

Government awards nearly £2 million to innovative transport proposals

- creative entrepreneurs awarded share of £1.95 million to revolutionise UK's transport network
- projects include technology to protect public transport systems from extreme weather conditions and proposals to reduce carbon emissions from HGVs
- government-backed projects will help support a greener and more efficient transport future, as UK drives towards net zero targets

Entrepreneurs and innovators pioneering new ways of creating a more efficient transport system are being backed by government funding announced today (13 April 2022).

In total, 51 projects have been awarded a share of £1.95 million in Department for Transport (DfT) funding as part of the government's [Transport Research and Innovation Grant \(TRIG\) programme](#), the largest number of projects backed in the programme's history.

One winner, Makesense Technology Ltd, will develop a technology to guide visually impaired people through the public transport network. A handheld device will scan the area and provide touch feedback, such as a vibration to the tablet holder, alerting them to any obstacles and their direction of travel.

AJEA Products Ltd is also among those awarded funding, creating autonomous flood protection for critical transport infrastructure. It will design self-deploying barriers that can be installed at train stations across the UK and pop up automatically when floods are detected, preventing passenger journeys from being disrupted by extreme weather.

Meanwhile, Unitrove Innovation Ltd is being backed to develop a control system for the world's first liquid hydrogen fuel container facility for zero emission ships (as seen in the image above).

The University of Cambridge is developing a new low-cost and lightweight steering system for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), which will reduce tyre wear, reduce carbon emissions and make it easier for larger vehicles to manoeuvre on the road.

Transport Minister Trudy Harrison said:

Innovation funded as part of TRIG could be the key to unlocking a more efficient and safer transport system for tomorrow.

I support the ingenious ideas of this year's cohort every step of the way and wish the successful applicants all the very best. I

look forward to seeing the ideas develop to boost our green agenda and create high-skilled jobs across the UK.

Now in its 11th round of funding, the TRIG programme, delivered in partnership with [Connected Places Catapult](#), brings together talented start-ups – mainly SMEs and universities – and policymakers at the earliest stage of innovation to help enhance the UK's transport system.

Since launching in 2014, over £6 million in grants has supported more than 200 TRIG projects.

This year, the programme focused on increasing the diversity of its applicants. From Southampton to the Shetland Islands, the winning projects are based across the UK and reflect DfT's commitments to levelling up.

The winners were selected based on 4 key themes:

- maritime decarbonisation
- future of freight
- COVID-19 recovery
- transport resilience

An open call, where any transport related idea was also considered.

For the first time, 6 Future of Freight grants worth £100,000 each were piloted for larger projects, moving them past 'proof of concept' and towards being demonstration ready. These will complement remaining 45 grants of up to £30,000 each, spread across all 4 themes.

DfT will also be working in partnership with Connected Places Catapult this year to pilot an Innovation Accelerator Programme, which will support companies at a later stage in their innovation journeys. The programme will provide funding to help projects take the last step towards the market by providing bespoke training from industry experts.

Rachel Gardner-Poole, Connected Places Catapult, Chief Operating Officer said:

TRIG is a one-of-a-kind programme. It provides a mechanism to identify and support early-stage innovation that might slip through the nets of traditional funding routes.

Connected Places Catapult is extremely proud to deliver TRIG 2021, which is supporting over 50 innovators across 4 different challenges, including the future of freight, maritime decarbonisation, COVID-19 recovery and resilient transport systems. I am excited to see what great products and services arise.