

# [News story: Reducing plastic waste in the environment: apply for funding](#)

There is up to £4 million for innovative business projects that look at ways of reducing plastic waste through new polymers, processes, designs, recycling regimes and use of biodegradable alternatives.

The funding is provided by UK Research and Innovation and delivered by Innovate UK. This competition forms part of the £20 million package of the Plastics and Research Innovation Fund.

## **Tackling the plastic problem**

There is growing concern about the amount of plastic waste in the environment and its impact on wildlife and the wider eco-system.

The amount of plastic waste produced is growing fast. [It was reported](#) that in 2016, 1.5 million tons of plastic was produced globally. This is set to double by 2034.

As recent as 2014, [it was found](#) that less than a third of Europe's plastic waste was recycled, with another third ending up in landfill. The remaining third was sent to energy recovery facilities.

## **Projects should improve recycling**

The competition is seeking 'circular economy' approaches to plastic use that could include:

- developing new polymer materials
- new product designs
- new recycling processes
- increasing the value of recycled polymer
- innovations that encourage people to change behaviour and reduce plastic waste

Projects could also look at new business models or at approaches focused on compostable or biodegradable materials.

[Clean growth is one of government's 4 grand challenges identified in the Industrial Strategy. Find out more about why it is focusing on this important area for the future.](#)

## **Competition information**

- the competition opened on 18 June 2018, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 8 August 2018

- projects can be led by a business or a research and technology organisation, but all projects must include an SME. Only an SME can lead projects with costs below £100,000
- we expect project costs to range between £50,000 and £1 million and for projects to last between 3 months and 24 months
- businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- a briefing event will be held on 19 June 2018

[Find out more about this competition and apply.](#)