

# Press release: Liam Fox launches awards for best business partnerships of the future

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP, launched the [GREAT Innovation in Action Awards](#) on 14 March 2018 to find the best partnerships between UK and Asia Pacific companies.

Twelve shortlisted trade projects all demonstrate how new ideas can transform the way we work, live, play or learn – the 4 themes of the [GREAT Festival of Innovation](#) that begins in Hong Kong on 21 March.

The awards, which provide a snapshot of international trade at its most ambitious and innovative, will celebrate a variety of brilliant partnerships between UK and Asia Pacific companies of every kind, from large corporates to new start-ups.

Shortlisted projects range from cutting-edge UK robotics making construction work safer for engineers in Hong Kong, to Chinese automotive technology cleaning the air we breathe in the UK's cities.

The Great Festival of Innovation in Hong Kong will showcase some of the best British businesses to the Asian market. The festival, which has been organised by the Department of International Trade, will take place from 21 to 24 March and bring together business leaders, government ministers and the latest ground-breaking technologies from the UK and across Asia.

Other projects up for an award include:

- Go Ahead London and Build Your Dreams of Shenzhen developing Europe's first all-electric bus garage in London, which will cut 700 tonnes of CO2 emissions
- UK architects Foster & Partners and Hong Kong-based Harbour City Estates extending the Ocean Terminal in Hong Kong, to create a new green, gateway to the city for its millions of visitors
- the Met Office and the China Meteorological Administration finding ways to provide industry and citizens with the intelligence they need to make better judgements on coping with extreme weather

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox said:

I am delighted to launch the GREAT Innovation in Action Awards, which showcase cutting edge collaborations between UK and Asian companies that will change the way work, live, play or learn in the future.

The IMF predict 90% of growth will come from outside the EU in the coming years, so it's vital that more UK companies develop these

business partnerships across the Asia Pacific region.

That's why, as an international economic department, we are helping UK companies forge new business ties that will boost exports and investment and bring more jobs and prosperity to every part of the country.

The awards are being launched as further good news arrives for related sectors in today's ONS trade statistics, exports of British electrical equipment rose by 13.3% in 2017, with machinery exports also up by 12.8%. UK exports rose 11.5% (£64.5 billion) to £625.9 billion in total with the overall trade deficit narrowing by £12.8 billion in the process.

Members of the international business community can vote for shortlisted projects, and winners will be announced on Wednesday 28 March. The full list of nominations and votes for the most innovative collaborations can be cast at [www.greatinnovationawards.com](http://www.greatinnovationawards.com).

Other projects nominated include:

- coffee roasting UK company IKAWA and Japanese tech giant Panasonic partnered to help the firm expand its home coffee roasting service with the latest in digital coffee roasting technology
- the Busan-Sheffield Inter-City Arts Project is an urban regeneration project that connects Busan and Sheffield, 2 cities that are both undergoing significant change. Made possible by Arts Council England, Arts Council Korea and the British Council in Korea, the initiative seeks to explore the identities of both cities
- Malaysia's Ministry of Education has been working with UK tech company Frog since 2012. In that time, they have succeeded in making Malaysia the first country in the world to connect all of its schools to a single learning platform, supporting 5,000,000 students and 500,000 teachers in the country

## **About the [GREAT Innovation in Action Awards](#)**

Shortlisted projects were selected on the basis of:

- being a trade relationship, joint venture or other form of commercial collaboration between a company headquartered in the UK (or its subsidiaries) and a company headquartered in Asia (or its subsidiaries), requiring significant co-operation
- showing evidence or serious and ambitious intent of changing the way things have traditionally done in their sector
- using advanced technology and/or innovative thinking to achieve that objective

## **About Department for International Trade**

The UK's Department for International Trade (DIT) has overall responsibility for promoting UK trade across the world and attracting foreign investment to our economy. We are a specialised government body with responsibility for

negotiating international trade policy, supporting business, as well as delivering an outward-looking trade diplomacy strategy.

### **About the GREAT international trade campaign**

The GREAT international trade campaign works to promote the strength of UK industries to overseas buyers, forging new business partnerships through DIT Trade experts across the globe. Whether its celebrating close UK-US ties in the creative industries, or the use of UK technology across the world, the campaign creates an online presence through which exceptional UK companies are promoted on a global stage.