

# Government funds UK companies at the forefront of space innovation

The cash injection is going to high-risk, high-reward projects that support companies and universities with radical ideas for how we tackle climate change through Earth Observation or address satellite communications challenges, from providing greater connectivity to remote places to increasing the efficiency of our homes.

Projects set for the cash boost include The Open University who will use the money to create the UK's first Precision Forestry tool, TreeView, which will support efforts to tackle the climate emergency through detailed measurement of tree-planting initiatives aimed at increasing carbon dioxide removal.

Surrey-based Global Satellite Vu will build a new compact, high-resolution infrared camera for satellites to measure thermal emissions from our homes, schools and places of work, supporting the government's green economic recovery plan.

Space Forge will take advantage of the unique qualities offered by the space environment. By manufacturing in microgravity, the space start-up hopes to produce a next-generation computer chip for the terrestrial and satellite telecommunications industries and return them from orbit for use on Earth.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

We want the UK to be a world leader in space technology which is why we are supporting our most ambitious innovators who are developing first-of-a-kind technologies to help solve some of our greatest challenges.

From slashing carbon emissions to protecting the UK's critical services from harmful cyber-attacks, today's funding will unshackle our most entrepreneurial space scientists so that they can transfer their revolutionary ideas into world-class products and services, while helping to boost the UK economy.

The funding comes from the UK Space Agency's National Space Innovation Programme (NSIP), which is the first UK fund dedicated to supporting the space sector's development of innovations, allowing us to compete internationally on the world stage with other countries, like France and Germany, which have dedicated national funding for space.

Businesses, universities and research organisations were awarded co-funding for projects that will help the space sector create new high-skilled jobs, while developing new skills and technologies on UK soil. Grants from the £15 million funding pot range from between £170,000 and £1.4 million per project.

Dr Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

Space technologies have become deeply embedded in, and critical to, almost every aspect of our daily lives. With rapid technological innovation, space offers a broad and growing range of opportunities to support economic activity and protect the environment.

From the satellites connecting our calls to the ones that tell us when to expect rain when we step outside, space technologies are fundamental to our day-to-day lives.

Our space sector is constantly advancing and welcoming new ideas, and through this funding we are championing the best of this British innovation.

In addition, £5 million of the programme funding has been set aside for international projects, which will focus on increasing exports and securing new inward investment, supporting UK science and the prosperity agenda by funding working relationships between world-leading researchers and institutions and developing space capabilities important to the UK's security interests.

The call for applications for this strand of funding closed in October and successful applicants will be announced in the coming weeks.

The UK space sector is a huge economic success story, growing by over 60% since 2010. The industry already supports £300 billion of UK economic activity through the use of satellite services and is expected to grow further as this new government support unlocks commercial opportunities.

The UK also remains a leading member of the European Space Agency, which is independent of the EU. ESA membership allows the UK to cooperate in world-leading science on a global scale, enabling UK scientists and researchers access to a range of international R&D programmes.

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## **OSCE Ministerial Council: joint statement on the Vienna Document**

In this year, we celebrate thirty years of Vienna Document implementation in the OSCE area (ever since the adoption of the original version in 1990), and commend the confidence- and security-building measures that have been established so far.

Deeply concerned that the security environment in Europe has deteriorated in recent years and in order to reverse this negative trend, we are determined

to contribute to efforts aimed at restoring trust and increasing mutual confidence among the participating States and, in particular, at enhancing reciprocal military transparency and predictability and reducing risk by updating the Vienna Document.

We recall the OSCE documents and commitments that are relevant to the Vienna Document, to its implementation and further development, notably Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) Decision No. 1/10 on establishing a procedure for incorporating relevant FSC decisions into the Vienna Document (adopted on 19 May 2010), the Astana Commemorative Declaration: Towards a Security Community (adopted on 3 December 2010) and the Hamburg Declaration on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the OSCE framework for arms control in 2016.

As a key confidence- and security-building measure and a reference point for the Security Dialogues within the FSC, the Vienna Document plays an essential role in promoting military transparency and political stability within the OSCE area.

We welcome the steps already taken and encourage discussions on the measures proposed for improving implementation of the Vienna Document and, in particular, enhancing military-to-military contacts among the participating States at the OSCE, including the High-Level Military Doctrine Seminar that is due to take place on 9 and 10 February 2021.

We also recall the proposals for updating the Vienna Document and encourage all participating States to engage in constructive discussions focused on the Vienna Document's role in reducing the risks of conflict in the OSCE area by promoting transparency, predictability and stability.

We reaffirm our strong commitment to the Vienna Document and its full implementation in letter and spirit, and are determined to support constructively the process of its modernization with a view to achieving substantial progress toward updating the Vienna Document by the OSCE Ministerial Council 2021.

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## **Streamlining the ODP Induction**

News story

The Operational Delivery Profession launch a comprehensive Induction Learning product to give an overview of what the profession can offer.



As the largest profession in government, the Operational Delivery Profession is home to a number of customer-facing and support roles.

Helping to onboard new recruits can feel like a mammoth task, especially at the moment. The cross-government team have been working very hard to create a specialised learning product to help with this.

Our brand-new ODP Induction Learning is designed to form an integral part of your induction process. You can use it to talk through the four pillars of the ODP offer and familiarise yourself with what it can mean to be part of a profession. It can also be used as a refresher for people who want to know more about what ODP means and what it can do for them.

Members of ODP benefit from a comprehensive offer covering development, learning, progression and helping you to connect with the wider cross-government ODP community. Not only that, we are always building and striving to offer more, adapting and responding to the changing needs of our members.

This is your product, so we'd love to hear your thoughts; what are your first impressions? Is it easy to navigate or have you had issues? How are you using this learning within your teams? Your feedback, ideas or suggestions are welcome!

Explore the learning on Civil Service Learning here [ODP Induction Learning](#) and let the team know what you think [learningandaccreditationteam.centralodp@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:learningandaccreditationteam.centralodp@hmrc.gov.uk).

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## [Annual Clinical Excellence Awards 2021 competition launches](#)

- High-performing consultant doctors and dentists, and academic GPs can apply for the annual national Clinical Excellence Awards competition

- The 2021 Awards will recognise the extraordinary work of senior clinicians in all disciplines, including work undertaken during the pandemic
- The Minister for Care has called for more women and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background to apply to improve representation and ensure excellence is recognised across the NHS

High-performing consultant level doctors and dentists and academic GPs in England and Wales can apply for national Clinical Excellence Awards (CEA) as the 2021 competition opens today (Monday 7 December).

The awards will recognise the extraordinary work staff have undertaken over the last four-to-five years, including efforts this year in response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic in relation to patient care, research or COVID-19 related clinical trial work. Those who have delivered nationally in other clinical services, teaching or training during this period will also be recognised.

This year Ministers are calling for more women and BAME backgrounds to apply. Analysis indicates that consultants from BAME backgrounds are under-represented as a proportion of applicants. Women have also been consistently under-represented, but evidence suggests that when women do apply, they are as broadly successful as men in securing an award.

To reduce the burden on staff and employers during this busy time, the process has been simplified and the application window extended from the usual eight to fourteen weeks. Following the suspension of the 2020 awards due to the pandemic, a higher number of awards will be available this year.

Minister for Care Helen Whately said:

I'm delighted to launch the Clinical Excellence Awards competition for 2021. This year's extended and expanded scheme is an important means of recognising and rewarding the work of senior doctors and dentists, particularly during this hugely challenging time. It's important we pay tribute to our extraordinary NHS and social care staff – they have been truly inspiring through such an unprecedented year.

I urge as many people as possible to apply – and especially women and those from ethnic minority backgrounds so we can recognise excellence right across the health service. Good luck to all those applying and thanks to all our NHS and social care staff for their continued hard work.

Professor Geeta Menon, Postgraduate Dean South London, Health Education England and Medical Vice Chair, South East ACCEA Subcommittee:

It is important that we recognise the extraordinary skills and knowledge our consultants and GP academics bring to the NHS,

especially during these challenging times. We hope to receive a wide range of applications, to enable the NHS to recognise all those, regardless of their background, who have gone above and beyond their day to day role.

Applicants self-nominate with sign-off and agreement by their employer and must demonstrate achievements over-and-above their usual work responsibilities that have had a national or international impact. The scheme is run openly and fairly and every application is considered on the merits of the evidence presented. Applications are scored by members of a regional sub-committee and the scores are then averaged and ranked against competitors. Following a rigorous quality assurance governance process, recommendations for new and renewed awards are sent to the Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards' Main Committee for agreement before being sent to Ministers for final approval.

The Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards will be shortly seeking views on reforms to the current national awards. This follows recommendations made by the Pay Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration to review and incentivise the Clinical Excellence Awards for consultants at local and national levels. The consultation will ask for views to ensure that any new scheme fairly assesses and rewards the highest performing consultants and academic GPs, regardless of their background.

#### **Notes to editors**

The 2021 competition opens to applications on 7 December 2020 and closes on 18 March 2021. Ordinarily, each year 300 new CEAs are awarded in England at four levels of progression and are renewable subject to application.

Awards last for 5 years and yearly award values are; Bronze – £36,192; Silver – £47,582; Gold – £59,477 – gold and; Platinum – £77,320. The awards are pensionable and on-costs increase the value of the awards. Final numbers will be determined by a number of factors, including the quality of applications.

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## **[Shark fins: Call for evidence on protecting endangered shark species launches](#)**

Greater protections for species of sharks will be considered through a new [call for evidence](#) to better understand the scale of the shark fin trade in the UK, as a way to help reduce the import and export of shark fins and protect the world's sharks.

The UK has a strong track record in marine conservation and has been pressing for stronger international action to protect sharks against unsustainable fishing practices and shark finning, which is the practice of removing a shark's fins at sea and discarding the finless body back into the water.

The government is now seeking additional evidence to ensure that appropriate protection is in place for all shark species and to inform future policy on protecting marine wildlife.

The call for evidence will help the government better understand the scale of the shark fin trade in the UK and the conservation, economic, social and cultural impacts of potential further restrictions such as banning the import and export of detached shark fins.

The greatest threat to sharks is overfishing, driven by demand for shark products. Wild populations of shark, skates and ray species have declined rapidly and species such as the scalloped hammerhead and angelshark are now considered critically endangered.

The call for evidence will provide insight into the role of the shark fin trade and what action can be taken to better protect sharks.

**International Environment Minister Lord Goldsmith said:**

Shark finning involves slicing the fins off living sharks that are then tossed back into the sea to die painful deaths. It is an extraordinarily barbaric practice, and has been banned in the UK for nearly 20 years. But the UK still imports shark fin products and therefore may still be inadvertently contributing to the practice.

At the end of the Transition Period and as a fully independent nation, we will have far more freedom to introduce measures to protect endangered species – on land and in the ocean. So we have launched this call for evidence to identify the best options to protect these incredible animals and to continue leading the way on shark conservation.

**Samuel Stone, Head of Fisheries and Aquaculture at the Marine Conservation Society said:**

We welcome the government's desire to increase protections for endangered shark species and this call for evidence to better understand the impact of the shark fin trade in the UK. Despite the abhorrent practice being banned by most fishing nations, including the UK and EU, illegal shark finning remains a significant problem in several fisheries around the world. This undermines attempts to improve the management and recovery of shark species and it's important that the government explores all avenues available to them to help stamp out the practice.

It will be important to explore how efforts can best distinguish between trade linked to illegal shark finning versus the legitimate trade of shark products from potentially well managed fisheries. Whilst the UK trade of shark fins may be relatively small on the global stage, efforts made here may have the potential to make a significant impact. We look forward to seeing the additional evidence and recommendations produced by this review.'

Strict trade controls are already in place for certain species of sharks under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which prohibits or requires trade to be carefully regulated. The UK also played a leading role in successfully listing an additional 18 shark species under CITES in August 2019.

The UK is leading in marine conservation efforts to protect the world's ocean and has already set up a ['Blue Belt'](#) of protected waters nearly twice the size of England including 41 Marine Conservation Zones.

In September 2019 the UK government also launched a [Global Ocean Alliance](#) of countries that work will together to protect at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030 (30by30).

The call for evidence marks the start of renewed efforts from government to raise standards on animal welfare even further now we are outside the EU, including taking steps to ban primates as pets, end live exports of animals for fattening and slaughter, and crack down on the illegal smuggling of dogs and puppies, with further proposals to improve standards and eradicate cruel practices expected to be set out in the coming months.

For more information on how to engage with this Call For Evidence please click [here](#).