

# Press release: Minister sets out plan for new technologies to transform public services

- Minister launches new guide setting out how government departments can use artificial intelligence (AI)
- Start-ups supported to pitch their innovations with launch of new online marketplace
- Technology Innovation Strategy focuses on how government can harness the potential of new technologies to transform services

A plan for how the government can harness new technologies to transform public services has been set out by the Minister for Implementation, Oliver Dowden.

In a speech at the start of London Tech Week today (10 June), the Minister launched a new guide to help government embrace artificial intelligence and an online marketplace to support tech start-ups sell to the public sector. These measures accompany a new Technology Innovation Strategy, setting out the government's approach to enabling widespread adoption of new technologies across the public sector.

The new AI Guide will be used across government to help departments implement new opportunities for AI, such as how to make cancer diagnosis more reliable and reduce fraud, in an ethical and safe way.

The guide also brings together, for the first time, research on how artificial intelligence is already being used by the public sector to save money and improve services.

Examples include:

- The Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency making roads safer and cracking down on rogue garages, by using AI to look through records of the 40 million MOT tests carried out across the UK every year to identify where standards are not being measured properly.
- The Ministry of Justice targeting safety risks in prisons, by using AI to analyse thousands of pages of inspection reports and identify common issues.
- The Department for International Development using AI to analyse satellite images, so that they can estimate populations and better target aid.

Tech start-ups will also see a boost to their ability to win government contracts through the launch of Spark, a new online marketplace that provides a route into the public sector for companies offering innovative technologies.

Minister for Implementation, Oliver Dowden said:

“The UK has led the world in harnessing technology to transform public services, but we cannot afford to sit back. Adoption of new technologies by the private sector is changing how people live their lives and the public sector has to pick up the pace to stay relevant.

“Artificial intelligence is already being used to identify rogue garages and improve prison safety, but government can go much further. New technologies like AI can deliver better services for less and I am determined that government is at the forefront of this revolution.

“Through initiatives like Spark, I also want to make it easier for start-ups and small businesses to deliver services for government so that we make the most of the UK’s thriving GovTech sector.”

Digital Secretary, Jeremy Wright said:

“Artificial intelligence is already having a positive impact across society – from improving fraud detection to better and quicker diagnoses of medical conditions.

“The UK government has already been recognised as world-leading in its readiness for AI and we continue to push leaders across the public sector to recognise its impact in delivering more personalised and efficient experiences.

“Our newly appointed AI Council of industry experts will boost the growth and use of AI in the UK further by helping us to realise its full potential.”

Details of the AI Guide can be found [here](#).

- This sets out guidance for public sector organisations on how to assess if using AI will help meet user needs; how to make best use of AI; and how to implement AI ethically, fairly and safely
- The AI guide was produced alongside the AI Review which was announced at Budget 2018 and led by the Government Digital Service and Office for AI.

Read the Innovation Strategy [here](#).

- This includes plans for building a better pipeline of tech talent in government by doubling the number of technology apprenticeships, improving data sharing to help solve problems such as fraud and serious violence, and addressing problems caused by out-dated computer systems.

More details on Spark [here](#).

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# Speech: Chris Skidmore speaking at COGX

Ladies and gentlemen – good afternoon. It's great for me to be here with you during London Tech Week – an event which I've been looking forward to since I took the job of Science Minister back in December.

And it's even more exciting for me now, because as well as my usual brief – which covers science, innovation, higher education and agri-tech, among many other topics – I'm currently looking after the energy and clean growth portfolio.

And all of these things, I think, fit together in a very real, and very important way.

Just under a year ago we received the landmark report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the impact of global warming of 1.5 degrees; a report which provided the clearest picture yet of the catastrophic impacts of rising global temperatures.

We immediately sought the advice of the Committee for Climate Change, asking what we needed to do to accelerate our own decarbonisation, and how we could make this benefit bill-payers and businesses alike.

We received the Committee's response in May. The report is comprehensive and authoritative and the advice is clear: limiting climate change is achievable. But it will take a tremendous effort – across all sectors of the economy, in all corners of the country – to meet our goals. And a huge surge of innovation to ensure that we can continue to prosper through this transition.

Recently, I've been making a series of speeches on our national R&D investment, and our plans to increase spending on innovation to 2.4% of GDP, rising to 3% in the longer term – an increase that will affect every area of our lives. We're putting two-and-a-half billion pounds into our efforts to decarbonise across the board, giving us a great chance to be at the cutting edge of the technologies of the future.

Many people say that we're in the early years of a fourth Industrial Revolution, a change just as profound as the birth of the steam engine and mass production, or the dawning of the digital age. But my colleague the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove, has rightly identified that we're entering into an agricultural revolution too – how we use our land will have to change, just as everything else will.

Farmers of course know this all too well, having been on the front-line last summer when temperatures were extraordinarily high, and food production became particularly challenging.

It might be this understanding that has inspired our agricultural sectors to embrace innovation, whether that's exploring vertical farming to reduce waste

and preserve our soil, using AI to monitor the relationship between bees and their environment to keep both in better health, or adopting precision agriculture techniques to improve crop yields and reduce fertiliser use. We have even begun using robots to plant, grow and harvest crops – as successfully trialled by Harper Adams University with its ‘Hands-Free Hectare’ project, which has attracted global interest.

I think that this gives us a glimpse into how we’ll be producing food in the future. These are all crucial developments, and each can make a major contribution to reducing our carbon footprint. But today, I want to focus in on another area where we could see real change: energy.

Of course, you don’t have to look very hard to see that, over the years, there has been a great deal of change here.

Go back 50 years or so and you’d find the landscape unrecognisable – literally so, for anyone who can remember the smog and soot of the mid-20th century. In fact, a hundred years ago, and just a few meters away from here, the Coal Drops – which are now being converted into a retail quarter – would have been filled with piles and piles of pitch-black coal, delivered from South Yorkshire and dispersed into London by narrowboat and horse-drawn cart.

Nor is it just the fuel that’s changed. Back in the 1960s and 70s, electricity was provided by your local electricity board – and that was about all you knew. If more energy was required, someone would phone someone, who would in turn phone someone else, until, eventually, someone in a power station was tasked with increasing the flow of coal into the furnace.

Coal was king, while solar power and offshore wind were considered curiosities – or even fantasies – if they were ever considered at all.

But today, the story is entirely different. In 1970s and 80s – and even into 1990 – to power our nation we burned through 70 million tonnes of coal each year. Just last week we saw an 18-day run of coal-free days – something we haven’t seen since the dawning of the first industrial revolution. And this morning, none of our power was being generated by coal.

This is a real testament to our flourishing renewables sector. In 2010 we had just under 10 gigawatts of renewable electricity. But at the end of last year, we’d more-than-quadrupled that. Last quarter, 54% of electricity generation was from low carbon sources, and on the 14 May this year a quarter of our power came from solar – these are the best results we’ve ever seen.

In the wider green economy, we’re employing some 400,000 people in green jobs, and we’re aiming to see that number increase to as many as 2 million over the next decade.

And these are jobs throughout the country:

In Hull, Siemens Gamesa have employed over 1,000 people at their turbine blade factory

On the Isle of Wight, MHI Vestas have installed a new blade mould in their

factory, creating 1,100 jobs and adding more than £40 million to the local economy. While in Fawley the same company have turned a decommissioned oil-fired power plant into a state-of-the-art painting and logistics facility for their 80-meter turbine blades

And in places like Grimsby and Barrow-in-Furness, people are seeing the economic benefits of new investment in operations and maintenance facilities for offshore wind.

The [Offshore Wind Sector Deal](#), launched on 7 March, has committed to looking at the technologies of the future, working across the R&D sector and institutions, which will provide the UK with significant export opportunities, including digital and robotic technologies for surveying and operations and maintenance, and next generation technologies contributing to cost reduction and grid integration.

So not only are we decarbonising, we're also diversifying – bringing these new technologies in, alongside natural gas and nuclear, to modernise our approach to energy. At the same time, we are building flexibility and reliability into a new, digitalised, decentralised system, through the rollout of smart meters and the deployment of technologies such as batteries and smart appliances, as outlined in our Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan.

We are already seeing more generation located closer to people's homes, an increase in energy demand as electric vehicles begin to take off, and a huge passion for climate-conscious policies and green products among the British people.

Our citizens want to do the right thing, and to be trusted to make their own decisions – exactly what this government wants to see too. Crucial to this effort is empowering both individuals and businesses to take control of their energy use; ensuring that people have the means to do what works for them, and are rewarded for their efforts.

So today, I'm really pleased to announce our new plan to develop [small-scale, low-carbon electricity generation](#) here in the UK. Supplier led and subsidy free, we're calling it the Smart Export Guarantee, or SEG for short, and its legislation has been laid in Parliament today – meaning it will be implemented before this year is done.

At its most basic, the SEG is a guarantee that those homes and businesses that supply their own low-carbon electricity – through solar panels on the roof, for example, or an anaerobic digestion plant on a farm – will have the chance to sell their excess electricity to the grid through a market mechanism. They'll be known as 'exporters.' Most electricity suppliers – any with more than 150,000 UK customers – will be required offer at least one 'export tariff', which will be the means through which this low-carbon electricity is bought and sold.

The precise details of the tariff – such as length and level – will be for suppliers to determine, but there are a few core conditions, not least that exporters must be paid for what they produce, even when market prices are

negative.

We expect to see these suppliers bidding competitively for electricity to give exporters their best market price, while providing the local grid with more clean, green energy. Indeed, since we first consulted on the SEG we are seeing great signs that the market is gearing up to rise to this challenge, with some suppliers, such as Bulb and Octopus, offering or trialling export tariffs to small-scale generators.

As the Secretary of State has set out previously, it is now time to move away from deployment through subsidy – paid for through a levy on bills – and towards a more market-based approach. This will benefit consumers, and will spur the sector to take advantage of innovation in technology and processes to reduce costs.

In line with our Industrial Strategy, our aim is to enable the small-scale low-carbon generation sector to fairly access the wider energy market and deliver clean, smart and flexible power. This will extend the benefits of a smarter energy system more widely, which will aid ambitions to further reduce emissions.

And perhaps most exciting of all, the SEG will benefit from an overlap with other parts of the low carbon transition, from electric vehicles to home storage and smart tariffs.

A key motivation for the SEG is enhancing the role that generators can play in driving forward a smarter energy system, using smart meters and time of use tariffs, which will allow more consumers to benefit from flexible electricity prices.

Under the previous Feed-in Tariffs scheme, exported electricity was largely unmeasured, flowing back to the grid without metering. Under the SEG, exports will be metered, supporting the roll-out of smart meters and ensuring compatibility with the rise in use of both electric vehicles and storage batteries.

So in the home of the future, customers could generate solar power, use that power to charge their car and go for a drive; then, when they came home, they could sell the power left in the car's battery back to the grid at a time of peak demand – so at a better price for them, while taking some of the load burden off national generation.

All of this will mean that there has never been a better time for innovative, low-carbon products and services to come to market. And with this legislation, we will ensure that we achieve that smart, green, flexible future we all want to see.

This is an evolving field – one that is welcoming to any business or individual that is ready and willing to develop new ideas and new technology. As I often say to the young people I speak to – whether I'm wearing my University Minister hat or my Science Minister goggles – great ideas can come from anywhere.

That's why as well as talking to all of you, this London Tech Week I'm pleased to announce the winners of our [Energy Entrepreneurs' Fund](#).

Since first running in 2012, the EEF has been one of the pillars of our Energy Innovation Programme. So far it's supported 133 projects, leading to more than 300 new jobs being created, more than 100 patents being filed, and more than £100 million of private sector investment.

And I'm delighted to say that we're maintaining this excellent record, with today's announcement of the 19 winners of Phase 7 of the fund.

These winners, whose details we've published today, will be receiving a share of over £8 million to support the development of their technologies in energy efficiency, power generation, and storage – technologies which will, of course, be essential to the SEG, and to that home of the future.

Maybe it's because I'm coming to this portfolio with fairly fresh eyes, but it's been a revelation for me to see the terrific progress we're making, and the many, many reasons we have to be optimistic about green growth in this country.

As I said back at the beginning of my speech, we all know that we're facing down a huge challenge, but I've seen a tremendous level of engagement from businesses and individuals throughout the UK, and as much as I know the enthusiasm is there, I want to make sure it spreads to every single person in this country.

It's one of the reasons that we're so keen to host COP26, which we're negotiating at the moment. Of course there are other countries that have a great story to tell, and have every right to host, but I think what we're doing here is truly exceptional, and is setting a precedent for the rest of the world to follow. After the success of Green GB Week, I have no doubt we'd do an excellent job with COP.

But that's something for the future. For the time being, I'm delighted by the Smart Export Guarantee, and I'm really excited to see the difference it will make in the years ahead. There are benefits in this for consumers, and plenty of opportunities for the sector and its suppliers too.

We've seen the energy landscape change over the centuries, and I think we're about to see it change again for the better. A cleaner, leaner system – with the British people at its heart – is on its way.

So I hope you'll take that optimism with you into the rest of this week, and I want to thank you all for listening today.

Thank you.

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## **Press release: Joint statement on the Republic of Moldova by the UK, France, Germany, Poland, and Sweden**

France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Poland and Sweden have noted with close attention the recent developments in the Republic of Moldova. Following the Parliamentary elections, a democratically-elected Parliamentary majority has taken important decisions including the formation of a government.

In the current constitutional crisis, we see and support the Parliament of Moldova as the representative of the people of Moldova, and as the best place to discuss all political issues including controversial ones.

We call for calm and restraint. All the sides bear responsibility for the resolution of this constitutional crisis by peaceful means.

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## **Press release: Business Council on Tech, Media and Telecoms: 10 June 2019**

This afternoon, the Prime Minister hosted the first meeting of the Tech, Media and Telecoms Business Council at Downing Street. The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Jeremy Wright, also joined the meeting.

The Council is one of five set up by the Prime Minister to provide high-level advice and policy recommendations to Government on the critical issues affecting business.

The Prime Minister began by welcoming the Council, which is co-chaired by Dame Carolyn McCall from ITV and Jan Du Plessis from BT Group and brings together a number of creative and digital businesses in the UK. She reflected on her speech this morning at London Tech Week and the successes of these sectors in the UK so far, which was welcomed by members.

Discussions focused on the development of digital infrastructure for local towns and communities; improving rail links between hubs in the UK; increasing digital connectivity throughout our transport infrastructure; regulation that works for everyone in a digital economy; and how to upskill people through the education system and retain talent in a creative and digital world.

They concluded by agreeing to take the ideas away and explore them in further



detail, both within the Council and within Government. All five business councils have now met to discuss their initial policy recommendations on how to improve business competitiveness in their sectors, and work is ongoing to take these forward.

### **Members:**

- Dame Carolyn McCall, ITV (Co-chair)
- Jan Du Plessis, BT Group (Co-chair)
- Edwin Morgan, IOD
- Stephen van Rooyen, Sky
- David Joseph, Universal
- Sarah Wood, Unruly
- Jane Turton, All3Media
- Tabitha Goldstaub, CognitionX
- Nick Read, Vodafone Group
- Mike Cooper, PHD Media/Omnicom Media Group
- Simon Segars, ARM (Softbank)
- Kathryn Parsons, Decoded
- John Allan, CBI

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## **[News story: UK Music Industry Backs #BeSafeBeSound Campaign](#)**

**Counter Terrorism Policing has collaborated with UK Music to deliver safety advice for festival-goers.**



Counter Terrorism Policing are reaching out to festival-goers who will be attending live events in the coming months by launching the #BeSafeBeSound social media campaign as part of their 'Summer Security' initiative.

The campaign is being backed by UK Music – an industry-funded body

representing the collective interests of the British music industry – to help reach the hundreds of thousands of people who will be attending live events this summer.

A number of videos released by Counter Terrorism Policing on social media will be encouraging festival-goers to have an amazing time, but to report anything suspicious, however small.

While there is no intelligence to indicate an increased threat to festivals and live music events, the Senior National Coordinator for Protect and Prepare, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D’Orsi, wants the public to familiarise themselves with the #BeSafeBeSound safety advice so they can play their part in keeping people safe.

DAC D’Orso explained:

There are some huge festivals taking place in the coming months, and we want everyone to have a fantastic time.

Whilst we want everyone to have fun watching their favourite artists, people’s safety and security remains the top priority for police and festival organisers.

The purpose of #BeSafeBeSound is to ensure that everyone attending these events knows they have an important role to play in the wider security operation.

Everyone can help make events safe and secure by familiarising themselves with the #BeSafeBeSound advice, by reading our Run, Hide, Tell guidance and to be ready to ACT if they spot suspicious behaviour and activity.

Don’t think you might be wasting anyone’s time, it is always better to be safe than sorry. If something doesn’t look or feel right it probably isn’t, so tell someone.

The importance of DAC D’Orsi’s message was echoed by UK Music CEO Michael Dugher who says:

While it’s important to stress that there is no evidence of any increased threat to live music events this summer, it’s sensible that we all stay vigilant and follow advice.

Festivals and live music gigs in the UK are amongst the best attended in the world and have rightly earned their reputation as well organised events where nothing is more important than the safety of music fans.

I would urge everyone attending events this summer to stay alert and follow the #BeSafeBeSound advice from the police to make sure

everyone has a fantastic time in a safe and secure environment.

Key advice for anyone attending an event this summer:

- Please arrive early for extra security measures. This will help prevent delays in getting into the event.
- Be patient with security checks and help the staff to help you. We know it is inconvenient but they are there to keep you safe.
- It is essential that you do not bring unnecessary items to the event; this will help to speed up searches and your entry to the event.
- If you spot someone acting suspiciously, report it to police or to security staff immediately: don't leave it to someone else.
- In an emergency, if you think there is an immediate risk, always call 999 and look around you for help from staff – especially those with radios who can raise the alarm quickly.
- Don't leave bags unattended or anywhere they could cause a security scare. And never agree to look after anyone else's bags, no matter how plausible their story.
- If there is an incident, listen to staff and any announcements. Organisers will have emergency plans to help you keep safe.
- Remember, the chance of being caught in a terrorism incident is small. But if it happens – Run, Hide, Tell.

You can follow the campaign by using the hashtag #BeSafeBeSound