

Government recognises achievements of its geographers

The second Geography in Government awards took place on 11 November 2020, hosted by the [Royal Geographical Society](#), to mark the achievements of a broad profession of dedicated and talented individuals and teams across the public sector. The categories and winners were;

Jess Baker, [Ordnance Survey](#), for developing cartographic colour schemes to make mapping more accessible for colour-blind users in the contribution to the profession category.

[Jess Baker, Ordnance Survey](#)

Data Science, Engineering and Remote Sensing Teams, [UK Hydrographic Office](#) for advancing geospatial data science by creating a deep learning model to detect and predict mangroves from satellite data.

[UK Hydrographic Office](#)

[Land and Property Services](#), Department of Finance, Northern Ireland for operational delivery for an innovative map application and data processing, enabling staff to access and use its data effectively.

[Land and Property Services](#)

Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) team at [Natural England](#) for excellence in geo-visualisation and cartography for innovative tools to help users access, analyse and present data from the MENE Survey.

[Natural England](#)

Regional Economic Development Team, [Scottish Government](#), for work re-establishing Ayrshire as a functional economic geography and establishing a regional growth deal in the impact on policy category.

[Regional, Economic Development Team, Scottish Government](#)

Urban Lab Team at [Westminster City Council](#), for the deployment of data-driven solutions and innovative tools to save public money, generate new insight and improve citizens' lives for excellence in local government.

[Westminster City Council](#)

The winner of the Geography in Government Award was the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) team, Natural England.

John Curnow, Director of Analysis at Defra said

The Monitoring Engagement with the Natural Environment is the

largest survey of its kind and the new tool allows users to dig into place level data as never before using leading edge geo-visualisation skills to help the public and policy makers better understand how we engage with the environment. I would like to congratulate Nathan Shaw and the team at Natural England for an outstanding piece of work.

Gideon Henderson, Chief Scientific Advisor at Defra said

Defra Group is very proud of our geographers who are an important part of our science and analysis community. Many congratulations to Nathan Shaw and the team at Natural England for deservedly winning this prestigious award; a testament to the quality of our geographers, and the impact they are having as part of our multi-disciplinary approach to policy design and delivery.

Marian Spain, Natural England's Chief Executive added

I am absolutely thrilled to be able to congratulate Nathan Shaw in the Natural England Evidence Team for winning his category (Excellence in geo-visualisation and cartography) for the work on the Monitoring Engagement with the Natural Environment tool, as well as winning the overall award! This is fantastic news and well deserved and I'd like to congratulate the whole team for the hard work they put into this incredibly important survey work. It produces such a wealth of information that is driving real changes in policy and practice by health and environmental professionals and so making a real difference for people. Congratulations to Nathan and the team from us all at Natural England.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond, Head of the Government's Analysis Function added

We find ourselves in a time where ever greater innovation and collaboration is essential in order to provide timely insights into complex, multidisciplinary issues and the unique specialism of those within the Geography profession will be key to helping inform decision making and overcoming the key challenges facing our society and economy.

The Government Geography Profession was set up in 2019 and is a membership network of over 1,300 members from across central and local government. It joined the [Geospatial Commission](#) in 2020 and is also part of the Government's Analysis Function.

If you are a geographer working in government you are able to access a range

of support from webinars to job opportunities via its [member site](#) or by visiting the [Government Geography Profession organisation page](#)

A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down (A303 Stonehenge) project granted development consent

Press release

Today, Thursday 12 November 2020, the application for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down project has been given development consent by the Secretary of State for Transport.



Development consent has been given to construct a new section of dual carriageway to address problems associated with the single carriageway section of the A303 between Amesbury's Countess roundabout and the dual carriageway section to the west of Winterbourne Stoke.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Highways England on 19 October 2018 and accepted for examination on 16 November 2018. Following an examination during which the public, statutory consultees and interested parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 2 January 2020.

This is the 97th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and the 34th transport scheme to be examined by the Planning Inspectorate and given Development Consent. The examination of the application was completed within the statutory timescale of six months followed by a recommendation made to the Secretary of State for Transport. This provides developers and investors with the confidence to build and improve the transport networks this country needs.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"There has been a great deal of public interest in this project. A major priority for us over the course of the examination was to ensure that communities who might be affected by this proposal had the opportunity to put forward their views. As always, the Examining Authority gave careful consideration to these before reaching its conclusion."

The decision by the Secretary of State for Transport, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation is publicly available on the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

ENDS

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office on 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, [National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

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UK government launches taskforce to support drive for 2 million green jobs by 2030

- UK government launches new Green Jobs Taskforce to support the creation of 2 million skilled jobs to build back greener and reach net zero emissions by 2050
- taskforce will set plans for new long-term good quality, green jobs by 2030 and advise what support is needed for people in transitioning industries
- green jobs push will set the direction for the job market as we transition to a high-skill, low carbon economy

The UK government today (12 November 2020) set a clear ambition to create 2 million green jobs by 2030, launching a new Green Jobs Taskforce to set the direction for the job market as we transition to a high-skill, low carbon

economy.

The Green Jobs Taskforce, to be chaired by Energy Minister Kwasi Kwarteng and Skills Minister Gillian Keegan, forms part of the government's ambitious plan to build back greener and achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Its aim will be to focus on the immediate and longer-term challenges of delivering skilled workers for the UK's transition to net zero including:

1. Ensuring we have the immediate skills needed for building back greener, such as in offshore wind and home retrofitting.
2. Developing a long-term plan that charts out the skills needed to help deliver a net zero economy.
3. Ensuring good quality green jobs and a diverse workforce.
4. Supporting workers in high carbon transitioning sectors, like oil and gas, to retrain in new green technologies.

Business and Energy Minister Kwasi Kwarteng said:

This government has promised to do all it can to provide good quality, secure work as we build back better and greener from coronavirus.

The Green Jobs Taskforce will oversee the UK taking strides towards long-term economic prosperity, as well as transitioning to the new low-carbon green industries of the future.

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Gillian Keegan said:

It is now more critical than ever to make sure people get the skills they need to progress and that will help our economy to recover.

I am very much looking forward to co-chairing this important taskforce so we can create more, high quality green job opportunities, levelling up our economy and delivering on our commitment to be net zero by 2050.

The Green Jobs Taskforce meets for the first time today (Thursday 12 November) and will represent the views of businesses, employees and the skills sectors and includes representatives from the Construction Industry Training Board, Engineering Construction Industry Training Board, East London Institute for Technology, Retrofit Works, Edinburgh University and National Grid.

It will assess how the UK jobs market and the skills sector will adapt to support net zero, developing ideas and solutions for how the UK can deliver

the green jobs of the future. The taskforce will create an action plan to inform on what support is needed for people in transitioning industries.

Today's announcements form part of wider efforts to ensure the UK meets its legally binding target to reach net zero emissions by 2050, whilst creating thousands of jobs as we build back greener from coronavirus.

The government has put £3 billion of green investment into renovating homes and public buildings to make them more energy efficient, which has the potential to support 140,000 jobs and help us transition to net zero.

The launch of today's Taskforce builds on the £200 billion support package that has been provided to safeguard jobs in every region and nation of the UK, with support now extended until March 2021. Over the past 8 months of this crisis, the UK government has helped millions of people to continue to provide for their families as part of its Plan for Jobs to protect, support and create employment.

Full list of Green Jobs Taskforce membership:

- Sarah Beale, CEO, Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)
- Russell Smith, Director, Retrofit Works
- Nick Molho, CEO, Aldersgate Group
- Professor Dave Reay, Chair in Carbon Management & Education, School of Geosciences, Edinburgh University
- Rhian Kelly, UK Corporate Affairs Director, National Grid
- Jane Cooper, Head of Stakeholder Relations & Regulatory Affairs for Ørsted, Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB)
- Yvonne Kelly, Principal and CEO, East London Institute of Technology
- Peter Stephens, Head of UK External & Government Affairs, Nissan
- Tor Farquhar, Tata Steel
- Simon Ashley, SVP people and culture, BP
- Paul Nowak, Deputy General Secretary, TUC
- Alan Goundry, Head of the Energy Academy, Newcastle College Energy Academy
- Andy George, Head of Talent Management, Barratt Developments
- Sharon Lane, Managing Director Tees Components, Tees Valley LEP
- Sue Ferns, Deputy General Secretary, Prospect
- Angela Francis, Chief Advisor on Economics and Economic Development, World Wide Fund for Nature
- Afsheen Rashid Kabir MBE, Co-founder and CEO, Repowering

UK government has made considerable progress so far to decarbonise the UK economy as well as further actions to deliver net zero, meet the UK's carbon budgets and build back better from coronavirus.

In July 2020, we announced [a package funding of £350 million](#) to cut emissions in heavy industry and accelerate the UK's green economic recovery. The multi-million pound investment is playing a vital role in helping businesses to decarbonise across the heavy industry, construction, space and transport sectors and to secure the UK's place at the forefront of green innovation.

Other recent announcements include:

- last month, the Prime Minister [set out new plans](#) to Build Back Greener by making the UK the world leader in clean wind energy – creating jobs, slashing carbon emissions and boosting exports. The Prime Minister announced that £160 million will be made available to upgrade ports and infrastructure across UK communities to hugely increase our offshore wind capacity
- last month we launched a £3 billion plan to upgrade the nation's buildings – the biggest in a generation. This included the £2 billion [Green Homes Grant](#) – the government-funded voucher scheme to help homeowners upgrade their homes and save up to £600 a year on their energy bills
- the [£200 million Sustainable Innovation Fund package](#) was announced in June 2020 and is helping to power the UK's economic recovery and develop new sustainable opportunities for businesses in any sector following the coronavirus pandemic, while helping the UK meet its ambitions to cut carbon emissions to net zero by 2050
- this year the Department for Transport [announced £2 billion](#), the biggest ever funding package from the department, to work with councils to redesign the streetscape so that it can cope with millions more bikes and pedestrians
- we have consulted on [bringing forward the end to the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans](#) from 2040 to 2035, or earlier if a faster transition appears feasible, as well as including hybrids for the first time
- on December 12, the UK will co-host a [Climate Ambition Summit](#) with the UN and France, and in partnership with Italy and Chile, to mark the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement
- the UK will continue its global leadership by hosting the next UN climate conference COP26, set to take place between 1 and 12 November 2021 in Glasgow.

Over the past 8 months of this crisis, the UK government has helped millions of people to continue to provide for their families as part of its [Plan for Jobs](#) to protect, support and create employment. An unprecedented £200 billion support package has been provided to safeguard jobs in every region and nation of the UK, with support now extended until March 2021. This builds on the 9 million jobs already protected through the furlough scheme, £13 billion provided for the self-employed, and billions of pounds in tax deferrals and grants for businesses.

[Crowdcube/Seedrs deal fast tracked to](#)

in-depth CMA investigation

Press release

The CMA has agreed to 'fast track' the anticipated merger of Crowdcube and Seedrs to an in-depth Phase 2 investigation, after finding likely competition concerns.



Crowdcube Limited (Crowdcube) and Seedrs Limited (Seedrs) are the 2 largest equity crowdfunding platforms in the UK. Equity crowdfunding platforms connect small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) looking to raise capital equity investment with investors willing to provide funding in return for a stake in the business.

The merging companies requested that the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) fast track the investigation to a Phase 2 stage last month. In most merger cases, a full Phase 1 investigation is needed to determine whether a deal can be cleared or whether further scrutiny is required. However, merging companies can ask for the CMA's review of the deal to be moved more quickly to Phase 2 where it is clear from an early stage that there are competition concerns that require an in-depth investigation.

The CMA today announced that the [criteria for a fast track reference](#) are met as the transaction gives rise to a realistic prospect of a substantial lessening of competition in the supply of equity crowdfunding platforms to SMEs and investors, which would impact on the whole or substantially all of the deal. It found that the merging companies would have a very high combined share of supply in the UK, and evidence from the companies' internal documents and third parties suggest the companies are very close competitors. The CMA is therefore concerned that, if completed, the deal could result in SMEs and investors losing out as a result of fewer choices, higher fees and poorer quality services.

The merger will now be referred for an in-depth Phase 2 investigation, which is overseen by an independent group of panel members. By requesting a fast track, the merging companies waive the right to offer undertakings or formal commitments to address the CMA's concerns and thereby avoid a Phase 2 investigation. Instead, if competition concerns are found at Phase 2, the

independent group will set out potential options for addressing these concerns.

Andrea Gomes da Silva, Executive Director of Markets and Mergers said:

Crowdcube and Seedrs are well-known names in the equity crowdfunding world and are two of the biggest platform providers in this market. Their services are used by thousands of investors and businesses, particularly early stage start-up SME businesses that tend to have limited options for raising investment. We've found a real risk that the merger could lead to less choice for SMEs and investors.

The companies recognised that the issues in this case are complex and that the test for reference at Phase 1 was likely to be met. They therefore requested use of the fast track procedure and, after due consideration, we believe this to be appropriate.

For more information on the next steps in the process, including how third parties can have their say, visit the [Crowdcube/Seedrs merger inquiry page](#).

Media queries should be directed to press@cma.gov.uk or 020 3738 6460.

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[British Embassy Bucharest: calls for bids on climate change](#)

World news story

Applications for projects related to the UK's priorities as part of the climate change agenda and host of COP26 in 2021 to be



UK Government

The British Embassy in Bucharest is seeking applications for projects related to the UK's priorities as part of its Presidency of the Conference of Parties on Climate Change and host of the COP26 summit in November 2021, among which deal with:

- clean growth: focus on renewable energy; tackling emissions; clean growth in sectors such as power, transport and industry
- green finance: the green transformation of the financial sector
- nature-based solutions: mitigate climate change and biodiversity loss; restoration of natural habitats and ecosystems
- adaptation and resilience: helping communities to prepare for natural disasters
- youth and civil society engagement in environmental social action.
- supporting efforts to raise public awareness about climate change and its socio-economic impact.

Further details of the UK's climate change ambition and priorities can be found at www.ukcop26.org

If you wish to submit a proposal, please do so by midnight (Bucharest time) on Thursday 26 November.

Bid guidance

- proposals and their budgets should be in RON
- maximum budget limit: RON 48,571
- activity should be completed by 15 March 2021

- project proposals must have a clear purpose supported by achievable and measurable outputs (e.g. events and reports) and outcomes (i.e. what the project aims to help address through its activity).
- project proposals should demonstrate that the staffing level is appropriate to the aim of the project and that the staff have relevant expertise and experience in the field

Assessment

Bids will be assessed by the British Embassy Projects Board against the following criteria:

- alignment with the above-mentioned thematic priorities and outcomes
- covering of the issues & proposed methodology
- outcomes are achievable within the funding period
- project design includes clear monitoring and evaluation procedures
- activity design that includes risk and financial accountability procedures
- the organization's safeguarding policies ensure protection of beneficiaries
- overall value for money

Process

1. Project proposals must be received by midnight (Bucharest time) on Thursday, November 26. Late proposals will not be considered
2. Proposals must be submitted using the attached forms only (Project Proposal and Activity Based Budget)
3. Proposals must be submitted to RSVP.Bucharest@fco.gov.uk and noelle.beaini@fco.gov.uk .
4. Only the project proposal(s) selected for further consideration will be notified.

Reporting

The reports to be produced during the course of this project are to be delivered in English:

- an inception note detailing approach and particular aspects of the activities to be pursued and providing wishes for meetings and specifying any additional details
- a draft report
- after a facilitated process of commenting, the final report

Timing and scope of input

It is expected that the project will be delivered by March 2021. The crucial milestones will be the submission of the draft report (February 2021) and the final report (March 2021).

Budget

Grant applications must include an estimated budget of up to 48,571 RON. Depending on the quality of the proposals, the British Embassy reserves the right not to grant all or part of the available funds. The Embassy also reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicants. In such a case, applicants will be asked to increase the amount that they co-finance, to propose other co-financing means or to decrease the total costs without altering the substance of the proposal.

In view of the current epidemiological situation, all events/activities will have to adhere to the guidelines in force at the time the events/activities take place.

Documents

[Project Proposal Form](#) (ODT, 45.4KB)

[Activity Based Budget Template](#) (ODS, 10.3KB)

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