

[Chevening OCIS/ Abdullah Gül Fellowship applications 21/22 open](#)

Chevening Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Fellowship (OCIS) and OCIS Abdullah Gül Fellowship Applications for Turkey are now open and will close on 3 November 2020 at 12:00 (GMT).

Hosted by the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies

The Chevening Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS) Fellowships are aimed at mid-career academics or professionals who are dedicated to the promotion of academic activities which encourage a more informed understanding of the culture and civilisation of Islam and contemporary Muslim societies.

The following fellowships are a collaboration between the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and [OCIS](#):

- Chevening OCIS Fellowship
- Chevening OCIS Abdullah Gül Fellowship

Course/programme structure

Fellows will undertake a 6-month period of self-directed research focusing on their own project on the culture and civilisation of Islam and contemporary Muslim societies in a global context.

Fellows will benefit from meeting a multi-disciplinary group of scholars focusing on the Islamic world and have the opportunity to develop contacts with relevant individuals, discuss issues relating to the Islamic world, including Islamic history, classical Islamic sciences, economics and Islamic finance, and the study of Muslims in the West. Fellows will contribute to the Centre's objective to encourage and promote sustained dialogue and collaboration within the global academic community of the culture and civilisation of Islam and contemporary Muslim societies. OCIS is a Recognized Independent Centre for the University of Oxford and provides a meeting point for the Western and Islamic worlds of learning.

This fellowship programme will commence in October 2021. Fellows will need to develop their own research project to focus on during their fellowship prior to arriving in the UK.

Fellows must reside in Oxford for the duration of their award. OCIS can provide information about accommodation options in Oxford upon selection

Benefits

- six-month period of research at OCIS
- living expenses for the duration of the fellowship
- return economy airfare from home country to the UK

- allowance package for research-related activities
- access to a programme of cultural events and activities organised by the FCDO and the Chevening Secretariat

Eligibility

The Chevening OCIS Abdullah Gül Fellowship is available to applicants from Turkey.

To be eligible for a Chevening OCIS Fellowship, you must:

- demonstrate the potential to rise to a position of leadership and influence
- demonstrate the personal, intellectual and interpersonal attributes reflecting this potential
- be a citizen of Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Philippines, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, or Uzbekistan
- return to country of your citizenship at the end of the period of the fellowship
- hold a postgraduate level qualification (or equivalent professional training or experience in a relevant area) at the time of application
- have significant professional and/or academic research experience (at least five years)
- provide evidence of meeting at least the minimum English language abilities for Chevening Awards
- not hold British or dual-British citizenship
- not be an employee, a former employee, or relative of an employee (since July 2016) of Her Majesty's Government (including British embassies/high commissions, the Department for International Development, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, the Ministry of Defence and the Home Office), the British Council, or a staff member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities

Please note that applicants who have previously received financial benefit from a HMG-funded scholarship or fellowship are eligible to apply after a period of five years following the completion of their first HMG funded award. In these cases, applicants will be required to demonstrate their career progression from that point.

For more detailed information on the eligibility criteria for fellowships, read the guidance page on the [Chevening website](#)

UK's Chevening Scholarship awarded to 38 Malaysians

The Chevening award is the UK Government's global scholarship programme, administered by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. Generous local corporate partners include CIMB Group Holdings Berhad, the Prudence Foundation (community investment arm of Prudential), Yayasan Khazanah and the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation. British universities are also providing additional funding in support of the Chevening programme.

His Excellency Charles Hay MVO, British High Commissioner to Malaysia, hosted a pre-departure reception for the scholars today. He said:

The global pandemic did not put a stop to the UK Chevening scholarships programme this year. Through Chevening, we are giving Malaysia's brightest an opportunity to attain a world class education in the UK. The UK is investing in the next generation of Malaysians who will return to the country and contribute to the future of Malaysia.

The UK Government and the UK education sector are working together to ensure the health and safety of all international students in the UK. You can expect to undertake your studies with a combination of online and in-person learning, receive wellbeing support from your respective university and the Chevening Secretariat, as well as up-to-date guidance from Study UK.

Today's event coincides with the start of the new Chevening application cycle, and the High Commissioner invited applications ahead of the deadline on 3 November 2020. More information is available on [Chevening Malaysia](#).

The current batch of scholars will be heading to the UK as early as September this year to pursue a wide range of postgraduate programmes at top UK universities, including in subjects such as climate change, environment, law, development, human rights, public policy, arts and journalism.

Scholar Surendran Chelliah R Karunairajah from the Ministry of Health said:

I applied for the Chevening scholarship because I wanted to be part of a global network seeking to be a high impact force for positive change. I chose to do my MSc in Climate Change, Management and Finance at Imperial College Business School because of its interdisciplinary approach in addressing issues on climate change and sustainability for business. Additionally, the UK itself is a focal point of global thought leadership and action in the field of climate change.

Another scholar Maizatul Khairani who will be attending Royal Holloway said:

As a prestigious award, Chevening opens the opportunities for a professional like me to challenge myself as a future leader, strengthen my knowledge, and develop global networking with the Chevening community. To study Information Security in the UK is the right decision considering the UK is the highest-ranking nation in cyber security commitment with the best quality institutions in this specific area.

Scholar Adeline Ng Kai Wen said:

Pursuing a master's degree from a world-renowned university is an ambitious dream of mine made come true by the commitment of Chevening in supporting future leaders. I chose to study the Masters of Environment and Development at King's College London as the environment is a critical factor that affects our livelihood and wellbeing. I think the opportunity to be in the UK when it hosts COP26 in 2021 will be a unique added experience that I look forward to being a part of.

Scholar Tengku Muhd Muzaffar Bin Tengku Muda from Terengganu will be studying a Master's in Finance at the Lancaster University said:

Chevening is beyond a scholarship. It is an avenue crafted to promote intelligence and exchanging thoughts within its broad community. Considering London City as the world financial hub, the country provides greater access to critical knowledge and dynamic exposure which shall benefit us; the financial enthusiasts.

Sarawakian scholar Venessa Sambai who will be attending University of York to study Social Justice and Education said:

I am very appreciative of the opportunity awarded to me by the Chevening scholarship. I look forward to deepening my knowledge and skills with other academics in the UK, particularly on social class and mobility through education.

Malaysia is the second largest recipient of Chevening awards in ASEAN and there are already over 1,700 Chevening alumni in Malaysia.

Government publishes new strategy to kickstart data revolution across the UK

- Plans will see 500 data analysts across public sector trained in data science by 2021
- Downing Street to offer up to ten fellowships each year to attract world-class tech talent to the heart of government
- New £2.6m project to address barriers to data sharing and support innovation in the detection of online harms
- Digital Secretary launches consultation to help shape final strategy

Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden today launched a National Data Strategy and set out the action the government will take to support the use of data in the UK.

The new strategy will put data at the heart of the country's recovery from the pandemic so companies and organisations can use it to drive digital transformation, innovate and boost growth across the economy.

The strategy, which lays out five priority 'missions' the government must take to capitalise on the opportunities data offers, is a central part of the government's wider ambition for a thriving, fast-growing digital sector in the UK.

It includes:

- Plans for 500 analysts to be trained up in data and data science across the public sector by 2021.
- Plans for a new Government Chief Data Officer to lead a whole-government approach to transforming government's use of data to drive efficiency and improve public services.
- Plans to introduce primary legislation to boost participation in Smart Data initiatives, which can give people the power to use their own data to find better tariffs in areas such as telecoms, energy and pensions.
- A new £2.6m project to address current barriers to data sharing and support innovation to detect online harms.

Today the Government is also announcing up to ten new Innovation Fellowships to support the digital transformation across government. Successful applicants will have the opportunity to work closely with the No. 10 Data Science team, Government Digital Service networks and a peer-group of

exceptional talent.

The UK is already a leading digital nation. Data-enabled UK service exports were estimated to be £243 billion in 2019, or 75 per cent of total service exports. And globally, the UK now sits behind only the US and China in terms of venture capital investment into the technology sector.

A 2019 McKinsey report also found that, internationally, a larger proportion of fast-growing companies use data-driven practices compared to slower-growing companies.

The strategy commits the government to develop a clear policy framework to determine what interventions are needed to unlock the value of data across the economy and help propel in the recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

Ahead of his speech at London Tech Week's Global Leaders Innovation Summit, Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

Our response to coronavirus has shown just how much we can achieve when we can share high-quality data quickly, efficiently and ethically. I don't intend to let that lesson go to waste.

Our new National Data Strategy will maintain the high watermark of data use set during the pandemic – freeing up businesses, government and organisations to innovate, experiment and drive a new era of growth.

I am absolutely clear that data and data use are opportunities to be embraced, rather than a threat to be guarded against.

It aims to make sure British businesses are in a position to make the most of the digital revolution over the years and decades to come, help us use data to improve people's lives, and position the UK as a global champion of data use.

Health and local authorities are using data to monitor the spread of coronavirus and the NHS is now able to predict where the system is likely to face strain first, be that on ventilators, beds or staff sickness and make fast interventions to save lives.

During the lockdown data kept supermarket shelves stocked, and services such as Ocado could send groceries to the doorsteps of those most vulnerable to the pandemic – allowing them to shield in safety. It also powers robots, pickers and packers meaning shopping arrives in one piece.

The government and businesses have come together to capitalise on data before. Open Banking handed the control of personal data back to customers who were able to share their data with third parties like start-ups, and shop around for a better deal.

Now the new strategy will look at how the country can leverage existing UK strengths to boost use of data in business, government and civil society.

It proposes an overhaul in the use of data across the public sector and the government will launch a programme of work to transform the way data is managed, used and shared internally and with wider public sectors organisations, to create an ethical, joined up and interoperable data infrastructure.

Up to ten new Innovation Fellowships, inspired by the US Presidential Innovation Fellowships, which attracted the Lead Developer on Google Maps, former CEO of Symantec and Co-Founder of the Earth Genome Project, will be created to support the digital transformation across government.

Those fellows will sit within No 10, the Government Digital Service and a number of departments, and use their skills to contribute to the kind of fulfilling challenging projects that only the public sector can offer – ones that have a huge impact on society as a whole.

In addition, 500 analysts will be trained up in data and data science across the public sector by 2021 through the Data Science Campus at the ONS, the Government Analysis Function, and the Government Digital Service to meet the evolving needs of government.

A new Government Chief Data Officer will oversee the Government Digital Service and lead the Digital, Data and Technology function. They will be responsible for shaping and delivering the government's innovation and transformation strategies to improve capability and ensure the government can better leverage data and emerging technologies to design and deliver citizen-centric services that enhance our reputation as the world's most digitally-advanced government.

This comes after plans were announced last month for a new Chief Digital Officer.

To help arm the next generation with high quality data skills, the Government will explore new ways to teach undergraduate students data skills that complement the existing current maths and computing curriculums, as well as developing T-Levels which include qualifications on digital skills.

Smart Data initiatives allow consumers and small and medium sized businesses to simply and securely share data with third parties that help them use that data. Plans for primary legislation will be brought forward to give people the power to use their own data to find better tariffs in areas such as telecoms, energy and pensions, and open the doors to disruptors in every part of the marketplace.

Plans to test the possibilities of sharing data between the public and private spheres include a new £2.6m project to model how improved systems for classification and sharing of data could support a competitive commercial market in tools able to detect online harms such as cyberbullying, harassment or suicide ideation. Through this programme, the government will review and

upgrade the data standards and systems that underpin the monitoring and reporting of online harms such as child sexual abuse, hate speech and self harm and suicide ideation.

The strategy aims to take advantage of being an independent, sovereign nation to maximise those strengths domestically, and position ourselves internationally to influence the global approach to data sharing and use, including committing to the creation of an independent international data transfers capability.

Dr Jeni Tennison, Vice President at the Open Data Institute said:

People and organisations of all kinds are facing big challenges over the next few years. Data can help us all to navigate them, increasing our understanding of our changing world and informing the decisions we make. Data can also cause harm, for example through over-collection and inappropriate use. At the ODI, we want data to work for everyone, which means ensuring it both gets to the people who need it, and that it is collected, used and shared in trustworthy ways.

This National Data Strategy consultation is an important opportunity for us all to explore and influence how data should be used to support the UK's economy, environment and communities, and we look forward to the debate.

Sue Daley Associate Director, Technology and Innovation techUK said:

Unlocking the full power of data has never been more important to our economy and society. A national data vision and strategy for realising the full economic and social value of data is vital to driving social good, innovation, competition, economic growth, productivity and job creation.

The consultation on the National Data Strategy announced today is key to finding the right way forward for industry and citizens and techUK stands ready to help turn the strategy into a reality. Now is the time to get to work to build and realise the UK's data-driven future.

Dan Sutch, Director of the Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technologies (CAST) said:

Good quality data is critical to ensure we have the best information and insight to address significant social challenges in effective ways. We welcome this consultation and the focus on creating a national data strategy, and we will work with Government, funders and charities across the UK to explore how we

can make the most of data to strengthen civil society.

Diane Coyle, Bennett Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge said:

Data has become increasingly important to the economy and society more broadly. Our work [link] has shown the potential for the effective use of data to bring widespread benefits; but to achieve these, as well as minimise potential harms, the development of a national strategy providing the framework for its collection and use is vital.

Darren Hardman, General Manager Amazon Web Services (UK and Ireland) said:

Making more effective use of data and cloud computing is key to the UK's long-term economic growth and the continual improvement of our public services. We welcome the launch of this consultation on the new National Data Strategy, which will be instrumental in ensuring the UK remains one of the world's leading digital nations.

To help shape the final National Data Strategy document, the government has launched a consultation to help shape the core principles of the strategy, our ambitions for the use of data across the economy and policy proposals.

Published alongside the National Data Strategy, the [Government Office for Science's The Future of Citizen Data Systems report](#) examines different approaches to the governance, control and use of citizen data across the world. Considering the evidence that variations in regional data systems both reflect and determine developments in the economy, security and society, it explores factors that might drive future changes. The report provides an evidence base to support the National Data Strategy.

Sir Patrick Vallance, Government Chief Scientific Adviser said:

Our Foresight report on The Future of Citizen Data Systems highlights the importance of having a clear vision for what we want to achieve with citizen data, and building understanding and confidence among citizens in how we will achieve it. The National Data Strategy consultation is an important step in defining and realising this vision for the UK.

For media queries contact: 0207 211 2210.

National Data Strategy

The National Data Strategy asks fundamental questions about what data should and should not be made available. It sets out how to maintain a regulatory

regime that is not too burdensome for smaller business and supports responsible innovation.

It will do so through five priority missions:

- Unlocking the value of data across the economy
- Securing a pro-growth and trusted data regime
- Transforming government's use of data to drive efficiency and improve public services
- Ensuring the security and resilience of the infrastructure on which data relies
- Championing the international flow of data

Online Harms Data Infrastructure project

The Online Harms Data Infrastructure project is a new £2.6m pilot project, funded through the HM Treasury Shared Outcomes Fund, to explore how improved systems for data sharing and data interoperability could support innovation and competition in the detection of online harms. This project will analyse the current data landscape and the economic and social benefits of opening up online harms data, and then test a number of potential practical solutions. It forms part of the wider programme of work led by DCMS and Home Office to make the UK the safest place in the world to go online, and the best place to grow and start a digital business.

Innovation Fellowships

The government will open applications to new No.10 and Government Digital Service Innovation Fellows in October. Prospective fellows will bring their unique skills to make a telling contribution to challenging projects that have significant impact for society. There will be ten fellowships available each year, with the first cohort starting in April '21. Fellowships will be awarded for 12 – 24months, with top talent being offered the opportunity to take on senior digital and technology roles in Government.

References

DCMS analysis using the UNCTAD definition of digitally deliverable services. Services that are principally or largely enabled by information and communication technologies (ICT) are defined as digitally deliverable services, which are used within the data-enabled estimations.

UK Tech for a Changing World, TechNation (2020)

UK businesses that receive personal data, such as names, addresses or payroll details, from organisations in the EU are being encouraged to prepare for new rules around data protection. Check GOV.UK/Transition for further guidance.

Supercharging the future of driving this #WorldEVDay

- £12 million in funding announced to propel groundbreaking electric vehicle research projects on first World EV Day
- future government plans could see green-coloured parking spaces, charge points at popular destinations and dedicated EV sites for buying and selling cars
- Highways England to provide local authorities with £9.3 million in funding to encourage businesses to switch to electric vans

Parking spaces painted green, charge points at supermarkets and popular tourist sites, and batteries that could charge in 6 minutes could all form part of the government's ambitious plans to accelerate electric vehicle uptake, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has announced today on World EV Day (9 September 2020).

The government is turbocharging its commitment to improving air quality, driving down emissions and encouraging drivers to make the switch to cleaner, greener vehicles through considering recommendations in a government-commissioned report by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles.

These include charge points installed at popular destinations such as supermarkets and tourist sites, consistent and clear public signage for drivers on UK roads, or guidance to local authorities on painting EV parking spaces green.

Further steps to decarbonise road transport have been taken by the government, with £12 million in funding for research and development (R&D) investment to support a series of competitions for some of the most promising EV technologies.

Together with Innovate UK, the funding will support a range of groundbreaking projects designed to open up significant commercial opportunities, one of which could see cars of the future benefit from a 6-minute battery charge.

The Department for Transport has also worked closely with Autotrader, a popular site for buying and selling cars, to develop [a dedicated EV section on their website](#) to help potential EV purchasers with their decision, with more sites expected to follow.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Whether you're taking a trip with the family or commuting to work, with the wide range of models at competitive prices, it is now more cost-effective and convenient than ever to drive and charge an electric vehicle.

This, together with our continued support for R&D, will see talented UK-based SMEs flourish, as well as more than 6,000 skilled jobs created up and down the country.

This is why, on the world's first-ever day dedicated to celebrating electric vehicles, I'm delighted to announce our unwavering support for a cleaner, greener transport future.

A £9.3 million scheme launched by Highways England will allow businesses to try electric vehicles for free before they buy. The initiative is designed to encourage drivers to shift to cleaner, lower-carbon vehicles and will see local authorities encouraging businesses with diesel van fleets to make the switch to electric.

Businesses will be offered a free trial of electric vehicles for 2 months, following a successful launch with Leeds City Council earlier in the year.

Highways England Chief Executive, Jim O'Sullivan, said:

We're pleased to be working with councils across the country to encourage businesses to make the switch to electric, and we expect many more to start using electric vehicles when they see the savings possible.

This is just one example of how we are using dedicated funding to benefit the environment and communities alongside our roads as well as the people travelling and working on them.

Ian Plummer, Director at Auto Trader, said:

Range anxiety, charging infrastructure and costs remain the primary barriers to adoption of electric vehicles. Therefore, in a bid to help consumers and alleviate some of their concerns, we relaunched our electric vehicle hub with new editorial content and improved search functionality.

The hub features specialist content and car reviews to help educate consumers and arm them with what they need to know about zero-emission cars, as well as helping to alleviate any concerns they might have. This, combined with improved search filters on Auto Trader for things like battery range and charging time, and displaying key information such as battery range more prominently on vehicle adverts on the marketplace, helps to make buying an electric vehicle easier.

Business and Industry Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

From multi-million-pound investments in electric vehicle charging

points to consulting on ending the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans, we're making certain that the future of UK transport is green.

World Electric Vehicle day is a chance to reflect on how far we've come as we make strides towards our world-beating net-zero climate target.

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Bill introduced to protect jobs and trade across the whole of the United Kingdom

- Bill introduced to protect trade and jobs across the UK by preventing new burdens on business when the Transition Period ends
- transfer of powers from the EU to the UK government to invest in businesses and communities across Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland as we recover from Covid-19
- a new independent Office for the Internal Market (OIM) to be set up within the Competition and Markets Authority to monitor the smooth running of trade within the United Kingdom
- the Bill will also set out limited and reasonable steps ensure that the government is always able to deliver on its commitments to the people of Northern Ireland

A new Bill to protect jobs and trade across the whole of the United Kingdom after the Transition Period ends will be introduced to Parliament Wednesday 9 September.

The UK Internal Market Bill will guarantee companies can trade unhindered in every part of the UK as they have done for centuries, ensuring the continued prosperity of people and business across 4 parts of the UK, while maintaining our world-leading high standards for consumers, workers, food, animal welfare and the environment.

From 1 January 2021, powers in a range of policy areas previously exercised at an EU level will flow directly to the devolved administrations in Holyrood, Cardiff Bay and Stormont for the first time. This will give the devolved legislatures power over more issues than they have ever had before, including over air quality, energy efficiency of buildings and elements of employment law, without removing any of their current powers.

Once the Transition Period ends, rules that have regulated how each home

nation trades with each other over the past 45 years will fall away. Without urgent legislation to preserve the status quo of seamless internal trade, rules and regulations set in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland could create new barriers to trade between different parts of the UK, unnecessary red tape for business and additional costs for consumers. Data shows that the combined total sales from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to the rest of the United Kingdom were worth over £90 billion in 2018.

The Bill will avoid this uncertainty for business by creating an open, fair, and competitive market across the United Kingdom, ensuring regulations from one part of the country will be recognised in another. Each devolved administration will still be able to set their own standards as they do now, while also being able to benefit from the trade of businesses based anywhere in the UK. The rules in this bill will also bind the UK government when acting on behalf of England in areas of devolved competence.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

For centuries the UK's internal market has been the cornerstone of our shared prosperity, delivering unparalleled stability and economic growth across the Union.

This Bill will protect our highly integrated market by guaranteeing that companies can continue to trade unhindered in every part of the UK after the Transition Period ends and EU law falls away.

By providing clarity over rules that will govern the UK economy after we take back control of our money and laws, we can increase investment and create new jobs across the United Kingdom, while our maintaining world-leading standards for consumers, workers, food and the environment.

Without these necessary reforms, the way we trade goods and services between the home nations could be seriously impacted, harming the way we do business within our own borders. Now is not the time to create uncertainty for business with new barriers and additional costs that would trash our chances of an economic recovery.

The Bill will also enable the UK government to provide financial assistance to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland with new powers to spend taxpayers' money previously administered by the EU. From January 2021, the UK will be able to invest in communities and businesses nationwide with powers covering infrastructure, economic development, culture, sport, and support for educational, training and exchange opportunities both within the UK and internationally – much of which were previously done at an EU level.

The transfer of powers from the EU to the UK government will complement and strengthen existing support given to citizens in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland by the devolved administrations, without taking away their responsibilities. A strong UK Internal Market, with the ability of the UK

government to invest to support all parts of our Union, will help the UK government to deliver prosperity for businesses and communities across all parts of the UK, levelling up the country and strengthening the Union.

The proposals will allow the UK government to meet its commitments to deliver replacements for EU programmes, such as a UK Shared Prosperity Fund, replacing bureaucratic EU structural funds and at a minimum match the size of those funds in each nation.

The Bill will also set out limited and reasonable steps to ensure that the government is always able to deliver on its commitments to the people of Northern Ireland. The UK government remains fully committed to implementing the Withdrawal Agreement and Northern Ireland Protocol.

However, at all stages we must, as a responsible government, ensure that we have the ability to uphold our commitments to the people of Northern Ireland, preserve the huge gains of the peace process and protect Northern Ireland's place in our United Kingdom – as set out in the Command Paper published in May.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove said:

The devolved administrations of the UK will enjoy a power surge when the Transition Period ends in December. Holyrood, Stormont and Cardiff Bay will soon have more powers than ever before and there will be no change to the powers the devolved administrations already have.

This Bill will also give the UK government new spending powers to drive our economic recovery from COVID-19 and support businesses and communities right across the UK.

No longer will unelected EU bodies be spending our money on our behalf. These new spending powers will mean that these decisions will now be made in the UK, focus on UK priorities and be accountable to the UK Parliament and people of the UK.

The UK government has also laid out plans to establish an independent monitoring body, the Office for the Internal Market (OIM), to support the smooth running of trade within the United Kingdom. The body will sit within the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and provide independent, technical advice to parliament and the devolved administrations on regulation that may damage the UK's internal market.

The reporting and monitoring role undertaken by the OIM will be non-binding and carried independently from ministers and devolved administrations, ensuring impartiality and transparency when developing its evidence. Where there is a matter of dispute, the OIM will ultimately provide such reports to the UK Parliament and each of the devolved legislatures and it will be for these bodies, supported by their respective administrations and intergovernmental processes, to determine how to take action in response,

minimising the need to seek court action.

Andrea Coscelli, CEO of the Competition and Markets Authority, said:

The new independent Office for the Internal Market will stand ready to provide technical advice to the UK government and parliament and the devolved administrations and legislatures on the smooth running of trade within the United Kingdom. The CMA will ensure that the OIM fulfils its role with professionalism, impartiality and analytical rigour.

Without this action to preserve the status quo of seamless domestic trade, businesses across the UK could face serious problems: a Welsh lamb producer could end up unable to sell their lamb in Scotland, or Scotch whisky producers could lose access to supply from English barley farmers. These proposals create certainty for businesses that might otherwise face a complex and increasingly fragmented regulatory environment.

The UK's existing high standards across areas including environmental standards, workers' rights, animal welfare and food standards will underpin the functioning of the Internal Market to protect consumers and workers across the economy. The UK government is committed to maintaining high standards in these areas, including in all free trade agreement negotiations.

More than 270 businesses, charities, academics and industry groups responded to a public consultation on the proposals, launched in July. Responses showed overwhelming support from businesses for the measures to avoid additional costs to doing business between different parts of the UK and providing vital certainty for firms from January 2021.