[Press release: Helping small businesses to control their energy costs](#)

- £8.8 million distributed among 9 UK-based competition winners and an evaluation project
- ideas aimed at helping hospitality, retail and education sectors to take control of their energy use through the use of smart meters
- smart systems could save Great Britain up to £40 billion in the coming decades

Small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) across the hospitality and retail sectors like high street cafés, restaurants and shops, as well as schools and colleges are set to benefit from new, innovative ideas aimed at reducing their energy use.

Together these sectors use the same amount of energy as 4.3 million homes, but through more efficient practice this number could be cut by more than 1 million. Funding of £8.8 million has been awarded to help develop and evaluate technologies that will help these sectors take control of their energy use through the use of smart meters, as part of the government's modern [Industrial Strategy](#).

The innovative smart technologies of an upgraded energy grid, like electronic household devices and thermostats you can control from a mobile phone, can help the country save up to £40 billion on energy costs over decades to come and smart meters will be central to this revolution.

The UK based competition winners, ranging from small energy management companies to tech giants Samsung and Toshiba, have designed smart information systems that give businesses real-time, tailored data on their energy use, helping them save money by being more efficient.

The benefits range from highlighting spikes in energy use in real-time and recommending ways to cut use in the long-term, to identifying faulty equipment or inefficient ways of working.

Over 11 million smart meters are in operation in homes and small businesses around Great Britain, helping consumers take control of their energy use and bring down their bills. Despite this, there is currently a lack of products specifically aimed at small and medium-sized businesses to help them to use their smart meters to take control of their energy consumption. Competition winners have been granted funds to develop such products.

Minister for Energy and Clean Growth Claire Perry said:

> The scale of the ambition displayed by the winning projects demonstrates that the UK is ready to lead the world when it comes

to helping smaller businesses understand their energy use through smart systems.

Energy costs for businesses can be one of the hardest things to understand and control, but these projects can change that, as well as help educate the next generation in our schools on the importance of controlling our energy consumption.

Smart meters are an opportunity for us to rewrite the rules on how we engage with the energy market and these winners will ensure that the benefits can be felt by businesses and schools as well as homes.

Case studies

Case study 1

RAE2, an energy management system will acquire data from Smart / Advanced Meters and undertake complex analytics in order to create a visual representation of energy usage for the business or site. As a result of this analysis, the system will be able to:

- create energy strategies aligned to business needs
- set energy budgets for individual machines or individual operational activities
- monitor energy usage in near real-time and schedule workloads accordingly
- rectify operational and operator behavioural issues quickly
- identify potentially faulty machines or operational issues

Case study 2

Considerate Hoteliers is developing an energy management app for the SME hospitality market to drive savings in energy and thus cost and carbon emissions across the sector. The app will provide users with information they can act on immediately to minimise operational inefficiencies and reduce energy consumption and associated costs allowing them to see:

- daily energy performance trends correlated to room nights and/or food covers
- trends in utility costs
- quick wins — recommendations on how to save energy
- opportunity to record implemented actions and track impact
- alerts of spikes in consumption — allowing for real time action

Notes to editors

The 9 competition winners are:

- ANDtr (AND Technology Research)
- Considerate Hoteliers

- Element Energy
- Hildebrand
- Hoare Lea
- Pilio
- Samsung
- Toshiba
- Transition Bath

Ipsos MORI and the Carbon Trust will help evaluate the impact and effectiveness of competition projects as they develop, and provide support to participants.

This will generate a practical evidence based on what works best for businesses to engage with their smart meter data, and change their behaviour to reduce energy consumption.