Press release: Prime Minister to host Burns Supper in Downing Street

Scots from a variety of business sectors, food and drink suppliers, educational institutions and politics will join the Prime Minister and Mr May, the Secretary of State for Scotland and others for a three-course meal in the State Dining Room.

Glasgow-based 'MasterChef: The Professionals' winner Gary Maclean will take over the Downing Street kitchen for the day to prepare the menu, made up of fresh produce from a range of Scottish suppliers.

Guests will be welcomed into Downing Street by a piper from the Scots Guards.

The Prime Minister, who will give a welcome address to guests this evening, said:

> Scotland is a greatly valued part of our United Kingdom and its contribution to the UK is immense – economically, socially, and culturally.
>
> And Robert Burns is a great example of that, as one of our finest poets, famous world-wide.
>
> I'm very much looking forward to this evening and the chance to celebrate a great poet, a great nation and an enduring Union.

Some of the courses being prepared by the head chef, who is also a senior lecturer at Glasgow City College, are the very ones that impressed the judges during the BBC2 cookery show.

Mr Maclean said:

> I'm incredibly honoured to cook for the Prime Minister and showcase the best Scottish produce, sourced from local farms and dairies for this evening's Burns Supper.
>
> A Burns Supper is an institution in Scottish life and it's wonderful to be able to be part of such a celebration of the works of our national bard in Downing Street.

Mr Maclean will be joined in the kitchen by his team, which includes his fellow MasterChef contenders, Matthew Healy and James Villiers, and James McGuire, who works for Braehead Foods.

Press release: Dame Judith Hackitt hosts industry summit

Issued on behalf of Dame Judith Hackitt

Around 50 senior industry figures met today (22 January 2018) to inform the next phase of the Independent Review into Building Regulations and Fire Safety.

Dame Judith Hackitt today hosted a summit kick-starting the next phase of the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety.

At the summit, Dame Judith issued a 'call to action' to all those involved in the building system to bring about changes that will enable residents to be assured that their buildings are, and will continue to be, safe to live in.

The event was attended by around 50 senior industry figures, reflecting the full scope of the Independent Review which was commissioned in July 2017 following the Grenfell fire.

At the summit, industry leaders committed to work aimed at creating a new system that will work effectively and coherently. Working groups will be established to develop innovative solutions in the following key areas:

- design, construction and refurbishment – establishing what industry and regulators need to do to fully embed building safety during the design and construction phase

- occupation and maintenance – identifying what building owners, landlords and regulators need to do differently to ensure that building safety is prioritised when a building is occupied and throughout its life cycle

- products – determining how the product testing and marketing regime can be improved

- competency – establishing how competency requirements for key individuals involved in building and managing complex and high-risk buildings should change

- residents' voice – determining the best way for residents to be given a clear, quick and effective statutory route for raising concerns on fire safety

- regulation and guidance – resolving whether central government ownership of technical guidance is the most appropriate model for complex and high-risk buildings

Hackitt review summit of industry leaders

Speaking at the summit, Dame Judith Hackitt said:

> I have been greatly encouraged by the wide ranging support which my Interim Report received. I can now say with confidence that there is widespread agreement that the current system of regulation for high-rise and complex buildings is broken and that we need a radical overhaul and a change in culture.
>
> I was greatly encouraged by the positive tone at the summit and the recognition of the common challenge. We now need to agree both the 'what' and the 'how' of delivering the transformational change which is needed.
>
> Today we have invited people from a wide range of organisations to join with us not just in agreeing the way forward but in making it happen.

Further information

The government announced an independent, forward-looking Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety on 28 July 2017.

The Review is being led by Dame Judith Hackitt, an experienced engineer, and is looking at current building regulations and fire safety, with a particular focus on multi-occupancy, high-rise residential buildings.

The Review's final report will be published in the spring.

Organisations and experts wishing to contribute proactively to this next phase of work should contact the Independent Review at BuildingRegulationsandFireSafetyReview@communities.gsi.gov.uk.

PDF, 14.6KB, 2 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. Request an accessible format.

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email alternativeformats@communities.gsi.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

Published 22 January 2018
Last updated 23 March 2018 + show all updates

1. 23 March 2018 Added a list of participants in Dame Judith Hackitt's January summit.
2. 22 January 2018 First published.

News story: Emerging and enabling & health and life sciences: apply for funds

Robopod's configureable robotics, on display at Innovate 2017. By Adam Gasson.

Innovate UK has up to £19 million to invest in innovative ideas for new products, processes and services in the fields of emerging and enabling technologies and health and life sciences.

You can apply to either industry sector, so long as your project meets the specific competition scope.

A further £12 million is available in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP), which allows businesses to recruit graduates that can help them on an innovation project.

New and novel, emerging and enabling technologies

Emerging and enabling technologies have the potential to transform a wide range of markets and generate significant economic growth.

Projects should be in one of 4 priority areas:

- emerging technologies, which have either recently developed or are starting to come out of the research base. It includes biofilms, energy harvesting, graphene and cutting-edge imaging technologies
- digital technology, specifically in the areas of machine learning and

artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, big data, distributed ledger, Internet of Things, 5G and virtual and augmented reality
- enabling capabilities, such as electronics, sensors and photonics, robotics and autonomous systems, as well as opportunities in the creative industries
- space applications including satellite communications, positioning, navigation and timing and Earth observation

All projects should provide business growth, productivity or an export opportunity for at least one SME and be applied in more than one industry, sector or market.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline is at midday on 28 March 2018
- projects must be led by a business or a research and technology organisation and must include an SME
- we expect projects to range in size from £35,000 to £2 million and to last from 3 months to 3 years
- businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- briefing events will be held in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Leeds in January and February

Addressing health and life sciences challenges

We are seeking projects that lead to increased agricultural productivity, better food quality and sustainability or improved health.

These could be in:

- agricultural productivity, such as advanced and precision engineering, novel genetics and breeding, or fighting agro-chemical and antimicrobial resistance
- enhancing food quality, for example, through better authenticity and traceability, modern manufacturing, new ingredients and smarter packaging
- precision medicine, including accurate decision-making for patient management and choice of therapy
- advanced therapies, including development of innovative cell and gene therapies
- medicines discovery, including development and validation of technologies, models and test systems
- advanced biosciences, such as the development of tools, platforms and techniques

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 28 March 2018
- projects must be led by a business or a research and technology organisation and must include an SME
- we expect projects to range in size from £50,000 to £2 million and to

last between 6 months and 24 months
- businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- briefing events will be held in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Leeds in January and February

Applying for KTPs

Up to £12 million is available to fund KTPs across emerging and enabling technologies and health and life sciences.

The scheme can help businesses to grow by linking them with an academic or research organisation and a graduate with relevant skills.

We particularly welcome KTPs that meet the competition scope, however, we will consider disciplines and applications that span across the sectors.

Projects can last between 12 and 36 months. Businesses should speak to a knowledge transfer adviser before starting an application.

News story: Funding available for student placements

Credit: Stefan Stefancik.

The funding from the Agency's Space Placement in INdustry (SPIN) scheme, is for Earth Observation projects at small and medium size businesses, universities, charities, not-for-profit or government agencies within the space sector.

There is a total of £30,000 funding available, with a maximum of £3,000 for each award.

The aim of the scheme is to fulfill the skills and careers objectives of the UK Space Agency education programme, as set out in its Education, Skills and Outreach Strategy. This in turn supports the aims of the UK Space Agency by providing a context for students to experience the breadth of opportunities that the sector can offer, developing skills crucial to the success of the sector, supporting the growth of businesses within the sector and raising awareness of the UK's space programme and STEM subjects in general.

What projects are suitable?

Your project may be targeted at a student or graduate of a specific discipline, or simply describe the skills you are looking for. It should outline a piece of work or role which will take a minimum of 8 weeks and be

designed to enhance the skillset of the successful applicant whilst providing them with a business context in which to apply their skills. Projects submitted for this round of SPIN funding should have an Earth Observation focus.

The placement will vary from organisation to organisation and may involve:

- a piece of research or a small project that would otherwise not be done
- working as part of a team on a product or client-focused project, or something more independent

Placements may be extended beyond 8 weeks, by mutual agreement between the host organisation and the successful applicant.

We anticipate the following schedule:

- opening of award scheme – 22 January 2018
- deadline for placement proposals to be received – 5pm on 30 January 2018
- panel meeting 31 January 2018
- projects to be advertised to students on the SPIN website for no more than 2 weeks
- successful applicants to be notified no later than 21 February 2018
- placements to be started no later than 7 March 2018
- invoice to be submitted no later than 12 March 2018

MS Word Document, 1020KB

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. Request an accessible format.

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email info@ukspaceagency.bis.gsi.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. Request an accessible format. If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email enquiries@bis.gsi.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

You will receive a notification of your application being accepted within 48 hours of sending. If you do not receive this, we have probably not received your application.

Email: Katharine.Bowden@ukspaceagency.bis.gsi.gov.uk

PDF, 297KB, 2 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. Request an accessible format.

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email info@ukspaceagency.bis.gsi.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

MS Word Document, 2.1MB

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology. Request an accessible format.

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email info@ukspaceagency.bis.gsi.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

News story: Improved healthcare for all: pioneering projects get funding

MeiraGTx colleague in the company’s facilities.

New initiatives to accelerate the development and manufacture of new medicines that could have real benefits to patients will share almost £50 million. The funding is from Innovate UK under the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

This is the leading edge healthcare challenge, which supports UK businesses and researchers to develop and manufacture new medicines and vaccines, as well as digital health products and medical technologies. A total of £181 million will be invested over 4 years.

The challenge of manufacturing medicines

To stimulate the development and manufacture of novel medicines for patients, 22 projects involving 58 organisations will get £15 million.

One of those to receive funding is MeiraGTx, which develops novel gene therapies for patients with acquired and inherited disorders, such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease.

MeiraGTx's Jon Telfer.

MeiraGTx will work with Touchlight Genetics and Symbiosis Pharmaceutical Services to develop a next-generation gene-therapy manufacturing platform.

The project will look at the manufacturing process for the adeno-associated virus. This virus infects humans but is not known to cause disease, making it a good candidate for gene therapies. It should help to deliver new treatments more quickly and efficiently.

New digital healthcare solutions

Innovate UK will also invest £8 million in 52 projects through the digital health technology catalyst, which aims to improve patient outcomes, access to healthcare and service delivery and treatments.

Digital therapeutics start-up Neurofenix will partner with Brunel University London to develop Gameball, an affordable and enjoyable rehabilitation programme for patients with neurological impairment, which includes people that have suffered strokes.

Patients will use a hand-controller and connected software to take part in digital games. It will provide upper-limb training to help patients regain mobility, an online community of support, as well as analytics on performance.

Neurofenix's Guillem Singla Buxarrais and Dimitris Athanasiou.

Centres for advanced therapies

£21 million will go towards setting up a network of 3 advanced therapies treatment centres that span the UK.

The centres will be alliances between the north of England and Scotland, and the Midlands and Wales, with the final site being based in Manchester.

This is a joint collaboration between hospitals, therapeutics development businesses and the supply chain. It should advance the use of pioneering cell and gene therapies with a large number of patients.

Building the UK's capacity

Finally, a further £5.6 million will go to the manufacture and production of viral vectors.

Viral vectors are important to advanced therapies as the carrier of gene therapy treatments. However, there is a shortage of capacity for making viral vectors in the UK.

The projects funded under this competition will expand commercial capacity in the UK and increase the ability to produce viral vectors to be used in advanced therapy medicinal products.

Work will be conducted at 2 locations at Oxford and Keele, Staffordshire.

One of Neurofenix’s 3D printers.

New opportunities

In addition to the almost £50 million already pledged under this challenge, a further £18 million will be made available to UK businesses and researchers in 2 new competitions.

There will be up to £8 million in the next round of the digital health technology catalyst. Up to £10 million will support collaborative research and development in medicines manufacturing.

These will open for applications in February and March 2018.

Developing research and innovation

Sam Gyimah, Minister for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, announced the funding today (22 January 2018) in a visit to Imperial College London.

The Minister also outlined plans to map UK’s research infrastructure to show strengths and identify any gaps. This will be the first major piece of work by UK Research and Innovation.