

Press release: Industrial strategy delivers new vaccines manufacturing centre to lead the fight against deadly disease

- The UK's first-ever dedicated Vaccines Manufacturing Innovation Centre will ensure the UK life sciences industry remains at the forefront of worldwide efforts to tackle life-threatening diseases, including Ebola
- the centre will be built in Oxford, creating more than 50 jobs in the local area
- through the modern [Industrial Strategy](#), the government is investing £66 million through UK Research and Innovation in the centre to help make Britain the best place in the world for innovators, including new treatments to help people live longer, healthier and happier lives through the Life Sciences Sector Deal

Ebola and Lassa fever are among the deadly diseases to be tackled in a pioneering new UK vaccine centre, Business Secretary Greg Clark announced today (Saturday 1 December).

Based in Oxford, the Vaccines Manufacturing Innovation Centre will help to tackle disease worldwide as well as further boosting the growth of the UK's £70 billion life sciences industry.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

More than 200 years ago the UK pioneered the first vaccine and with it, smallpox was eradicated. Now as the world is threatened by killers such as Ebola and Lassa fever we will build on our significant heritage and history to fight against them with our unmatched reputation for medical research and innovation.

The government is investing in pioneering vaccine manufacturing as part of our modern Industrial Strategy to create more highly skilled jobs, place the NHS at the forefront of cutting-edge technologies and deliver the biggest increase in public investment in research and development in UK history.

The availability of safe, effective and economical vaccines is an important pillar of world health. Alongside more familiar diseases, populations globally are threatened by new outbreaks of diseases such as Ebola and Lassa fever. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, an outbreak of Ebola beginning last August has resulted in 357 confirmed cases and 186 deaths, while this year a Lassa fever outbreak in Nigeria has resulted in 553 confirmed cases and 143 deaths. There are presently no licensed vaccines

available for these diseases.

The UK's world-leading research and innovation expertise is ideally placed to create new, cost-effective ways of developing and manufacturing vaccines for global distribution, as well as ensuring the UK's own preparedness in the event of a pandemic. The centre is expected to open in 2022, with the first products from the centre expected later that year.

Public Health Minister Steve Brine said:

It is no exaggeration to say that vaccines are a modern marvel and their introduction catapulted our healthcare system years ahead. Just this year we celebrated 50 years on from the introduction of the measles vaccine, which has potentially averted 20 million measles cases and 4,500 deaths.

While all vaccines save millions of lives around the world every year, we cannot get complacent. There are still too many debilitating diseases that take thousands of lives each year – but through investments like this we can strengthen our efforts and stop more diseases in their tracks.

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive Professor Sir Mark Walport said:

Improving the development, production and application of new vaccines against infectious diseases requires expertise and collaboration across academia and industry.

The Vaccines Manufacturing Centre will play an important role in bringing expertise from industry and academia together to ensure we are prepared to respond to the threats of serious infections, including viruses with the potential to cause major national or global epidemics.

Led by the Jenner Institute, a partnership between the University of Oxford and the Pirbright Institute, the new centre has been awarded funding by [UK Research and Innovation](#) of £66 million through the UK government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF) Medicines Manufacturing challenge.

Jenner Institute Director, Professor Adrian Hill, said:

This is an exceptional opportunity for the UK to lead in the provision of vaccines against a wide range of outbreak pathogens which threaten to cause major epidemics. The lack of commercial incentive to develop these has now led to this exceptional partnership of major academic and industrial players in the vaccine field, to accelerate a range of vaccines towards large-scale manufacture and stockpile provision for vulnerable populations.

In parallel, the Centre will develop innovative manufacturing technologies with UK companies and universities to support the next generation of life-saving preventive and therapeutic vaccines.

The Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund aims to bring together the UK's world-leading research with business to meet the major industrial and societal challenges of our time, backed by the biggest increase in public research and development investment in UK history. The investment marks a significant step in delivering on a major commitment in the Life Sciences Sector Deal, a partnership between government and industry ensuring the UK remains at the forefront of developing innovative new treatments and medical technologies to improve patients' lives.

Additional funding of £10 million will come from commercial and other partners, including Janssen Vaccines & Prevention B.V. and Merck Sharp and Dohme. The centre will be further supported by expertise and training from GE Healthcare.

The core research teams will be drawn from academia and industry and will include significant new contributions from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and Imperial College London as well as the University of Oxford. The programme will also benefit from access to technologies and intellectual property created by the partners.

News story: Appointment of new Chair of the Disclosure and Barring Service

A former chief executive of four previous NHS trusts has been appointed as Chair of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Dr Fairfield will take up her role today (December 1), taking over from Bill Griffiths, who has occupied the role since December 2012.

The Chair's responsibilities include:

- providing effective strategic leadership for the operation of the DBS;
- playing a significant role in ensuring that the DBS and its staff maintain the capability to deliver the DBS's statutory responsibilities and objectives;
- taking into account Government's safeguarding objectives and priorities;
- chair all meetings of the board and ensure that meetings are conducted efficiently and effectively; and
- undertake annual performance appraisals of the Non-Executive Board members and the Chief Executive in line with agreed procedures and timescales.

Dr Fairfield said:

I am delighted to be appointed as the Chair of the Disclosure and Barring Service.

This is an important time for the organisation, as the DBS continues to modernise and drive up its performance to ensure an effective and streamlined service for all. I look forward to working with the dedicated staff there and with our partners as we shape the organisation to ensure that the DBS is as effective, consistently reliable and of the highest quality as possible.

Dr Fairfield is a qualified general practitioner and consultant in public health and worked as chief Executive for the Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust and the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust in addition to two NHS Acute Trusts. Dr Fairfield retired from the NHS after 36 years of service in August 2017.

In addition to her health experience, Dr Gillian has served as a Non-Executive Board Member on the national Youth Justice Board and as Chair of the Youth Justice Board Performance Committee and as member of the Justice Board's Finance and Risk Committee.

The appointment was facilitated by the passing of the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation and Exercise of Functions) Act 2018 in November.

Press release: UK to tell EU it will no longer seek access to secure aspects of Galileo

Instead, the UK will explore options to build its own Global Navigation Satellite System that can help guide military drones, run energy networks and provide essential services for civilian smart phones. It will also work with the US to continue accessing its trusted GPS system.

UK Space Agency (UKSA) is currently leading the work, with the full support of the Ministry of Defence, and any British system will provide both open and encrypted signals, giving it the same range of commercial and security applications as GPS and Galileo.

British Armed Forces were due to have access to Galileo's encrypted system when it is fully operational in 2026. However the National Cyber Security Centre and Ministry of Defence have concluded it would not be in the UK's

security interests to use the system's secure elements if it had not been fully involved in their development.

The Prime Minister, Theresa May said:

I have been clear from the outset that the UK will remain firmly committed to Europe's collective security after Brexit.

But given the Commission's decision to bar the UK from being fully involved in developing all aspects of Galileo it is only right that we find alternatives.

I cannot let our Armed Services depend on a system we cannot be sure of. That would not be in our national interest.

And as a global player with world-class engineers and steadfast allies around the world we are not short of options.

In August the Prime Minister tasked British engineering and aerospace experts to develop options and set aside £92 million for the plans. Since then over fifty UK companies have expressed interest in the project and a series of key contracts are now being tendered.

When commissioning options the PM set out that the British system must be compatible with the US GPS system, meaning that if either were subject to malicious attack the other could provide crucial positioning information.

The Prime Minister has also confirmed that the UK is in close contact with key international allies on plans for the national system.

The UK's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies would be used to provide the global network of locations needed for the necessary ground-based infrastructure and worldwide coverage.

Recent estimates indicate that over 11 per cent of the UK's GDP is directly supported by satellite navigation systems and the Blackett review estimated that a failure of service could cost the UK economy £1 billion a day. Resilient and secure position, navigation and timing services are increasingly essential for defence, critical national infrastructure and emergency response.

The UK is a world-leader in developing satellite technology. Britain has a 40% share of the global export market for small satellites and makes major components for one in four of the world's telecommunications satellites. Glasgow builds more satellites than any other European city. The UK has particular expertise in security, cryptography and satellite manufacture, and has manufactured all of the Galileo satellite payloads to date.

As part of the modern Industrial Strategy the government is committed to growing the UK space sector – helping create 30,000 high-skilled jobs by 2030.

News story: Transatlantic flight guarantee as UK and Canada agree new air arrangement

- Transport Secretary announces arrangement between UK and Canada guaranteeing vital routes will remain in place once the UK leaves the EU
- the arrangement provides certainty for businesses, allowing trade to continue driving tens of billions pounds into the UK economy
- builds on the successful conclusion of the government's air services arrangement with the United States

Millions of passengers will be able to enjoy the same access to transatlantic routes once the UK leaves the EU.

The Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has today (30 November 2018) announced that the UK has reached a new air services arrangement with Canada which will see flights continue between the 2 nations post Brexit.

The deal ensures that planes flying from the UK will continue to enjoy the same access they currently have with Canada, helping the UK maintain its place as Europe's most important aviation hub.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

This new aviation agreement between the UK and Canada will further strengthen the strong economic and cultural bonds shared between our countries.

International cooperation is essential to a thriving economy and this latest arrangement continues to build momentum for the UK as we leave the EU and take a more prominent position on the world stage.

Since 2012, the number of passengers travelling between the UK and Canada has been steadily increasing with more than 3 and a half million people travelling between the 2 countries last year.

Today's announcement with Canada is another step forward as the UK continues to build on an important trade relationship which saw goods worth £17.5 billion traded between the 2 countries last year.

It follows the government's recent [announcement of a new air services arrangement with the United States](#), guaranteeing passenger journeys and further bolstering a trade relationship worth £50 billion.

The deal will replace the existing EU aviation agreement which is currently in place, providing passengers and businesses with the guarantee that they will continue to enjoy the same access they currently have with Canada.

Press release: UK Minister visits Nairobi for talks on sustainable blue economies and marine conservation

The UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, visited Kenya from 26 to 27 November 2018.

In addition to leading the UK delegation to the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, Lord Ahmad held talks with Cabinet Secretary Monica Juma and the Chief Justice. He also met with young Kenyans, refugees, and survivors of gender based violence. In addition to his ministerial role, Lord Ahmad is also the British Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, an issue which has long been a priority for the UK government.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference the Minister welcomed Kenya's leadership on economic development and underlined the UK's commitment to the sustainable use of our oceans. This includes the joint leadership of the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance (CCOA) with Vanuatu.

CCOA was launched at the April Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held in London and unites countries around the Commonwealth in their shared ambition to tackle plastics in the marine environment.

Foreign Office Minister Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Lord Ahmad said:

We have all seen the devastating impact that plastic pollution is having on our oceans, ruining marine environments and affecting livelihoods. It is vital that we move towards a sustainable blue economy, where we stop treating the ocean as a bottomless, free resource.

The United Kingdom, Vanuatu and our Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance partners are determined to make sure our oceans are clean, healthy, productive and biologically diverse. We call on all Commonwealth countries to pledge action now on plastic pollution, whether by following Kenya's lead by cutting down on single-use plastic bags or taking steps to eliminate avoidable single-use plastic waste, before it is too late.

Lord Ahmad also visited the organisation RefuSHE on Monday, which provides holistic services to unaccompanied refugee women and girls in Nairobi, many of whom are survivors of violence. Lord Ahmad heard from the RefuSHE women and girls about the challenges they face, and their hopes for the future. The British business community in Kenya is supporting these vulnerable refugees including with education and training.

Speaking after his visit, Lord Ahmad said:

It was wonderful to visit RefuSHE today, and to hear these brave women and girls discuss their stories, and their hopes for the future.

My visit to this inspirational organisation fell during the 16 days of activism to end Gender Based Violence, an issue which I care passionately about. The UK will continue to do all it can to raise awareness of gender based violence, and support efforts to tackle, and ultimately eradicate it, around the world.

On Tuesday evening the Minister met with young Kenyans for a wide ranging discussion on youth unemployment, tackling corruption, and human rights.

- The UK supported the delivery of the Blue Economy Conference through funding which allowed participation from Commonwealth Small Island Developing States.
- During her recent visit, the British Prime Minister announced a package of support responding to the issues the next generation care most passionately about in Kenya and around the region. This included support for the fight against corruption in Kenya, through the signature of a framework agreement which allows the return of assets of corruption from the UK to Kenya. It also included support for the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs through the catalytic Jobs Fund, which is due to be launched early next year. See a [full list of announcements made during the Prime Minister's visit to Kenya](#).

Further information