive for the Portman Group said:

We warmly welcome the second round of the LAAAs; and the opportunity to support local communities in reducing alcohol-related harm and creating safe and thriving night time economies.

Drinks producers and retailers have an important role to play and are committed to reducing the harms related to alcohol misuse through their support of the local alcohol partnership schemes; a range of initiatives that work to make local communities safer and create great places for people to live, work and socialise.

The programme will run for 2 years and LAAA areas will also be put in touch with mentors who have successfully tackled the issues that they face and will come together to problem solve and share best practice.

The 33 local alcohol action areas are:

- Barnsley
- Bedfordshire
- Camden
- Colchester
- Cornwall
- Derbyshire
- Doncaster
- Exeter
- Fareham
- Hastings
- Havering
- Hull
- Isle of Wight
- Islington
- Merton
- Northumberland
- Norwich
- Nottinghamshire
- Peterborough
- Shropshire
- Southwark
- Surrey
- Swansea
- Swindon
- Wakefield
- Wandsworth
- Westminster
- Weston-super-Mare
- Weymouth
- Wirral
- Wisbech
- Wolverhampton

- Wrexham
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Press release: Greater Manchester and London handed new disability powers

The 2 cities will receive around £100 million to develop, procure and deliver localised versions of the new Work and Health Programme to fit the needs of their residents.

In the last 3 years, the number of disabled people in work has increased by almost 600,000. However, the gap between the employment rates of disabled people and non-disabled people remains too large at 32%.

By devolving these powers, participants – including homeless people and long-term unemployed people – will receive more intense, tailored support based on local expertise that will give them the best chance to move into long-term employment.

Work and Pensions Secretary Damian Green said:

This is a significant step to help thousands of disabled and vulnerable people get the support they need to move away from benefits and find lasting work.

Good work has huge benefits for physical and mental health and we are committed to helping all those people who can work to find work.

By devolving powers we are sending our clearest message yet that we are serious about making changes for the better, and believe this can be found in the expertise of local providers who know their residents best.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said:

I am delighted that funding and responsibility for the new Work and Health Programme is to be devolved to London government.

This is a great example of how we can put party politics aside and work closely with the national government in the best interests of all Londoners.

Delivering this programme at a local level will result in greater integration of employment support with other local services. This

will lead to better outcomes for Londoners, with those who need support receiving it at the right time.

Councillor Sean Anstee, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Lead Member for Skills and Employment said:

In Greater Manchester we know that when we create local solutions to help people back in to work they are much more effective. Through intensive, tailored support from local key workers our Working Well programme has helped people right across our city-region get back in to the workplace.

These new devolved powers will help us expand Working Well and make a real difference to people's lives. More people will now get the support they need to find a job and be successful in Greater Manchester.

Chair of London Councils, Councillor Claire Kober, said:

This is a significant moment in London's call for further devolution and gives us the opportunity to create local schemes better tailored to meet Londoners' needs. Boroughs – who can already demonstrate significant success in this area – are delighted to be able to get on with the important job of helping residents with complex needs back into the workplace.

Devolving powers to London and Greater Manchester is the latest in a series of steps taken by the government to strengthen local support for disabled people.

The [Work, Health and Disability Green Paper](#) is currently seeking views from disabled people, stakeholders and the public.

It includes a new Personal Support Package that will recruit around 200 Community Partners around the country into Jobcentre Plus, and extend 'Journey to Employment' job clubs to 71 Jobcentre Plus areas with the highest number of people receiving Employment and Support Allowance with limited capability for work.

In addition, the number of Disability Employment Advisors to provide specialist and local expertise in jobcentres will be increased to around 500 nationally.

The Work and Health Programme will start from late 2017 in England and Wales. In line with the Scotland Act, employment support for the long term unemployed and disabled people are to be devolved to the Scottish Government.

Over the life of the contract current estimates are that DWP would devolve

around £72 million to London and around £28 million to Greater Manchester, subject to Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) approval.

The [Work, Health and Disability Green Paper](#) closes on 17 February 2017.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 6118

Follow DWP on:

Press release: MHRA warns athletes to avoid potentially dangerous DMAA

As many people embark on a new-year fitness boost, athletes at all levels of sport are being urged to steer clear of the potentially dangerous ingredient DMAA.

DMAA can be found in unlicensed medicines marketed as sports supplements and it has been linked with high blood pressure, tightening in the chest, strokes, heart attacks and even death.

The warning has been issued by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) as a significant number of products containing DMAA continue to be found on sale in the UK.

MHRA has launched a 'Week of Action' between 30th January and 5th February supported by a number of leading national organisations to alert people to the potential dangers.

The Week of Action aims to improve awareness and will include an animated social media campaign, health & fitness bloggers sharing their stories and a video featuring Team GB Olympic weightlifters at the National Sports Stadium in Crystal Palace.

People who either suspect a product contains DMAA or want to check whether it is present are being encouraged to check online. If you find products on the market, immediately contact us via our dedicated mailbox dmaa@mhra.gsi.gov.uk

Named on the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) Prohibited List, DMAA is banned during sports competition and the safety concerns are well documented.

When MHRA find unlicensed medicinal products containing DMAA on the market, urgent action is taken to remove them from sale. Last year MHRA took urgent action to remove a number of products containing DMAA from the market.

Dr Chris Jones, MHRA Medicines Borderline Section Manager said:

As always, we will continue to take robust action when unlicensed medicinal products containing DMAA come to our attention.

We first removed these products from sale in 2012, and will protect public health by continuing to do so. Although the sale of DMAA products has dropped since 2012, any companies selling this unlicensed medicine is one company too many.

Ashley Metcalfe, British Weight Lifting CEO said:

Weightlifting is a fantastic sport, not least because of the health and wellbeing benefits associated with strength training. However, as with all sports, it is very important that lifters participate in a safe and controlled manner, and are aware of the dangers of taking anything that could be potentially harmful – as has been proven with DMAA.

We are proud to support this campaign and hope that it encourages lifters that wish to use sports supplements to choose only those that are properly regulated, and remain well-informed about the dangers of using unlicensed medicines.

Dr Adam Carey, Chair of the European Specialist Sports Nutrition Alliance (ESSNA) said:

We fully support the MHRA's efforts to raise awareness of the dangers of supplements which contain DMAA. MHRA has classified such products as medicinal products and they have no place in legitimate sports nutrition supplements.

The dangers of consuming DMAA are significant and well-proven. We urge all sportspeople to avoid it at all costs – and emphasise that sportsmen and woman can only do this by making sure they're only buying their sports supplements from responsible and reputable retailers.

Nicole Sapstead, UK Anti-Doping Chief Executive said:

Any athlete who takes supplements containing DMAA in-competition – either deliberately or inadvertently – is not only risking their career, but is also risking their health.

If you are considering taking a supplement make sure you assess the need first by speaking to a qualified nutritionist. If you need to take a supplement, make sure you understand the risks and consequences by undertaking thorough research.

This 'Week of Action' is part of the FakeMeds campaign aimed at young adults and highlights the pitfalls of buying unlicensed medicines online.

Visit [here](#) for more information about the 'Week of Action'.

Background

1. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK by ensuring they work and are acceptably safe.
2. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgements to ensure that the benefits justify any risks. MHRA is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) and the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD). The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency is an executive agency of the Department of Health.
3. The approach for the classification of Borderline products is set out in Part 9 of the 2012 Human Medicines Regulations (as amended). A borderline product is a product which does not have a relevant authorisation or registration that the Licensing Authority regards to be medicinal product. Unless exempt unlicensed medicines may not be placed on the UK market without the appropriate authorisation.
4. MHRA classifies products (not substances) according to the definition of a medicinal product.
5. MHRA's Medicines Borderline Section reaches a determination on whether a product is or is not a medicinal product on a case by case basis, and in the light of:
 - the definition of a medicinal product
 - following an assessment of all the available evidence
 - relevant European Court Judgments and domestic Court precedents.
6. MHRA first classified a product containing DMAA to be [medicinal products in 2012](#). MHRA has since determined a number of products which contain DMAA to be medicinal products and may not be placed on the UK market without the appropriate authorisation.
7. DMAA is regarded as being capable of significant modification to human physiology. Products containing DMAA have already been subject to regulatory controls in various countries around the world following a series of suspected links to serious adverse effects. It is MHRA's view that the uncontrolled sale and supply of products containing DMAA poses potential risks to public safety.
8. MHRA is responsible for ensuring that medicinal products work and are acceptably safe and is not responsible for the licensing of products such as sports supplements which are used by athletes to improve their performance. MHRA will investigate instances of the sale and supply of unauthorised medicinal products, including those that may be present in sports supplements.
9. We have been working with British Weightlifting, UK Anti-Doping, ESSNA, UK Active, National Food Crime Unit (FSA) and Sporting Integrity Ltd for the DMAA 'Week of Action'.

News story: PM to meet ministers from devolved nations at first JMC meeting in Wales

The Prime Minister is to hold the first Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) meeting to take place outside of London today, in a special meeting in Wales.

As a sign of the government's commitment to engage with the devolved administrations and to seek a Brexit that works for the whole of the UK, the Prime Minister, together with the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU, the Secretary of State for International Trade, the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Minister for the Cabinet Office will be meeting with ministers from the devolved administrations today.

This will be the second JMC under the Prime Minister's leadership and follows 3 JMC(EN)s that have taken place over the last few months.

Discussions are expected to focus on our exit from the EU, how we can work together to support UK businesses to trade and invest in the lead up to leaving the EU and intergovernmental relations.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, the Prime Minister said:

I am delighted to be holding today's JMC in Cardiff, particularly in the week the Wales Bill is expected to gain Royal Assent – heralding a new devolution settlement for Wales.

At the JMC in October, I set out how we would fully engage with the devolved administrations in the process of planning the UK's departure from the EU.

I am pleased that the committee on EU negotiations has met 3 times since then, giving ministers from the Scottish government, Welsh government and Northern Ireland executive a direct line to the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU.

I know ministers and officials from all sides are also in regular contact bilaterally. We have received papers from both the Scottish and Welsh governments and I am grateful to the devolved administrations for their contributions to this important process.

We will not agree on everything, but that doesn't mean we will shy away from the necessary conversations and I hope we will have further constructive discussions today.

We have also had the Supreme Court judgement which made clear

beyond doubt that relations with the EU are a matter for the UK government and UK Parliament. We should not forget that that means MPs representing every community in the UK will be fully involved in the passage of Article 50 through Parliament.

The United Kingdom voted to leave the EU, and the UK government has a responsibility to deliver on that mandate and secure the right deal for the whole of the UK. We all have a part to play in providing certainty and leadership so that together we can make a success of the opportunities ahead.

The Prime Minister met all the heads of the devolved administrations within her first month of taking up office, and has made it a priority of the UK government to fully engage with them on the UK's exit from the EU.

Since the referendum the UK government has continued discussions with the devolved administrations both at ministerial and official level, including a direct line to the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU through the JMC(EN).

There have been 3 JMC(EN) meetings to date. There will be further meetings including the JMC(EN) as the UK government continues discussions with the devolved administrations on this important issue.