

[News story: Accelerator Innovation Network Event: Regenerative medicine at the front line](#)

Suppliers who attend the event will hear presentations about the [regenerative medicine at the front line themed competition](#) which seeks to make a real difference by saving lives and reducing disabilities.

The competition is looking for proposals for regenerative technologies that can be applied very early after severe, traumatic injury resulting from combat or acts of terrorism.

Recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan saw step changes in trauma care that led to great improvements in survival following blast or ballistic trauma. This has meant, however, that people survive with increasingly life-changing injuries.

Our belief is that the very early use of approaches in regenerative medicine, one of the [UK Government's 8 great technologies](#), has the potential to further revolutionise front line trauma care to save lives and to improve the quality of life for survivors.

This competition has 2 challenges:

1. bioengineered blood and blood components
2. the preservation and regeneration of soft tissue using biophysical approaches

The outputs from this work would be developed for use by the UK's Defence Medical Services and other organisations who deliver trauma care in challenging environments. These approaches should also reduce the burden on later care supplied by both MOD and the NHS.

Up to £500,000 is available for Phase 1 of this themed competition and at least a further £500,000 will be available for Phase 2.

This competition closes at midday on 11 April 2018.

[News story: Changes imminent to how ARSAC licenses research](#)

The Administration of Radioactive Substances Advisory Committee (ARSAC) is

urging researchers who administer radioactive substances to read up on imminent changes to the way that approvals are granted.

New regulations under The Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations 2018 (IR(ME)R), due to come into force on 6 February 2018, will replace the current process for the administration of radioactive substances with a new licensing system for practitioners and employers.

Public Health England will manage all applications for licences. Fees may be charged depending on the type of licence applications for employers and research approval. There will be no fees for practitioner licences.

ARSAC will still need to approve research studies involving the use of radioactive substances. There will be no change for research sponsors, such as a pharmaceutical company or university, who should continue to apply to ARSAC for authorisation.

Submit all applications for site-specific research certificates by 16 January 2018.

Nasreen Parkar, Scientific Adviser to ARSAC said:

When the new regulations come into force early next year, any valid research certificates will be considered to be a licence for both the practitioner and the employer at the identified installation. This will allow administrations of radioactive substances to continue in line with the research study protocol.

New or uncertificated research studies will require both the employer and practitioner to have an appropriate licence that includes the procedures within the research protocol.

Currently each research study requires a research ARSAC site certificate. Under the new system, this will no longer be the case.

Once an employer has a licence in place and there are licensed practitioners entitled under the employer's procedures, administrations can be performed under the procedures detailed in any ARSAC-approved research study within the scope of the licences.

Installations that currently submit more than one research certificate application a month may need to apply early for employer licences and practitioner licences. There is nothing in the new regulations to stop employers or practitioners applying for licences any time after the new regulations come into force.

At present 80% of research studies involve the use of bone scans, MUGA scans, GFR studies and FDG tumour imaging. Once these and any other routine procedures have been included on employer and practitioner licenses, no

further amendment is required to take part in a research. Researchers will need to notify practitioners about the research protocol and the employer will need to confirm that each installation has the capacity to perform the procedures.

Louise Fraser said:

It's really important that research sponsors and sites understand how these changes will affect their local processes. We encourage everyone to look into what the changes will mean for them so that they are aware of what, if anything, they will need to do.

For further information please [subscribe to our bulletin](#).

Press release: Self-employed on Universal Credit to get business support

This is part of the government's commitment to small businesses. Initial mentoring can last for up to 12 weeks and includes workshops on topics including financial planning and marketing support, as well as help in creating a business development and growth plan. If the plan is viable, people can receive a further year of support and mentoring.

This programme of support for people who are already self-employed builds on the success of the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) programme. The NEA offers mentoring, a weekly allowance for 6 months and access to a start-up loan to people who are out of work and would like to start their own business. Figures out today show that over 111,000 businesses have already been started with the support of the NEA.

The latest NEA figures show that the north-west had the highest number of start-ups (17,020) followed by London (13,410) and Yorkshire and the Humber (12,150).

Minister for Employment Damian Hinds said:

The NEA has been a huge success in supporting enterprising jobseekers turn their business dreams into a reality, and now we're offering mentoring to help people in receipt of Universal Credit who are already self-employed as they grow their businesses.

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and we want to do

all we can to ensure people succeed.

The figures also show that of the people who have started up a business with NEA support:

- over two thirds were aged between 25 and 49, 24% were over the age of 50 and 7% were aged between 18 and 24
- 40% were women
- 22% have a self-declared disability
- 13% were from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background

111,540 businesses have been set up through the NEA scheme. The financial support is paid as a weekly allowance of £65 a week for 13 weeks and then £33 for the following 13 weeks (a total of £1,274 over 26 weeks)

More information

Mentoring is available to Universal Credit full service claimants whose business income fall below, or looks set to fall below, their Minimum Income Floor.

People who already own their own business are eligible for mentoring, but not for the financial support aspect of the scheme.

Successful applicants to the NEA start-up support get access to a business mentor, and those who start their business can receive financial support for up to 6 months, mentoring support for up to 12 months and may be able to apply for a loan of up to £25,000 to help with start-up costs.

Read more about NEA – www.gov.uk/new-enterprise-allowance

The full regional breakdown

Entries are rounded to the nearest 10.

Region	Individuals with an NEA business start
North-west	17,020
London	13,410
Yorkshire and Humberside	12,150
West Midlands	10,650
Scotland	10,250
South-east	8,450
South-west	7,680
East of England	7,610
North-east	7,500
Wales	6,580
East Midlands	6,400

Follow DWP on:

[Press release: HMRC issues Christmas warning about iTunes gift card scam](#)

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is today (20 December 2017) warning the public about a high-profile phone scam that is conning vulnerable and elderly people out of thousands of pounds.

The scammers are preying on victims by cold calling them and impersonating an HMRC member of staff. They tell them that they owe large amounts of tax which they can only pay off through digital vouchers and gift cards, including those used for Apple's iTunes Store.

Victims are told to go to a local shop, buy these vouchers, and then read out the redemption code to the scammer, who has kept them on the phone the whole time. The conmen then sell on the codes or purchase high-value products, all at the victim's expense.

The scammers frequently use intimidation to get what they want, threatening to seize the victim's property or involve the police. The use of vouchers is an attractive scam as they are easy to sell on and hard to trace once used.

HMRC would never request the settling of debt through such a method.

The scam continues to hit a large number of people. Figures from Action Fraud, the UK's national fraud reporting centre, show that between the beginning of 2016 and August this year there have been over 1,500 reports of this scam, with the numbers increasing in recent months. The vast majority of the victims are aged over 65 and suffered an average financial loss of £1,150 each.

HMRC is working closely with law enforcement agencies, Apple and campaign groups to make sure the public know how to spot the scam and who to report it to.

HMRC's Director General of Customer Services, Angela MacDonald, said:

These scammers are very confident, convincing and utterly ruthless. We don't want to see anyone fall victim to this scam just before Christmas. That's why we're working closely with crime fighters to ensure taxpayers know how to avoid it.

These scams often prey on vulnerable people. We urge people with elderly relatives to warn them about this scam and remind them that they should never trust anyone who phones them out of the blue and asks them to pay a tax bill. If you think you've been a victim you should contact Action Fraud immediately.

Temporary Detective Chief Inspector Lara Xenoudakis, City of London Police, said:

Fraudsters perceive the elderly and vulnerable as easy targets, so we are urging people to be wary of HMRC-related frauds to protect themselves, family members and friends.

We have received an increasing number of reports in which we have been told that people are being asked to pay fraudsters in iTunes vouchers. People should be cautious of unsolicited emails, calls or letters and always check directly with HMRC to ensure they are legitimate before responding.

Chief Executive of Tax Help for Older People, Gary Millner, said:

Tax Help for Older People fully supports HMRC in tackling this particularly wicked scam. We have taken too many calls from people who have fallen foul of it. The amounts of money lost are significant for some, and the feelings of helplessness, violation and embarrassment are immense.

Recognising and reporting a scam

If you suspect that you or a vulnerable or elderly relative has been the victim of this scam or a similar one, you should report it immediately to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or use their [online fraud reporting tool](#).

Check GOV.UK for information on [how to avoid and report scams](#) and [recognise genuine HMRC contact](#).

If you think you have received an HMRC-related phishing or bogus email or text message, you can check it against the examples shown in this [guide](#).

Apple provides a support page reminding customers that iTunes Gift Cards can be used only to purchase goods and services on the iTunes Store, App Store, iBooks Store, or for an Apple Music membership, and providing tips to avoid becoming the victim of a scam. More information is [available here](#).

[News story: Sea Ceptor missile test firing complete at sea](#)

Firing trials of the new Sea Ceptor air defence system have been successfully completed on board HMS Argyll.

The second ship fitted with Sea Ceptor has also conducted a successful firing to verify the weapon system upgrade.

The new missile defence system will provide UK personnel with a powerful shield against airborne targets – including hostile combat jets and helicopters, as well enemy missiles travelling at supersonic speeds.

The completion of the firing trials from Type 23 frigate HMS Argyll means Sea Ceptor can proceed to the next stage of the acceptance into service with the Royal Navy.

Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin said:

In the face of intensifying global threats, cutting-edge systems like Sea Ceptor will keep the UK safe. These successful trials from HMS Argyll mark a major milestone towards the introduction of this world-class missile system into service for the Royal Navy.

Work to develop and install Sea Ceptor across the Royal Navy is also boosting British industry, supporting 600 jobs in the Bristol, Stevenage and Bolton areas.

The firing trials at sea included two missiles being fired at the same time.

The first firings of Sea Ceptor were conducted from HMS Argyll at the Hebrides range off the coast of Scotland and involved firing the system to assess its performance against a range of scenarios.

Two sets of trials were conducted by Defence, Equipment and Support (DE&S) and supported by a number of other organisations, lasting around two weeks each.

During the firings the system was first tested against single aerial targets. This was followed by more demanding tests, including a single target engaged by two missiles and a twin firing (two targets, each engaged by a single missile at the same time).

An installation test firing from HMS Westminster – the second ship fitted with Sea Ceptor – took place in November, with each of the Type 23 ships due to carry out installation test firings in due course.

Lieutenant Nick Andrews, HMS Westminster's Anti-Air-Warfare Officer, said:

HMS Westminster managed to explore the real potential of the system during her training and to say it is a real game changer is an understatement. Unlike its predecessor, the system is capable of defending ships other than Westminster herself. Whether it's engaging multiple air threats or fast incoming attack craft, Sea Ceptor represents a massive capability upgrade for the Type 23

frigate.

Designed and manufactured by MBDA in the UK, Sea Ceptor is being fitted to replace the Sea Wolf weapon system on the Type 23 frigates and will provide the same capability for the Royal Navy's future Type 26 Frigates.

Sea Ceptor defends escort vessels within a maritime task group, such as for the new Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, and with [HMS Argyll due to deploy to Japan next year](#), the trials successfully showcased the short range capabilities of the new defence system. Another Type 23, [HMS Sutherland, is due to deploy to Australia in the New Year](#).

HMS Argyll will deploy to Japan next year, fitted with the Sea Ceptor missile system.

The system uses a new UK-developed missile, the Common Anti-air Modular Missile or CAMM, that is capable of reaching speeds of up to three times the speed of sound, and will have the ability to deal with multiple targets simultaneously, protecting an area of around 500 square miles (1,300 square kilometres) over land or sea.

Sea Ceptor supports around 600 MBDA jobs and its supply chain in key locations across the UK such as Bristol, Stevenage and Bolton.

Richard Smart, Director Weapons, for the MOD's procurement organisation Defence Equipment and Support, which is based at MOD Abbey Wood in Bristol, said:

These trials are a significant step in getting the Sea Ceptor weapon system to acceptance and a great example of how important live trials are in helping us to understand a new military capability before using it in operational service. The success of the trials is testimony to the hard work put in by the DE&S project team and the working relationship they have with industry.

The results of the firings are now going through extensive analysis; our assessment so far is positive and shows how Sea Ceptor is capable of protecting both the ship which fired it and other ships in its task group, which could include the UK's two new Queen Elizabeth Aircraft Carriers.