

[Press release: PM call with Prime Minister Abe: 23 October 2017](#)

This morning the Prime Minister called Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan to congratulate him on his success in the Japanese general election.

The Prime Minister and Prime Minister Abe discussed North Korea and agreed to continue to work with the international community to maintain pressure on the regime to cease its destabilising activity. They noted the role the UK played in the EU agreeing tough sanctions on North Korea last week.

The leaders reflected on the Prime Minister's successful visit to Japan in August and the positive impact it has had on UK-Japan relations. They looked forward to deepening ties between our two countries on trade, security and defence.

The Prime Minister also offered Prime Minister Abe her condolences on the impact and loss of life caused by Typhoon Lan.

[News story: Making viral vectors for advanced therapies: apply for funding](#)

Businesses can apply for a share of £16 million for manufacturing viral vectors for cell and gene therapy – part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

Innovate UK has up to £16 million to invest in capital projects that support the growth of manufacturing capacity for viral vectors used in cell and gene therapies.

Commercial opportunities in advanced therapies

Advanced therapy medicinal products are emerging medicines that use cells, genes or engineered tissues to treat patients.

These therapies usually involve delivery of the treatment by a virus. The therapeutic gene is carried in a viral vector.

It is estimated that the global market for regenerative medicine and cell therapies could be more than \$67 billion by 2020 and for gene therapy \$11 billion by 2025. While the UK is at the forefront of research into these new therapies, there is a shortage of capacity for making viral vectors. We need

to act to take advantage of the commercial opportunities.

The funding for this competition is under the government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to develop first-of-a-kind technologies for the manufacture of medicines.

Encouraging public and private partnerships

Funding in this competition is for capital investment in equipment that can be used for making viral vectors. This can include refurbishment.

Projects must:

- advance UK ability to produce viral vectors for use in advanced therapies
- encourage partnerships between public and private organisations and maximise further investment

Successful projects are likely to include ones that:

- create infrastructure that fast-tracks research, development, production and commercialisation of viral vectors
- increase UK commercial capacity
- increase competitiveness of the lead business

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for registration is midday on 8 November 2017
- projects must be led by a business with a viral vector manufacturing facility, working alone or with partners
- we expect projects will range in size from total costs of £2 million to £6 million
- businesses can attract up to 50% of their project costs

[Press release: Dstl analyst supports military in hurricane-hit Caribbean](#)

Richard Hoyes, an operational analyst based at Portsdown West, deployed to the Caribbean to support the military following the devastation caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

With just 3 days' notice Richard travelled to Barbados to join the military part of the Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) Operations on the island. He provided operational analysis to the headquarters of the HADR Operations, focusing on how best to move people and freight across the many

Caribbean islands with the aircraft available, and planning deployment of military force back to the UK.

Richard worked with the military, other government departments and civilian organisations. He said:

The conditions in Barbados were very different to working in a lab, but it was highly rewarding to be part of supporting the aid of the islands. I felt my analytical experience was put to good use and I hope that I made a difference helping the islands get back on their feet.

Richard is just one of more than 30 members of Dstl staff who are trained and ready to deploy anywhere in the world in support of military operations. As part of Dstl's support to operations capability, Dstl has a pool of operational analysts and scientific advisers who can support the military at a moment's notice and even deploy on operations.

Dstl also has a 24-hour, 365-day 'reachback' capability, which provides rapid access to the breadth and depth of Dstl's capabilities in support of military operations. This could include anything from computer modelling and highly detailed scientific advice to a review of previous research studies for similar issues.

[Press release: Minister for Europe opens Strategic Dialogue with Georgia](#)

Minister for Europe and Americas, Sir Alan Duncan, will today [October 23] welcome Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Georgia, Mikheil Janelidze for the fourth round of the UK-Georgia annual strategic dialogue, known as the Wardrop Dialogue.

Deputy Prime Minister Janelidze's will also meet Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson before joining the Lord Mayor at Mansion House for talks on business links.

Georgian Defence Minister, Levan Izoria, is also visiting London to participate in the Dialogue and will meet Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon.

Relations between the governments of the UK and Georgia are at an all-time high. The dialogue will provide an opportunity to discuss continued co-operation on trade, defence, and mutual values, which underpin the strength of our ties.

Minister for Europe Sir Alan Duncan said:

Our relations with Georgia are stronger than ever, and I'm delighted that Deputy Prime Minister Mikheil Janelidze visited London for the fourth round of our annual Wardrop Dialogue.

The UK stands by Georgia in support of its territorial integrity, security, and ambitious reform agenda. This commitment is underlined by our Good Governance Fund, through which the UK helps Georgia to deliver necessary reforms, and reach its economic potential.

As the UK leaves the European Union, we are ensuring our relationship with Georgia will continue to grow. Trade will be an important element and the Prime Minister's appointment of Mark Pritchard as our new Trade Envoy reiterates our optimism over the future of UK-Georgian trade.

Not only is Georgia a role-model in the region for reform, democracy and human rights; they also play a pivotal role in the wider security of the region in the face of external pressures. We also support the positive role the EU plays in the region, which we expect to be reiterated at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels in November.

Further information

[Press release: Awards ceremony honors unsung heroes who support victims and witnesses](#)

Giving evidence can be a painful and difficult experience, which often involves people having to recount one of the most horrific moments in their lives.

The inaugural 'Celebrating Services for Witnesses' awards ceremony, held in Nottingham on Friday night, has honoured the unrecognised people and agencies who spend their day to day lives supporting victims and witnesses to perform their invaluable role.

This can include a Witness Liaison Officer in a court who can advocate for the witness and make sure the court is doing all it can to make the experience easier, a court operations manager who makes sure the waiting

rooms for victims and witnesses are comfortable and reassuring, or a volunteer for the Witness Service charity who offer a source of emotional support and practical advice.

The ceremony was held at Nottingham Trent University, and was supported by the university's Law School, the Crown Prosecution Service, defence lawyers including members of the independent bar, the British Transport Police and the Citizens Advice Witness Service.

There were six award categories:

- unsung hero award (individual)
- specialist support award (team or individual)
- frontline services award (individual)
- significant improvements award (team or individual)
- partnership award (team)
- the Victims' Commissioner's award (team or individual), presented by Baroness Helen Newlove, the Victim's Commissioner.

Susan Acland-Hood, CEO of HMCTS, said:

I am delighted to have been at the first 'Celebrating Services for Witnesses' awards, to honour those who support some of the most vulnerable in the courts system. It's vital that we make sure victims and witnesses feel as comfortable and confident as possible, allowing them to give their best evidence and help to make sure justice is done.

Mr Justice Haddon-Cave, Presiding Judge of the Midlands, said:

These awards are a wonderful opportunity to thank, honour and encourage the many volunteers, professionals and agencies who do vital work in our courts up and down the country helping and supporting victims and witnesses.

Professor Janine Griffiths-Baker, Dean of the Law School at Nottingham Trent University, said:

We are delighted to have sponsored such a momentous event and to have hosted so many distinguished guests from across the justice sector.

As a Law School which prides itself on playing an active role in the legal community, we recognise that the justice system only works when those who give evidence are provided with support from a wide range of agencies. The nominees for these awards have displayed enormous determination and innovation in championing the rights of witnesses.

The safety and security of citizens is a theme that the Nottingham Law School centres much of its research around; the work that those who have been celebrated by these awards does is a crucial part of a justice system which keeps the public safe and secure.

The Government is investing over £1 billion to reform the courts and tribunals system – this will make sure it is providing targeted care to those who need it, by reducing stress for victims and the most vulnerable, and lessening the emotional turmoil experienced through crime.

It has put in place a range of measures to help reduce the anxiety of attending court, including: the use of video links to give evidence; giving evidence behind a screen; the use of a registered intermediary; allowing more vulnerable and intimidated victims of sexual offences to have their cross-examination pre-recorded before trial, so they do not have to face their attacker in live court; and plans to ban men with a record of violence or sexual abuse from cross-examining vulnerable partners or children in family courts.