

[News story: Improving productivity for businesses: apply for funding](#)

The

[Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#) (BEIS) has up to £2 million to invest in trials of innovative ways to improve productivity for micro, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs).

The funding is part of the government's Business Basics Programme, announced as part of the modern Industrial Strategy.

The aim of the programme is to identify and test ideas that encourage SMEs to adopt existing technology and management practices that would improve their productivity.

[Find out more about the Industrial Strategy.](#)

Projects should show how to improve SME productivity

The competition will fund 2 types of project, proof of concept or feasibility studies and full-scale trials. If a proof of concept is successful, there is potential to access further funding to move the project into a full-scale trial in the future.

Projects should look at how to increase the adoption of technology and business practices to improve the productivity of SMEs. This could include:

- adopting existing technology, such as accountancy, CRM or HR software, cloud computing or payment systems
- adopting modern business practices, such as leadership and management capabilities or developing an innovation culture
- a combination of the 2 approaches above

Ideas could include increasing awareness about the benefits of technology, how to create interest in adopting new technology and business practices, making the benefits of new technology clearer and providing advice and support.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 4 September 2018
- projects can be led by a business, public sector, academic, charity or trade organisation working alone or with partners
- we expect projects for full trials to have costs of up to £400,000 and

to last between 3 and 12 months

- we expect proof of concept projects and feasibility studies to have costs of up to £60,000 and to last between 3 and 6 months
- businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- a briefing event will be held on 12 July 2018

[Find out more about the competition for proof of concept projects and apply.](#)

[Find out more about the competition for full-scale trials and apply.](#)

Speech: Celebrating 70 years of UK-Sri Lanka friendship: Speech by H.E. James Dauris

Honourable Minister, Faiszer Mustapha, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Suba sandiawak weeva, Elorukum Vanakam, Asalam Alaikum

This evening, Helen and I, together with all of our colleagues in the High Commission and in the British Council, are honoured to have so many friends here together. Some of you have travelled a long way to be with us tonight. A special welcome to [former President Nasheed and] our other guests from Maldives, neighbour of Sri Lanka and long-standing friend of both of our countries.

I recently came across a useful bit of advice for people giving speeches. It was this: "Make sure you have finished speaking before your audience has finished listening."

The Minister and I will do our best to finish speaking before you have finished listening, but we will need your cooperation. In advance, thank you.

The playwright Oscar Wilde commented: "I can resist everything except temptation".

This evening I can resist almost everything except the temptation to tell you something about why seventy years of the relationship between Sri Lanka and the UK gives us lots of good reasons to celebrate.

1948 was not, of course, the beginning of our relationship. But with Independence came the beginning of a new chapter. Throughout the past seventy years ours is a relationship that many people have valued, invested in and cherished.

We have many reasons to celebrate today:

- We are proud of our people to people links, and of the hundreds of thousands of people of Sri Lankan origin living in the UK who help to make our country as successful as it is today.
- We are proud of our links through parliamentary traditions, the law and the Commonwealth. It's a pleasure to have Members of Parliament who have recently been in London with us tonight. We were very pleased to have President Sirisena lead Sri Lanka's delegation at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London in April.
- We are proud of our flourishing educational and cultural links, a large but by no means the only part of the important work being done by the British Council in Sri Lanka, ably represented by its director, Gill Caldicott, and members of her team this evening. It's good to lots of the many Sri Lankan organisations that make these educational and cultural faces of our relationship as successful as they are with us.
- We are proud too of our links through sports. We are looking forward to having the England cricket team here (and will be hoping they fare better than did against Scotland last weekend).
- We are proud of the many business links we enjoy, some of them more than a century old, others new and equally exciting.
- And we are proud of the work that our High Commission does, with all the organisations we work with and the projects we fund, from supporting Sri Lanka to achieve its objective of being free of mines by 2020, to promoting inter-religious dialogues in Trincomalee and Batticaloa, from working with the Sri Lankan Police Service on tackling violence against women, to supporting Sri Lanka's Peacebuilding Priority plan. The British government is currently providing more than £50 million of funding to development support in Sri Lanka. My special thanks to all of my colleagues on the High Commission team, without whose talent and hard work we could not do what we are doing.

Mention of the businesses that link us gives me an opportune moment to thank our five sponsors this evening for their generous support.

De La Rue – one of the world's leading producers of secure documents, a company that manufactures here in Colombo and exports from Sri Lanka to the region.

Finlays – a company whose relationship with Sri Lanka goes back more than a hundred years. If you have had the good fortune to try one of our tea cocktails tonight it was made with Finlays' Earl Grey tea.

HSBC – HSBC needs no real introduction. With a history spanning well over a century in Sri Lanka, they are the oldest bank in the country as well as a global ambassador for Britain's financial services industries.

Jaguar Land Rover and their authorised local distributor, SML Frontier Automotive. This year Land Rover, one of UK industry's most iconic brands, celebrates its 70th birthday as well as 70 years in Sri Lanka.

And Unilever, alphabetically last but by no means least – another champion of

the UK's long trading relationship with this country, in the local market since the nineteenth century and a manufacturer here for the last 80 years.

They deserve our applause.

These companies' stories of successful investment in Sri Lanka illustrate the traditional and the modern in the business our two countries are doing together. Each of their successes tells its own tale of commitment, talent, opportunity and ambition. Theirs are exciting examples that illustrate the possibilities for doing business in Sri Lanka today, opportunities that will only grow with sensible economic reform.

As many of you will know, we don't have a national day in the UK. But we do celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's birthday. This year we celebrate her 92nd birthday and her 66 years – two thirds of a century – on the throne. We were delighted that Prince Edward and the Countess of Wessex were able to represent The Queen at the official celebration of Sri Lanka's 70th anniversary of independence in February.

Winston Churchill, historian as much as politician, commented: "If we open a quarrel between the past and the present we shall find that we have lost the future."

It think it can equally be said that if we continue today to build on friendships founded in the past, they will be stronger still in the future in ways that benefit us all. And that is our firm ambition.

Ladies and gentlemen, can I ask you to join me in a toast:

To His Excellency, Maithripala Sirisena, President of Sri Lanka and to the people of Sri Lanka.

Press release: Appointment of Lord and Lady Justices of Appeal: 27 June 2018

The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of Mrs Justice Nicola Davies, Mrs Justice Rose and Mrs Justice Simler as Lady Justices of Appeal and the following as Lord Justices of Appeal: Mr Justice Baker, Mr Justice Green, Mr Justice Haddon-Cave and Mr Justice Males.

These appointments will fill current and forthcoming vacancies in the Court of Appeal.

Further information

These appointments are to be made in light of the appointment of Sir Andrew

McFarlane as the President of the Family Division, forthcoming appointments to the Supreme Court and retirements from the Court of Appeal.

The appointment of Lord and Lady Justices of the Court of Appeal are made by Her Majesty The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor following the recommendation of an independent selection panel.

Notes for Editors

The selection panel was chaired by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Burnett of Maldon. The other panel members were Sir Terence Etherton, the Master of the Rolls; Lord Kakkar, the Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission; and two lay Commissioners of the Judicial Appointments Commission: Dame Valerie Strachan and Mr Andrew Kennon.

In accordance with section 79 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013, the panel determined the selection process to be followed. In accordance with s10(3) of the Senior Courts Act 1981, the selection exercise was open to applicants that satisfied the judicial eligibility condition on a 7 year basis or were Judges of the High Court.

Biographical notes

Sir Jonathan Baker: Called to the Bar (Middle Temple) in 1978 and took Silk in 2001. He was appointed a Recorder in 2000 and a High Court Judge in the Family Division in 2009. He was the Family Division Liaison Judge on the Western Circuit from 2011 until 2017. He was appointed as the Senior Family Liaison Judge in October 2017.

Dame Nicola Davies DBE: Called to the Bar (Gray's Inn) in 1976 and took Silk in 1992; she was made a Bencher in 2001. She was appointed a Recorder in 1998 and a Deputy High Court Judge in 2003. She was appointed a High Court Judge in the Queen's Bench Division in 2010. In 2012 she was appointed a Senior Liaison Judge for Diversity. She was Chair of the Equal Treatment Advisory Committee of the Judicial College in 2012 and Chair of the Lord Chancellor's Standing Committee for the Welsh Language 2016-2017. She was appointed as a Presiding Judge of the Wales Circuit in 2014.

Sir Charles Haddon-Cave: Called to the Bar (Gray's Inn) in 1978 (and Hong Kong in 1980) and took Silk in 1999; he was made a Bencher in 2003. He was appointed a Recorder in 2000. He conducted the Nimrod Inquiry from 2007 to 2009. He was appointed a High Court Judge in the Queen's Bench Division in 2011. He was Chair of the Advocacy Training Council 2007-2011, Master of Education at Gray's Inn 2012-2016, Chair of the Judicial College International Committee 2013-2017 and a member of the Criminal Procedure Rules Committee since 2018. He was a Presiding Judge for the Midland Circuit from 2014 until 2017. He was appointed Judge in Charge of the Terrorist List in 2017.

Sir Nicholas Green: Called to the Bar (Inner Temple) in 1986 and took Silk in

1998. He was appointed a Recorder in 2004. He was Chairman of the Bar Council in 2010 and Chairman of the Advocacy Training Council 2011-2015. He was appointed a High Court Judge in the Queen's Bench Division in 2013. He was appointed as a Presiding Judge for the South Eastern Circuit in 2017.

Sir Stephen Males: Called to the Bar (Middle Temple) in 1978 and took Silk in 1998. He was made a Bencher in 2007. He was appointed a Recorder in 2000 and authorised as a Deputy High Court Judge in the Administrative Court and Commercial Court in 2008. He was appointed a High Court Judge in the Queen's Bench Division in 2012. He was appointed a Presiding Judge for the North Eastern Circuit in 2015.

Dame Vivien Rose DBE: Called to the Bar (Gray's Inn) in 1984. After ten years in private practice as a barrister she joined the Government Legal Service in 1996. She worked as an advisory lawyer in HM Treasury until the end of 2001; was promoted to the Senior Civil Service as a legal advisor in the Ministry of Defence and between 2005 and 2008 she worked as Deputy Counsel in the Office of Counsel to Speaker of the House of Commons. She was appointed a chairman of the Competition Appeal Tribunal in 2005 and as a judge of the Charities Tribunal (later the First-tier Tribunal (Charities)) in 2008. She sat as a Recorder between 2010 and 2013. She was appointed a High Court Judge in the Chancery Division in 2013 and became President of the Upper Tribunal (Tax and Chancery Chamber) in 2015.

Dame Ingrid Simler DBE: Called to the Bar (Inner Temple) in 1987 and took Silk in 2006. She was appointed a Recorder in 2002 and was authorised to sit as a Deputy High Court Judge. She was appointed a High Court Judge in the Queen's Bench Division in 2013 and she became President of the Employment Appeal Tribunal in 2016.

[Press release: Be part of the fourth industrial revolution](#)

Could you create a road surface that heals itself to make it more resilient for the future? Do you have an idea or product that will help prepare the highways infrastructure for the coming of connected and autonomous vehicles (CAV)?

If you or your company has a solution which could help transform England's motorways and major A roads then Highways England wants to hear from you.

The company responsible for maintaining, operating and improving the strategic road network has today launched an '[Innovation Portal](#)' to help identify things that could make roads safer for motorists and road workers, improve how information reaches those travelling around or help deliver an ambitious programme of road schemes.

The online platform shows just some of the research and development being funded by Highways England through a special fund it has ring-fenced for innovation. These include an intelligent and connected construction plant development to make excavation work safer and more productive, mobile safety equipment to protect our road workers and CAV test bed sites to prepare our network for future vehicles.



Paul Doney, Innovation and Continuous Improvement Director, Highways England (pictured). Credit: Highways England

Launching the portal, Paul Doney, Innovation and Continuous Improvement Director, Highways England, said:

This is a really exciting time to work in infrastructure and in a world with technology at our fingertips the possibilities for the future are endless.

At Highways England we have an ambitious roads programme and we want to harness the good ideas out there to help us build our future network.

The new Innovation Portal gives a two-way platform to connect on. It shows everyone the areas that really matter to us and the challenges we expect to face: improving safety for road users and our work force, customer service and delivering our ambitious road programme.

If you think you can help us and want to be part of this come and

Speak with us at Highways England.

The company is keen to engage with the industry, small and medium-sized enterprises, research organisations and academic bodies.

Highways England also wants people to understand the 'journey' their idea or product will go on. Solutions to problems are fed by the discovery stage of research, which Highways England is keen to support. Beyond that it's about developing new products and services and how innovation can be linked to what customers want; it also needs to deliver value for money. The big challenge is then to 'land' innovation and make it business as usual through standardisation.

A previous innovation which is now standard is the way Highways England models major improvement schemes. Historically a bespoke model would be built for each scheme, incurring significant cost and time.

The new models now provide the opportunity for the traffic model building process to "hit the ground running" with a much stronger information base helping Highways England to deliver projects in a shorter timescale and in turn providing the benefits sooner. Furthermore they have been used to provide information for models developed by a number of local authorities and Sub-Regional Transport Bodies, providing wider benefits to the country.

Another innovation in development is looking toward building a real-time simulation of our network using computer gaming technology to improve decision making when assessing the operational impact of incident management or changes to the road layout.

Highways England wants to use the new portal to reach outside of the company and show people what it will be like to work with them and maximise opportunities. This could be through funding or connecting idea owners up with others who may be able to work with them.

Currently Highways England is supporting over 95 projects across the country with investment from the £150 million [special fund for innovation](#). The portal shows the process for applying, as well as live research and innovation competitions. Anyone who wants to engage with the company should get in touch via the Innovation Portal.

Interview opportunity:

Paul Doney, Highways England, is available for interview on Wednesday 27 June (afternoon only) or Thursday 28 June, where he is attending the [Traffex Seeing Is Believing event](#). If you are interested in speaking to Paul, please call Kelly Barnes or Andy Broughton, Highways England Press Office on 0844 693 1448 (select Option 1).

Note: the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" (see title of news release) is referenced in an independent report ["Made Smarter Review"](#) published by Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in October 2017.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: LLWR awards multi-million pound contract to Orano TN](#)

LLW Repository Ltd has signed a multi-million pound contract with Orano TN for the supply of packaging, professional services and equipment to facilitate the safe and cost effective transport of waste from UK nuclear sites to Sellafield for storage.

The scope of the contract includes the modernisation and maintenance of three TN Gemini packages, owned by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), and the supply of logistical equipment recently approved by the French Nuclear Safety Authority.

David Rossiter, LLWR's Head of Waste Management Services, who attended the contract launch event in Paris on behalf of the organisation, said:

Orano TN has deployed these market-leading containers in France for over two decades, and this contract marks a milestone in establishing a long term relationship with the UK.

It will facilitate the transport in TN Gemini packages of legacy waste stored on Magnox sites, and that is great news for the NDA estate.

The contract covers the requirements of multiple UK nuclear Site Licence Companies for up to six years.

LLWR Programme Manager Alan Jackson said:

LLWR's engagement with Orano TN for these supply and professional services contracts embodies a key part of our mission.

Not only does it represent LLWR's international outlook for the safest solutions to the UK's waste transport programme, but it also

shows our commitment to gaining the best value for money for the UK taxpayer.

David Ohayon, Senior Vice President Waste of Orano TN, the logistics subsidiary of the global nuclear fuel cycle company, Orano, said:

Our ability to offer innovative and competitive products and services has been formally recognised by our partners LLWR and Magnox.

Orano TN is proud to contribute to this vital programme for the sustainability of nuclear energy in the UK.