

New British Ambassador presents her credentials to the President of Ukraine



Courtesy of the Office of the President of Ukraine

Today, the new British Ambassador to Ukraine Melinda Simmons presented her Credentials to the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and reaffirmed the UK's unwavering friendship and support for Ukraine.

At a ceremony in the Gorodetskyy House in Kyiv, she said:

Your Excellency,

It is a great honour for me to become the British Ambassador to Ukraine at this important time for both of our countries. Please allow me to present my credentials, and the letter of recall for my predecessor.

The United Kingdom remains Ukraine's steadfast friend and partner on your path of reforms, as well as in your efforts to defend your sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. We look forward to welcoming you to the UK later this year to discuss Ukraine's progress and consider how the UK can support you further in your ambitious programme for the development of Ukraine.

As the British Ambassador, I will work to develop and deepen our relationship, and I hope for a constructive dialogue on a wide range of important issues of mutual interest.

Further information:

Published 11 September 2019

New UK-led satellite will identify natural resources from space

Searching for natural resources is often an expensive and hazardous exercise, carried out in remote areas of the world. However, high resolution images of terrain taken by the MANTIS satellite and refined through novel data analysis will mean that prospectors can view Earth geology remotely, so reducing cost, removing risk and helping them to make better decisions.

The demonstration project is co-funded by industry and the UK Space Agency through its investment in the European Space Agency's (ESA) InCubed Programme, which aims to support innovative projects related to Earth Observation into the commercial market.

Beth Greenaway, Head of Earth Observation for the UK Space Agency said:

Observations of the Earth from space are central to modern day life in helping us to monitor climate change, map our environment, forecast the weather and now – finding new resources.

The UK is a world leader in Earth observation technology, and we hope to maintain momentum at the forthcoming European Space Agency Council of Ministers in November, where we will be reaffirming our ESA membership.

The InCubed funding will help bring this service from concept to a Minimum Viable Product stage, providing and demonstrating the first element of a potential satellite constellation, helping overcome the initial barrier to market and supporting the growth of the UK space sector.

UK space business Open Cosmos will provide the satellite platform and lead construction of the mission, Terrabotics will provide the data analytics service and the high resolution camera will be procured from Satlantis in Spain.

Rafel Jordá Siquier, founder and CEO of Open Cosmos said

Open Cosmos is very excited to work on this next generation Earth Observation satellite. This project shows that bringing together the best specialists in their fields, in this case Open Cosmos, Satlantis and Terrabotics, leads to great technical performance improvements of Earth Observation platforms, while at the same time significantly reducing time to orbit, complexity and cost of these systems.

Investing in Industrial Innovation – InCubed – is a European Space Agency programme supporting innovative projects related to Earth Observation, with the focus of removing barriers to entry of the commercial marketplace. The UK, jointly with Spain, is a lead contributor to the programme, with the nations having contributed €10 million each to the total budget of €35 million. UK InCubed funding has been awarded through a process of competitive calls for proposals.

The MANTIS contract was signed this afternoon (11 September) at ESA's ESRIIN facility near Rome, Italy.

The UK's investments in ESA are strengthening the UK's national capability in space, which is fundamental to modern day life, from weather forecasting and satellite TV, to communications and monitoring climate change.

The UK will make ambitious new subscriptions to ESA programmes in November, which will strengthen capabilities further and ensure the UK plays a significant role in global efforts to return humans to the Moon, bring back the first samples from Mars and develop innovative new technologies for life on Earth.

[Ministerial portfolios confirmed at Department for Education](#)

The government has today confirmed Michelle Donelan as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, as Chris Skidmore returns as joint Minister of State for the Department for Education and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Minister Donelan began the role on Tuesday 10 September, following the start of her predecessor Kemi Badenoch's maternity leave.

She takes on responsibility for children's social care, special educational needs and disabilities – including high needs funding – disadvantage and social mobility and support for the home learning environment.

She will also continue to support the Secretary of State in his role as skills lead, including on the delivery of T-Levels, apprenticeships and adult education, in recognition of the important role technical education plays as the country prepares to leave the European Union.

Minister for Children and Families Michelle Donelan said:

I truly believe that a good education is the key to creating a fair society where everyone, no matter where they come from or their

circumstances, has opportunities to succeed.

From the earliest years of children's lives to the point at which they make decisions about their further education or training, I am proud to be joining a department that is focusing its efforts on the most disadvantaged in society.

Minister Donelan remains as a Government Whip, taking on the role at the Department for Education on an unpaid basis for the duration of Kemi Badenoch's maternity leave. She was previously a member of the Education Select Committee between July 2015 and October 2018.

Minister Skidmore returns as Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, following the resignation of Jo Johnson on Thursday 5 September.

The government has also announced today that:

- Minister of State for School Standards Nick Gibb will take on policy for early education and childcare including funding, support for the early years workforce, curriculum, quality and the early education entitlements.
- He will also add responsibility for PE and school sport and the Pupil Premium to his existing portfolio.
- Minister for the School System, Lord Agnew, will take on responsibility for the further education provider market, including quality and improvement.
- He will also lead on EU exit preparation, delivery of the Careers Strategy, the Opportunity Areas programme, school food and safeguarding in schools and post-16 settings, in addition to his existing brief.

[Major funding boost for River Aire regeneration project](#)

The funding completes a package of £2.3 million that will enable the Developing the Natural Aire (DNAire) project to reconnect the ecology of the river by building fish passes on the last four high weirs below Gargrave, allowing salmon to return to the river for the first time since the Industrial Revolution.

All four fish passes – at Armley, Kirkstall, Newlay and Saltaire – will be installed in summer 2020 and will allow those salmon which already get as far as Leeds to finally reach their spawning grounds upstream of Skipton.

Oliver Harmar, Yorkshire Area Director of the Environment Agency, said:

“We are delighted that The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded this money to Developing the Natural Aire. It’s an amazing project that continues our work in further regenerating Yorkshire’s beautiful rivers.

“Rivers such as the Aire, which was heavily polluted 30 years ago, are now home to a rich array of wildlife. The DNAire fish passes will enable salmon and coarse fish species to migrate upstream and provide fantastic opportunities for the River Aire to be enjoyed by everyone.”

Using the return of salmon as a catalyst, the project will be carrying out an extensive community engagement programme that will reconnect communities to the river that led to those communities existing in the first place.

Over the next three years it will deliver a series of events with community partners, including working with:

- Schools, helping to teach young people in river guardianship, so that they understand the importance of looking after our rivers and how STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects are vital
- Volunteers to clean up the banks of the river, removing litter and invasive weeds and making it a more welcoming environment
- Walkers and ramblers to create a series of short self-guided trails illustrating locally important stories

The project will also train ‘citizen scientists’, who will monitor the river and report pollution.

Geoff Roberts, Chairman of the Aire Rivers Trust, said:

“We are delighted to have received this support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

“It will help the project and be a catalyst for the renaissance of the River Aire, making it more healthy, vibrant and valued.

“The link between our rivers and the communities which depended on them has been lost and this project creates a great opportunity to re-forge that link.

“We now live in an exciting time when river wildlife is returning to our rivers and this project offers many opportunities for people to get stuck in and make a positive difference to wildlife and improve our understanding of the area’s important industrial history.”

The project also received £500,000 from Yorkshire Water as well as funding from the EA, Craven District Council, Bannister Trust and Garfield Weston Trust and others.

Nevil Muncaster, Yorkshire Water’s Director of Asset Management, said:

“Yorkshire Water is delighted to be an active partner in this project to revitalise one of Yorkshire’s great rivers.

“It will build on the great water quality improvements which our investment has brought and will remove the remaining obstacles to the return of salmon.

“The project will also enable local communities to build a new connection with their river in a way which hasn’t been possible since the industrial revolution.”

David Renwick, Director, England: North, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:

“National Lottery players have told us that natural heritage projects are of great importance to them and high up on the list of priorities they wish to see their money going towards.

“Developing the Natural Aire is a fantastic example of one such project, and we are delighted that through our funding we will be able to aid in the re-establishment of at-risk species, like the Atlantic Salmon and lampreys, to the River Aire.

“We are also delighted that the project also offers communities great opportunities to increase their connection to the river, and in turn, their health and wellbeing, through the varied and exciting programme of activities.”

[New Security Export Strategy will boost British exports](#)



Today (11 September), DIT launches the [Security Exports Strategy](#), setting out how the Government will ensure that UK companies remain at the forefront of growing global demand for security exports and services.

This builds on the Government’s 2018 Export Strategy and sets out how the United Kingdom will harness its global network, DIT’s Trade Commissioners and cross-Government network to support the specific needs of companies serving the security and resilience sector.

This will be done by:

- encouraging businesses to export;
- providing export “know how” and guidance;
- connecting them with partners in the UK and overseas;
- and ensuring that no viable UK security export fails for a lack of finance or insurance from the private sector through promotion of the UK Export Finance (UKEF) offer to business

Liz Truss, Secretary of State for the Department for International Trade said:

Britain’s security exports market is booming. Last year alone businesses collectively saw their overseas sales reach £5.2bn and this Government is committed to seeing that figure grow this year and beyond.

This Strategy I am launching today seeks to do just that. By providing support for businesses, harnessing the UK’s global network using DIT’s Trade Commissioners, and promoting the UK Export Finance offer to business, we will ensure they remain the vanguard of security exports and services.

Building on the Collaborative Agreement, signed with the UK’s Security and Resilience Industry Suppliers Community (RISC) in March 2019, the strategy outlines how the Department for International Trade, wider government and the sector will continue to work in partnership to bring the best of British innovation to a global audience.

Published 11 September 2019