

[News story: Innovate 2017 day 2: call to develop cyber security talent](#)

The UK needs to develop and nurture talent in cyber security, not only in schools but also in the workplace – that is the consensus of a panel of industry experts at [Innovate 2017](#).

Discussing the topic were:

To tackle the threat of cyber attacks, people need to be skilled in using cyber security tools and systems, and also developing these technologies.

The panel agreed that there is a lot of untapped potential in the UK. The requirement now is getting people into computer sciences to get them ready and prepared for sophisticated attacks.

Research and innovation into commercial opportunity

Innovate 2017 was pleased to welcome Sir Mark Walport, Chief Executive Designate of [UK Research and Innovation](#), who joined a panel on turning blue sky thinking into commercial opportunities.

Outlining his vision for the new organisation, Sir Mark said he believed that universities are doing great work with businesses, and should do more to publicise this.

He described how the UK needs a team approach, helping to connect the researchers and innovative start-ups who need funding with the plentiful capital that is available.

A stand at Innovate 2017.

Tomorrow's innovators

Also visiting the event were more than 50 pupils from 4 schools in the Midlands. The 14 to 18-year-olds took part in tomorrow innovators, a day-long programme of activities that was designed to inspire the next generation of business leaders and help them to develop their entrepreneurial skills.

The pupils took part in creative workshops, where they were tasked with coming up with solutions to some of the world's most challenging problems, working alongside [Engineers Without Borders](#).

They also heard from Professor Dame Ann Dowling, President of [Royal Academy of Engineering](#), and Dr Simon Foster, Physics Outreach Officer for [Imperial College London](#), about what it means to be an innovator. The take away was don't fear failure: if you've got an idea, then go and make it happen.

New jobs for graduates

There were a number of announcements made during Innovate 2017.

We announced additional funding for our [Knowledge Transfer Partnerships](#) (KTPs) programme, which connect UK businesses with an academic or research organisation and qualified graduate.

The extra £30 million will create new jobs for graduates. Part of the [National Productivity Investment Fund](#), it will help build the UK's talent pipeline.

Embedding machine learning in our own practices

Deputy Chief Executive of Innovate UK, Kevin Baughan, also announced the winners of a funding competition to improve our own operations through machine learning. This will look at how machine learning can be applied to existing Innovate UK data and processes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our operational functions.

It was run through the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI).

Winner of Peer to Peer award

Innovate 2017 came to a close with the announcement of the Peer to Peer award.

Delegates at the event were able to vote for their favourite product or service from the showcase companies. [Environmental Street Furniture](#) were announced as the winners. The company has developed a solar-powered bench for city centres, parks and stadiums, with USB points for mobile charging and WiFi.

Innovate UK's Ruth McKernan presents Gareth Russell, Environmental Street Furniture with the Peer to Peer award.