

UK celebrates success at third China International Import Expo

World news story

The third China International Import Expo saw the UK secure more than £430 million of commercial deals across a range of sectors.



- UK showcases the best of UK agriculture, food and drink at the third China International Import Expo in Shanghai
- British firms sign more than £430million of deals with Chinese companies during the Expo
- Thousands of new connections between UK and Chinese companies, with 120,000 unique visitors to new UK-China business matching platform

The third China International Import Expo saw the UK secure more than £430 million of commercial deals across a range of sectors.

The deals include:

- Collaboration between Lakeland Dairies and Namchow Food Group (Shanghai) Co. Ltd on bringing high quality dairy products from Northern Ireland to China
- A partnership between Savills and Greenland Group Xi'an Fenghe Real Estate Co. Ltd on the Silk Road International Center Project luxury commercial and office complex. An additional partnership between Savills and Shanghai Yangpu Government on innovation and transformation of Yangpu district
- A partnership between Millennium Group and Suning International · Sup's bringing a range of British food and drinks brands to the Chinese market

In addition to the commercial deals that will have immediate benefits for the UK economy, CIIE saw thousands of new business connections between UK and Chinese companies.

John Edwards, HM Trade Commissioner said:

CIIE 2020 was a success for UK firms with a wide range of business deals signed across sectors. In addition, despite the impact of Covid 19, our 360 digital offer has meant that we have still been able to build impactful connections between UK and Chinese companies. Our bespoke, cutting-edge digital platform – www.ukbusinessinchina.com – has had 120,000 unique visitors to the site since its launch in September.

The UK has high ambitions for our trade and investment partnership with China. We want to work with China to increase trade and investment flows, improve market access, and set a mutual ambition for the future relationship.

Industry leader Diageo has been the UK's Strategic Partner at the CIIE, running a range of events and tasting sessions at the UK pavilion.

Mark Edwards, Managing Director of Diageo China said:

It is the second time that Diageo has participated in this flagship event that celebrates China's transformation. The CIIE has connected us with many Chinese companies.

As a multinational operating in over 180 countries, Diageo will continue contributing to 'mutual opening up' by leveraging our unrivalled expertise in spirits-making to support the high quality development and internationalisation of Chinese alcohol industry.

The UK is proud to have worked with the CIIE Bureau and China's Ministry of Commerce to participate in the third China International Import Expo – showcasing the dynamic and diverse excellence of British brands in the agriculture, food and drink sector.

There is real and significant demand in China for British products and services. Through the brand new Royal Mail cross-border e-commerce platform – www.thebritishchoice.com – Chinese consumers have been able to buy a range of UK products, many of whose products have never been on sale in China before.

Published 9 November 2020

[Drones to fight fires and deliver COVID-19 supplies are first to receive](#)

share of over £33 million government funding

- Projects include using drones and aviation technologies to solve major global challenges, including coronavirus pandemic and climate change, while creating new jobs across the UK
- 20 winning ideas are the first wave of projects to be announced from a wider £33.5 million pot for 48 projects
- funding is part of efforts to build back better from COVID-19 and support innovative new enterprises

Innovative projects harnessing the latest technology to support the fight against COVID-19 and other challenges like climate change, while creating hundreds of jobs across the country, have been backed by government investment, Business Minister Nadhim Zahawi has announced today (9 November 2020).

The 20 winning ideas will receive a share of £7 million funding ranging from the development of drones capable of delivering COVID-19 medical supplies to remote areas, to technology to enable remote inspections of infrastructure and construction sites – removing the need for workers to potentially be put at risk.

The funding, backing the aviation technologies of the future, comes at a critical time for the industry, with winners demonstrating pioneering ways they are responding and adapting to the challenges posed by issues including climate change and the coronavirus pandemic.

The funding today forms part of a wider £33.5 million investment with an additional 28 potential projects also in the pipeline for government backing.

Business and Industry Minister, Nadhim Zahawi, said:

As the UK leads the way in the aviation revolution, these bold proposals showcase the pioneering spirit of the UK's aerospace and aviation industries in solving global issues, and those facing us here in the UK.

Today we have announced over £7 million of funding for projects across the country which demonstrate how using the latest and most cutting-edge aviation technologies can step up our response to the coronavirus pandemic, help us build back better and cement our well-earned reputation for research and development excellence, while creating hundreds of new jobs.

Transport Minister Rachel Maclean said:

The UK is already a world-leader when it comes to innovation in aviation and this funding will allow us to carry on supporting the extraordinary work taking place right across the country.

Innovation delivers real change and our support for dynamic ideas in this exciting sector means we are now seeing real life solutions, like the drone delivery of COVID-19 medical supplies, for challenges such as public health and climate change.

The £33.5 million investment comes from the Future Flight Challenge, which aims to increase mobility, reduce reliance on road travel thereby improving road congestion, and increase UK manufacturing opportunities. Today the first wave of 20 winners have been announced, with more projects to be announced in the coming weeks.

Of these, 9 projects are focussed on developing technology to aid the response to the coronavirus pandemic. This includes the development of unmanned drones to deliver medication, reducing human contact and, consequently, transmission of the virus.

Advances in alternative, green energy sources to power aircraft, including hydrogen and electricity, are also a key feature of some of the winning proposals.

The projects include:

- Dock-to-Dock, based in Cardiff, which is developing a pilot project to deliver goods between Bristol and Cardiff using a hydrogen-powered electric aircraft.
- NAPKIN, based in Greater London, which focuses on paving the way for low and zero carbon short-haul flights for passengers around the UK.
- APIAN Limited, based in Essex, is creating and building a drone to deliver medical supplies like COVID-19 blood and swab tests between NHS hospitals and labs in response to the pandemic, protecting key NHS staff and the wider public from coronavirus transmission.
- The Light Aircraft Company Ltd, based in Norfolk, will integrate electric propulsion into existing aircraft to enable electric flight of small aircraft.
- Windracers Distributed Avionics, based in Southampton and Bristol, will develop swarming technology, an approach to coordinate multiple robots, to allow multiple drones to fly in close formations and work together to provide humanitarian aid or fight fires.
- Droneprep Ltd, Consortiq Limited and Windracers Limited, based in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, will use unmanned aerial vehicles to deliver critical PPE and Covid-19 testing kits to vulnerable, rural communities in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Today's announcement is part of wider support for the aviation and aerospace industries. The UK has a world-leading aerospace sector generating well-paid jobs and suitable growth across the country, and the government is continuing to support the industry – and their aviation customers – with over £9.5

billion in R&D grants, loans and guarantees, and support for exports and exporters.

Notes to editors:

In total 34 projects are set to receive a share of £30 million, while an additional 14 projects, focused specifically on coronavirus response, will receive a share of a further £3.5 million.

Today 20 winners, receiving a total of £7.35 million, have been announced.

Of the winning proposals announced today, projects include:

- Windracers SWARM technology (Southampton, Bristol): This project will develop technology which allows multiple drones to fly in close formations for a variety of purposes including fighting fires and providing humanitarian aid.
- Dock-to-Dock (Cardiff): Dock-to-Dock will demonstrate an alternative to road transportation between coastal cities, developing a pilot project to deliver goods by air using clean energy: initially between Avonmouth Docks in Bristol and Cardiff Docks in Wales. The project will focus on vehicle performance and the infrastructure necessary for hydrogen-powered electric aircraft which take-off and land vertically, and therefore don't require runways.
- NAPKIN (Greater London): By looking at different aspects of air travel – including aircraft, airports, airspace, airlines, passengers and communities – NAPKIN will help accelerate the introduction of sustainable, low and zero carbon commercial flights. This includes project partners Cranfield Aerospace, GKN and Rolls-Royce, who are developing conceptual designs for electric aircraft, while airport partners are using their expertise to assess the viability of plans for sustainable flights.
- Drone Defence (Nottinghamshire): Drone Defence Services and the University of Nottingham will develop sensor technology to track aircraft. By monitoring all aircraft, Drone Defence aims to provide increased airspace awareness which will prevent drone misuse and enable drones to safely share the sky with other aircraft.
- Gold Dragon (Llanbedr, Wales): This project will develop sensor technology for unmanned drones, prioritising health and emergency services including the Police, Coastguard, and Mountain Rescue. It is linked closely with skills development and STEM engagement activities with Gwynedd Council and the Welsh Government. In addition, a recent Economic Impact Assessment estimated that successful development at the Snowdonia Aerospace Centre could contribute 515 jobs to the local area.

Projects focused specifically on coronavirus include:

- Cornish Drone Airbridge (Cornwall/Isles of Scilly): Using drones, this project will develop technology capable of delivering PPE and COVID-19 testing kits to vulnerable rural communities in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- MediDrone (London): MediDrone's project will develop a network of small

drones following paths between medical facilities, acting as high-speed shuttles for small medical packages. This will improve the delivery speed of critical medication, and limit human contact with supplies to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19 to vulnerable patients.

- BVL0S Drone Comms for COVID-19 (Hertford): This project will help improve contact between drones and their control rooms when flying outside the operator's line of sight. The creation of such technology would help realise the use of drones to deliver medical supplies to patients and collect medical samples.
- Remote industrial inspection by drone (Chichester): As the pandemic has meant many have had to spend time off work due to illness or work from home, this project aims to enable remote inspection and monitoring of industrial sites by drone. By reducing workers' exposure to the virus, this will help increase worker productivity and safety, thereby reducing project cost and risk.

This investment is part of the government's commitment to help advance the UK's future transport system through its extensive R&D Roadmap and to increase R&D public spending to £22 billion per year by 2024/25.

The £7.35 million funding announced today represents the first wave of projects totalling £33.5 million funding through the Future Flight Challenge (FFC). Over the next few years, The FFC will distribute £125 million from the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF). The FFC aims to accelerate the UK's position as a world leader in revolutionising how people, goods and services fly. It focuses on the development and demonstration of a novel integrated aviation system that enables the safe operation of new classes of air vehicles. These include air taxis, drones and regional aircraft using electric or autonomous technologies. The Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund aims to bring together researchers and businesses to tackle the big societal and industrial challenges of today.

Further quotes:

Future Flight Challenge Director at UK Research and Innovation, Gary Cutts, said:

At this very challenging time for the international aviation industry, it is a great testament to the UK's drive and ambition that we have had such a strong response to the first funded Future Flight competition.

The breadth, quality and creativity of the bids has been exceptional and the economic and social benefits offered are very significant.

Chair of the Drone Industry Action Group, Ian Gray, said:

The Future Flight Challenge has been hugely successful in bringing together the different communities necessary to realise the

economic and social benefits in the UK of autonomous air vehicles. I am delighted on behalf of the Drones Industry Action Group to see the range of successful grant awards including drone developers, service providers and Air Traffic Management solution providers.

The Drone Industry Action Group was established in 2016 as a collaborative forum for government and the sector to exchange views as the opportunities and challenges emerge in the move to autonomous flight.

[Consultation on next steps for more environmentally friendly haulage](#)



- government launches consultation on introducing longer goods vehicles permanently to Britain's roads
- trial shows longer semi-trailers (LSTs) reduce haulage miles, emissions and accidents
- consultation on next steps forms part of wider plans by government to decarbonise transport while supporting a green recovery

Longer goods vehicles that increase productivity and reduce haulier emission levels could become a permanent fixture on Britain's roads as the government today (Monday 9 November 2020) launches a [consultation into their future](#).

Longer than conventional heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) but not heavier, LSTs can carry 3 more rows of supermarket goods cages on each journey compared with existing trailers.

A [trial of LSTs that has been underway for the past 7 years](#) has shown that they've saved lorry drivers travelling millions of miles – cutting emissions and boosting productivity. Up until last year, the vehicles involved in the trial have saved lorry drivers 33.5 million miles and 48,000 tonnes of CO₂ – equivalent to taking over 20,000 cars off the road. The results also show the trailers were involved in fewer personal injury collisions compared with standard size HGVs.

Off the back of these positive results, the government has proposed to end the trials early and, through today's consultation, seek views on whether LSTs should be allowed to permanently operate on roads across the UK.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Our freight industry keeps the country moving, delivering vital goods and services every single day – which, as we all know, has never been more important than it is now, during the pandemic.

These trials clearly show the benefits for business and the environment of using longer trailers. By determining the next steps to get them on our roads permanently, we can benefit industry and our economy, boost safety and cut emissions.

The Department for Transport is also launching a [further consultation today on proposals to start a trial of slightly heavier HGVs on UK roads](#), which could see the maximum weight of some HGVs increased by 4 tonnes to 48 tonnes.

The change suggested in the consultation would allow lorries to transport heavier containers direct to or from freight trains, helping to shift more cargo from road-only journeys onto rail, and therefore cutting emissions and congestion on our roads, further demonstrating government commitment to make haulage more environmentally friendly.

The proposed trial would operate on around 10 routes cleared as safe for use by 48-tonne vehicles, and would look at whether it encouraged a shift of goods from road to rail.

The consultations come ahead of the ground-breaking Transport Decarbonisation Plan, which will set out a clear pathway to delivering transport's contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and meeting net-zero by 2050.

Published 9 November 2020

Last updated 10 November 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 10 November 2020

Error correction: alteration of statement to “Up until last year, the vehicles involved in the trial have saved lorry drivers 33.5 million miles and 48,000 tonnes of CO₂”.

2. 9 November 2020

First published.

Social media giants agree package of measures with UK Government to tackle vaccine disinformation

- Platforms endorse the principle that no company should be profiting from COVID-19 vaccine mis/disinformation and commit to swifter responses to flagged content
- Platforms will step up work with public health bodies to promote factual and reliable messages

Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden and Health Secretary Matt Hancock have agreed with social media platforms new measures to limit the spread of vaccine misinformation and disinformation and help people find the information they need about any COVID-19 vaccine.

At a virtual roundtable to address the growth of vaccine disinformation, Facebook, Twitter and Google committed to the principle that no company should profit from or promote COVID-19 anti-vaccine disinformation, to respond to flagged content more swiftly, and to work with authorities to promote scientifically accurate messages.

As the UK moves closer to developing a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine, Mr Dowden and Mr Hancock used the roundtable to welcome the progress these companies have made in strengthening their policies towards false coronavirus information and helping publicise the steps people should take to prevent the spread of the virus.

But the ministers raised concerns about the length of time misleading and false information about coronavirus vaccines remains on platforms, and called for swifter action to tackle such content.

Together the platforms have now agreed:

- To commit to the principle that no user or company should directly profit from COVID-19 vaccine mis/disinformation. This removes an incentive for this type of content to be promoted, produced and be circulated.
- To ensure a timely response to mis/disinformation content flagged to them by the government.
- To continue to work with public health bodies to ensure that authoritative messages about vaccine safety reach as many people as possible.
- To join new policy forums over the coming months to improve responses to mis/disinformation and to prepare for future threats.

The forums will see the government, social media platforms, public health bodies and academia increase their cooperation and ongoing information sharing to deliver a better understanding of the evolving threat caused by

false COVID-19 vaccine narratives.

Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

Covid disinformation is dangerous and could cost lives. While social media companies are taking steps to stop it spreading on their platforms there is much more that can be done.

So I welcome this new commitment from social media giants not to profit from or promote flagged anti-vax content, given that making money from this dangerous content would be wrong.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

After clean water, vaccination is the most effective public health intervention in the world and has saved countless lives across the globe, eradicating one disease entirely.

I am encouraged that social media companies have agreed to do more to prevent the spread of dangerous misinformation and disinformation on their platforms.

We want users to have greater access to reliable and scientifically-accurate information on vaccines from trusted sources like the NHS so they can make informed decisions to protect themselves and their loved ones.

Vaccines are overwhelmingly safe and effective healthcare solutions. Ministers used the meeting, which also included representatives from fact-checking charities, academics and data experts, to highlight that robust action must be taken against misleading messaging and content online which could harm and discourage people from protecting themselves or their loved ones.

Throughout the pandemic the government's Counter Disinformation Unit has been developing a picture of the extent, scope and reach of disinformation and working with online platforms to ensure appropriate action is taken.

The unit has observed a range of false narratives about coronavirus vaccines across multiple platforms, including widespread misuse of scientific findings and baseless claims challenging the safety of vaccines or plans for their deployment.

Ronan Harris, Google UK Managing Director, said:

Since the beginning of the covid-19 epidemic, we have worked relentlessly to promote authoritative content from the NHS and to fight misinformation. In the last few months, we have continued to update our policies to make sure that content contradicting

scientific consensus about the virus is swiftly removed and demonetised. Today, we are redoubling our commitment to take effective action against covid vaccine misinformation and to continue to work with partners across Government and industry to make sure people in the UK have easy access to helpful and accurate Information.

Katy Minshall, Head of UK Public Policy, Twitter UK, said:

We are focused on protecting the public conversation and helping people find authoritative information on Twitter – in May 2019, we launched a search prompt that serves people with credible vaccine information from the NHS. In January this year, we launched a dedicated COVID-19 search prompt, ensuring that when people come to the service for information, they're met with authoritative, public health information first. To date, over 160 million people have visited the Twitter COVID-19 curated page, over two billion times.

Since introducing COVID misinformation policies in March, and as we've doubled down on tech, our automated systems have challenged millions of accounts which were targeting discussions around COVID-19 with spammy or manipulative behaviours. We remain committed to combating misinformation about COVID-19, and continue to take action on accounts that violate our Rules. We look forward to continued collaboration with government and industry partners in our work towards improving the health of the public conversation.

Rebecca Stimson, Facebook's Head of UK Public Policy, said:

We're working closely with governments and health authorities to stop harmful misinformation from spreading on our platforms. Ads that include vaccine hoaxes or discourage people from getting a vaccine are banned, we remove harmful misinformation about Covid-19 and put warning labels over posts marked as false by third party fact checkers. We're also connecting people to accurate information about vaccines and Covid-19 whenever they search for these topics. In the first months of the pandemic we directed more than 3.5 million visits to official advice from the NHS and UK government and we're pleased to continue to support public health efforts.

New winter package to provide further support for children and families

- £170m Covid Winter Grant Scheme to support children, families and the most vulnerable over winter
- Holiday Activities and Food programme to be expanded, covering Easter, Summer and Christmas in 2021
- Healthy Start payments set to rise from £3.10 to £4.25 a week from April 2021
- Suite of measures represents long-term plan to help tackle poor health, hunger and education.

Building on the significant support given to the most vulnerable during the pandemic, a new £170m Covid Winter Grant Scheme will be run by councils in England.

The funding will be ring-fenced, with at least 80% earmarked to support with food and bills, and will cover the period to the end of March 2021. Local Authorities will receive the funding at the beginning of December 2020.

It will allow councils to directly help the hardest-hit families and individuals, as well as provide food for children who need it over the holidays. Local councils understand which groups need support, and are best placed to ensure appropriate holiday support is provided – which is why they will distribute the funds, rather than schools, who will continue providing meals for disadvantaged children during term-time.

The Holiday Activities and Food programme, which has provided healthy food and enriching activities to disadvantaged children since 2018, will also be expanded across England next year.

It will cover Easter, Summer and Christmas in 2021, and cost up to £220m. It will be available to children in every local authority in England, building on previous programmes – including this summer, which supported around 50,000 children across 17 local authorities.

Healthy Start scheme payments are also set to increase from £3.10 to £4.25 a week from next April, 2021.

This scheme supports pregnant women or those with children under four who have a low income and are in receipt of benefits to buy fresh fruit and vegetables. This will help people boost the long-term health of their children.

The Government has also pledged additional funding of £16m for food distribution charities, with conversations with FareShare and others ongoing as to how this is allocated.

Work and Pensions Secretary, Thérèse Coffey, said:

We want to make sure vulnerable people feel cared for throughout this difficult time and, above all, no one should go hungry or be unable to pay their bills this winter.

We know this has been a challenging time for many, and we have consistently supported the lowest-paid families, protecting 9 million jobs with furlough and boosting welfare support by £9.3 billion.

This package builds on that support, and by extending our successful Holiday Activities and Food programme, as well as funding a £170 million Covid Winter Grant Scheme, we are making sure families get the help they need.

The government has acknowledged that school holidays can be difficult for some families, with children at risk of missing out on healthy meals, activities, and learning opportunities.

For example, learning loss over summer accounts for almost two-thirds of the attainment gap between the richest and the poorest children by age 14.

For this reason, up to £220m is being invested in the Holiday Activities and Food programme, with disadvantaged children able to get healthy food and take part in fun enriching activities over summer, Christmas and Easter in 2021.

Ministers have also taken unprecedented measures during the pandemic to protect the most vulnerable, and put in place a strong package of financial support to support families and children.

This includes:

- Protecting millions of jobs and livelihoods through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, which have been extended until March 2021
- Increasing Universal Credit and Tax Credits by up to £20 a week this year
- £63m for councils to provide emergency assistance to families, pensioners and the most vulnerable with food, essentials and meals
- Extending free school meals support to those eligible when schools closed during lockdown
- Increasing Local Housing Allowance rates for Universal Credit and housing benefit claimants, so it covers the lowest 30% of local rents – benefiting over 1 million households by on average £600 this year.

Local authorities understand which groups need support, and are best placed to ensure appropriate holiday support is provided – which is why the £170m Covid Winter Grant Scheme will be distributed by them, rather than schools, who will continue providing meals disadvantaged children during term-time.

Further information

- To place the Covid Winter Grant Scheme in context, the cost of providing free school meals to eligible children for two weeks is around £40m based on government data.
- The government has consistently supported the lowest-paid families, including by raising the living wage, ending the benefit freeze and putting another £9.3bn into the welfare system.
- The government remains committed to developing a food strategy that will support the development of a food system that is sustainable, resilient and affordable, that will support people to live healthy lives, and that will protect animal health and welfare.
- The £170m is for Local Authorities in England only. Devolved Administrations have received equivalent funding through the upfront funding guarantee we have provided, which was recently increased to £16bn for the year to support their Covid-19 response.

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