

[News story: £15 million for 49 manufacturing and materials innovations](#)

The 49 winning projects – involving 81 companies – have been awarded in the latest round of our industry sector competition.

To be successful, companies had to focus on identified technical or commercial challenges. Their solutions should lead to increased productivity, competitiveness and growth for UK small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Funded projects

Examples of the projects include:

- [Branscan Ltd](#), which is using intelligent sensors to detect contaminants in food processing, making it easier to trace food and improve the quality
- [Rawwater Engineering](#), which is developing an advanced bismuth alloy that can be used to plug oil and gas wells at the end of their lives. This is an alternative to currently-used cement plugs, which have issues relating to sealing integrity, a short lifespan and are high cost
- Sweet Perspex, a joint project that is developing a new bioprocess to manufacture the basic materials for acrylic production. This should provide more sustainable, bio-based materials for safe use in everyday applications such as screens for phones, laptops and TVs
- UltraWELD, a project consortium of 5 companies, is developing ultrafast laser processes to join dissimilar materials in the manufacture of complex electro-optic devices and OLED (organic light-emitting diode) lighting. This is an alternative bonding technique that will improve device sealing and integrity

Simon Edmonds, Director – Manufacturing and Materials, Innovate UK, said:

The quality of the projects funded is excellent, and demonstrates the appetite among manufacturing and materials businesses within the UK to innovate and grow.

I urge those businesses who might be interested in our funding opportunities in manufacturing and materials to look at our next £15 million competition, which is currently open for applications.

An Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund activity

Manufacturing and materials will be supported through the government's [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund](#).

In the [first 6 areas to be announced](#), challenges include batteries for clean and flexible energy storage, self-driving vehicles and manufacturing and materials of the future.