

[News story: Improving diagnosis and treatment of disease: new innovation fund](#)

There is simultaneous grant funding and private investment for precision medicine projects that improve how we diagnose, monitor and treat disease for individual patients.

Innovate UK has up to £6 million available in grants for UK-based small and medium-sized enterprises, with at least the same amount in additional match funding coming from equity partners.

This joined up approach should benefit businesses by removing the need to chase their own match funding or additional investment while supporting access to skills, knowledge and market opportunities.

Earlier, more accurate diagnosis and treatment

We are inviting funding applications for projects that will advance precision medicine technologies to support early and accurate diagnosis and inform treatment options. They should help to ensure that the right treatment is selected for individual patients, first time.

We are looking for projects that focus on at least one of the following:

- next-generation medical diagnostics, including new molecular and cellular diagnostics, advanced medtech devices, and imaging and clinical pathology technologies
- wearable or implantable devices such as biosensor tattoos or contact lenses that can inform treatment options for the patient outside of the hospital
- tailor-made therapies or medicines designed around an individual patient's molecular diagnosis. This includes gene therapy, regenerative cell therapy, immunotherapy, synthetic biology or combination therapies
- bioinformatic or artificial intelligence applications that rapidly and accurately extract digital data from medtech devices, imaging systems or clinical pathology platforms

This need for earlier diagnosis and precision medicine is one of areas being addressed by the [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund](#). The challenge will invest up to £210 million in industry and research to combine research data with evidence from the health service and transform precision medicine.

The investor partners

There are 13 investor partners providing match funding in this competition. These are:

If you have a preferred investor partner that you would like to work with, you can specify this in your application. For a grant to be offered both Innovate UK and the investor partner must identify a project as fundable.

Competition information

- the competition opens on 23 July 2018, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 26 September
- only a single SME can claim a grant
- projects can last up to 24 months and have total costs of between £500,000 and £1.5 million
- successful applicants will be provided with 100% of their project costs. This will be split between Innovate UK and the equity partner, depending on whether it is an industrial research or experimental development project
- you can register to attend a briefing event on 2 August 2018 to help you complete your application

[News story: Charities encouraged to bid for life-saving cash](#)

Transport Minister Nusrat Ghani is urging maritime charities across the UK to enter this year's Rescue Boat Grant Fund competition, which she launched at Shepperton Marina today (10 July 2018).

The fund is now in its fifth year, and so far has given charities £3.6 million, helping them buy almost 100 boats and other craft, as well as nearly 4,000 items of crew kit and more than 1,400 other pieces of equipment to support their life-saving work.

It has already helped Loch Lomond Rescue Boat buy a vertically mounted winch to launch in higher waters and Ferryside Lifeboat to get a hovercraft to help navigate shallow waters. Other winners have bought kayaks for inland riverbank searches or crowded beaches, and rafts to help people affected by floods.

Maritime Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

Our search and rescue services attend more than 40,000 incidents a year, saving countless lives and assisting hundreds of thousands of people every year.

This money will provide volunteer rescue teams with advanced lifeboats and equipment which could make the difference when it comes to saving lives.

It means if anyone gets into trouble on or around our waterways, help is never far away.

[Rescue Boat Grant Fund video](#)

Last year's fund helped buy 14 new lifeboats and maritime equipment including lifejackets, helmets, boots, ropes, knives and torches.

The competition comes as part of Maritime Safety Week, which highlights the work being done across the UK to cut the number of lives lost at sea or on rivers. So far this week, the Maritime Minister has met the UK Chamber of Shipping and visited Shell's London headquarters to discover more about its Partners in Safety initiative to drive down casualties at sea.

Tomorrow (11 July 2018), Nusrat Ghani will host an MP round table meeting on fishing vessel safety to promote recent work to improve safety in the industry, which is currently the most dangerous in the UK with 92 lives lost since 2006.

The minister will also visit the Royal Yachting Association and meet RNLI personnel and volunteers saving lives on the Thames.

[Press release: More pupils in England reach expected standard at Key Stage 2](#)

More children across the country met the expected standard at the end of primary school this summer in English and mathematics, amid rising education standards in England, Minister for School Standards Nick Gibb announced today (Tuesday 10 July).

Figures published today show:

- 64 per cent of pupils met the expected standard in all of reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2 nationally. This figure was 61 per cent in 2017;
- 75 per cent met the expected standard in reading, up 4 percentage points on last year;
- 78 per cent met the expected standard in writing. This figure was 76 per cent in 2017;
- 76 per cent met the expected standard in mathematics, up on 1 percentage point on last year; and
- 78 per cent met the expected standard in grammar, punctuation and spelling, up 1 percentage point on last year.

The new national curriculum and assessments have set a higher standard in

schools and today's rising results show more pupils are meeting that standard, thanks to the hard work of teachers and pupils, and government reforms.

This year's results are the third to be released following the introduction of a more rigorous national curriculum assessments in Summer 2016, bringing primary education in line with the best in the world.

Standards are rising in primary schools. There are now 154,000 more six-year-olds on track to become fluent readers today than in 2012, in 2017 the attainment gap between disadvantaged primary pupils and their more affluent peers had narrowed by 10.5 per cent since 2011, and England's rise up the international PIRLS rankings for literacy put the success of the government's reforms on a global scale.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

A good primary education lays the foundations for success at secondary school and beyond. That's why we introduced a more rigorous, knowledge-rich primary school curriculum – with an emphasis on reading and fluency in arithmetic – to ensure every child is helped to reach their potential from the moment they start school.

Today's results and the rising standards we are seeing in our primary schools are the fruit of our reforms and a tribute to the hard work and dedication of teachers across the country. These reforms promise even more success in the years to come and will help to improve education for every child, no matter their background.

The government has invested in programmes to help raise standards in our primary schools, including a £26 million network of specialist English Hubs around the country to improve pupils' literacy and £41 million to follow the same approach to teaching maths as world leading countries through the Shanghai Mastery for Maths programme. □This is on top of wider changes to the primary assessment system which will reduce unnecessary workload for teachers so they can focus on what really matters in the classroom.

Today's figures build on the record 1.9 million more children now in good or outstanding schools than in 2010. The government is continuing to ensure all parents have a good school place on their doorstep, with the recent announcement of [£680million to create 40,000 more good school places](#) in primary and secondary schools. Since 2010, 825,000 new school places have been created, with recent analysis showing 91 per cent of those in 2016-17 were in good or outstanding schools.

Speech: 88th Executive Council session of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Madame Chair, Director General,

The United Kingdom supports the statement made by the Ambassador of Austria on behalf of the European Union.

With a heavy heart, I must begin by updating this Council on the major incident in Amesbury, in the United Kingdom. On 30 June two people were hospitalised in Salisbury. Charlie Rowley remains critically ill in hospital and tragically, two days ago, Dawn Sturgess died. This is shocking and appalling news. The UK police have now launched a murder inquiry and are working around the clock to bring those responsible to account. On 4 July tests confirmed both individuals had been exposed to a Novichok nerve agent, the same substance that contaminated Yulia and Sergei Skripal on 4 March; the same substance that was identified by the technical experts of the OPCW. We informed the OPCW early on Thursday 5 July and I updated the Director General again yesterday. We are grateful for the OPCW's offer of further assistance, if requested. We will keep the Technical Secretariat and this Council informed of developments.

Turning to other recent events, the membership of the Chemical Weapons Convention came together in unprecedented numbers last month to send a very strong message of support for the Convention. We heard loudly and clearly that the use of chemical weapons would not be tolerated and that there can be no impunity for those that disregard the ban. Over three-quarters of those present and voting supported the Decision taken. The Technical Secretariat (TS) is working to deliver on the mandate, starting with identifying those responsible for chemical weapons attacks in Syria.

Madame Chair, the TS now needs to work swiftly and transparently to develop proposals to strengthen verification and chemical security; enhance the capability of the Secretariat; and to provide technical expertise to identify those responsible for chemical weapons use. As the CSP confirmed, technical attribution and determination of compliance are clearly provided for in the Convention. States parties must come together at the November CSP to agree next steps and ensure chemical weapons use is consigned firmly to history.

The CSP approved increased OPCW assistance to address chemical terrorism and support secure, innovative and productive chemical industries. To that end, the UK announced yesterday an additional £1 million to assist the implementation of the Decision and support the OPCW's work to uphold non-proliferation and disarmament. In the last week we have seen two more people suffer as a result of nerve agent use in my own country, one of whom has tragically died. The Fact-Finding Mission has now confirmed the use of sarin in Ltamenah, Syria on 24 March 2017 as well as on 30 March 2017. It is

extremely disturbing that the samples from 24 March were consistent with the sarin used by Syria in Khan Shaykhun on 4 April 2017, as reported by the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism and condemned by the recent CSP.

The FFM has also reported chlorine use on 25 March 2017 in Ltamenah and on 4 February 2018 in Saraqib. Only last Friday the FFM published an interim report on the devastating chemical weapons attack on 7 April in Douma, Syria in which up to 75 people were killed. The report states that chlorinated organic chemicals were found, along with residues of explosive. Incontrovertible evidence of the use of chemical weapons in Syria continues to mount. It has got to stop. Attributing responsibility for these repugnant acts is a step in the right direction.

I wish to end by paying my own tribute to the Director General for his eight years of dedicated service. Ambassador Uzumcu has led the Technical Secretariat with distinction in these testing times. He leaves a strong legacy as his own thoughtful remarks just now demonstrated, like him I look forward with optimism and hope for this organisation. The UK looks forward to welcoming Ambassador Arias as his successor later this month, confident that the critical work of upholding the Convention is in safe hands.

Thank you Madam Chair.

Press release: Fish released to boost North East rivers

The Environment Agency has released more than 8,000 young fish into North East rivers to give stocks a boost.

The trout – bred at Kielder Salmon Centre in Northumberland – were released into the tributaries of the River Tyne.

There was 4,000 each released into the River Ouseburn at Woolsington and Brunton Park, and the River Team near Kibblesworth and Beamish.

The fish were released to the two recovering river system to support wider restoration projects and encourage natural recovery of fish stocks in the future.

Niall Cook, Fisheries Technical Officer at the Environment Agency in the North East said:

It's hoped by giving the two rivers a boost it will help aid their natural recovery. Restocking is just one of the many things we do together with our partners to develop fisheries, including reducing

the impact of any industrial legacy and pollution incidents.

But we're also working hard to improve habitats and remove barriers to fish migration which make it difficult for fish to reach their natural spawning grounds.

Water quality is the best it's been for decades and targeted and appropriate restocking has helped the restoration of natural fish stocks and viable fisheries. In fact returning salmon have already been seen in the lower reaches of the River Team recently, which is great news.

Fish releases

Each year Environment Agency staff release thousands of salmon and trout from Kielder Salmon Centre into the River Tyne and its tributaries. The centre breeds 360,000 salmon and between 10,000 and 20,000 trout every year to compensate for the construction of Kielder Reservoir and ensure the River Tyne and its tributaries continue to flourish.

In addition, last year they released 40,000 fish including chub, dace, roach, bream, barbel, tench, grayling, crucian carp and rudd into rivers across the North East which were reared at the Environment Agency's fish farm near Calverton, Nottinghamshire, using funding from rod licence sales.

The Environment Agency releases fish into our waterways annually. Fisheries officers target fish stocking activity using data from national fish surveys to identify where there are problems with poor breeding and survival.

Angling is a great way to keep healthy and enjoy the natural environment. All rod licence income is used to fund work to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries.

Fishing is free for children under 16, although those aged between 12 and 16 still need a junior licence. For anyone over 16, a full annual licence costs from just £30, with some short term and concessionary licences also available. [You can buy your fishing licence online](#)