

Press release: Science Minister announces funding for cyber security and screen entertainment projects in Bristol

- New Industrial Strategy funding for projects to support next generation of cyber security products and media services to market in Bristol
- Science Minister Chris Skidmore has today visited the Bristol Robotics Lab at the University of the West of England to see the Industrial Strategy in action and how their cutting edge work supports the Grand Challenges
- the activities demonstrate how the modern Industrial Strategy is bringing jobs, opportunity and prosperity to all regions of the UK

In a boost for Bristol, Science Minister Chris Skidmore has announced that 3 ambitious research projects will receive up to £50,000 each in new government investment, building on the city's thriving cybersecurity and entertainment industries, and the South West's globally recognised strengths in environmental science.

The projects, 2 of which are being led by the University of Bristol and the third by the University of Exeter, have been awarded the early-stage funding from UKRI's [Strength in Places Fund](#), announced as part of the modern Industrial Strategy in 2017.

A total of 24 projects across the UK have initially been awarded up to £50,000 to develop their innovations, with 4 to 8 of the strongest set to receive between £10 million and £50 million each later in the year to carry out their projects.

Led by the University of Bristol, the 'Cyber Wales and West' project is looking to create a new cyber hotspot that will push the boundaries of innovation where academic talent and test-bed platforms will attract leading UK cyber businesses. The partnership between academia and industry will support business growth in the area, provide skills training and build on the city's reputation of thriving cyber businesses and academic talent. The industry focused Test Bed will allow rigorous testing for real time virtualisation, bringing together physical and virtual environments, enabling experts to identify the appropriate computer parts and networks to protect.

A second project being led by the University of Bristol is looking at how to enhance Bristol and Bath's enviable reputation for screen-based media by creating a vibrant creative cluster. The project 'My World' will seek to address current challenges faced by growing immersive formats of screen entertainment to address innovation and perceptual issues that are currently stalling further investment in the sector. It will focus on the relationships

between content creation, delivery and consumption.

Meanwhile, the University of Exeter is looking to establish an 'Environmental Intelligence Accelerator', working with a number of partners including the Met Office and Plymouth Marine Laboratory to make environmental data more accessible for decision-making. Addressing the global move to low-carbon economies and a changing climate, governments and businesses are in demand of environmentally-related information to inform their operations – from mitigating damage to property by natural hazards to reducing the negative impact on the environment by reducing pollutants. The project will seek input from partners around the world to address challenges in developing Environmental Intelligence Solutions and support private sector entrepreneurs test environmental sensors in the South West.

Science and Innovation Minister Chris Skidmore said:

From enhancing home screen entertainment to developing innovative solutions for fighting cyber-crime, Bristol has much to be proud of, and these shortlisted projects have the potential to revolutionise their respective industries.

We are committed to building on our world-leading reputation in science, research and innovation, and that is why we announced the Strength in Places Fund in our modern Industrial Strategy to boost productivity and create the high-skilled jobs of the future all around the UK.

Announced in the modern [Industrial Strategy](#) in November 2017, the Strength in Places Fund will benefit all nations and regions of the UK by enabling them to tap into the world-class research and innovation skills base that is spread right across the country. The fund brings together research organisations, businesses, and local leadership on projects that will lead to significant economic impact, high-value job creation and regional growth.

The announcement comes as Science Minister Chris Skidmore visits Bristol Robotics Lab where he has seen first-hand the important work being done to address the Industrial Strategy's [Grand Challenges](#). This has included learning about the role robots can play in addressing care solutions to support independent living, using medical robotics to provide precise and accurate sensing in surgery and advancing unmanned air vehicles such as drones. The visit follows the recent announcement that the Minister will be convening an industry group of robotics leaders to enhance the sector in the UK.