

UK space sector wins over £2 million to help develop options for a national position, navigation and timing space system

Leading UK space companies Airbus, CGI, Sirrus Analysis, GMV NSL, Inmarsat, and QinetiQ will each receive a share of the funding to help develop system design and operation, signals and algorithms, resilience, assurance, and cost modelling for the UK Space Agency's Space Based Positioning, Navigation and Timing Programme (SBPP).

UK Space Agency deputy CEO Ian Annett said:

The UK is critically dependent on position, navigation and timing information from satellite navigation systems in transport, communications, energy distribution, and emergency response.

This initial funding will help us design options for a new system to support our critical national infrastructure, whilst growing the space sector, boosting economic growth and making daily life more secure for people everywhere in the UK.

Satellite navigation is a sophisticated technology that works by beaming signals from space that devices such as smartphones can use to determine their location and time – otherwise known as position, navigation and timing (PNT).

PNT services from satellite navigation systems are essential to modern day life in the UK, underpinning our National Security, defence, and transport. PNT signals are also an important component of future technologies including autonomous vehicles and smart cities, transforming the way people live, work and travel whilst supporting the net zero carbon emissions agenda.

Formed in October 2020, the Space Based PNT programme is exploring innovative ways of bringing a space PNT capability to the UK. Later this year it will advise on options to Government for a space-based solution to improve the UK's PNT resilience.

Work from the programme will boost the UK's already thriving space industry and expertise whilst paving the way for a more 'Global Britain', bolstering UK interests with greater independence from foreign systems.