

# [News story: Crack your business productivity puzzle: new funding available](#)

Innovate UK is making up to £3 million available to help make businesses more productive and solve the problems that are holding back their growth.

The fund will allow businesses to work with some of the country's leading analysts and measurement experts to help improve their productivity and competitiveness.

## **Analysis for innovators**

The funding is provided by Innovate UK, the [National Physical Laboratory](#), the [National Measurement Laboratory](#), the [National Engineering Laboratory](#) and the [Science and Technology Facilities Council](#) (STFC).

It comes through the analysis for innovators programme, which aims to help individual companies solve tricky and sometimes long-running technical problems that can affect how well their products, processes or services function.

In 2017, 96% of UK businesses employed fewer than 10 staff. We know that many lack the skills for effective analysis and measurement. This programme aims to address that. By awarding access to expertise and the facilities of the laboratories and STFC, it allows businesses to optimise processes or improve their specifications to unlock new markets.

Grant holders from previous competition rounds have reported benefits including:

- increased productivity
- increased sales
- accelerated time to market
- development of exploitable intellectual property

## **Businesses must outline the problem they face**

At this stage, we are looking for expressions of interests from businesses with a particular analysis or measurement problem.

If successful, businesses will be invited to meet with measurement experts and work with them to develop projects for grant funding in a second stage. These projects should have clear benefits in solving the problem and lead to improved productivity or competitiveness.

We will consider problems that:

- are related to the measurement or analysis of some quantities or properties of an existing process, product or service
- are not solvable by simple 'off the shelf' methods or techniques

A business can apply up to 3 times in this competition. Each application must focus on a different problem.

## Competition information

- the competition opens on 22 August 2018, and the deadline for expressions of interest is at midday on 6 September 2018
- UK-based businesses of any size can apply
- stage 1 is looking to identify analysis problems within a business, with stage 2 offering grant funding. We expect most stage 2 projects to be under £50,000 and last up to 3 months, but we could fund projects of up to £200,000
- businesses could receive matched funding for their projects
- you can [register to attend a briefing event or webinar](#) on 3 September 2018 to find out more about the competition and how to submit a quality application

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## [News story: UK Space Agency Steering Board seeks new Chairperson](#)

Britain's space industry is going from strength to strength and the UK Space Agency – an Executive Agency of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy – is driving the growth of the sector.

The Agency's Steering Board provides vital support to the executive board and the new Chairperson will have an important and demanding role, offering a valuable external perspective to the organisation. The Steering Board advises the CEO and Ministers on the Agency's strategies, operation and performance.

The Chairperson's role is to help provide strategic direction to the Agency. Under their leadership, the Steering Board has collective responsibility to challenge the executive board and exercise oversight on behalf of the sponsoring department.

The Agency's responsibilities include delivery of UK Government's civil space requirements; working with the European Space Agency and other international organisations; agreeing with UK industry how to maximise the benefits of space technologies; working with the scientific community to provide a clear voice on decisions that affect the sector and encouraging young people to study STEM subjects.

The closing date for applications is 11pm on 10 September 2018. [Click here](#)

for more information on the role and to apply.

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## [News story: Civil news: bid deadline is close for HPCDS work in four schemes](#)

The deadline is approaching to submit bids and take advantage of further tender opportunities for HPCDS work in four schemes.

The schemes available are:

You have until 5pm on 7 September 2018 to submit your tender.

### **Further information**

[Civil 2018 contracts tender](#) – to find out more and download tender documents

[e-Tendering system](#) – to submit your tender

[GOV.UK news story 13 August](#)

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## [News story: Matt Hancock writes to health and care system on no-deal Brexit planning](#)

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## [News story: DHSC publishes Brexit guidance for pharmaceutical industry and suppliers of medical devices](#)

In his [letter to pharmaceutical companies](#) (PDF, 65.9KB, 3 pages) Matt Hancock asks suppliers to:

- increase their medicines stocks by at least 6 weeks on top of their usual buffer stocks
- ensure plans are in place to air freight products with a short shelf life that cannot be stockpiled

In his [letter to suppliers of medical devices and clinical consumables](#) (PDF, 62.3KB, 2 pages) he says that:

- separate contingency plans are being developed
- stock holding at a national level will be increased
- further information will be provided to industry in September

[The Department of Health and Social Care has published additional guidance for the pharmaceutical and medical devices industry.](#)

Six technical notices relating to health have been published by the government, covering:

- unilateral recognition of batch testing of medicine
- life sciences IT system
- life sciences
- tobacco-related products
- organs, tissues, cells
- blood safety and quality standards

Matt Hancock said:

The government has made significant progress in negotiations with the EU and remains confident we will leave with a good deal for both sides, that supports existing and future healthcare collaboration.

However, as a responsible government, we continue to prepare proportionately for all scenarios, including the unlikely outcome that we leave the EU without any deal in March 2019.

Given the significant amount of work that has now been done, I am confident this gives a clear basis for the health and care sector and the life sciences industry to plan so that patients can

continue to receive high-quality care unhindered.