

Press release: UK launches new research and innovation hub to tackle scourge of plastic in our seas and oceans

- UK's world-leading researchers to collaborate with peers from Canada, India and other Commonwealth countries to tackle this global challenge
- new global hub will bring together scientific and technical expertise to share the latest thinking on creating sustainable alternatives to plastic and stopping plastic entering oceans
- high-profile names Unilever and Waitrose are backing the hub financially
- British Plastics Federation and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation are among the top names that have given their support

The UK, working with other Commonwealth countries, will launch a research and innovation hub for experts to develop solutions to stop plastic waste from entering our oceans and find environmentally-friendly alternatives to plastic.

India, Canada and other Commonwealth nations have already signed up to be part of the new Marine Plastics Research and Innovation Framework – a hub where researchers will be able to connect and collaborate on the latest research and innovations to tackle marine plastics.

The UK will play a leading role in designing and running the Framework, encouraging the world to move towards clean growth through the government's modern [Industrial Strategy](#). An international steering board will oversee the work.

The Prime Minister announced that the [UK would contribute £25 million to the Framework](#) during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London.

So far Unilever has committed £5 million in research and development, while Waitrose has pledged £0.5 million of research.

The British Plastics Federation, which represents more than 500 UK companies, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), RPC Group Plc and engineering giant Mott MacDonald are among those who have given their support, including access to their facilities, networks and expertise.

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry said:

Plastics are not only polluting our waters, they are contributing to climate change and killing sea life.

This Framework will help develop options for alternative uses to

prevent plastics from ending up in our seas. It also ensures that the UK is at the forefront of encouraging the world to move towards clean growth, tackling the threat from marine plastic and protecting our oceans for future generations.

Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Sam Gyimah said:

Plastics are clogging our oceans and threatening our sea life to devastating effect.

This hub will bring together the brightest minds in UK science and innovation to solve this problem.

Chief Executive Officer of Unilever Paul Polman said:

It is critical that governments, businesses and others from across the Commonwealth work in partnership to step away from our take-make-dispose model of consumption.

We are delighted to be contributing £5 million worth of research and development to the Framework.

Managing Director of Waitrose Rob Collins said:

With plastic waste one of the great challenges of our time, we strongly support the Commonwealth Summit's plans and targets to tackle this issue.

Notes to editors

1. This Framework will bring together experts, governments and businesses from across the Commonwealth to support knowledge sharing and new research in a broad range of issues – from stopping plastic waste entering the oceans in the first place and fostering a more circular economy, to exploring sustainable ways to clean up our seas and developing environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic.
 2. [The Prime Minister speaks at the Commonwealth Joint Forum Plenary: 17 April 2018](#)
 3. Our [Clean Growth Strategy](#), published October 2017, commits government to work towards an ambition for zero avoidable waste by 2050.
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[News story: Dstl scientists inspire more women to choose STEM careers](#)

Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) scientists are supporting the WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) conference today, Wednesday 9 May 2018, which aims to inspire more girls to choose to study or work in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

In their roles as WISE Co-chair and Executive Sponsor respectively, Phillippa Spencer and Penny Endersby will be panel members at the annual conference – Penny on a panel about creative career paths and Phillippa looking at “patently biased” – about why so few patents are raised by women.

Dstl is a corporate member of WISE as part of our commitment to a diverse STEM workforce. 30%, and rising, of Dstl’s 3,000 scientists, engineers and mathematicians are women, and we seek best practice elsewhere to improve gender equality in Dstl. We are also committed to sharing our own good practice and experiences in this area, which is why Penny and Phillippa are delighted to be attending this conference.

WISE enables and energises people in business, industry and education to increase the participation, contribution and success of women in STEM.

The UK government’s new Industrial Strategy makes a commitment to invest in science, research and innovation and to do more to commercialise the UK’s world leading science base to drive growth.

Penny Endersby, Division Head at Dstl, said:

I have a very soft spot for WISE having had my first experience of what a life in science and technology might be like as a WISE scholar in my sixth form. The inspiration I took from that experience set me off on a career path which has been fulfilling and exciting beyond what the 17-year-old me could ever have imagined.

I have since learned the importance of providing mentors and role models at every career stage and the power of being encouraged to try new things. I hope that the conference will cause women at all stages in their careers to back their talent and reach for the next challenge.

[Read more about the WISE conference.](#)

Speech: Standing in solidarity alongside those who want a more prosperous and stable future for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Thank you Madam President, and congratulations on taking up the Presidency. We wish you every success. Thank you also to High Representative Inzko, and your team, for your objective and detailed reports and for your continued efforts to support the implementation of the General Framework for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. You have the United Kingdom's full and continuous support.

Madam President, I would agree with my French colleague that today, Bosnia and Herzegovina remains at a crossroads. In the six months since we last met, there has been some small, incremental reform progress, and the reaching of at least two significant milestones. And yet, the vestiges of division continue to mar that progress and to prevent Bosnia and Herzegovina reaching the potential its citizens deserve. I will briefly touch on those two milestones.

First, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia issued its final judgments in November and, at the end of the year, transferred responsibility to the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals. We recognise the tribunal's achievements, including the first instance conviction of former wartime commander Ratko Mladić of genocide and crimes against humanity. Although Mladić's conviction will not bring back the thousands who lost their lives, it demonstrates that the architects of suffering will be held to account, giving others around the world hope that there can be justice for appalling human rights abuses. The court has accumulated a wealth of practical knowledge and experience over the 24 years it has been operating. And it is important that the lessons learnt are shared with other international criminal courts and tribunals.

The Tribunal has done ground-breaking work to investigate, prosecute and convict perpetrators of wartime sexual violence. I would like to echo the report of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee in welcoming Bosnia and Herzegovina's initiatives to integrate women, peace and security in counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) issues through the development of national and local action plans, and the UK would encourage Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue and intensify its efforts on this trajectory.

Madam President, it is a matter of regret that some political leaders have disputed the rulings of the Tribunal and the decisions of domestic war crimes chambers in the region, and have even made inflammatory remarks about a return to conflict. I agree with my American colleague that we should condemn such rhetoric, which privileges the pursuit of political advantage ahead of

the pursuit of justice for victims and a peaceful future for all.

Second, Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted its EU questionnaire earlier this year. We commend Bosnia and Herzegovina for this achievement, which was not insignificant given the complexities of the system being assessed.

But we have been disappointed to see only limited commitment to the difficult but essential reforms that underlie the political commitment to becoming an EU member state.

Now the questionnaire has been submitted, Bosnia and Herzegovina must demonstrate the commitment to uphold the rule of law and to implement agreed reforms.

Among these, as my Dutch colleague has already highlighted today, there is an urgent need to amend the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code on special investigative measures in order to comply with the Constitutional Court decision of June 2017 and align with international standards. Failure to do so would seriously undermine the fight against corruption and organised crime, put in jeopardy international cooperation, and the security of partner countries.

Madam President, as the High Representative noted, 2018 will also be a significant year for Bosnia and Herzegovina with elections expected in October. However, amendments to the electoral law are necessary so the results of those elections can be implemented. If political leaders fail to agree to amendments, the entire country will be exposed to an unnecessary and serious risk. Political leaders must demonstrate their ability to compromise on a solution without further delay, and move towards European standards.

As elections approach, we see an opportunity for Bosnia and Herzegovina to focus on the future, not the past. Divisive nationalist rhetoric demeans those who use it and does a disservice to the people and the country as a whole. The United Kingdom encourages the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to demonstrate to their people and the European Union that they are committed to building a better and more secure future for them and their children.

The consequences of Bosnia and Herzegovina's divisive politics are easy to see. Huge numbers of young people leave every year in search of the political stability and employment opportunities that they are denied at home. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina deserve better.

As a longstanding friend of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the UK will continue to stand in solidarity alongside those who want a better, more prosperous and stable future for the country, including as Bosnia and Herzegovina pursues Euro-Atlantic integration. The UK's hosting of the Western Balkans Berlin Process summit in London this summer is a signal of that solidarity and commitment. We remain committed, too, to Operation Althea and the High Representative, including the use of Bonn Powers if the situation requires, until stability and security are firmly entrenched.

Thank you.

Press release: Joint statement from Prime Minister May, Chancellor Merkel and President Macron following President Trump's statement on Iran

It is with regret and concern that we, the Leaders of France, Germany and the United Kingdom take note of President Trump's decision to withdraw the United States of America from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Together, we emphasise our continuing commitment to the JCPoA. This agreement remains important for our shared security. We recall that the JCPoA was unanimously endorsed by the UN Security Council in resolution 2231. This resolution remains the binding international legal framework for the resolution of the dispute about the Iranian nuclear programme. We urge all sides to remain committed to its full implementation and to act in a spirit of responsibility.

According to the IAEA, Iran continues to abide by the restrictions set out by the JCPoA, in line with its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The world is a safer place as a result. Therefore we, the E3, will remain parties to the JCPoA. Our governments remain committed to ensuring the agreement is upheld, and will work with all the remaining parties to the deal to ensure this remains the case including through ensuring the continuing economic benefits to the Iranian people that are linked to the agreement.

We urge the US to ensure that the structures of the JCPoA can remain intact, and to avoid taking action which obstructs its full implementation by all other parties to the deal. After engaging with the US Administration in a thorough manner over the past months, we call on the US to do everything possible to preserve the gains for nuclear non-proliferation brought about by the JCPoA, by allowing for a continued enforcement of its main elements.

We encourage Iran to show restraint in response to the decision by the US; Iran must continue to meet its own obligations under the deal, cooperating fully and in a timely manner with IAEA inspection requirements. The IAEA must be able to continue to carry out its long-term verification and monitoring programme without restriction or hindrance. In turn, Iran should continue to receive the sanctions relief it is entitled to whilst it remains in compliance with the terms of the deal.

There must be no doubt: Iran's nuclear program must always remain peaceful

and civilian. While taking the JCPOA as a base, we also agree that other major issues of concern need to be addressed. A long-term framework for Iran's nuclear programme after some of the provisions of the JCPOA expire, after 2025, will have to be defined. Because our commitment to the security of our allies and partners in the region is unwavering, we must also address in a meaningful way shared concerns about Iran's ballistic missile programme and its destabilising regional activities, especially in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. We have already started constructive and mutually beneficial discussions on these issues, and the E3 is committed to continuing them with key partners and concerned states across the region.

We and our Foreign Ministers will reach out to all parties to the JCPOA to seek a positive way forward.

Speech: PM speaks at Creative Industries reception: 8 May 2018

Good evening everyone. It is a pleasure to welcome some of Britain's great creative minds to Downing Street today, and I hope you have had the chance to admire some of the great British art we have here at Number 10. From Henry Moore to Stanley Spencer, who was brought up in my constituency, to Tracey Emin are represented here.

It's a real who's who of British art but our artists, modern and contemporary, are not the only world-leaders in our creative industries. I think what is great here this evening is that we have people from so many different aspects of our creative industries.

So while our films captivate audiences the world over, our fashion designers surprise and delight, our architects are shaping skylines and cityscapes on every continent.

In publishing, in music, in advertising and more, the UK consistently punches well above its weight. And every day our creative industries fly the flag for Britain on the global stage. Every year our creative industries contribute £92 billion to the economy, providing work for more than two million people right across the country.

I am not just talking about the big names, the stars of stage and screen who we all recognise, the sector provides highly skilled jobs right across the board. Technicians, producers, researchers, designers, coders, set builders, make-up artists.... The unsung heroes, the people without whom our creative industries would not be the worldwide success that they are.

But of course, the value of culture and creativity lies not only in its economic strength. Just as important is the less tangible contribution that

it makes to our national life. The work you do brings joy to millions. It fosters unity, gives us a common currency. It helps to define and build our sense of national character.

“Without culture [...] society is but a jungle”. Your work is a vital part of our national life and our national economy, and I am absolutely committed to supporting it.

And of course since 2015, Arts Council England has invested over £1 billion in arts and culture, with grants being made right across the country.

Our ambitious sector deal for the creative industries, announced just before Easter, will see a further £150 million invested by government and industry, spreading success and making the sector fit to face the future.

And today, I’m delighted to announce a £3 million fund that will provide a new source of finance for creative and cultural organisations across the North of England. Offering a mix of grants and loans, the social investment fund will be open to non-profit, community-based organisations that deliver a positive social impact.

And it will form part of the legacy for this summer’s Great Exhibition of the North: a game-changing moment for the region that showcases the very best of the North’s culture and creativity.

But our support goes beyond the financial. As we leave the European Union, we will continue to work with our European friends to protect cultural heritage and promote cultural diversity.

And, in Matt Hancock you’ve got a Secretary of State who really gets what the sector is all about, and is enthusiastic about it, and I know he is already doing great work with many of you who are here tonight.

Our creative industries really are at the heart of what makes Britain great. As I say, from the big screen to the local gallery, your sector has consistently led the world for many, many years – and I look forward to that success continuing for many more years to come.

Thank you for all that you do. Thank you for all that those who work with you do. And long may it continue.