

# Thousands more global study and work opportunities for UK students

UK students are set to benefit from work and study placements in countries all over the world, as bids today opened for the second year of the Turing Scheme, which has seen students travel to over one hundred countries since it launched last year.

Universities, schools and colleges are invited to submit applications for grants to the scheme, which is backed by £110m for the next academic year, to create lifechanging opportunities in countries across the world.

The first year of the programme, which replaced the UK's participation in the Erasmus+ scheme, has seen UK students embark on journeys to every corner of the globe – from Iceland to Indonesia.

Projects have included 30 pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds in Wales visiting Cleveland, Ohio earlier this month to spend time in the homes of their US peers, and 16 teenage pupils from Buckinghamshire spending a week in Bangkok, Thailand, and raising thousands of pounds for a local orphanage.

As well as supporting work and study placements, the Turing Scheme also opens the door to volunteering opportunities in unique settings all over the world. UK universities and colleges are able to partner with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and public bodies, and schools with other schools, to create opportunities for UK students to volunteer in support of important causes. One Cambridgeshire Secondary School plans for forty pupils to visit Jodhpur, India, as part of fundraising efforts for a residential school in the region helping young people with disabilities.

Minister for Skills Alex Burghart said:

The Turing Scheme has delivered thousands of life-changing experiences since it launched last year – opening minds and broadening horizons for students from every part of the UK – through placements in some of the world's most exciting international destinations, from Bolivia to Brunei.

As part of our vision for a truly Global Britain the Government is funding the Turing Scheme for a further 3 years, and I urge every school, college and university to make bold, creative applications for next year, so more students can travel to new frontiers to earn, learn, and grow their potential.

Skills Minister Alex Burghart is today (31 March) visiting the University of St. Andrews and University of Edinburgh, where he will meet chemical and electrical engineering students who have honed their skills through Turing work placements in Toronto and Zurich.

University of Edinburgh, Vice Principal International, Professor James Smith, said:

The University has a proud international history. Alongside welcoming international students to Scotland, we continue to create successful opportunities for our students to learn with leading universities and industrial partners around the world.

Widening participation, especially for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, is one of our key strategic priorities. We look forward to working with the UK Government to ensure the Turing scheme will enable us to continue delivering inclusive life-changing opportunities for all talented and bright students, regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds.

We are pleased to be applying for the second year of the Turing scheme, and we look forward to sending students to all parts of the globe. For this year's placements, this is a fantastic opportunity for students to embrace new learning experiences, forge new friendships and immerse themselves in a different culture.

The opening of Turing Scheme bids comes after it was confirmed that the UK had for the first time hit its target for the number of international students coming to the UK, almost 10 years ahead of schedule. New figures published in January showed that in the year 2020/21, more than 600,000 international students chose to study in the UK, a figure the Government had pledged to hit by 2030.

The Turing Scheme delivers on the Government's mission to level-up opportunity and life chances across the UK, by targeting areas which previously benefited less under the Erasmus+ programme, and providing extra funding for disadvantaged students to cover travel, passport and visa costs.

Bids open on 31st March for universities, schools and colleges in every region and nation of the UK to submit applications for Year 2 of the Turing Scheme, for academic year 2022/23.

Based on data reported by universities, schools and colleges for mobilities which have a start date prior to 1st March 2022, we can confirm that Turing participants at UK providers have travelled to 113 countries. We will publish a full breakdown of mobilities in due course, once projects have completed.

The Turing Scheme supports educational volunteering opportunities, by including opportunities for UK universities and further education colleges to partner with NGOs, non-profit organisations and social enterprises.

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# More vital support given to over 300 cultural organisations to survive beyond pandemic and protect jobs

- Grants are supporting organisations as they emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic
- £1.57 billion funding package has protected jobs across music venues, theatres, galleries, museums and cinemas

Hundreds of cultural organisations have received a share of the final £35 million emergency support package from the Culture Recovery Fund, to help overcome the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Since August 2020, the Culture Recovery Fund has distributed £1.57 billion to around 5,000 organisations and sites across the country, giving a lifeline to theatres, museums, independent cinemas and many more cherished organisations around the country through the pandemic.

The final round of funding has supported organisations through the latest challenges, in particular those affected by the Omicron variant this winter. It has kept organisations up and running so that they can continue to support jobs and contribute to local economies.

The record-breaking fund has helped the country's precious arts, heritage and culture through the pandemic, backing world-renowned names such as Blackpool's Tower Ballroom, Glastonbury Festival and the National Theatre.

Arts Minister Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay said:

Being cut off from them during lockdown has underlined what a vital role cultural organisations play in their community up and down the country. The Government stood by them in the pandemic, and is determined that they should remain open and accessible to everyone – now and for generations to come.

I am very proud of the Culture Recovery Fund and the lifeline it has provided for cherished organisations in every part of the country.

## **Support for festivals and live events**

The government has been working flat out to support our world-class performing arts and live events sector through challenging times. Now, thanks to this funding, festival-goers and gig-lovers will be able to get back to the brilliant live, in-person events that have been on hold over the past two years. Harrogate International Festivals, for example, have received a grant of £80,000 to continue delivering engaging cultural festivals, such as the

Harrogate Music Festival.

A £185,000 grant for Corsica Studios in central London has helped the night club welcome grassroots DJs and household names alike and £60,000 has supported the Wedgewood Rooms, an independent music venue in Southsea, Portsmouth offering an important grassroots music space, and comedy and spoken word events since opening in 1992.

## **Support for arts**

To make sure that everyone continues to have access to arts and culture, this funding will support creative, community-driven arts organisations and creative projects to help nurture and sustain local talent. £70,000 has been awarded to the oldest working men's club in Britain, Holbeck Working Men's Club based in Leeds, making sure this community-owned venue can continue with its rich cultural programme.

West End Stage in central London has also received a grant of over £80,000 to continue inspiring and supporting young people to begin their careers on stage. More than £95,000 in funding has gone to Birmingham-based Deaf Explorer to help their important work with Deaf artists to access opportunities across the arts. Almost £50,000 is going to support Golden Tree Productions in Cornwall so that it can continue to develop iconic cultural projects that celebrate Cornwall's distinctiveness and diversity.

The Bluecoat, Liverpool's iconic contemporary arts centre, has also been granted over £170,000 to continue their important work engaging the community with art and culture. Home to over 27 artists, arts organisations, craftspeople and retailers in one of Liverpool's most historic buildings, the funding has protected jobs and kept the centre running.

Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England said:

This additional round of the Emergency Resource Support Fund has provided a vital lifeline to creative and cultural organisations who have faced further challenges whilst recovering from the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We once again thank the government for its unprecedented support for our creative and cultural industries. The £35 million awarded in Cultural Recovery Funding is helping to support the sector as it continues to welcome back visitors, reinvigorate communities, champion local talent, and ensure every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences wherever they are in the country.

## **Support for heritage**

These final awards are also safeguarding precious heritage and regional museums so they can be enjoyed by local communities and visitors long into

the future. £1.35 million has protected jobs at The Piece Hall in Halifax, the only remaining Grade I-listed Georgian cloth hall in the world, and funded conservation repairs so the heritage destination can continue welcoming visitors.

£130,000 has also been awarded to Aerospace Bristol, a family-friendly museum and learning centre whose exhibitions tell the remarkable story of Filton Airfield, and almost £200,000 has gone to The Sussex Archaeological Society to support their work researching and preserving local history and archaeology.

Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive, Historic England, said:

This final round of government funding has supported a range of important heritage organisations across the country, including The Piece Hall in Yorkshire. These places offer people with unparalleled ways of understanding the past, the history of their area, and the great outdoors and are of great importance for our post-pandemic recovery. Helping them to continue to recover and thrive into the future will provide long-lasting benefits to communities across the country.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:

This third and final round of the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage has provided a vital lifeline to heritage organisations, sites and attractions who have found it challenging to recover from the ongoing impact of the Covid pandemic. The £3.1 million awarded by DCMS has helped support the heritage sector as it continues to move forward with plans to open doors to visitors, reinvigorating local areas and contributing to local and national tourism and economy.

## **Support for cinemas**

Emergency funding has also kept projectors rolling in independent cinemas across the country. Thanks to a £45,000 emergency grant from the Culture Recovery Fund, Plymouth Arts Cinema, Plymouth's only independent cinema, has been able to continue its rich programme of international and UK independent films and offer cheaper tickets to those out of employment, students, those attending Relaxed screenings, and asylum seekers and refugees.

Almost £130,000 has also supported The Regal at Stowmarket to complete its long-planned refurbishment and offer an expanded programme to local communities, including "pocket-money screenings" with £3 tickets for children and work with local disability groups.

Ben Roberts, Chief Executive, BFI said:

Every penny of the Culture Recovery Fund including over £500k in this final round of funding to independent cinemas across the country has been vital to their survival, enabling them to recover and welcome back their audiences. As well as bringing people together to experience the magic of experiencing film on the big screen, local cinemas are hubs for educational and film activities and provide thousands of jobs contributing to regeneration and local economies.

## **Additional quotes**

TV presenter Angellica Bell, Board Member, Kingston Theatre Trust said:

As a Board member of Kingston Theatre Trust, I know how hard our team has worked to sustain the theatre during the pandemic. The Rose enjoys a reputation as both a well-respected producing house and a vibrant community arts hub for Kingston and South West London. We are committed to welcoming new, diverse audience members to the theatre, and this grant helps us to create work that will entice both first time and returning theatregoers to visit the Rose.

Dame Evelyn Glennie, solo percussionist said:

I am delighted that Deaf Explorer has this Culture Recovery Grant. This is a unique company with immense expertise amongst the artists that they collaborate with and support. They access producers that facilitate deaf artists to pioneer inclusive new work. The grant will help key staff return to work, fund-raise and rebuild confidence in their network of deaf artists, who have been devastated by the impact of Covid-19 on the cultural sector. New marketing and promotion will profile the company and help them find new cultural partners, wanting to improve access. I hope for them to quickly return the CIC to a successful not for profit, inspiring the deaf community to be creative and involved in the arts.

Nicky Chance-Thompson DL, Chief Executive, The Piece Hall Trust, said:

We are incredibly grateful the Government recognises the pivotal role The Piece Hall will continue to play in supporting the region's recovery post pandemic. This generous grant will ensure that this internationally significant heritage site loved by so many, can continue to be sustained and remain free to enter, enabling many different visitors and communities to enjoy and benefit from this precious historic and cultural asset at a time when it's perhaps needed more than ever. It has become increasingly clear that heritage and culture both play a vital role in

supporting our emotional and economic well-being, and we look forward to bringing some much-needed fun and joy back to visitors with a great line up of events in 2022.

Mary Cloake, CEO, The Bluecoat, Liverpool said:

We're absolutely thrilled that we have been thrown this financial lifeline from the Culture Recovery Fund. We're grateful to DCMS and the Arts Council for their unwavering support for arts and culture throughout the pandemic. We have spent years building a mixed economy that isn't solely reliant on public funding, and that was turned on its head during Covid. We will use this money to continue to provide a centre for art and artists in the heart of Liverpool city centre, rebuilding our business and securing its future.

Anna Byrne, Executive Director, Auxiliary Project Space, Stockton on Tees said:

This funding comes at a pivotal time as we emerge from the effects of Covid-19. It allows us to make the full transition of opening up to the public, and supports our team and building with essential resources. We can now face 2022 with a renewed sense of confidence as we build towards the future.

Joanna Resnick, Executive Producer, The Holbeck, Leeds said:

The Holbeck Club serves the community in so many ways- an everyday cultural palace- a place to learn, laugh and relax. This vital funding means that we can continue to do this in these trying times. We're incredibly grateful for it.

Clare Sacco, Events Co-ordinator, The Creative Seed, South Shields said:

We are absolutely delighted to have received the Emergency Resource Support Fund. The Arts Council and DCMS's support through the ERF fund has been essential to allowing us to continue our work in the community, with people from a variety of backgrounds and demographics, with a focus on those who traditionally do not find arts and culture accessible. We strongly believe that the arts should be fully inclusive, and this funding will be pivotal in allowing us to facilitate this inclusion.

Sharon Canavar, Chief Executive, Harrogate International Festivals said:

This funding will make a significant difference to our ongoing delivery and emergence from the pandemic. Festivals are cyclical by nature and despite delivering a mix of digital and smaller scale live events during 2021 we need to be fit for purpose for the future learning from our resilience, radically changed programmes and creative ambition over the last two years. This funding will allow us to make informed decisions on our future artistic and community outputs.

Peter Blackburn CBE, Honorary President, Harrogate International Festivals said:

Financial support for the Harrogate International Festivals will be a much needed boost to the organisation after an incredibly challenging two years. HIF has been an integral part of the community during the pandemic supporting residents, employing artists and radically changing the creative offer to animate the town. However, as an organisation with a heavy reliance on ticket sales and sponsorship these much needed funds will bridge the gap across the winter months enabling us to rebuild and reimagine our organisation as we look towards the summer season in 2022 and beyond.

Ellie Claughton, Co-Director, Barrel Organ Theatre, Sheffield said:

We believe that everybody should be afforded the opportunity to nourish their creativity and have a voice, whether they consider themselves to be an artist or not. Funding from the Emergency Resource Fund has been intrinsic in supporting this work and in ensuring Barrel Organ are in a robust position to serve the communities we work with.

Loren Slater, Co-Director, Signal Film and Media, Barrow and Cumbria said:

This funding has been a lifeline for us during the pandemic, allowing us to adapt and increase our services to support some of the most vulnerable and isolated members of our community here in Barrow and Cumbria. The money meant we were able to keep delivering high quality activities and adapting to the rapidly changing circumstances of COVID instead of being under constant worry over our survival. We're incredibly grateful to the Arts Council for their dedication to helping organisations like ours and their responsiveness in providing the help we needed in such tough times.

Alison Gwynn, Chief Executive, Northern Film + Media said:



We [Northern Film + Media] are grateful to have received an award through the Cultural Recovery Fund at a really challenging time. The funding has enabled us to survive, and continue with the delivery of our programme of activities to those who are looking to enter the screen industry here in the North East. Our activity is due to expand rapidly this year and this marks the start of what will be an exciting time for the region and significant growth in the industry. The award has helped get to the point where we can thrive and be ready to support our talented screen professionals.

Richard Blaine, Artistic Director, Southwold and Aldeburgh Theatre Ltd said:

The amazing support from both CRF and ERS has been instrumental in both securing the survival of the company and creating a pathway to renewed self-sustainability and expansion. By supporting our 2021 summer season, CRF enabled the company to re-open on Freedom Day, 19th July, the first in our region. That season's success won us an invitation to expand to a second venue in 2022. The vital bridge to this expanded season, with potentially twice the income, and twice the local jobs of 2021, is our ERS grant. Having been kept afloat, we have now had a huge push back into the stream – it's a great example of how judiciously targeted Arts Funding is a future-facing investment, not just a lifeline.

Valerie Mills, Director, Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre said:

We are delighted to have received further funding from the Culture Recovery Fund and this Emergency Response Support grant has enabled us to navigate the winter months with more confidence, despite ongoing difficult operating conditions. Thanks to the funding we have been able to continue working towards sustainability by supporting our 350 volunteers, working with our collections and developing our learning programme.

Steve Goodman (aka Kode9), Hyperdub Records, London, said:

Having held live music, club nights and art events at Corsica Studios for over 10 years (most recently our Ø series which ran from 2017-2020), I am delighted to hear that the venue has been successful in its latest funding round. Corsica is one of the few remaining places in London that champions and supports left field and emerging culture with care and attention to sound and the overall experience of its audiences. It's an incredibly important musical hub and home for artists, labels and collectives in South London.

James Steventon, Director, Fermynwoods Contemporary Art, Northampton said:

After an incredibly challenging two years we are grateful to Arts Council England and DCMS for their support which has allowed us to take stock and reconfigure our organisation to do what we do best in creatively responding to a changing world.

Corey Baker, Choreographer, Corey Baker Dance, Birmingham said:

By the second half of last year, Swan Lake Bath Ballet had been a huge international hit and we had loads of opportunities for new projects. But for over a year our regular income sources had been completely cut off, and we had a serious cashflow crisis. Emergency Resource Support gave us the working capital we needed to get back to making work. With this support, we danced on top of wind turbines to celebrate renewable energy; we choreographed cars, bikes and skydivers for the BBC and One Dance UK's Dance Passion; and we even got to dance at No 10 Downing Street. We made three new dance films that have been seen by millions. ERS got our company moving again.

Billy Read, Chair of Deaf Explorer CIC, Birmingham, said:

We are excited to receive this Cultural Recovery Grant. Before Covid-19 we massively changed the lives of deaf artists. During Covid-19 our pipeline of artists collapsed. This grant will celebrate and raise our profile with a two day festival that will bring Deaf artists together, commission new work and reach our deaf audiences. We will also fundraise to delivery outstanding community participation projects that will involve a new generations of deaf artists.

Will Coleman, Artistic Director of Golden Tree, Cornwall, said:

Yma an Arghasans Yagheans Gonisogeth ow kweres gwitha an termyn a dheu rag Gwriansow Gwedhen Owr ha'gan gasa dhe besya dhe dysplegya digolmow gonisogethek, adhyskansel ha kerghynedhel neb a wul dyffransow leun a styr ha hirduryadow dhe gemenedhow.

Translation: The Culture Recovery Fund will help safeguard the future of Golden Tree Productions, and allow us to continue to design cultural, educational, and environmental solutions that make meaningful and lasting differences to communities.

Ian Stockley, Chief Executive Officer, Bath Festivals said:

The ERS Fund allowed us to maintain the required level of resource in the last quarter of 2021 to plan for a successful return to our higher levels of activity in 2022, as we emerge from the pandemic. We announced our May 2022 Festival programme of over 130 events at the beginning of March. This would not have been feasible without the grant from the ERS Fund.

Geoff Priestly, General Manager from Wedgewood Rooms, Portsmouth said:

The Culture Recovery Fund: Emergency Resources Support Fund has enabled the venue to weather the storm caused by the later Covid variants, and allowed us to keep shows in place, pay artists, promoters and technicians, and allowed The Wedgewood Rooms to present a wide and varied programme, further we have been able to re engage with our local creative community and audience.

Captain Les Brodie, Former British Airways Concorde pilot said:

As a former Concorde pilot, I believe it is absolutely vital that we preserve our precious aviation heritage for future generations and inspire young people to become the scientists and engineers of the future. I'm thrilled that, thanks to the kind support of The Arts Council, Aerospace Bristol has been able to make it through the pandemic and Concorde will continue to spark inspiration in young minds for many years to come.

Lloyd Burnell, Executive Director, Aerospace Bristol said:

Thanks to vital support from the Culture Recovery Fund, Aerospace Bristol, has been able to survive the unprecedented challenge of the covid-19 pandemic, keeping our museum open and continuing our award-winning learning programme and conservation work. We're enormously grateful for this crucial grant and it's fantastic to now see the results of this support, as visitors return to Aerospace Bristol to discover our incredible aviation heritage, step aboard Concorde, and enjoy days out together again.

Greg Staw, Co-founder, ON:SONG, Stroud said:

After what has been such a turbulent time for ON:SONG, like for so many cultural organisations, we are thrilled to have once again been supported by this round of funding. This means the world to us, both in terms of the financial stability it brings, and the

belief shown in our mission to change lives through the power of music and song.

David Marsh, Events and Theatre Manager, Stowmarket Town Council, local to The Regal said:

The ongoing support from the Culture Recovery Fund has allowed us to continue to grow the cultural offering in mid-Suffolk. The additional measures and full programme it has afforded us to put in place has helped give our community the confidence to return to the cinema and in turn support many of our neighbouring hospitality businesses. We thank the BFI and DCMS for their incredibly valued support during this period.

Simon Ward and Corinna Downing, Owners, The Palace Cinema, Broadstairs said:

We're delighted to have received a further award from the BFI's Culture Recovery Fund for Independent Cinemas through the DCMS. The BFI's informed and consistent support for our cinema throughout the two years of the pandemic has ensured our survival. Thanks to this award we can look forward to a thriving future presenting an increasingly diverse range of international cinema, special events and education programmes to our communities in Broadstairs, Thanet and wider-Kent. Thank you!

Anna Navas, Director and Film Programmer, Plymouth Arts Cinema said:

We are very grateful to receive this support for Plymouth Arts Cinema. It will enable us to continue rebuilding our audience as we recover from the pandemic, and to develop new audiences by deepening our community engagement. We are committed to bringing world class independent cinema and film culture to Plymouth.

Gareth Negus, Managing Director, Electric Picture House Cinema, Southwold said:

Since we first received support from the Culture Recovery Fund, we've been gratified to see our audiences start to return to the cinema in greater numbers, some for the first time in several years. But we still face the challenge of rebuilding their confidence, and the cinema-going habit, in a period when – like many businesses – we are facing a number of increasing costs. So we're tremendously grateful for this additional funding, and the investment in small businesses like ours that are so important to their communities. We're here for culture, and we're planning to

stay that way.

Gary Trinder, Chairman, Regent Centre, Christchurch said:

We are absolutely delighted to be the recipient of a further Culture Recovery Fund award from the DCMS, awarded through the British Film Institute of which we are members. The award provides ongoing certainty to operation of the Regent which is a registered Charity, meaning that after a sustained period of closure last year, we have reopened once again as a vibrant and healthy organisation, which would not have been the case without the award.

Raj Jeyasingam, Owner, Palace Cinema, Alton said:

I'm very grateful to DCMS and the BFI for this much needed help at a crucial time when there has been fewer movies on release to suit our customers, many of whom are still lacking confidence in attending the cinema.

Micaela Tuckwell, Executive Director, The Ultimate Picture Palace, Oxford said:

The Ultimate Picture Palace (UPP) is enormously grateful to everyone at DCMS and BFI for selecting us for an award from their CRF Emergency Resource Fund as this grant has made a vital difference to the future of our small cinema after the devastating blow Covid-19 had on sales, particularly in the final months of 2021. Crucially, the grant has allowed the staff and volunteers of the UPP to share their commitment to keeping the cinema open 7-days a week and to continue screening the best independent films from the UK and around the world. Receiving the grant has also given the business the stability to green light the cinema's exciting community ownership campaign which is being launched in the coming months inviting everyone who loves the UPP and independent cinema to invest in our historic cinema so that it can be brought even closer to the heart of the community, stays independent and has a bright future.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

For more information on the funds please see: [ACE](#) [BFI](#) [HE/NLHF](#)

Find out more about the [Culture Recovery Fund](#) and [Here For Culture campaign](#).

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## Largest overhaul of sewer system to tackle storm sewage discharges

Water companies will face strict limits on when they can use storm overflows and must completely eliminate the ecological harm any storm sewage discharges cause to the environment and significantly reduce discharges to protect public health under new plans unveiled by the Government today (31 March).

The [consultation on the Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan](#) outlines a step change in how water companies tackle the number of discharges of untreated sewage, which the Government and the public have made clear are completely unacceptable.

A growing population, Victorian infrastructure and an increase in extreme weather events has increased pressure on our sewer system, bringing the frequency of discharges to an unacceptable level.

Under the proposed plan:

- By 2035, the environmental impacts of 3,000 storm overflows (75%) affecting our most important protected sites will have been eliminated;
- By 2035, there will be 70% fewer discharges into bathing waters –(using last years figures that would have equated to 4,620 fewer discharges into our bathing waters during the bathing season;)
- By 2040, approximately 160,000 discharges, on average, will have been eliminated (40% of the total); and by 2050, approximately 320,000 discharges, on average, will have been eliminated (80% of the total).
- The consultation outlines how water companies are expected to achieve these targets, including mapping their sewer networks, reducing surface water connections and engaging in long-term collaborative planning.

It also details how government will hold to account those companies who do not meet expectations, including a new monitoring and reporting framework as legislated for in the Environment Act which will significantly improve the ability of both Ofwat and the Environment Agency to take enforcement action where needed.

Views are sought from the public on the targets as part of a suite of measures to be considered for the final Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan, which will be published in September.

The main measures under consultation are:

- Time-bound targets for water companies to achieve the complete elimination of ecological harm from storm overflows, further protect public health and limit storm overflow use;
- Details of how water companies will be expected to achieve these

targets;

- An outline of wider options to reduce the strain on our sewer system, such as mandatory sustainable drainage systems; and
- Commitments to revise guidance on applying for a new bathing water designation, and to publish responses to a call for evidence on options to eliminate the use of wet wipes and ensure they are biodegradable where needed.

### **Environment Secretary George Eustice said:**

We are the first government to set out our expectation that that water companies must take steps to significantly reduce storm overflows. Today, we are setting specific targets to ensure that those storm overflows are used only in exceptional circumstances – delivering on our Environment Act and building on wider work on water quality.

Today's consultation follows significant action to date on tackling the critical issue of storm overflows. The Strategic Policy Statement for Ofwat, in which the Government has for the first time set a clear expectation that the industry's economic regulator should prioritise action by water companies to protect the environment, is now in force.

A raft of measures have also been brought forward in the [Environment Act 2021](#) to tackle sewage discharges, including the requirement for greater transparency from water companies on their storm overflow data, meaning there are now more protections in place for our water environment than ever before.

Between 2020 to 2025, water companies are investing £7.1 billion to protect and improve the environment. Of this, £3.1 billion is being invested specifically in storm overflow improvements. This includes £1.9 billion investment on the Thames Tideway Tunnel super sewer.

### **Environment Agency Chief Executive Sir James Bevan said:**

Water companies need to go further and faster in tackling the damage caused by storm overflows, so these targets aimed at drastically reducing the number of harmful discharges are a welcome development.

The Environment Agency will continue to work with government, the water industry, the other regulators and the NGOs to ensure we have healthier sewers, cleaner rivers and a better environment for all.

### **Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England, said:**

Separating sewage from water people drink is one of the greatest public health triumphs of the last 200 years.

The discharge of raw sewage, including from storm overflows into waters used by the public, should be an exceptionally rare event and we need to take action to reduce it substantially.

The consultation is open from today for six weeks, until 12 May.

### **Background:**

- Complete separation of sewage and rainwater systems would remove the need for storm overflows, however this would cost between £350 billion and £600 billion. It would also cause significant disruption.
- For example, most of the combined system runs under our towns and cities and would have to be dug up. Reducing discharges to zero in an average year at all inland waters using other options, such as building storage tanks to capture excess water during heavy rainfall, would cost between £160bn and £240bn. The cost of each of these options would have an impact on consumer water bills.

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## **Foreign Secretary in India as part of diplomatic push on Ukraine**

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss is in India today (Thursday 31 March) as part of a wider diplomatic push following Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine last month.

In a meeting with India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, the Foreign Secretary will say Russia's invasion of Ukraine underlines the importance of democracies working closer together to deter aggressors, reduce vulnerability to coercion and strengthen global security.

She wants to counter Russia's aggression and reduce global strategic dependence on the country ahead of key NATO and G7 meetings next week.

During her trip, Truss will progress talks to develop defence-related trade, including innovative security technology, strengthening defence ties with the world's largest democracy.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

Deeper ties between Britain and India will boost security in the Indo-Pacific and globally, and create jobs and opportunities in both countries.



This matters even more in the context of Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and underlines the need for free democracies to work closer together in areas like defence, trade and cyber security.

India is an economic and tech powerhouse, the world's largest democracy and a great friend of Britain, and I want to build an even closer relationship between our two nations.

She will also work to deepen cyber security and defence co-operation between the two countries, and will announce a new joint cyber security programme.

The programme will aim to protect online infrastructure in both countries from attacks. India and the UK will work together to increase cyber security and carry out joint exercises to practise combatting threats from cybercriminals and ransomware.

The UK and India will also agree to closer maritime co-operation in the Indo-Pacific. The UK will join India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative and become a lead partner on maritime security issues, coordinating work with key partners in Southeast Asia.

This stronger partnership on maritime security builds on the visit to India last year by HMS Queen Elizabeth and the Carrier Strike Group (CSG) – a symbol of the UK's world leading defence capability. The CSG took part in the most demanding exercise ever undertaken between the UK and India, involving all 3 military services.

Strengthening ties with India has been a priority for the Foreign Secretary since taking up the role. This is her second trip to the country as Foreign Secretary following [her visit last October](#) and her third as a Secretary of State in 13 months.

Since the [2030 Roadmap](#) was agreed last year, the UK and India have launched free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations.

On her trip the Foreign Secretary will also confirm £70 million of British International Investment (BII) funding to support renewable energy use in India. This will help build renewable energy capacity and develop solar power in the region. She will also confirm plans for a new platform to allow British investors to bid for green infrastructure, technology, and business opportunities in India.

Current volatility in oil and gas prices and energy security concerns, as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, underscore the importance of India's green transition and move towards energy self-sufficiency.

- in May 2021, Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prime Minister Narendra Modi made an historic commitment to strengthen work between the UK and India over the next decade. The new [Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and the '2030 Roadmap'](#) will bring our countries, economies, and people

closer together and boost cooperation in areas that matter to both countries

- the new cyber programme is part of our Enhanced Cyber Partnership, as endorsed by Prime Minister Johnson and Prime Minister Modi in the UK-India 2030 Roadmap
- the Foreign Secretary and External Affairs Minister Jaishankar will address the India-UK Strategic Futures Forum later today (Thursday, March 31) to set out their vision for the long-term relationship between the 2 countries.
- the Foreign Secretary will also confirm plans to hold the first Strategic Tech Dialogue, a ministerial-level summit on emerging technology

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## [Australian investors commit £28.5bn in major economic boost for UK](#)

- Top Australian investors announce £28.5 billion for clean energy, technology and infrastructure projects across the UK
- Today's investment commitments will create thousands of jobs and support major developments from Orkney to Southampton
- PM hails transformative investment which will help level up, boost quality housing stock and drive the green energy transition

Leading Australian businesses have announced major new investments totalling £28.5 billion in projects across the United Kingdom, as the Prime Minister hosts a UK-Australia investment roundtable at Downing Street this evening [Wednesday 30th March].

Today's announcements follow from the Global Investment Summit hosted by the PM in October and the creation of the new Office for Investment. They underline the growing appeal of the UK's dynamic economy and workforce for foreign investment.

The strategic investments will create thousands of jobs initially with many more expected, supporting the Government's agenda to level up across the UK, improve the quality of our infrastructure and housing and drive a green industrial revolution.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

I'm proud that some of Australia's leading businesses have chosen to invest in the UK, recognising opportunities across the globe in our dynamic and forward-looking economy.

The fantastic schemes announced today will turbocharge the Government's efforts to create jobs and growth in every part of the country, and put the UK at the cutting edge of the green industrial revolution. This is Global Britain in action – building new partnerships with friends and allies around the globe to create prosperity at home.

New investments announced today include:

- Top Australian financial services firm Macquarie Group plans to support £12bn of investment by 2030 in infrastructure projects across the UK, including in offshore wind in Lincolnshire and north Scotland, gigabit broadband in rural England and hydrogen hubs in Southampton and Orkney. Macquarie Group has supported more than £50bn of investment in the UK in the last 15 years, backing half of the country's existing offshore wind capacity.
- Pension fund AustralianSuper forecasts a further £8bn in investments across the UK over the next five years. Among other projects, the funding will support a joint venture with British Land to develop their Canada Water master plan, estimated at £5bn in value on completion.
- Real estate and investment group Lendlease and its partners plan to deliver £5.5bn of investment across its major regeneration projects in London and Birmingham over the next five years, subject to planning permission. This investment is expected to deliver thousands of new low carbon homes, training and employment opportunities for local communities.
- IFM Investors intend to deliver £3bn in investment into the UK over five years. The funding will help maintain existing assets, including the M6 toll and Manchester, Stansted and East Midlands airports, and its new net zero fund will support large-scale infrastructure energy transition projects – including in electrification, carbon capture and solar power.
- Energy, chemicals and natural resources experts Worley will expand their UK operations, supporting the energy transition and drive for NetZero creating over 1,000 highly-skilled professional jobs in the next 18 months in areas including Humberside, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow and Aberdeen.
- Global green renewable energy company Fortescue Future Industries (FFI) plans to create up to 1,000 new jobs at Williams Advanced Engineering in Oxford, which they acquired in March. The investment will support decarbonisation initiatives and build on the UK's excellence in engineering.

The Prime Minister hosted ten Australian CEOs and senior executives for a hybrid roundtable at Downing Street this evening alongside the International Trade Secretary, to welcome today's investments and discuss opportunities for further collaboration and investment.

The UK and Australia have close and historic economic, political and cultural ties, which are set to be bolstered by our new Free Trade Agreement.

Macquarie Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Shemara Wikramanayake, said:

The UK was our first destination when we expanded internationally in 1989, and has remained a strong focus for our investment activity ever since.

The UK has been a world leader in the positive utilisation of private capital to meet essential infrastructure needs of communities, including as a global leader in investment in the energy transition. We look forward to building on our track record of investment of capital and expertise to deliver the next generation of UK infrastructure.

The Department for International Trade is boosting inward foreign investment – securing almost £10 billion in new investment at October's Global Investment Summit and lining up a pipeline of future funding partnerships – and supporting UK businesses to grow their exports, including to new markets in the Asia-Pacific.

Investment Minister Lord Grimstone, who also attended the roundtable, said:

The UK is one of the best investment destinations in the world. Global businesses invest here for many reasons, not least our stability, commercial openness and financial services credentials, as seen when we hosted the Global Investment Summit last year, which brought over

The investment announced today not only builds on the UK-Australia Free-Trade Agreement but will help level up every part of the UK. Investment is a driving force for the creation of jobs and higher living standards, and I'm delighted we'll see this right across the country.

Lendlease Global Chief Executive Officer, Tony Lombardo, said:

"We stand shovel ready with the British Government and our partners to deliver vital new homes, parks, offices and jobs for the UK and its people. In line with our world-leading decarbonisation targets, we'll be striving to make these places and neighbourhoods some of the most sustainable in the UK."

IFM CEO David Neal said:

IFM is owned by pension funds and invests, over the long term, on behalf of pension funds, their members, and other long-term

investors. We have been investing in core UK infrastructure for decades and now are planning to almost double our investment over the next five years.

We believe the deployment of pension capital in partnership with the UK government will be critical to supporting the UK's energy transition and net zero ambitions over the next 25 years.

### **Notes to Editors:**

- For more details on the individual investments, please contact the relevant company directly.
- In 2020, the UK was both Australia's second-largest destination for foreign investment and the second-largest investor in Australia.