

News story: New and novel healthcare solutions: apply for innovation funding

Up to £12 million is on offer to UK businesses for projects that support the development of healthcare technologies and processes.

Innovate UK and the [Medical Research Council](#) (MRC) are to invest up to £12 million in new and novel healthcare solutions.

There are 2 competitions for UK micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the latest round of the Biomedical Catalyst. These are for feasibility and early stage projects.

What we are looking for

We are looking to support the development of innovative healthcare technologies and processes such as:

- disease prevention and proactive management of health and chronic conditions
- earlier and better detection and diagnosis of disease, leading to better patient outcomes
- tailored treatments that either change the underlying disease or offer potential cures

Feasibility studies

These are for exploring and testing the commercial potential and feasibility of ideas. Up to £2 million is available.

Early-stage projects

These are for testing a well-developed concept and showing its effectiveness in a relevant environment. Up to £10 million is available.

About the Biomedical Catalyst

The Biomedical Catalyst is a partnership between Innovate UK and the MRC. It aims to support the most innovative life sciences opportunities regardless of the scientific approach. It also wants to de-risk academia and industry being able to take forward innovative scientific ideas.

Competition information

- the competitions are open, and the deadline is midday on Wednesday 11 October 2017

- you could get up to £200,000 for feasibility studies lasting up to 1 year
 - you could get between £250,000 and £4 million for early-stage projects lasting between 1 and 3 years
 - you can work alone or in collaboration with other businesses or research organisations, but to lead a project you must be a UK-based SME
 - you can [watch the recording of the briefing event](#) to help with your application
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Press release: Welsh Secretary to mark 35 year anniversary of Japan-Wales business club

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will underline the strong cultural bonds between Wales and Japan at a dinner to mark a milestone anniversary for a Tokyo based business forum.

Clwb Hiraeth was founded in 1982 by senior executives of Japanese corporations who had worked and lived in Wales and had since returned to Japan. The aim was to champion business ties between the two nations.

35 years on and the club has helped to maintain and strengthen not only the business bonds, but the social links between those who formed close friendships in Wales.

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns is in Japan visiting leading international companies to discuss the great potential for further inward investment in the United Kingdom.

He will mark Clwb Hiraeth's anniversary at a dinner in Tokyo where he will address the members and reiterate the importance of preserving the business ties between the nations to help secure the future prosperity of both countries.

Speaking ahead of the event Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

Japanese companies have given Wales a lasting legacy, not just industrially, but culturally as well.

Japan has never underestimated Wales. It is one of the best places to do business and I know that Clwb Hiraeth has worked tirelessly to ensure other business leaders, universities and communities throughout this country understand just how much Wales has to

offer.

I congratulate the club on its 35 years of important service to Japan and Wales. I wish it every success in the years to come as we continue to strengthen the bonds between us.

The first chairman of Clwb Hiraeth was Mr Yamaguchi of Takiron – the first Japanese company to invest in Wales.

Over its 35 year history, members of the club have acted as unofficial ambassadors for Wales. They meet regularly, hold a number of social events, celebrate St David's Day, and endorse Wales to other potential investors and business people.

Japan's business ambitions have also been matched by the ambition of its sportsmen on the rugby pitch. Like Wales 20 years before it, the country is readying itself to host the 2019 Rugby World Cup. And while the two countries may often face one another as adversaries on the field of play, Alun Cairns will highlight the affinity each nation has with the game as another key catalyst for many more years of mutually beneficial business.

Mr Cairns added:

The strong cultural and sporting links between our two great nations have provided a strong backdrop for a successful and lucrative trade and investment partnership.

Rugby has the ability to define us as a nation and we know that success for the Welsh rugby team has a measurable economic impact. We look forward to seeing the world gather in Japan in 2019 and seeing our sporting, trading and cultural partnerships take deeper root over the years to come.

[News story: Home Secretary Amber Rudd calls for united stand against online terror](#)

Speaking at the Forum, held in San Francisco, Amber Rudd welcomed the willingness of internet service providers to develop a coordinated industry response to the global threat.

It is encouraging to see so many organisations here today willing to take a

stand on this vital agenda. I want to thank the companies I have met while here for the strides they are taking in making the internet a hostile place for terrorists to operate.

But we need to do more to help keep our communities safe. The scale of the threat we face is not something any one of us can tackle alone and only through collective action across governments, civil society and industry can we seek to defeat it. I welcome the commitment of the Forum to take this work forward.

There is no doubt that the challenge is complex. But it is important to remember that behind these discussions about technology lies our determination to protect people – from being radicalised and from being the victims of a terrorist attack.

Our enemy is trying to weaponise vulnerable people in their homes. It is a war where the front line can be a screen in a young person's bedroom or the mobile phone in their pocket.

We must be united in our resolve to purge the internet of this poisonous and pernicious material. Today has been a significant step towards achieving that goal but there is more to do. Let's work together to take terrorism offline.

Press release: £174m M3 upgrade opens to traffic

Cutting-edge technology installed on a 13.4 mile section of the motorway between the M25 and Farnborough sets the speed limit to match conditions, helps spot any queuing traffic, incidents or broken down vehicles, and informs drivers about conditions ahead.

The hard shoulder has been converted to a new fourth traffic lane in each direction, boosting capacity by a third on the vital route between London and the South West.

Since it was created in April 2015, Highways England has completed 16 major improvements, with a further 15 upgrades due to be started or open by spring 2018.

The new style emergency area on the M3 smart motorway

Drivers in this morning's peak period were the first to benefit from the fully upgraded road. Main construction on the project was completed overnight on 30 June, when the fourth lane was available for use with a 50mph speed restriction remaining in place, whilst testing of the smart motorway technology was finalised. Now, the full four lanes are open at 70mph, with

the smart motorway technology detecting incidents, actively managing traffic and giving drivers information.

Shaun Pidcock, Director of Highways England's smart motorway programme said:

This is a significant upgrade for the M3 and will deliver real benefits for the 130,000 drivers who use it every day. We've added 26.8 miles of new lanes to this busy section of the M3 and completely overhauled the technology to give drivers better information to help with their journeys.

Smart motorways create vital extra capacity, improve journey times and maintain our high levels of safety across the network. New technology will make the road more resilient to disruption, improving journeys by using variable speed limits that will help tackle frustrating stop-start traffic and giving drivers better information on conditions ahead.

As well as the smart motorway upgrade, we have also been carrying out the most extensive maintenance on the M3 since it was first built in 1971, fully resurfacing the motorway and its slip roads and restoring it to an 'as new' condition.

I would like to thank drivers for their co-operation and understanding while we've been building this new improved road and hope they enjoy the improved journeys between London and the south coast.

[Smart motorways](#) have been designed to be intuitive to drive on. Normal motorway rules apply: keep left unless overtaking, drive within the speed limit and never drive in a lane closed by a Red X. Even without a hard shoulder, there are safe places to stop every 75 seconds of driving on average.

Work on the smart motorway upgrade started in November 2014. Major maintenance being carried out alongside the project is also substantially complete, but some activities – including the rebuilding of the Woodlands Lane bridge over the M3 near Windlesham – will continue until later in the year. None of this maintenance will require any permanent traffic restrictions on the M3.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Press release: Green light for HS2 as first major contracts signed



From left to right: Sean Jeffery, Executive Director and Chairman of CEK JV Board; Nicole Geoghegan, General Counsel & Company Secretary, HS2 Ltd; Mark Cutler, Balfour Beatty VINCI HS2 Managing Director; Mark Thurston, Chief Executive, HS2 Ltd; Jim Crawford, Managing Director, Phase One, HS2 Ltd; Emma Head, Corporate Health, Safety, Security and Environmental Director, HS2 Ltd; Peter Jones, Executive Director and SCS JV board member; Jérôme Furgé, Align Project Director

High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd Chief Executive, Mark Thurston, was joined by representatives from SCS JV, Align JV, CEK JV and Balfour Beatty VINCI, in a signing ceremony at the company's Birmingham head office. The winning companies, whose names were released by the Department for Transport last month (17 July 2017), will go on to support 16,000 jobs across the UK-wide supply chain as they deliver what will be the biggest investment in UK's transport infrastructure since the building of the motorways.

Welcoming the milestone for the project, HS2 Chief Executive Mark Thurston said:

HS2 is more than just a railway. The contracts we sign today will provide much needed extra capacity and connectivity between our major cities, but it will also unlock huge opportunities for new jobs, homes and economic development and start to rebalance our economy.

We are determined to deliver the project to new levels of safety and efficiency, with respect for communities, protection for the environment and value for money at the core of everything we do. The contracts we signed today will support 16,000 jobs and generate thousands of contract opportunities within the wider supply chain, spreading the benefits of this investment across the whole country.

A team made up of Skanska, Costain and STRABAG (SCS JV) will build the first

section of the route which is in a tunnel between Euston and Old Oak Common and onwards to Northolt. Welcoming the contract award, Peter Jones, Executive Director and SCS JV board member said:

We are delighted to have been awarded these major contracts by HS2 which follow on from the South Enabling Works Contract awarded last year.

The awards are further testimony to the SCS collaborative approach and our strong track record in applying technology-based innovative solutions in the delivery of large-scale projects.

Align JV, a team made up of Bouygues, VolkerFitzpatrick and Sir Robert McAlpine will build the next stage, including the Colne Valley Viaduct and Chilterns Tunnel. Welcoming the contract award, Jérôme Furgé, Align Project Director said:

I have worked on many major projects around the world, and find it a special privilege to be working on HS2. This project will require a unique level of collaboration between all of us and the highest industry standards, expected by HS2, will be implemented in order to obtain the very best outcome. My Align colleagues and I are delighted to be part of the challenge to deliver a world-class asset to the UK.

The largely rural stages between the Chilterns Tunnel and Long Itchington will be built by a team made up of Carillion, Eiffage and Kier (CEK JV). Welcoming the contract award, Sean Jeffery, Executive Director and Chairman of CEK JV Board said:

We are delighted to have been selected to help deliver this major infrastructure project and look forward to working in partnership with HS2. Our involvement in this project will enable us to create many new jobs and training opportunities as well as working with a diverse range of supply chain businesses from across the UK.

A team made up of Balfour Beatty and VINCI will complete the route, taking the line north past Birmingham Airport and into the new Curzon Street station in the centre of Birmingham, as well as onward to a connection with the existing West Coast Mainline at Handsacre. Welcoming the contract award, Mark Cutler, Balfour Beatty VINCI HS2 Managing Director, said:

I am proud that our long-standing joint venture has been chosen to deliver these two important and complex sections of HS2.

This iconic rail infrastructure project will create significant

opportunities for the UK construction industry and enable long term benefits in skills, jobs and regional prosperity. We look forward to building on our successful track record of major infrastructure projects, and playing our part in the delivery of HS2.

The contracts are two-stage, with the contractors spending the first 16 months working collaboratively with HS2 Ltd on the detailed design before construction begins around 2018/19. Preparatory work has already begun on the project with geological investigation underway across the route and ecological and archaeological work due to begin soon.