

# Government injects funding boost for cutting-edge vaccine site in Darlington

- Government's Vaccine Taskforce has granted £10.65 million in additional funding to support the launch of Darlington RNA vaccine innovation centre
- the 'RNA Centre of Excellence', hosted by technology innovation organisation CPI, will support the development, scale-up and manufacture of new RNA therapies and vaccines, the same technology used for the Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccinations
- CPI has also established an RNA Training Academy, to support companies by providing the industry with the skills required in RNA technology

The government has today (Friday 7 October) announced £10.65 million in funding to boost the development of RNA technology, the vaccine innovation that protected millions around the world from COVID-19. The funding will support the launch of a new innovation centre by CPI in Darlington, advancing the technology that is currently under development for the treatment of various cancers, flu vaccines and personalised medicines including gene therapy.

The Vaccine Taskforce granted the funding – administered by Innovate UK – for CPI's RNA Centre of Excellence, which has the potential to make homegrown breakthroughs in the fight against a number of diseases, producing RNA material for clinical trials which will be crucial to future vaccine development.

The Centre is the only site in the UK currently able to develop and manufacture messenger and self-amplifying RNA vaccines and therapies with the capability to manufacture millions of doses of a vaccine, if required for a future healthcare emergency.

It will provide state-of-the-art equipment and world-leading expertise to support industry with the testing, scale-up and clinical production of RNA technologies – showcasing the UK's capability in this area and helping to promote the UK as an attractive destination for further investment.

Minister for Science and Investment Security Nusrat Ghani said:

The UK's exceptional capabilities in Life Sciences were showcased on the world stage when we became the first nation globally to approve a working COVID-19 vaccine during the pandemic.

We are now committed to boosting these capabilities even further, ensuring we are thoroughly prepared for future health emergencies and remaining at the forefront of the development of new therapies.

This is why we are making this significant investment in CPI's brilliant RNA facility in Darlington, a site with the potential to make enormous homegrown breakthroughs in the fight against disease.

The Centre will also form an important part of the UK's commitment to future pandemic preparedness, as the government will retain priority access to the facility for up to 10 years. This will allow vaccine developers to utilise the site as required to provide additional manufacturing capacity in the event of a future health emergency or pandemic.

As part of the Centre, CPI has also established the RNA Training Academy, providing interactive courses in RNA technology alongside bespoke training at CPI facilities to ensure that companies can access the industry skills they require in the UK. The Academy has already gained accreditation to provide continuing professional development.

Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen said:

CPI is a fantastic example of a local organisation at the cutting-edge of biosciences and its new Centre of Excellence will be another string to the bow of the growing cluster on Darlington's Central Park and our world-leading life sciences sector.

This latest boost comes on the back of the amazing work of the sector in the fight against coronavirus. This funding will help our scientists make even more leaps forward and breakthroughs, having a huge impact on lives across the UK and beyond. Funding of our research centres, labs and manufacturing space will help create high-quality, highly-skilled and well-paid jobs in the innovative industries of the future for local people.

While we're seeing difficulties across the globe which are making times tough for many, our region continues to move forward and make huge progress thanks to investments like these – meaning the long-term future of Teesside, Darlington and Hartlepool is bright.

This funding illustrates the proactive steps the government is taking to realise the 2021 [Life Sciences Vision](#), and to continue furthering its ambitions to secure the UK's reputation as a life sciences superpower. The investment also delivers on the government's levelling up agenda, supporting highly skilled jobs and helping bring greater prosperity and productivity in the north-east region.

The Vaccine Taskforce previously supported the construction and development of CPI's centre with funding of £26.48 million, and to date, the government has invested over £405 million to secure and scale up the UK's vaccine manufacturing capabilities, supporting the UK's ability to respond to future pandemics.

## Notes to editors

- Innovate UK is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
- The Vaccine Taskforce has now transferred its core functions to the UK Health Security Agency and the Office for Life Sciences

### About the CPI

- [CPI](#) is a social enterprise that partners with industry, academia, government, and the investment community to catalyse the delivery of healthcare and sustainability innovations that benefit people, places and our planet
- CPI works with the [pharma industry](#) to develop next-generation medicine manufacturing innovations to deliver tomorrow's vaccines and therapeutics. The organisation offers world-leading facilities and expertise in small molecules, biologics, oligonucleotides, and complex medicines to accelerate drug development and scale-up and offers complementary drug delivery systems like lipid nanoparticles
- it creates agile, efficient, and sustainable supply chains by convening actors across the pharma industry ecosystem in a pre-competitive space and boosting the adoption of industry 4.0 advanced processes and digitisation
- CPI hosts one of the largest pools of experts in RNA manufacturing in the UK. This RNA expertise will be shared with the pharma industry and budding scientists through the [RNA Training Academy](#). Apprentices, technicians, scientists, and executives will be able to access a series of courses on the development and manufacture of RNA, RNA encapsulation, and final formulation. The first course will be delivered on 25 October 2022
- CPI is a founding member of the High Value Manufacturing Catapult, a network of world-leading technology and innovation centres that help business, researchers and government deliver industrial transformation in the UK

### Additional quotes

Public Health and Mental Health Minister Dr Caroline Johnson said:

The UK's world-leading clinical research and innovation has been vital in our fight against COVID, giving people across the world the protection they and their loved ones need.

The opening of this new Innovation Centre will provide potentially life-saving therapies and vaccines for thousands of patients, while delivering research into a wide range of potentially ground-breaking treatments cementing the UK's status as a life sciences superpower.

Innovate UK CEO Indro Mukerjee said:

Innovate UK has been proud to actively support the UK's pioneering vaccine development and manufacturing. We are pleased to have partnered with the Vaccine Taskforce and to use catapults and expert resources across the Innovate UK system to support their work.

Frank Millar, CEO of CPI said:

CPI played a key role in the development and scale-up of COVID-19 vaccine technology as part of the government's Vaccine Taskforce. As a founding member of the UK's High Value Manufacturing Catapult, we act as a catalyst for delivering healthcare and sustainability innovations and transformation across industries.

Thanks to the successes of our partnership with the VTF, our new RNA Centre of Excellence and Training Academy in Darlington will support industry through world-leading skills developments and the delivery of complex medicines to fight the next healthcare emergency and benefit patients through novel treatment options.

We're delighted to be enabling UK Life Sciences to acquire new capabilities from Teesside, building on the region's long history of biomanufacturing.

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**Remembrance Service Sunday 13 November 2022 – Bangkok**



# UK Government

The annual Remembrance Day Service organised by the British Embassy in Bangkok will be held at The British Club commencing at 10:50am on Sunday 13 November 2022. The event will not only commemorate British, Commonwealth, and allied personnel, but all those who have been affected in all conflicts. It serves as a reminder that nations who fought so bitterly against each other can come together to promote peace and stability in the modern world.

Wreaths will be laid at the War Memorial by Ambassadors or their representatives, by War Veterans' organisations and by representatives from associations and societies in Bangkok. Those attending the service are asked to gather from 10:20am.

We would be grateful if you would reply either via this [link](#) or via the email [remembrance.bangkok@fco.gov.uk](mailto:remembrance.bangkok@fco.gov.uk) **no later than 1 November 2022** if you would like to attend. If you wish to lay a wreath, they are available from the British Embassy for a donation of 1500 THB each; requests for wreaths and details for payment are included in the attendance response form. All funds raised will go to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. There will be an opportunity for personal wreaths to be laid following the service.

There is no public parking on site. Travel by public transport is recommended. Public Address The British Club Bangkok, Silom Road Soi 18, Bangrak. Following the service, light refreshments will be served on the back lawn.

Please be aware that attendance may result in your image being captured during official event photography. Should you not wish your image to appear

in any official photographs on government or other media outlets please inform the British Embassy in writing accordingly.

If you wish to join the live stream for Remembrance Day Service 2022 from 10:30am, kindly click [here](#)

Or please enter the below code on Zoom application

Meeting ID: 885 6777 5849 Passcode: 887929

[Remembrance Service 2022 : Schedule](#) (PDF, 248 KB, 1 page) [Remembrance Service 2022 : Order of Service](#) (PDF, 876 KB, 4 pages)

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1. 8 November 2022

adding the order of service

2. 7 November 2022

Adding the schedule for Remembrance Service 2022

3. 11 October 2022

Added livestream link

4. 7 October 2022

First published.

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## [Avanti West Coast placed on short-term contract to drastically improve services](#)

News story

The Department for Transport has placed Avanti West Coast on a short-term contract and challenged it to deliver the urgent increase in services required.



- Avanti West Coast placed on short-term contract to stabilise its operational challenges
- government has only approved a limited extension of 6 months to 1 April 2023
- Avanti must roll out its recovery plan and deliver long-overdue reliability for passengers

The Department for Transport has placed Avanti West Coast on a short-term contract and challenged it to deliver the urgent increase in services required.

Over the past few months, Avanti has seen major operational issues primarily caused by a shortage of available drivers. Nearly 100 additional drivers will have entered formal service this year between April and December. This has meant the company has begun to add more services as new drivers and those who need re-training become available to work. They have also added extra trains on its key London-Manchester and London-Birmingham routes, bringing service levels closer to normal running.

With Avanti's previous contract coming to an end, the short-term extension will see it continue to run services on the route until 1 April 2023. This window is designed to provide Avanti with the opportunity to improve their services. The government will then consider Avanti's performance while finalising a National Rail Contract that will have a renewed focus on resilience of train services and continuity for passengers.

Alongside rolling ahead with training new drivers, Avanti's service improvement plans include:

- the successful delivery of its timetable recovery plan and a significant, sustained and reliable increase from about 180 trains per day to 264 trains per day on weekdays as new and retrained drivers become available
- continuing to deliver on its traincrew recruitment and plans to reduce reliance on rest day working to operate services
- extending booking options for passengers, making the full range of tickets available as early as possible

Transport Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

We need train services which are reliable and resilient to modern day life. Services on Avanti have been unacceptable and while the company has taken positive steps to get more trains moving, it must do more to deliver certainty of service to its passengers.

We have agreed a 6-month extension to Avanti to assess whether it is capable of running this crucial route to a standard passengers deserve and expect.

The problems facing Avanti over recent weeks stem from old working practices that mean shifts are often covered by existing drivers volunteering to work above their 35 contracted hours. This antiquated practice shows just how urgent it is for us to modernise our railways, so passengers benefit from reliable services that don't rely on the goodwill of drivers volunteering to work overtime.

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## [Prime Minister welcomes 'powerful show of solidarity' at European leaders' meeting](#)

- Prime Minister pays tribute to “collective resolve” of leaders to oppose Russian aggression
- UK agrees new regional energy cooperation and progress on Sizewell C nuclear development at Prague summit
- Ministers to take forward enhanced operational cooperation to address migrant crisis

The Prime Minister has welcomed the strong show of unity against tyranny at the summit of European leaders today, as the UK secures new commitments on energy and migration.

Convening 44 leaders from across the continent, the meeting in Prague reaffirmed the steadfast resistance to Russia's aggression.

In a meeting with French President Macron, both leaders confirmed their full support for the new nuclear power station at Sizewell C and committed to take all necessary steps to finalise investment decisions within the next month, progressing the next generation of the UK's nuclear power.

The UK and France will ramp up wider cooperation on civil-nuclear development ahead of a planned UK-France Summit in 2023, working together on issues

including new innovation, infrastructure and workforce training.

Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala also confirmed plans to renew the UK's participation in the North Seas Energy Cooperation group, which supports the construction of wind farms and interconnectors in the region. The Prime Minister used the summit to push for the development of new, next-generation hybrid interconnectors in the North Sea to accelerate renewable energy capacity.

Prime Minister Liz Truss said:

“Leaders leave this summit with greater collective resolve to stand up to Russian aggression. What we have seen in Prague is a forceful show of solidarity with Ukraine, and for the principles of freedom and democracy.

“The UK will continue to work with our allies to deliver on the British people's priorities, including ending our reliance on authoritarian regimes for energy and reducing costs for families, tackling people smuggling gangs, and standing up to tyrants.”

The Prime Minister also discussed the benefits of energy partnerships with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Støre, highlighting today's announcement from London-based firm Neptune Energy that it will increase gas production at the Duva field as a successful example. Gas from Norway's Duva subsea field serves households in the UK.

On migration, the UK Prime Minister agreed with President Macron and Dutch Prime Minister Rutte to intensify cooperation on tackling illegal migration. The UK and France confirmed that their interior ministers would conclude an ambitious package of measures to address pernicious people smuggling gangs in the Channel this autumn.

The Prime Minister will attend the closing plenary session and dinner at the European leaders' summit this evening.

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## **Recognising the clear link between illicit trading of natural resources and conflict**

Thank you very much, President.

President Excellency, thank you for convening this important debate, and I thank our briefers as well this morning for their insights. I'd like to highlight three considerations.

First, as today's briefers and previous speakers have underlined, we recognise the clear link between illicit trading of natural resources and conflict. From Somalia to Sudan to the Democratic Republic of Congo, the illicit trade in natural resources of charcoal, timber and gold has helped fund conflict and the activities of armed groups.

And we should bear in mind that increased global demand for critical minerals – essential to decarbonisation and our green growth goals – risks exacerbating the illegal sourcing of natural resources without appropriate action.

So we do need a concerted and coordinated effort to tackle illicit trafficking as a root cause of conflict, and in this context, I welcome the African Union's efforts including conflict prevention, including the work of Commissioner Bankole and his department. As a Council, too, we should look at ways to strengthen the UN Security Council's sanctions regimes both against individuals and entities that illegally exploit natural resources to fund or prolong or provoke conflict. The Council acted in Somalia by banning the export of charcoal to inhibit Al-Shabaab's revenue streams; we can and should do more across other mandates.

Second, President, we need stronger regulation and governance efforts to tackle the illicit trafficking of natural resources, including stringent certification and verification processes.

And in this context, the UK is proud to support a number of international mechanisms that deliver this, including the OECD's Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Mineral Supply Chains and the Kimberley Process that helps stem the flow of conflict diamonds.

Finally, President, we share the view of previous distinguished speakers of the dangerous consequences of the exploitation of Africa's natural resources by private military companies.

There is significant independent reporting outlining the exploitation of gold resources in Sudan and the Central African Republic through Wagner Group's subsidiaries like Meroe Gold. Gold extraction and smuggling operations risk undermining local stability, present significant ecological and human rights risks and are a significant loss to Sudan.

The United Kingdom reiterates our concerns over Wagner Group's activities in Africa, which undermine effective resource governance and offer no sustainable solutions to Africa's security challenges.

In concluding, President, I thank you again for convening this important debate during Gabon's Security Council Presidency.

Thank you.