

Developing the future of flight: take part in the challenge

New technologies including electrification, digital services and autonomy could revolutionise aviation.

They could help to power a new generation of flying taxis, drones delivering goods and services and small, all-electric aircraft.

The UK has played a leading role in aviation over the last 100 years and is well-placed to take advantage of a new generation of aircraft that could help to ease congestion and reduce the carbon footprint of the industry.

Individuals from businesses and research organisations with an interest in this field are invited to apply to attend a workshop to develop ideas to meet the challenges posed by future flight.

The invitation is the first phase of a £125 million government investment in the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund Future Flight Challenge. It will be matched by a £175 million investment from industry.

Demonstrate green flight and new services

The aim of the Future Flight Challenge is to demonstrate innovative ways to achieve greener flight, new services and ways to travel, increased mobility, better connectivity and reduced congestion.

Individuals applying to attend the 2-day workshop in February 2020 can come from a wide range of disciplines.

They must show how they would attempt to solve one or more of 6 problem statements:

- the full range of drone applications is stifled by the absence of the physical and data infrastructures needed to exploit the potential of the global market
- current air traffic management systems are not scalable
- there is a need to develop autonomy while maintaining high levels of safety
- there is a need to move towards more electric flight by moving technology between urban, sub-regional vehicles and larger aircraft
- there is a need to develop use cases and operational frameworks for the adoption of autonomous air vehicles
- there is no aviation innovation or development environment that will allow real-life demonstration and evaluation of the issues presented in the first 5 problem statements

The aim of the discovery workshop is to help participants form consortia that will apply for funding in future phases of the competition.

Competition information

Phase one discovery workshop

- the workshop will be held in Birmingham, 4-5 February 2020
- no grant funding is available at this stage but costs will be covered
- the application process is open and closes on 13 November 2019
- it is open to UK businesses and research and technology organisations
- a briefing event will be held on 7 October 2019

Phases 2 and 3

- we expect future projects to range in size between £5 million and £20 million