

Press release: Call for new green innovations to tackle climate change

- Britain's brightest brains will be invited to launch projects – from digital sensors to monitor the environment, to new software to help us adapt to low carbon technologies
- funding announced by Business Secretary Greg Clark as part of Industrial Strategy comes during the first ever Green GB Week, a nationwide week of action on climate change

Britain's best innovators and researchers will be invited to pitch their ideas to help tackle the effects of climate change on towns, cities and the countryside as part of modern Industrial Strategy.

Business and Energy Secretary Greg Clark today (19 October) announced 4 new research programmes to boost the UK's resilience to climate change, develop digital environments, promote clean air and investigate how to use our land to boost health outcomes.

The £60 million funding pot was announced during the first ever [Green GB Week](#) – a government-led week of campaigning to encourage businesses, communities, funders and academics to renew their efforts to confront the global challenge of climate change.

The government has put clean growth at the heart of its modern [Industrial Strategy](#), setting out ambitions to reduce carbon emissions while supporting a thriving green economy. Earlier this week the UK became one of the first major industrial economies to ask climate change experts for advice on setting a target for achieving [net zero greenhouse gas emissions](#) from across the economy.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Companies are capitalising on the UK's world leading position in the greener economy as we transition to a greener, cleaner economy and is one of the greatest industrial opportunities of our time.

The UK is a world leader in tackling climate change, cutting our emissions more than 40% since 1990 while growing our economy. When you combine Britain's leadership, innovation and determination it is an unbeatable combination – exactly what our Industrial Strategy and Green GB Week are supporting and encouraging.

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive, Professor Sir Mark Walport, said:

The recent IPCC report is a timely reminder of the challenges we face in tackling climate change. Storm Callum has highlighted the

impact that extreme weather events can have on our communities.

It is vital that the evidence generated by research is used effectively to navigate and mitigate the effects of climate change, and new technologies are developed to support a move to a low carbon economy.

The Strategic Priorities Fund is important in supporting UKRI's mission, allowing us to bring collective expertise from a wide range of disciplines and sectors to bear on addressing important matters affecting all of society.

The programmes, administered by UKRI, will bring together a broad range of research disciplines, ranging from mathematics and biology to climate science and technology development to:

- produce better data on climate risks to the UK
- build a digital picture of our natural environment for greater monitoring and analysis of the impact of climate change
- cut air pollution and protect vulnerable groups from its effects
- use our land better, for the benefit of the environment and communities
- developing ways for the UK to adapt to climate change

Chief Scientist of the Met Office, Professor Stephen Belcher, said:

These programmes will allow the Met Office and our partners to make real progress in two areas of significant environmental impact: air pollution and climate change.

Working together with other world-leading scientists from the UK's academic community, we will be able to deliver tools and services which will benefit the lives and livelihoods of people across the UK.

Competitions for the programmes will open in the coming weeks. Researchers and innovators can visit the [UKRI website](#) for updates.

The funding comes as part of the Strategic Priorities Fund, delivered by UKRI to drive an increase in high quality multi- and interdisciplinary research and innovation. It will ensure that UKRI's investment links up effectively with government research priorities and opportunities. Further programmes will be announced in the coming months.

Notes to editors

1. The 4 research programmes are:

UK Climate Resilience

- NERC and the Met Office with EPSRC, ESRC, DEFRA, The CCC Adaptation Sub-

Committee

- funding: £18.7 million

The programme will harness multidisciplinary expertise to deliver robust climate risk and solutions research, which ensures the UK is resilient to climate variability and change, and powerfully positioned to exploit the opportunities of adaptation and green growth. Coming together with policymakers and industry, the programme will bring impacts that benefit the UK economy and safeguard the public.

Clean Air: Analysis and Solutions

- NERC and the Met Office with EPSRC, ESRC, Innovate UK, MRC, NPL, DEFRA, DHSC, DfT
- funding: £19.6 million

Air pollution is responsible for up to 40,000 early deaths and a cost of up to £20 billion to health services and businesses every year. This programme will develop solutions to air pollution to help policymakers and businesses protect health and work towards a cleaner economy. The programme will predict future air quality challenges, identify the most vulnerable groups in society, improve new technologies and policies for reducing air pollution, and create a system for providing robust consistent advice to decision makers.

Constructing a Digital Environment

- NERC with EPSRC, Innovate UK, DEFRA, Cabinet Office
- funding: £10.4 million

This programme will apply the latest technologies to environmental data from sensor networks across the UK, to deliver information in unprecedented detail. This will enable the construction of an integrated, digital picture of our natural environment, bringing benefit to policy-makers and other users by enabling better decision-making across a range of sectors, and increasing the opportunity to gain value from natural resources and mitigate environmental challenges.

Landscape Decisions

- NERC with AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, DEFRA
- funding: £10.5 million

This programme will develop a new understanding to help individuals, communities and country make the best choices regarding land use in the UK. Experts from the environment, biology, health, social, and arts and humanities will research together, supporting real world decisions with solutions for the informed use of land, and deliver improvements to our health, well-being and economy.

2. UK Research and Innovation works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities, and government to create the best possible environment for research and innovation to flourish. We aim to

maximise the contribution of each of our component parts, working individually and collectively. We work with our many partners to benefit everyone through knowledge, talent and ideas.

Operating across the whole of the UK with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation brings together the [7 Research Councils, Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England](#).