

[News story: New design innovations get up to £2 million funding](#)

The funded projects – part of our design foundations competition – will help businesses identify high-value innovation opportunities and generate ideas for new or improved products, services or business models that align with customer demand.

Projects will begin by exploring human motivations and behaviour before identifying specific problems or opportunities to be addressed.

Ideas generated in response to those opportunities should then be quickly tested and refined with a focus on validating the quality of the customer experience, rather than developing the underlying technology.

User-centred design projects

Some of the successful projects from the first round include:

- [Baxi's](#) 'delivering warmth' project will look at how people heat their homes and use water. This will enable Baxi to develop tailored propositions and provide heating comfort for people in the UK
- [Bramble Energy](#) – a start-up manufacturing printed circuit board fuel cells – will broaden the approach to engineering fuel cells, which typically incorporates multiple design cycles. The company intends to go to users first, to develop new products that better meet customer needs and are quicker to market
- Cambridge Animal Technologies is exploring livestock farming, including monitoring, managing and taking care of the health of the herd. The project will generate a portfolio of conceptual design solutions, based on the principals of user-centric design
- [Comp-A-Tent](#) is leading a project to reduce the impact of abandoned tents at musical festivals, with more than one in 5 tents being left behind. It will leverage existing festival infrastructure to prevent abandonment and reduce environmental and economic costs
- [Hubl Logistics](#) with its 'delivery mate' project will put the recipient in control of their online shopping deliveries, whether they are a homeowner, business or public body. It should enhance the customer experience while reducing pollution and congestion
- [Thames & Hudson](#), a publisher and distributor of books on visual culture, will investigate how mobile technology can enhance and augment the physical experience of discovering, buying and experiencing illustrated books
- [The Future Care UK Ltd](#) will develop a wearable monitoring system for infants of less than 12 months. It will enable more efficient monitoring, to allow sick babies to live at home with their parents, as well as quicker and more accurate diagnosis. The designs will be tested with patients, parents/guardians and hospital staff

Putting people at the centre of the creative process

Ben Griffin, Innovation Lead, Innovate UK, said:

Great design puts people at the centre of the creative process, inspiring solutions that are not only technically feasible but also more desirable and useful. This is important because while technology can make new ideas possible, it is people that ultimately make them successful.

Design has greater impact and value when it's used early to clarify the opportunity, inspire the creative process, support decision making, improve communications and reduce the risk of costly late-stage discoveries and rework.

The UK has world-class design capability, but it's not always used to its best advantage, missing out on potential value and competitive advantage as a result. This competition aims to support businesses seeking to integrate human-centred design into their innovation process.

[Press release: CMA helps microbusinesses combat energy overpricing](#)

During its 2-year [investigation into the energy market](#), the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) found that about 45% of microbusinesses across Great Britain were stuck on their supplier's expensive 'default' tariffs. The study concluded that it was difficult for owners to shop around and switch to cheaper deals, as energy price information was not easily available. In some cases, microbusinesses also found themselves being 'rolled over' onto these contracts, with limited opportunities to switch, when their original deal ended. It is hoped these remedies will help microbusinesses save up to £180 million a year.

The CMA ordered suppliers to stop locking these small firms into automatic rollover contracts and make it easier for microbusinesses to compare the cheapest energy prices, by making information clearly available on their website, or via a link to a price comparison website. They were given until today to make these changes, and from now on are required to comply with these requirements.

Roger Witcomb, Chairman of the Energy Market Investigation, said:

Small businesses rely on keeping overheads down to survive, so to find that nearly half of the microbusinesses across the country were on pricey default deals was worrying.

That's why the CMA ordered energy suppliers to stop automatically rolling small business customers onto fixed-term tariffs and to help their customers more easily find information on the deals available. These, alongside 30 other measures resulting from the investigation, will help energy customers make sure they are on the most competitive deal in future.

Dermot Nolan, Ofgem Chief Executive, said:

The requirement on suppliers to clearly display their prices online to microbusinesses will make it much easier for these businesses to compare prices and shop around. This is a big change in the way the market works. Microbusinesses will also be able to leave more expensive auto-rollover default tariffs without paying an exit fee, freeing them to switch to a better deal.

We'll be working closely with suppliers to make sure they give microbusinesses clear information on the prices they offer in line with the regulation. We are considering what further steps could be taken to protect and help these businesses customers engage in the market as part of our wider programme to make sure all consumers – business and domestic – get a better deal.

Mike Cherry, National Chairman at the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), said:

For too long, many small businesses have had a raw deal in the energy market. These CMA remedies are a step in the right direction. Published prices and a ban on unfair auto-rollover terms should bring some much-needed fairness and transparency to the energy market for microbusinesses.

Mike Spicer, Director of Economics at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:

Energy is a major cost for many companies so it's important they understand what flexibility there is when it comes to managing these expenses. Businesses, like residential users, can save significant amounts by testing the market for their energy. The remedies announced by the CMA, particularly the halt on

automatically rolling companies onto fixed-term tariffs will help ensure that fewer are paying more than they should.

In [June 2016](#) the CMA published its full report following a comprehensive investigation of the energy market. As well as identifying that householders could save around £300 a year if they moved to the best available deal, it also found a disparity with the way suppliers treated business customers.

Energy suppliers only published a full list of available tariffs for domestic customers, so it was more difficult for microbusinesses to compare and switch energy deals than for households. Automatic rollover clauses meant that if a fixed-term contract was not terminated or renegotiated before its end date, then some contracts would automatically continue, often at a higher tariff and with termination fees and no-exit clauses that made it expensive to switch.

Taken together the CMA's measures will not only drive down bills, they will also make it easier for microbusinesses to switch suppliers once their initial contract has ended. Microbusinesses will only need to add 2 relevant pieces of information, their post code and rate of consumption, to get a personalised quote.

The [order](#) and all other information published in relation to the investigation are available on the [energy market investigation case page](#). A [short overview](#) of the investigation is also available, along with a [summary of the changes for microbusinesses](#).

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law.
 2. Roger Witcomb recently [delivered a speech](#) setting out progress in implementing the investigation's remedies, one year on.
 3. For more information on the CMA see our [homepage](#), or follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Flickr](#), [LinkedIn](#) and like our [Facebook](#) page. Sign up to our [email alerts](#) to receive updates on markets cases.
 4. Media enquiries should be directed to Beatrice Cole (beatrice.cole@cma.gsi.gov.uk, 020 3738 6472 or 07774 134 814).
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News story: Cladding sample testing update

The number of high rise buildings which have failed a combustibility test is now 60 across 25 local authority areas

Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, published a [statement on Saturday 24 June](#) which detailed the work being undertaken to ensure the safety of residents in high-rise buildings following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

The number of high rise buildings from which cladding samples have failed a combustibility test at the Building Research Establishment is now 60 across 25 local authority areas. All landlords and fire and rescue services for these local authorities have been alerted to the results and we are in touch with all of them to support and monitor follow-up action.

The table below shows the distribution of buildings, naming those areas where we know that the local authority or landlord has informed affected residents that a building's cladding has failed the test.

Local authority area	Number of buildings
1 Barnet	3
2 Brent	1
3 Camden	5
4 Doncaster	1
5 Hounslow	1
6 Islington	1
7 Lambeth	1
8 Manchester	4
9 Norwich	1
10 Plymouth	3
11 Portsmouth	2
12 Stockton on Tees	3
13 Sunderland	5
14 Wandsworth	2
15 – 26 In addition 11 other areas where cladding test failed	27
Total – 25 areas	60

News story: Lorry emissions checks to start at the roadside

DVSA will be target lorry drivers and operators who try to cheat vehicle emissions. The new checks will target those who break the law and will help to improve air quality.

In May 2017, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs published a [draft plan to improve air quality by reducing nitrogen dioxide levels](#) in the UK.

This included looking at ways to reduce emissions produced by vehicles, including those used commercially. A final plan will be published by 31 July.

Fraudulent emissions readings

DVSA's enforcement staff, and their European counterparts, have found evidence that drivers and operators use emissions cheat devices to cut the cost of operating. These include:

- using devices designed to stop emissions control systems from working
- removing the diesel particulate filter or trap
- using cheap, fake emission reduction devices or diesel exhaust fluid
- using illegal engine modifications which result in excessive emissions
- removing or bypassing the exhaust gas recirculation valve

Taking action against emission cheats

DVSA enforcement officers will give the driver and operator 10 days to fix the emissions system if they find a vehicle with tampered emissions readings.

If the emissions system isn't fixed within 10 days, DVSA will issue a fine and stop the vehicle being used on the road.

DVSA enforcement staff can insist that a vehicle be taken off the road immediately if they find a driver or operator is repeatedly offending.

Working with the EU

DVSA will investigate all Great Britain operators cheating emissions and pass the findings to the Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain, who have the power to remove operator licences.

DVSA will also continue to work with our counterpart agencies across Europe, and further afield, to make sure that all offences committed by non-Great Britain hauliers are dealt with locally.

Protecting you from unsafe drivers and vehicles

DVSA Chief Executive, Gareth Llewellyn, said:

DVSA's priority is to protect you from unsafe drivers and vehicles. We are committed to taking dangerous vehicles off Britain's roads and this new initiative to target emissions fraud is a key part of that.

Anyone who flouts the law is putting other road users, and the quality of our air, at risk. We won't hesitate to take these drivers, operators and vehicles off our roads.

Transport Minister, Jesse Norman said:

I welcome this crackdown on rogue hauliers who cheat the system by installing bogus devices which lead to increased pollution.

There has rightly been a huge public outcry against car manufacturers that have been cheating emissions standards, and the same rule should apply here too.

We all need clean air in which to live and work. That's why the government has committed more than £2 billion since 2011 to support greener transport.

[Press release: Government pledges to help improve access to UK markets for world's poorest countries post-Brexit](#)

The Government will use Brexit to cement Britain's standing in the world and meet our commitments to the world's poorest by securing their existing duty-free access to UK markets and providing new opportunities to increase trade links.

The commitment means that around 48 countries across the globe, from Bangladesh to Sierra Leone, Haiti and Ethiopia will continue to benefit from duty-free exports into the UK on all goods other than arms and ammunition, known as 'everything but arms'.

On leaving the EU, the UK Government will also explore options to expand on

relationships with developing countries such as Jamaica, Pakistan and Ghana – all of which currently benefit from a mixture of reduced or zero tariffs on the goods they export to the UK – as well as maintaining existing trading arrangements and avoiding costly tariffs.

The Government continues to deliver improved support to these countries by helping them break down the barriers to trade, supporting critical trade infrastructure like ports and roads, and building trade skills in those countries, so that they can take better advantage of trading opportunities.

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox said:

Our departure from the EU is an opportunity to step up to our commitments to the rest of the world, not step away from them.

Free and fair trade has been the greatest liberator of the world's poor, and today's announcement shows our commitment to helping developing countries grow their economies and reduce poverty through trade.

Behind the 'duty-free exports' are countless stories of people in developing countries working hard to provide for themselves and their families by exporting everyday goods such as cocoa, bananas and roses, resulting in lower prices and greater choice for consumers.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

The UK is using its position as a great, global trading nation to seize opportunities to lift countries out of grinding poverty. This will generate the wealth, prosperity and investment needed to create millions of jobs and help the world's poorest people stand on their own two feet.

Helping developing countries harness the formidable power of trade means we are not only creating trading partners of the future for UK businesses, but supporting jobs at home too. Building a more prosperous world and supporting our own long-term economic security is firmly in all our interests.

Around £20 billion a year of goods are shipped to the UK from these developing countries, accounting for around half of our clothing, a quarter of our coffee and other everyday goods such as cocoa, bananas and roses.

Without these trading arrangements, clothing, for example, from some of the poorest countries could face tariffs of over 10% – which could be passed on to UK consumers through higher prices at the till.

Access to the markets of developed countries also provides vital trading

opportunities for the world's poorest people and creates jobs. For example, 2 million women work in Bangladesh's garment sector, which is a significant exporter of clothing to the UK. These opportunities help people to work their way out of poverty and build our trading partners of the future.

In 2015, the UK imported the following from developing countries:

- £19.2 billion of goods
- 79% (or £186 million) of all tea imports – enough for 34.9 billion cups of tea
- Over 22% of all the UK's coffee imports, valued at around £131 million. Both Indonesia and Vietnam exported more than £30 million into the UK, and Ethiopia exported over £15 million
- £7.8 billion in textiles – accounting for 45% of all the UK's textile and apparel imports
- Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam combined exported 34 million dresses – one dress for every woman in the UK.

None of these countries can defeat poverty without sustained economic growth – jobs and investment opportunities are vital to helping the world's poorest people stand on their own two feet. Without these jobs, a whole generation could be consigned to a future where opportunities are out of reach; potentially fuelling instability and mass migration, which could in turn have direct consequences for the UK.

Further information

The world's Least Developed Countries are calculated by the UN using criteria which is based on income criterion, the Human Assets Index and the Economic Vulnerability Index. [Further information can be found here.](#)

Under current EU arrangements, the UK offers Duty Free Quota Free access for Least Developed Countries on all goods which they are exporting to the UK, other than arms and ammunition. For the next tier of developing countries, largely classed as lower middle income, the EU offers a mix of reductions on tariffs.

DFID's first [Economic Development Strategy](#), launched by Ms Patel earlier this year, sets out how private sector investment will help developing nations speed up their rate of economic growth, trade more and industrialise faster, and ultimately lift themselves out of poverty.

The UK is committed to ensuring that when companies source from developing countries, they do so in a way which protects the human rights of workers and their health and safety.

Case studies

Textiles, preferences and development

The UK imported £7.8 billion in textiles and apparel from countries which

benefit from preferential access to UK markets in 2015, 45% of all the UK's textiles and apparel imports. Preferential trade arrangements not only created jobs for people in developing countries, but also benefitted customers and businesses in the UK by keeping prices lower and offering greater choice of goods.

The UK imported 34 million dresses from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam in 2015 – enough for one dress for every woman in the UK. Women in Bangladesh often lack opportunities to work outside the home. The growth of the ready-made garment industry is changing this.

Vast numbers of young Bangladeshi women are leaving their villages to work in garment factories where, in earlier generations, young women were rarely seen outside their homes. In Bangladesh, women make up the majority of workers in the ready-made garment sector as a whole, with around 2 million women currently working in this sector. Women in garment factories are pushing back the social limits on their life options by redefining the norms of female propriety.

The textile industry often has wider spill overs to industries other than textiles. For example, India's textiles sector uses 7% of India's agricultural products, chemical and computer related services sectors, whilst nearly 8% of the transport and storage output goes to the textile industry. Therefore one industry creates multiple demands in others.

Tea and coffee exports supporting jobs in developing economies

Promoting agricultural exports from developing economies supports DFID's agricultural programme which by 2018 could help over 900,000 people to earn better livings from agriculture.

In 2015, 79% of tea in the UK came from beneficiary countries of trade preferences (£186 million). £129 million of this came from African economies – £111 million from Kenya. In total the UK imported 103,000 tonnes of tea from beneficiary economies; enough for 34.9 billion cups of tea.

In 2015 countries which benefit from preferential access to the UK imported over 22% of all the UK coffee imports. These countries imported nearly £131 million worth of coffee into the UK in 2015. Both Indonesia and Vietnam imported more than £30 million into the UK and Ethiopia imported over £15 million.

Bananas

The UK imports 6% of the world's dried and fresh banana exports, and we eat around six billion bananas every year. Countries such as the Dominican Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Ghana are an important source of this trade to the UK, contributing to 30% of total banana imports.

DFID is a committed Fairtrade partner and is providing £18 million over six years to help Fairtrade International have a greater impact in their work and make the global Fairtrade system stronger.

The Fairtrade Foundation highlight that one in three bananas bought in the UK is Fairtrade. Fairtrade plays an important role in helping to improve the lives of poor people, such as by ensuring farmers receive fair prices for their products, workers receive better wages to help them support their families and agricultural practices are made more sustainable.

The UK imported over 105,000 tonnes of bananas from Sub-Saharan Africa in 2015. The amount of bananas the UK imports from Sub-Saharan beneficiary economies has almost doubled since the start of the millennium.