

News story: Innovative vehicle to grid technology to receive £20 million

The new investment will support vehicle-to-grid projects as part of the government's Industrial Strategy and create a smarter energy system, while increasing the numbers of electric cars on UK roads.

The projects will investigate technology that allows plug-in electric vehicles to not only draw power from the grid when charging but return it to people's homes or back to the grid.

There are already 100,000 electric cars and 11,000 chargepoints thanks to government support. As this number grows they become a resource for a smart electricity grid – bringing benefits for drivers and creating a more flexible and efficient energy system.

Minister of State for Climate Change and Industry, Claire Perry said:

The government is a world leader in tackling climate change and we are committed to investing in clean energy innovation to support the UK's transition to a low carbon economy.

Vehicle to grid technology provides another opportunity for the UK to showcase to the world our leading expertise in research and development which is at the heart of our ambitious Industrial Strategy. This competition could unlock significant economic benefits for the UK – helping to create jobs in this burgeoning sector while helping to reduce our emissions.

The new funding from the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) underlines the government's commitment to innovative technologies. Financial support for energy innovation will double by 2021 and over £600 million is already being invested to accelerate the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles.

The £20 million announced today will be awarded to three types of innovative vehicle to grid projects:

- feasibility studies – investigating the ways vehicle to grid technology can be used in the future
- industrial research or experimental development – for example, to develop vehicle-to-grid charging equipment
- demonstrator trials in the real-world environment – projects that trial vehicle to grid technology in different locations across the country

Transport Minister Jesse Norman said:

Electric vehicles are already helping thousands of motorists cut their fuel costs, and now there is an extra financial incentive for motorists to go green.

The number of ultra-low emission vehicles on our roads is at record levels, with the latest figures showing that there are over 100,000 plug-in cars and vans registered.

The government's ambition is that nearly all cars and vans on our roads are zero emission by 2050.

The competition process will start in the next few weeks with the aim of winners being notified in December and projects starting in early 2018.

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

These competitions present ground-breaking opportunities for UK businesses to develop the next stage of vehicle to grid products and services. The potential of these technologies are huge, both for businesses and consumers.