

UK backs new small nuclear technology with £210 million

- Government commits £210 million to develop small modular reactors in the UK, matched by private investment
- new nuclear critical to strengthening energy security as we reduce Britain's dependency on volatile fossil fuels
- Kwarteng: "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the UK to deploy more low carbon energy than ever before and ensure greater energy independence."

Next steps in developing the design for one of the world's first small modular reactors (SMR) has been backed by £210 million in new government funding for Rolls-Royce SMR, the UK government has announced today (Tuesday 9 November 2021), delivering on the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan and creating good high-skilled jobs.

Matched by private sector funding of over £250 million, today's investment will take forward phase 2 of the Low-Cost Nuclear project to further develop SMR design and take it through the regulatory processes to assess suitability of potential deployment in the UK.

New nuclear has a crucial role to play in providing reliable, affordable, low carbon energy as Britain works to reduce its dependency on volatile fossil fuels and exposure to global gas price spikes.

SMRs have the potential to be less expensive to build than traditional nuclear power plants because of their smaller size. Their modular nature of the components offers the potential for parts to be produced in dedicated factories and shipped by road to site – reducing construction time and cost. Rolls Royce SMR estimate that each Small Modular Reactor could be capable of powering 1 million homes – equivalent to a city the size of Leeds.

Today's news comes as Parliament considers the Nuclear Energy Financing Bill which establishes a new financing model for nuclear projects, known as the Regulated Asset Base (RAB). This would attract a wider range of private investment into these projects, reducing build costs, consumers' energy bills and Britain's reliance on overseas developers for finance.

The UK is investing millions into the nuclear industry, including up to £1.7 billion to bring at least one large-scale nuclear project to a final investment decision, and a new £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund to provide targeted support towards further nuclear projects as part of the [Net Zero Strategy](#).

Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the UK to deploy more

low carbon energy than ever before and ensure greater energy independence.

Small modular reactors offer exciting opportunities to cut costs and build more quickly, ensuring we can bring clean electricity to people's homes and cut our already-dwindling use of volatile fossil fuels even further.

In working with Rolls Royce, we are proud to back the largest engineering collaboration the UK has ever seen – uniting some of the most respected and innovating organisations on the planet. Not only can we maximise British content, create new intellectual property and reinvigorate supply chains, but also position our country as a global leader in innovative nuclear technologies we can potentially export elsewhere.

By harnessing British engineering and ingenuity, we can double down on our plan to deploy more home-grown, affordable clean energy in this country.

Rolls Royce Chief Executive Warren East said:

The SMR programme is one of the ways that Rolls-Royce is meeting the need to ensure the UK continues to develop innovative ways to tackle the global threat of climate change.

With the Rolls-Royce SMR technology, we have developed a clean energy solution which can deliver cost competitive and scalable net zero power for multiple applications from grid and industrial electricity production to hydrogen and synthetic fuel manufacturing.

The business could create up to 40,000 jobs, through UK deployment and export enabled growth. As a major shareholder in Rolls-Royce SMR, we will continue to support its path to successful deployment.

Today's £210 million grant follows £18 million invested in November 2019, which has already delivered significant development of their initial design as part of Phase One of the Low-Cost Nuclear project.

Today's investment comes as COP26 continues its focus on science and innovation.

Fellow at the Royal Society and Royal Academy of Engineering Dame Sue Ion said:

This is extremely welcome news and demonstrates the potential of advanced nuclear power, which could be expanded safely to improve the overall efficiency of our energy system, with cheaper stable

low carbon power to help meet the UK's net zero goal.

This welcome recognition of the innovative approach taken by the Rolls Royce-led team gives the UK a real chance to regain its place at the top table in nuclear energy internationally and create a new manufacturing base for cutting-edge power generation, helping boost our economy and our export potential.

This £210 million contribution from government has been awarded through the Low-Cost Nuclear challenge at UK Research and Innovation.

- [Read details about the government's previous £18 million investment in Rolls-Royce SMR's plans for new Small Nuclear Reactors](#)
- in May, the UK government declared the [Generic Design Assessment \(GDA\)](#) open to advanced nuclear technologies – including SMRs – for the first time. The process allows the UK's independent nuclear regulators to assess the safety, security and environmental implications of new reactor designs. Rolls-Royce SMR have stated their intention to enter the GDA process shortly
- Generic Design Assessment (GDA) is a process carried out by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) and the Environment Agency (EA) (the Nuclear Regulators) to assess the safety, security, and environmental protection aspects of a nuclear reactor intended for deployment in Great Britain. It is an upfront, non-site-specific (hence generic) assessment of a design which aims to provide confidence that it is capable of deployment in the UK. This is separate to the planning processes which would need to be completed for any new nuclear project
- this programme will support the aims, set out in the Net Zero Strategy, of maintaining options and informing any potential investment decisions during the next Parliament

How the government is kickstarting our nuclear industry:

- in the Spending Review, we announced up to £1.7 billion of direct government funding to enable at least one large-scale nuclear project to the point of FID by the end of this Parliament
- a new £120 million Future Nuclear Enabling Fund will provide targeted support to address barriers to entry. This fund will be part of the measures to inform investment decisions during the next Parliament on further nuclear projects
- the Nuclear Energy (Financing) Bill will introduce a Regulated Asset Base (RAB) model as an option to fund future nuclear projects. A RAB model is a tried and tested method, typically used in the UK, to finance large scale infrastructure assets such as water, gas and electricity networks
- the £210 million SMR funding is part of the £385 million Advanced Nuclear Fund – announced last year in the Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution. We are providing funding for a SMR design and are progressing plans for an Advanced Modular Reactor demonstrator in the early 2030s

'Super courtroom' opens in Loughborough

Press release

Suspected criminal gangs will face justice at the country's second 'super courtroom,' which opens in Loughborough today (9 November 2021).



- victims, defendants and witnesses will receive faster access to justice
- latest step in national effort to tackle the impact of the pandemic on the justice system
- more gang trials to be heard in Loughborough

£2.7 million has been spent to revamp Loughborough Magistrates' Court – creating a space that is much larger than a usual courtroom. It will host trials for offences that have a large number of defendants including county lines drug trafficking, murders, and money laundering – starting with a nine-defendant murder trial that begins tomorrow.

So-called 'multi-hander' cases – which involve three or more defendants and accounted for almost a fifth of all trials waiting to be heard in mid-October – have built up during the pandemic as they have been harder to hear with social distancing measures in place.

The 'super courtroom' will create the space needed to hear these trials and free up capacity elsewhere in the courts system, allowing up to an extra 250 cases a year to be heard across England and Wales.

The court is the second of its kind following another in Manchester which opened its doors in September. The facility will make best use of HM Courts & Tribunals Service's (HMCTS) rapid rollout of remote technology since the pandemic hit. More importantly, it allows vulnerable witnesses and victims to relay their evidence from outside the courtroom, reducing the distress caused by being in the same room as the defendants.

This comes as £1 billion has been allocated to the Ministry of Justice in the Spending Review to boost capacity and accelerate post-pandemic recovery. Nearly half of this will help deliver the swift access to justice that victims deserve – improving waiting times and reducing court backlogs.

Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Secretary, Dominic Raab, said:

This new super courtroom will be an important asset as we start to reduce the backlog. It will free up space elsewhere in our court estate – allowing us to hear up to 250 extra cases every year.

It forms part of our broader plan to build back better from the pandemic, investing £500 million to reduce waiting times and speed up the delivery of justice for victims.

Today's announcement forms part of the significant action taken since the start of the pandemic to ensure the courts can recover from the pandemic and tackle delays. This includes:

- investing a quarter of a billion pounds to support recovery in the courts in the last financial year – plus over £50 million for victims and support services
- ensuring there is no limit on the number of sitting days the Crown Court can sit this year
- setting up Nightingale courtrooms across the country to increase capacity and ensure more trials can be heard – with a commitment to extend 32 Crown courtrooms that deal with criminal trials until the end of March 2022
- opening 3,265 Cloud Video Platform virtual courtrooms across all jurisdictions. These currently hold around 13,600 hearings per week using audio and/or video hearings

The impact of these measures is already being seen. The number of outstanding cases has dropped by around 80,000 in the magistrates' court since its peak in July 2020, while the caseload in Crown Court has stabilised in recent months.

Notes to editors:

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[Science and innovation critical to](#)

climate change solutions

Science and Innovation Day at COP26 will see the announcement of new initiatives backed by global coalitions of nations, businesses and scientists. These will support the implementation of the goals announced during the World Leaders Summit and other country commitments announced during the first week of the conference.

Government Chief Scientific Adviser Sir Patrick Vallance will underline the critical role of science and innovation in enabling every country to access the tools it needs to immediately reduce emissions in line with Paris temperature targets, and to adapt to the effects of climate change that we are already seeing. These initiatives include:

- new commitments to accelerate innovation and low carbon transitions in industry and cities
- new global Adaptation Research Alliance to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities on the frontline of climate change
- independent experts to track progress against the Breakthrough Agenda announced by world leaders on 2 November, advising on action and collaboration
- global scientific research community to produce annual climate risk assessment to ensure the dangers are fully understood by world leaders

Mission Innovation, a coalition of 23 governments (covering 95% of global public investment in clean technology, research and development) will announce 4 new 'innovation missions' in which countries will work together to accelerate the development of clean technologies for cities, industry, carbon dioxide removal, and the production of renewable fuels, chemicals, and materials. Mission Innovation's 'innovation missions' now cover sectors responsible for more than 50% of global emissions.

The **Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA)** – a global first – launches today. This network of over 90 organisations across 30 economies will see governments, research institutions and communities collaborate to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities on the frontline of climate change.

A new landmark programme putting the ARA's work into practice is the **Climate Adaptation and Resilience research programme (CLARE)**, jointly funded by the UK and Canada. Today the UK announces a further £48 million towards CLARE, bringing the total UK aid funding to £100 million, alongside £10 million from Canada to support the development of actionable solutions in communities most vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather events. £40 million of the UK's contribution will be focused on Africa, and in total the programme is set to benefit at least 5 million people around the world.

To support implementation of the Breakthrough Agenda announced by World Leaders on 2 November, a new 'Global Checkpoint Process' will seek to sustain and strengthen international cooperation in each of the emitting sectors. Independent experts led by the International Energy Agency (IEA), together

with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the UN High Level Climate Action Champions will produce an annual report to track progress and advise on action. Informed by this advice, countries will discuss how they can work together to make faster progress.

A group of leading international scientific organisations will make a new commitment to improve the way we assess and communicate climate risk to inform the decisions of world leaders. The coalition, including, amongst others, the World Meteorological Organisation and the World Climate Research Programme, will work to ensure that research and reports for policymakers set out clearly for world leaders the full scale of the dangers we will face if global temperature increase is not held below 1.5 degrees.

Other announcements on Science and Innovation Day include:

Under the **Industrial Deep Decarbonisation Initiative (IDDI)** the UK, India, Germany, Canada and UAE will work together to create new markets for low carbon steel and concrete. The IDDI launched today a campaign where member governments, including the UK, commit to the disclosure of embodied carbon of major public construction by no later than 2025, they also pledged to achieve net zero in major public construction steel and concrete by 2050, and to work towards an emission reduction for 2030 to be announced next year.

Building on the success of the Futures We Want collaboration, the UK COP26 Presidency, in partnership with Italy, is establishing a **new global partnership** to leverage the power of science and innovation to address key challenges blocking the path to a climate-resilient, net-zero future. This new partnership will bring together countries from across the world to pool scientific expertise and develop new ways to bring citizen voices into policy making, by running a series of region-led projects to tackle specific net-zero challenges.

47 countries (including Malawi, Spain, Morocco and the US) have committed to building **health systems** which are able to withstand the impacts of climate change and which are low carbon and sustainable. These include 42 countries, representing over a third of global health care emissions, which have committed to develop a sustainable, low-carbon health system. 12 of these 42 countries have set a deadline of 2050 or earlier, by which their health system will reach Net Zero.

Patrick Vallance UK Chief Scientific Adviser said:

The facts are clear: we must limit warming to 1.5C. Thanks to science, that is feasible – the technologies are already available. Investment in research and development will deliver new clean technologies, while policies to create markets will ensure they are deployed. At the same time, science will help us adapt to the impacts of climate change we're already seeing around the world and transform our economies. Through research and innovation, we will adjust essential systems and ensure continued safety, security and prosperity.

Patrick Child, Chair of Mission Innovation and Deputy Director-General for Research and Innovation at European Commission said:

Clean energy solutions must be cost-effective at scale and available everywhere if we are going to reach net zero. We must invest in innovation now to scale up these vital technologies and avoid a climate disaster. International collaboration sits at the heart of this, and Mission Innovation provides a vital platform for world governments to drive action and investment in the technologies which will save our planet.

Jesse De Maria Kinney, Head of Secretariat for Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) said:

Climate adaptation requires evidence-based solutions that are tailored to local contexts. The formal launch of the ARA highlights a growing global movement supporting this approach among funders, researchers, policymakers and communities and our collective commitment to driving a paradigm shift in the adaptation community where solutions are co-produced, action oriented and lead to positive changes in people's lives.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan, COP26 Champion on Adaptation and Resilience said:

Action-focused research is crucial to effective, inclusive and sustainable climate adaptation, particularly to protect the most vulnerable communities from the impacts of climate change. We will ensure women's voices shape these conversations, and women's leadership and expertise are championed to deliver gender-sensitive adaptation solutions. Both the Adaptation Research Alliance and the UK's support for the Climate Adaptation and Resilience research programme will improve the effectiveness of adaptation, putting people at the heart of climate research to build the resilience of those living on the frontline of the climate crisis.

Science Minister George Freeman, Science Minister said:

Real change to combat climate change cannot happen without new scientific ideas, innovation and research, and it is clear that no country or company acting in isolation can deliver the change that is needed at the pace that is needed.

As an innovation nation, we want to lead the global effort to have every country, organisation and business contribute to this agenda by encouraging new ideas and products. That is why, for example, we have launched new commitments to enhance international innovation

cooperation and ensure we meet our climate goals.

The scale of the challenge we face is daunting, but there is room for optimism, and I look forward to working together to unleash a new wave of innovation to build a cleaner, better, and more prosperous world.

1. The COP26 Health Programme has been developed and supported by the UK government as the Presidency of COP26, the World Health Organization (WHO), Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) and the UNFCCC Climate Champions. The programme enables transformational change in health systems that protects both people and the planet whilst amplifying the trusted voices of health professionals globally.
2. The Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) is an alliance of organisations operating at a range of scales including local community-based organisations, universities, government departments, regional organisations and international organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). More than half of these organisations are based in the global South – organisations participating include those based in Kenya, South Africa, India and Colombia.
3. The full list of organisations that will participate in the initiative to improve climate risk assessment for world leaders is:
 - Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM)
 - Chatham House
 - Future Earth
 - International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA)
 - International Science Council
 - Jiangmen Laboratory for Carbon and Climate Science and Technology
 - Woodwell Climate Research Center
 - World Climate Research Programme
 - World Meteorological Organisation

The Woodwell Climate Research Center has committed to support this coalition in producing an annual climate risk assessment for heads of government.

[It is past time for all parties to put the Ethiopian people first](#)

Thank you Mr President, I would like to thank High Representative Obasanjo and Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for their important briefings. I also thank the A3+1 and Ireland for calling today's meeting and for their work on Friday's statement by this Council.

The UK shares the serious concerns already expressed today about the situation in Ethiopia including by the African Union Peace and Security Council.

The introduction of a State of Emergency by the Government of Ethiopia must not be used as an excuse to ignore human rights and international humanitarian law.

Violations and abuses of human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law are already taking place as a result of this conflict. The report released last week by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission documented these in detail, including the widespread use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, torture, attacks on civilians and forced displacement.

All parties should act to implement the recommendations contained in that joint report, ensure accountability and prevent further suffering. Indeed addressing the humanitarian and human impact of this tragic conflict should be our immediate focus. And when it is over, we must come together and help Ethiopia heal.

Therefore it is vital that all parties stop fighting and start talking. Tigrayan forces need to stop their advances and return to Tigray. The humanitarian blockade needs to be lifted. Hate speech and ethnic profiling must end: it serves only to set Ethiopian against Ethiopian and deepens divisions which will make recovery from this crisis even harder.

The United Kingdom gives its full support to the Secretary-General and His Excellency African Union Special Envoy Obasanjo and urges all parties to make use of their good offices. We stand ready to provide any support that is required.

In the last year, this conflict has brought only destruction, suffering and despair. It is past time for all parties to put the Ethiopian people first.

Thank you.

Government announces major review into HGV driver training

- review will be launched looking at ways to improve compulsory ongoing training for existing and returning heavy goods vehicle (HGV) drivers
- government also identifying sites for short-term improvements to lorry parking and investing £500,000 to move additional 29,000 lorry loads of freight to railways
- comes as DVLA clears over 40,000 HGV and vocational licence applications

in just 4 weeks

A sweeping review will seek to improve compulsory ongoing training for HGV and bus drivers, in the latest of 30 measures to support the road haulage sector and encourage even more people to return to the profession.

Drivers currently need to undergo 5 days of periodic training every 5 years to ensure they remain fully qualified to drive heavy goods vehicles and buses professionally and up to date with road safety standards.

This training is an EU initiative and is compulsory within what is known as the [Driver Certificates of Professional Competence \(DCPC\) regime](#).

While its aim is to keep standards high, some drivers are left to pay for the training themselves and are not paid whilst attending their training course. Feedback from industry suggests this puts off many drivers who have left the profession from returning.

The review will look at how the process can be updated to reduce the burden on drivers – both returning and new – and ensure it doesn't act as a barrier to working in the sector, as the government continues to bolster supply chains and tackle the global driver shortage here in the UK.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

We're listening to industry leaders who have told us about the issues HGV drivers face with CPC arrangements. Now we've taken back control of our own laws and regulations, I'm delighted to say we're launching a review into these training rules.

We understand it's vital for drivers to remain fully qualified – but we're looking to ensure they can do so in the most efficient way possible whilst maintaining road safety standards. No driver should be out of pocket or out of work through no fault of their own.

This is the latest in a raft of 30 measures we've taken to support this vital sector and encourage drivers to return to the job or kickstart a new career in the industry. These measures are working – there is no backlog of HGV licence applications and we're seeing over a thousand more people than normal apply for a licence each week.

In a further move to encourage more people back to the sector and attract new recruits, the government is working with key stakeholders to identify a number of lorry parks across the country where short-term facilities such as temporary toilets, showers and catering can be delivered in the coming months.

The government also emphasised the expectation that councils consider new

proposals for these vital facilities constructively and has committed to review guidance that will assist this.

This follows the £32.5 million recently committed in the [Chancellor's budget](#) to provide better facilities right across the country for HGV drivers, which will drive up standards of roadside parking and facilities for our hauliers and further safeguard driver wellbeing, comfort and safety.

£500,000 will also be added to the existing [Mode Shift Revenue Support Fund](#) for 2021 to 2022, in another boost to the country's supply chains. This £20 million grant scheme provides funding to private-sector freight companies to encourage them to move more freight from the country's roads to either the railways or inland waterways.

The additional funding equates to taking a significant 29,000 lorry loads of goods off the roads up until the end of March 2022 and will help to generate more environmentally friendly modes of transporting freight.

Director of Policy at Logistics UK Elizabeth De Jong said:

The measures announced today (8 November 2021) will support our members in their efforts to attract and retain new HGV drivers to the sector. Inadequate driver facilities across the roads network have led to a negative impression of our industry, creating a barrier to entry to our sector and are an issue that [Logistics UK](#) has been campaigning on for many years; we are pleased that the government has listened to our concerns and will move forward with a rapid programme of improvements.

Logistics UK and its members also welcome the review of Driver CPC, to ensure that continuous education for drivers is as effective as possible while upholding all necessary safety requirements. Meanwhile, the extra funding for the Mode Shift Revenue Support scheme will help industry to reach net zero emission targets while reducing road congestion.

Among other measures already taken to support the haulage industry, the testing process has been streamlined, the number of weekly HGV tests available has increased by 90% and training for up to 5,000 new drivers through skills bootcamps has been announced.

The DVLA has processed over 40,000 HGV and vocational licence applications in just 4 weeks, with applications that don't require complex medicals being turned around in just 5 working days. DVSA is providing 1,350 more tests than normal a week at sites all over the country.

These measures are working. Not only are vocational licence applications being processed in normal 5-day turnaround times with no backlogs, over the past 3 weeks, we've seen around a 90% increase in the number of people requesting application packs for vocational licences each week.