

News story: Government backs small businesses in transport sector

Cyclists and commuters are set to benefit from government funding for smaller businesses, as firms across the country celebrate Small Business Saturday today (2 December 2017).

Over 50 small and medium-sized businesses in the transport sector have already received funding to kick-start innovative projects, through the [Transport Technology Research Innovation Grant \(T-TRIG\)](#).

This includes a business helping blind and partially-sighted people navigate towns and cities, and a company that has developed an electronic motor which can be fixed to bikes.

Now firms will have the opportunity to bid for funding through the next round of the T-TRIG scheme, set up to support innovation.

T-TRIG funds early-stage research projects with the aim of helping to create a better transport system. This is one of the ways the government is supporting businesses and entrepreneurs across the UK.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Many pioneering and innovative transport companies are ready to put their ideas into practice and I am pleased that firms will have another opportunity to bid for funding through the T-TRIG programme.

We want to tap into ground-breaking ideas for the benefit of passengers across the country, and I look forward to hearing about the next round of projects.

Some of the businesses funded through the last round of T-TRIG include:

- Wayfindr: a system that helps blind and partially sighted people navigate towns and cities using Bluetooth-enabled beacons and smartphones
- Biella Research: a bike share docking station, allowing cyclists to stack more bikes in the same station to make the most of the space available
- Simply Connect: a platform to manage public transport on demand, using people-carrier-sized vehicles
- DriverNet: an app that prevents delays for delivery vehicles
- Pushme Inc: an electronic motor which can be attached to any conventional bicycle in seconds, leading to faster commuting times

Charles Carey, director at Biella Research, said:

Biella Research is a fast, agile development company, developing a high density stack rack for bicycles. We needed to test a prototype in a real world environment, with real users, and the T-TRIG grant proved invaluable in funding this and justifying further pre-commercial development following a successful outcome.

Ant Chisnall, CEO of DriverNet, said:

DriverNet is a smart logistics app for drivers that reduces delays, damage and emissions during deliveries.

The T-TRIG award enabled us to build our prototype and successfully prove our concept during a trial with Kuehne and Nagel. We used this platform to secure Innovate UK funding to continue our R&D to help us reach the market early in 2018.

Neil Brown, CEO of Simply Connect, said:

Simply Connect was delighted to receive T-TRIG funding from DfT at a critical stage in our development. Without this support, we would not have been able to progress our business: we are now in Scottish Enterprise's 'Growth Pipeline' as a digital business with high-growth potential, and following successful initial trials in Exeter in 2017, will launch a 20 vehicle service in Manchester in spring 2018.

[Business Population Estimates published this week](#) show that the UK has an extra 196,000 small businesses compared to 2016. This takes the total of small businesses in the UK to 5.7 million.

For more information about government support available to small businesses, contact our [business helplines](#).