

News story: Over £35 million to support Scottish universities tackling global challenges

This is part of a £270 million package to support projects across the country to reduce the impact of ocean pollution, improve security of food supply and control infectious diseases.

Putting the UK at the forefront of tackling global grand challenges, this is part of the modern Industrial Strategy which brings government, businesses and organisations together to address challenges of clean growth, the future of mobility, healthy ageing and the use of data and artificial intelligence.

Projects run by the Universities of Strathclyde and Edinburgh will see world-leading UK researchers collaborating with partners in the developing and developed world to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges. These will be backed by over £35 million of UK Government funding, Science and Universities Minister Chris Skidmore announced today.

He confirmed that the One Ocean Hub, led by University of Strathclyde, will receive over £18 million in funding. This will support their work in bringing together researchers and local communities across the globe to protect and make best use of ocean resources, while also cutting pollution and keeping oceans sustainable. This supports the Government's ambition in the modern Industrial Strategy to maintain the UK's position at the forefront of encouraging the world to move towards clean growth.

The University of Edinburgh will also receive over £17.5 million in funding to lead a Multi-Hazard Urban Disaster Risk Transitions Hub. This will look to reduce disaster risk for the poor by building better resilience into urban planning.

Secretary of State for Scotland David Mundell said:

Scottish universities are at the forefront of ground-breaking research and these new hubs will help these universities build on our reputation as a world leader as they tackle some of the biggest global issues.

The partnerships built in Scotland, between government, universities and businesses are at the heart of how we hope to overcome these challenges. We remain committed to strengthening the strong and collaborative relationship that exists here in Scotland.

Science and Universities Minister Chris Skidmore, said:

The UK has a reputation for globally influential research and innovation, and is at the centre of a web of global collaboration – showing that science has no borders.

We have a strong history of partnering with other countries – over 50% of UK authored research involves collaborations with international partners.

The projects being announced today reinforce our commitment to enhance the UK's excellence in innovation at home and around the world, driving high-skilled jobs, economic growth and productivity as part of the modern Industrial Strategy.

A total of 28 projects across the world will see world-leading UK researchers collaborating with international partners in the developing and developed world to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges – from securing safe food and water supplies, to better understanding the connection between climate and health, as well as creating a global economy that works for all.

Of the 28 successful projects, twelve projects, including the One Ocean Hub, will be supported by £200 million from the Global Challenges Research Fund. The other 16 projects will be receiving a share of £79 million from the Fund for International Collaboration, which will be match funded by partnering developed nations and is aimed at boosting international collaboration on research and development in areas such as future advanced technologies. The successful projects are being managed by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

With UK universities and innovators engaging with their peers in all continents around the world, the international reach of the projects will secure and enhance the UK's world-leading reputation in science and research at the same time as tackling these global challenges.

The UK Government's modern Industrial Strategy sets out Grand Challenges to put the UK at the forefront of the industries of the future, ensuring that the UK takes advantage of major global changes, improving people's lives and the country's productivity. The first 4 Grand Challenges are focused on the global trends which will transform our future in artificial intelligence and data, ageing society, clean growth and the future of mobility.