

News story: £95 million “Full Fibre” Broadband Boost for Local Authorities

Last year, the Chancellor announced more than £1 billion of funding to stimulate further and faster roll-out of full fibre networks, and drive the next generation of mobile connectivity.

As part of this, Government’s £190 million Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) Challenge Fund was launched to boost commercial investment in networks across the whole of the UK.

Successful projects in this third round of funding will enable gigabit capable connections to key public buildings and businesses and also encourage broadband providers to create additional connections to local homes and businesses.

Minister for Digital, Margot James said:

We recently set out our ambition for a nationwide full-fibre broadband network by 2033, and initiatives like this will be instrumental in achieving that. We want to hear from any local authority interested in taking part, so we can work closely with them on their plans to help them secure funding.

The final decision on funding will be made by the Local Full Fibre Networks Investment Panel, who will assess the proposals, placing particular importance on a number of areas, including:

- Rural focus: Projects demonstrating the effectiveness of Local Full Fibre Networks delivery in rural locations and hard-to-reach areas
- 5G or Barrier Busting: Projects focused on overcoming obstacles to the commercial roll-out of fibre and 5G
- Public Sector Productivity: Projects targeting improvements to public sector services, such as enabling schools to access new cloud based educational tools, or allowing medical professionals to remotely monitor patient health
- Market Development: Projects deliberately targeting the development of the full-fibre market in a particular area, including incentivising aggregation

Following the successful first two rounds of grant funding, a new process has been designed to allocate the remaining £95 million from the Local Full Fibre Networks Challenge Fund.

There will be no fixed date for formal submissions – instead, local bodies with an interest in bidding for the Challenge Fund are invited to submit an informal expression of interest to the programme. Government officials will then enter into a dialogue with them to assess their project and where

appropriate help them shape their approach.

Local bodies are now being invited to submit an [expression of interest](#)

This programme is part of the government's expanded £31 billion National Productivity Investment Fund aimed at improving productivity, which is key to raising living standards. This fund has already earmarked £740 million specifically for improving Britain's digital infrastructure, ensuring the UK is match-fit for the future as part of our modern industrial strategy.