

Funding boost to help healthcare suppliers improve cyber security

Hundreds of the country's vital healthcare firms are set to benefit from government funding to boost their cyber security, the Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman announces today, as part of London Tech Week.

The move comes after the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) [identified](#) a heightened cyber threat to the UK health sector in relation to the pandemic, with cyber crime groups attempting to steal sensitive intelligence, intellectual property and personal information from pharmaceutical companies and medical research organisations.

Small and medium-sized businesses, such as medical suppliers and primary care providers, are being invited to apply for a slice of the £500,000 funding for the initiative which will see all consultancy and certification costs covered by the government.

Participants can receive guidance and support to get accreditation from the government's Cyber Essentials certification. This includes training to make sure all phones, tablets, laptops or computers are kept up-to-date, proper firewall usage to secure devices' internet connections, and user access controls to manage employee access to services.

Firms could opt to receive support from one of the programme's cyber experts, who will look at the organisation as a whole, identify its cyber security risks and help develop and implement a business continuity plan.

Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman said:

We know there is a heightened cyber threat for healthcare businesses at the moment so we are releasing new funding to help those playing a vital role in the pandemic response to remain resilient.

I also urge all organisations to sign up to the government's Cyber Essentials programme which contains a number of simple steps firms can take to get the fundamentals of good cyber security in place.

Paul Chichester, the NCSC's Director of Operations, said:

Protecting healthcare has been our top priority during the Covid-19 pandemic and we have been working hard to ensure organisations can keep themselves secure.

While we will continue to support them, signing up to initiatives such as Cyber Essentials is an excellent way for organisations to

help themselves.

Those who have not already taken up this offer should do so – it will help ensure they have fundamental security protections in place, even in the most challenging of times.

Despite good progress in recent years, almost half of all businesses (46 per cent) suffered a cyber breach or attack in the last 12 months, with one in three per cent (32 per cent) experiencing them at least once a week, according to the [Cyber Security Breaches Survey 2020](#).

Recent graduates of the Cyber Essentials programme include an app development firm whose products have supported Covid-19 patients and clinical teams throughout the pandemic, a not-for-profit organisation offering vital youth programmes to disadvantaged young people across the North East, and a group providing accessible health services across Yorkshire during the Covid crisis.

A Cyber Essentials participant from the healthcare sector said:

As a key supplier of medical equipment to the NHS, we qualified for government funding for a Cyber Essentials check on our IT systems. It was simple to arrange, we found the assigned partner easy to work with and overall the service has been an excellent sanity check on our IT systems and processes to ensure we are working to the best current security practices. It is definitely worth doing if you can.

This announcement comes on the day the London Office for Rapid Cybersecurity Advancement (LORCA), the government-backed cyber innovation programme, [reveals](#) companies supported by LORCA have raised more than £150m in investment since it launched two years ago, more than triple the original target and 12 months ahead of schedule.

[Government investment to help build robots for nuclear plants and batteries for electric aeroplanes](#)

- £65 million government cash injection to help make the UK the global home for future technologies in battery development, robotics and advanced healthcare treatments
- part of the funding will go towards the development of robots that inspect, maintain and repair nuclear power stations, satellites and wind

turbines

- the extension of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund will help the UK build back better by transitioning to a low carbon economy and developing solutions for an ageing society

Future technologies that could transform people's lives such as high-performance batteries for electric vehicles, advanced medical treatments and robotics will receive a £65 million government cash boost today (Thursday 10 September).

The funding will be available through the government's [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund](#), which has been extended today to help develop solutions to some of the biggest global challenges, including climate change and tackling diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's.

Of the investment announced today:

- nearly £44 million to develop the next generation of high-performance batteries for electric vehicles and wind turbines, which could also be used for new technologies such as electric aeroplanes. The funding will also be used to complete a first-of-its-kind [UK Battery Industrialisation Centre](#), in Coventry, West Midlands, creating 100 high-skilled jobs. Organisations across the automotive, rail and aerospace sectors will have access a unique battery production facility combining manufacturing, experimentation and innovation
- £15 million to enable universities, research organisations and businesses to build robots to inspect, maintain and repair nuclear power stations, satellites and wind turbines. The robotics will also be used to address new problems resulting from the pandemic, including ones that can operated remotely and make contact-free deliveries or move hospital beds.
- £6.5 million will be allocated to the [Advanced Therapy Treatment Centre](#) network to accelerate patient access to advanced therapies through the development of specialised infrastructure for the delivery of these products in the NHS. These cell and gene based therapies are aimed at the treatment of life-limiting and inherited diseases such as cancer, Duchenne muscular dystrophy or cystic fibrosis.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

We want to build back better by putting the UK at the forefront of new technologies to create high-skilled jobs, increase productivity and grow the economy as we recover from coronavirus.

This new funding will strengthen the UK's global status in a range of areas, including battery technologies for electric vehicles and

robotics, helping us develop innovative solutions to some of our biggest global challenges and creating jobs in rewarding careers right across the country.

Challenge Director for [The Faraday Battery Challenge](#) Tony Harper said:

In order for batteries to play their full environmental and economic role in achieving Net Zero we need to deploy at scale and build supply chains for today's technology, shift from strong potential to commercial dominance in a new generation of batteries and continue to build world-class scientific capability to sustain us into the future. The announcement today confirms our commitment and determination to build on the hard-won progress the UK has made in the last 3 years on all these fronts and to accelerate progress post COVID-19.

CEO of the [Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult](#) Matthew Durdy said:

The ATTC network is a fantastic example of effective government intervention and the international community recognises this as part of the UK's leadership in the field. Bringing together companies, the NHS and regulatory bodies to make the use of cell and gene therapies easier, more cost effective, and more widespread both boosts the industry and brings these life changing medicines to patients who need them.

The fact that 12% of global clinical trials in cell and gene therapy take place in the UK and half of those involve ATTCs is a testament to the success of this highly respected programme.

Andrew Tyrer, Challenge Director for [Robotics for a Safer World](#) said:

I am delighted that the government has provided an extra £15 million funding to help academics and businesses bridge the gap to: complete on-going deliverables set against the Robots for a Safer World Challenge, and also; utilise knowledge gained to the benefit of new sectors, ahead of this Autumn's spending review.

Established in 2017, the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund is delivering £2.6 billion of government investment with the aim of funding world-leading research and highly innovative businesses to address the biggest industrial and societal challenges.

Today's announcement furthers the government's commitment through its [R&D Roadmap](#) to put the UK at the forefront of transformational technologies and is part of the government's wider commitment to increase R&D investment to

2.4% of GDP by 2027.

- Nearly £44 million of the funding announced today will be allocated to the government's Faraday Battery Challenge to drive forward ground-breaking research in battery development, overseen by the [Faraday Institution](#).
- the Faraday Institution anticipates that the overall workforce in automotive and electric vehicle battery sectors could grow by 29% from 170,000 in 2020 to 220,000 employees by 2040.
- through the Robotics for a Safer World challenge, the government initiative has already created nearly 300 new jobs in the UK and around the world, with the new funding expected to increase the number of high-skilled roles and attract more businesses to the robotics sector
- since the establishment of Advanced Therapy Treatment Centres in 2017, they have successfully promoted the adoption of advanced cell and gene therapies for a range of conditions including several types of cancer. The Centres are helping the UK take advantage of the global market in advanced therapies, with around 1 in 8 global trials taking place across the country
- the UK has a growing advanced therapy sector with over 90 companies operating in this area – today's announcement will help drive further growth and put the UK on the path to lead the world in advanced therapies
- the Advanced Therapy Treatment Centre network receiving funding includes the Innovate Manchester Advanced Therapy Centre Hub (iMATCH); the Midlands-Wales Advanced Therapy Treatment Centre (MW-ATTC) and the Northern Alliance Advanced Therapies Treatment Centre (NA-ATTC), coordinated by the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult
- the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund has supported 1,820 organisations since its inception and almost 500 projects across the UK have received government investment. Businesses can apply for funding [here](#)

[Paraguayan Ministry of Health and Stirling University sign agreement](#)

World news story

The Paraguayan Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare (MSPBS) and the University of Stirling signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).



Minister of Health Julio Mazzoleni signs MoU, accompanied by John Davie and Professor Ross Collins.

The MoU signed between the MSPBS and the Stirling University will serve to implement a program for scientific, technological and educational cooperation in the areas of health and public administration accredited by the Paraguayan National Institute of Health (INS).

The launch of the project and signing of the MoU took place at the MSPBS in Asunción with the presence of Minister Julio Mazzoleni, Chargé d’Affaires of the British Embassy, John Davie, and Professor Ross Collins, coordinator of Inova Education in Paraguay and Uruguay. Representatives of the University of Stirling were also in attendance via video call.

The MoU aims to facilitate projects for the elaboration and development of civil servants of the MSPBS through exchange programs; educational activities, including MBAs; and scientific and technological research in public health.

Regarding the agreement, Chargé d’Affaires John Davie said:

Scotland, and the UK more broadly, has much to offer with regard to education and training in these areas. The British Embassy is delighted to support this MoU.

Professor Ross Collins said:

This MoU introduces Paraguay to world-leading education to strengthen management in public health and to train Paraguayan academics.

Published 9 September 2020

PM call with Irish Taoiseach Micheál Martin: 9 September 2020

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke with Irish Taoiseach Micheál Martin today.



The Prime Minister spoke with the Taoiseach this afternoon.

The leaders discussed the UK Internal Market Bill and the Prime Minister set out the rationale for the provisions related to the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The Prime Minister confirmed the UK's commitment to implementing the Northern Ireland Protocol and the Joint Committee process. He hoped that an agreement would be possible within that framework. However, if an agreement was not reached, as a responsible government, we had to provide a safety net that removed any ambiguity and ensured that the government would always be able to deliver on its commitments to the people of Northern Ireland.

The leaders also spoke about the bilateral relationship and the Prime Minister reiterated his desire to strengthen ties and increase dialogue between the countries in the future.

Published 9 September 2020

Sport pilots to be reduced in capacity to 1,000 people socially distanced

- All pilots with larger audiences will be reviewed in light of transmission rates and risk to decide if they are safe to go ahead

- Government will keep under review whether fans will be able to return to sports stadia from 1 October and if people can attend socially distanced business conferences and events
- Sports pilots will not be able to take place in areas that have high coronavirus incidence rates

The government is to reduce the number of people that can attend sporting events to pilot the safe return of spectators to 1,000 in light of the increase in the number of positive coronavirus cases.

While a number of successful pilots have already been held in football, rugby, cricket and snooker given the overall national Covid situation pilots will now be limited in number.

The change will come into effect from tomorrow for all sports pilots due to happen this month.

The government will also make a decision on whether fans can return to sports stadia socially distanced on 1 October and if people will be able to attend business conferences and events from that date.

Organised grassroots sport will be able to continue in a covid-secure way to help people stay fit and healthy. This includes organised team sports, Parkrun and exercise classes in gyms and leisure centres.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

In light of increasing transmission rates, the Government is reviewing the proposed sports and business events pilots ahead of the 1 October and we will unfortunately need to scale some back.

We know fans and audiences are eager to return, and jobs depend on this too, so work continues around the clock on the moonshot project with the ambition of having audiences back much closer to normal by Christmas, if safe to do so.

The government announced the latest sporting events to pilot the safe return of spectators on 26 August and was clear that they would only take place if the latest scientific and medical advice allowed for them to proceed in a Covid-secure way.

Clear guidance has been produced in consultation with the Sports Ground Safety Authority to set out the strict measures that test events must follow to limit the spread of coronavirus.

This includes upholding social distancing in queues, minimising the risk of any pinch points or crowding and recording people's data to assist NHS Test and Trace.

Notes to Editors

The following test events are able to continue with an audience capped at no more than 1,000 people, subject to locations not having local prevalence concerns.

12 September, Dagenham – West Ham v Arsenal (Women's Super League Fixture)

12 September, Cambridge United v Carlisle United (EFL League Two)

27 September, Wembley – Non-League Finals Day (FA Vase and FA Trophy)

Rugby Union

14 September – Gloucester v Harlequins

Horse Racing

21 September – Warwick

24-26 September – Newmarket, Cambridgeshire

Cricket

16 September – Yorkshire vs Durham (T20)

18 September – Lancashire vs Durham (T20)

18 September – Hampshire vs Surrey (T20)

19 September – Western Storm vs Sunrisers (Women's T20)

Basketball

18 September, Eagles Community Arena, Newcastle

Speedway

26 September, Foxhall Stadium, Ipswich