News story: Technology solutions for gestational diabetes: apply for funding

The Department of Health and Department for Economy in Northern Ireland are to invest in new technology solutions that improve the health of women with gestational diabetes.

Funding of up to £60,000 per project is available for the development of technologies that can:

- enable diabetic pregnant women to take better control of their health
- increase the effectiveness of interventions
- reduce pressure on health care services, (maternity, neonatal and endocrinology services)
- support an ongoing care programme
- improve the lives, well-being and outcomes for maternal and infant health
- enable women to lead as normal a life as possible
- reduce the need for travel to specialist clinics

This is a Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) competition. It's part of the GEMS project – 'gestational, type 1 and type 2 diabetes empowering mothers through mobile technologies'.

- this competition is open now
- the application deadline is 3pm on 25 August 2017
- SBRI is open to any type of organisation
- successful projects will attract 100% funded development contracts
- phase 1 contracts are worth up to £60,000 and last up to 6 months
- if phase 1 testing is successful, organisations may be able to bid for phase 2 to develop and test their prototypes

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News story: CIC Regulator's voicemail techinal fault

We would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused during this disruption. We ask that all enquiries are sent to cicregulator@companieshouse.gov.uk and we will respond within 24-48 hours.

We are hoping the voicemail service will be back up and running shortly and will keep you updated via this page and @CICRegulator.

News story: Draft Technical Capability Regulations notified to European Commission following targeted consultation

The Home Office has notified the European Commission of regulations to help make companies maintain the technical capability to respond to warrants and authorisations from law enforcement, security and intelligence agencies.

The Investigatory Powers (Technical Capability) Regulations 2017 do not include any new powers but relate to powers already set out in the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 which enable the Secretary of State to give a "technical capability notice" to a telecommunications operator in relation to interception, communications data or equipment interference.

The purpose of a "technical capability notice" is to ensure that, when a warrant or authorisation is served on or given to an operator, that company has the capability to provide assistance in giving effect to it securely and quickly.

The use of these powers is vital in the fight against terrorism, crime and other national security threats.

Security Minister Ben Wallace said:

> Technical advances present ever-evolving opportunities for terrorists, criminals and paedophiles.
>
> These regulations will help make sure that we maintain the capabilities to confront this challenge, subject to strict safeguards.

The regulations do not impose requirements on telecommunications operators, but set out the specific obligations that may be imposed on operators in a "technical capability notice", including those which relate to maintaining the capability to remove encryption in response to a specific warrant or authorisation.

The move comes after a targeted consultation which included hearing views from telecommunications operators that are likely to receive a notice; bodies that hold statutory functions in relation to operators, such as the Investigatory Powers Commissioner; and the Technical Advisory Board.

Following notification under the Technical Standards Directive, the

regulations have been published and there will now be a three month standstill period, during which they can be considered by the European Commission and Member States.

The secondary legislation will be subject to a debate and a vote in both Houses of Parliament before it can come into effect.

News story: £14 million for ground-breaking quantum technologies

The winners have been announced in the latest round of a grant funding quantum technologies competition, totalling £13.8 million.

This competition was co-funded by Innovate UK and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). Of the funding, 65% will go towards supporting company activities, and the remaining 35% to academic research.

Quantum technologies in different applications and markets

The winning projects cover a huge variety of different applications and markets. This includes using quantum technologies for:

- securing drone data: a consortium of Airbus, KETS, ID Quantique, University of Bristol and University of Oxford will look at the security of data transmitted between unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and the ground. The project will use a low-weight, high-speed optical communication system with secure quantum encryption
- brain scanning and mental health: Unitive Design & Analysis is working with University of Nottingham to develop a brain scanning magnetoencephalography (MEG) device. By using quantum technology it has the potential to be smaller, simpler, more flexible and cheaper than other devices
- buried assets and rail infrastructure: a collaborative project by RSK Environment, Network Rail, Atkins and University of Birmingham will establish how quantum technology could be used in gravity sensors to detect and assess infrastructure buried below the railway network, such as drains
- gas sensing: ID Quantique will lead QLM technology, Sky-Futures and University of Bristol in a project to explore how photon sources – an essential component of quantum communications systems – could be used to detect gas leaks with high levels of accuracy
- authenticating wine: startup VeriVin and University of Oxford will explore the use of quantum sensing to faults in unopened bottles of

wine, monitor ageing and ensure authenticity

Into the hands of companies and consumers

Paul Mason, Director – Emerging and Enabling Technologies, Innovate UK said:

> The world is on the brink of a second quantum revolution, which will bring quantum sensors, cameras, communications and computers out of the lab and into the hands of companies and consumers.
>
> This competition brings the total grant offered to companies to up to £28 million since 2014, funding 55 individual companies and leveraging £15 million of private investment.
>
> Bearing in mind that industrial activities were more or less zero when the UK quantum programme started back in 2013, this is an incredible achievement that sees no signs of slowing down.

Professor Philip Nelson, EPSRC's Chief Executive, said:

> The announcement of the competition winners represents an exciting next step in the development and establishment of quantum technologies.
>
> These new technologies, that have the potential to transform so many aspects of our lives, are the result of more than two decades of research. Sustained support for research in this area is vital to ensuring that the opportunities on offer can be fully exploited.

News story: New deal to help schools save cash on computer equipment

DfE to offer schools the chance to save on tablets, laptops and desktop devices.

DfE and Crown Commercial Service (CCS) will launch the second in a series of bulk buying deals (sometimes referred to as 'aggregated deals') for schools considering buying new tablets, laptops or desktop devices at the beginning of the autumn term.

One hundred schools took up the previous deal, buying over 2,000 devices. Some schools saved thousands of pounds, with average savings of 8%.

CCS will publish full details of the deal on 4 September 2017. Schools will then have until 29 September 2017 to send CCS their equipment requirements.

CCS will work with suppliers to get the best prices and notify schools after they award the contract on 6 November 2017. Schools will then be able to place their orders for delivery and arrange payment at the agreed price.

We currently plan that the tablet devices will be branded products – for example, Apple iPad. Whereas laptop, desktop and Chromebook devices will not have a brand specified to increase competition and get the best prices.

We have scheduled further buying opportunities for spring 2018 and will announce dates later.

Read more about ordering hardware for schools and see a webinar explaining the process in more detail.