

## 2,500 new places on artificial intelligence and data science conversion courses now open to applicants

- Up to £24 million of funding from government, universities and industry partners will help bolster the introduction of new and diverse talent into digital and tech roles
- 2,500 places will be available, with 1,000 scholarships offered to students from underrepresented backgrounds
- Funding has been awarded to 18 universities who are working with partner providers to deliver courses in 28 universities and colleges across England

Graduates will have the opportunity to [apply](#) for a place on new artificial intelligence (AI) and data science masters courses starting in autumn 2020, Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden announced today (Wednesday 10 June).

The move will enable 2,500 people to develop new digital skills or retrain to help find new employment in the UK's cutting-edge AI and data science sectors.

The government has joined forces with the Office for Students, universities and industry partners to create a fund of up to £24 million to increase the number of highly-skilled workers in AI and data science roles. The cash will provide places for graduates from a range of backgrounds – both those that have a degree in science, technology, engineering, maths or social sciences and those that have studied other subjects to date. Scholarships will be made available to support applications from diverse backgrounds.

Applicants could include people returning to work after a career break and looking to retrain in a new profession, under-represented groups in the AI and digital workforce. 1000 scholarships will specifically target the female, black and disabled demographics.

Statistics from a Tech Nation and Royal Society report reveal women make up only 19 per cent of the tech workforce and people from a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background represent just 4 per cent of the UK tech industry.

Successful students will have flexible access to study and course content so they can fit their studies around their daily lives. Students will undertake

paid work placements to help maximise their employment opportunities at the end of their course which could see them land roles as machine learning engineers, data scientists, research scientists or AI architects.

The announcement is part of the government's commitment to increase R&D investment to 2.4% of GDP by 2027.

Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

It is vital we increase diversity across our tech sector and give everyone with the aptitude and talent the opportunity to build a successful career.

This will help make sure artificial intelligence developed in the UK reflects the needs and make-up of society as a whole which will also help mitigate the risk of biased technologies being developed.

Through these new AI and data science conversion courses we are working with industry and academia to develop and maintain the best AI workforce in the world.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

From disease diagnosis to driverless vehicles, demand for a diverse new pipeline of talent in the AI and digital workforce has never been greater.

By working with our leading universities and industry partners, I am delighted that we are providing students from all backgrounds the chance to upskill and help tackle some of the most complex challenges of our time.

Creating a more diverse future workforce will help with the design of new technology that has the potential to help tackle some of the greatest social challenges of our time – from protecting our environment to transforming the way we live and work and also saving lives by detecting signs of diseases earlier.

Chris Millward, director for fair access and participation at the Office for Students, said:

In recent years we have seen significant and increasing demand for digital skills in a range of fields. From healthcare and biosciences, to industry and transport – harnessing artificial intelligence and data science will be crucial in tackling significant global challenges for years to come.

It is also critical that graduates from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to gain the skills that employers need. With new AI

and data science conversion courses across the country, and scholarships available to students from underrepresented backgrounds, this programme will both help tackle skills gaps and increase choice and opportunities for all students.

AI Skills Champion Dame Wendy Hall quote:

It is imperative that we continue to grow the pathways that supply good AI and Data Science jobs. Introducing new and diverse talent will continue to maintain the UK's position as a global leader in AI and Innovation. These conversion courses and the scholarships attached demonstrate the importance we place on diversity and talent.

Mark Martin MBE, co-founder of UK BlackTech said:

The new AI and data science courses and scholarships will help boost uptake of these technologies across the country and prepare the next generation to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic and social injustices.

It's important we encourage more homegrown talent from different backgrounds to access these opportunities so we can develop better tech tools, services and organisations that truly reflects our nation.

In addition to these new conversion courses, the Government is also supporting industry-funded AI Masters, prestigious Alan Turing Institute AI research fellowships and 16 dedicated Centres at universities across the country to train 1000 extra AI PhDs.

To boost the use of AI in the public sector the World Economic Forum has published new guidelines to help the public sector embrace the technology to help drive efficiencies and prepare for future risks.

The guidance will also help established companies, start-ups and new entrants to the AI sector compete on a level playing field for government contracts and drive adoption of ethical practices by tech companies.

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**[Change of British High Commissioner to](#)**

# The Gambia: July 2020

Press release

Mr David Belgrove OBE has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Republic of The Gambia in succession to Ms Sharon Wardle.



Mr David Belgrove OBE has been appointed British High Commissioner to the Republic of The Gambia in succession to Ms Sharon Wardle who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Belgrove will take up his appointment during July 2020.

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

Full name: David Belgrove

Married to: Mette Ofstad

Children: Two

2015 to present Monrovia, Her Majesty's Ambassador  
2012 to 2015 Khartoum, Deputy Head of Mission  
2010 to 2012 Monrovia, Chargé d'Affaires  
2009 to 2010 FC0, Deputy Head of Afghan Interdepartmental Drugs Unit  
2007 to 2009 Kabul, Head of Counter Narcotics Team  
2004 to 2007 FC0, Team Leader Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Section, Conflict Issues Group  
2002 to 2004 FC0, Head of Section and Security Sector Reform Manager, Caribbean Team  
2000 to 2002 Ottawa, First Secretary, Head of Media and Public Affairs

## **Further information**

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## Malaysia can take the green road to post-coronavirus recovery: joint op-ed

British High Commissioner to Malaysia H.E. Charles Hay and Ambassador of Italy to Malaysia H.E. Cristiano Maggipinto

We mark the World Environment Day today, followed by World Oceans Day in three days' time. Today we should be more aware than ever of the global context in which we operate. Covid-19 has shown us that an action in one country has major consequences in another. Our economies and the very structure of our societies can be disrupted by exogenous developments outside our control.

But in our hurry to focus on economic recovery from Covid-19, we risk missing the lessons and the opportunity to deal with another existential challenge. Climate Change, the result of the carbon emissions of our current socio-economic system, is already happening.

Malaysia's rapid and decisive action to manage the Covid-19 epidemic has been impressive. A similarly resolute approach is needed to tackle the climate and wildlife emergencies.

Global carbon emissions fell sharply as people were locked down at home. Businesses and factories were shut, resulting in cleaner air in cities, and wildlife has emerged in unlikely places. We all want to retain these benefits, but of course Covid-19 lockdown is not a solution, given the mass unemployment and reduction in the quality of life.

The lesson from the 2008 economic crisis is that recovery efforts should be combined with long-term sustainability goals. We have now three major advantages with respect to 2008 to push those goals further and faster.

- First, the cost of renewable energy has dropped dramatically, in many cases below that of conventional energy, despite the temporary slump in oil prices. Today we can extend the deployment of renewables through technologically sound and commercially viable solutions that provide high quality jobs.
- Second, the world's development institutions are now much more focused on climate change. Central banks and financial institutions have taken stronger positions on climate actions, including Bank Negara and many of Malaysian banks. Malaysia has been the biggest green sukuk player in this region for the past two years.

- Third, a global carbon price is on the horizon. Factoring the future carbon price into new projects will be essential. Malaysia will benefit immensely in emission avoidance schemes through market mechanisms.

This favourable framework should entail a fast distribution of funds to sound, ready-to-go low-carbon projects in emerging markets.

Streets and motorways should be ready for electric vehicles, industries need to invest in clean technologies, and electricity grids should be designed to enable the integration of more renewables. A critical element will be widely accessible fast broadband that will spur further the digital economy.

Malaysia is already ahead of the curve in policy thinking and technology developments for this transition. The pledge to maintain at least 50% forest cover and protection of immense marine areas under the Coral Triangle Initiative signal the ambition to be at the forefront of mitigation actions.

Just as Tan Sri Dr Zakri Abdul Hamid (a former Science Advisor to the Malaysian PM) said a few weeks ago:

It is up to our leaders to put us finally and firmly onto a sustainable path. As a wake-up call to respect nature, the Covid-19 pandemic is a giant alarm clock with the impact of a sledgehammer on our health and economy. We have no time left to procrastinate.

The next United Nations' Climate Change Conference, known as CoP26, will be the right place to show tangible progress in tackling climate change. Originally due in 2020 but postponed because of Covid19, the COP26 will now take place between 1 and 12 November 2021 in Glasgow, hosted by the UK in partnership with Italy.

Covid-19 is a severe blow, certainly. But it need not be a blow to a safer, healthier, resilient, sustainable and green future.

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## [New powers for councils to keep cyclists safe](#)

- local authorities given new tools to crack down on misuse of mandatory cycle lanes
- increasing numbers of cyclists will continue to enjoy car-free cycle lanes
- plans are part of government work to build a greener, healthier and more resilient transport network

Cyclists will have safer journeys thanks to new laws coming into force from 22 June, Cycling Minister Chris Heaton-Harris has announced today (10 June 2020).

Local authorities in England will have new powers to use CCTV to issue penalty charge notices to drivers who park or load illegally in mandatory cycle lanes, putting cyclists at risk of a serious accident.

Cars parked on cycle lanes pose problems for cyclists, often forcing them into the flow of traffic. With approved camera devices, it will be easier for those local authorities with civil parking enforcement powers to take action against cars illegally parked on mandatory cycle lanes, allowing cyclists to complete their journeys without deviating from their path.

Today's announcement is the latest measure from the government to develop a greener, healthier and more resilient transport network in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The move comes as part of Bike Week (6-14 June), which will see a range of organisations – led by Cycling UK – encourage everyone to get pedalling to boost their fitness and protect the environment.

Cycling Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said:

Across the country there has been a surge in the number of people dusting off their old bike from the back of the shed and cycling, or taking journeys on foot, to get from A to B.

Giving local authorities more powers to stop cycle lanes from becoming blocked will make it safer for cyclists.

These new measures also build on our recent £2 billion investment to create a green, healthier legacy and see more people travelling by bicycle or on foot.

This measure will help get more cyclists on the road and alleviate pressure on public transport infrastructure, giving people the confidence to use their bike for more journeys – perhaps for the first time.

This news follows the Transport Secretary's announcement of a [£2 billion package for cycling and walking](#) last month to help create a greener transport network.

This included £225 million for local authorities in England to create pop up cycle lanes with protected space for cycling, wider pavements, safer junctions, and bike and bus-only corridors.

The public will also be able to benefit from the recently announced bicycle repair scheme, where up to half a million £50 vouchers will be issued to people in England to help get neglected bikes back on the road.

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## Liz Truss launches future trade strategy for UK tech industry

- The Government has announced a range of measures to help boost digital trade and establish the UK tech industry as a global player
- The new measures will help create and support jobs by increasing exports and attracting international investment
- They will also ensure the industry can take advantage of new Free Trade Agreements

New measures to boost digital trade and help turn the UK into a global tech powerhouse have been announced today Wednesday 10 June by the International Trade Secretary, answering industry calls for support for UK tech firms.

Liz Truss will unveil a package of strategic interventions during London Tech Week to support UK tech companies to seize trade and investment opportunities overseas. Developed in partnership with stakeholders across the industry, the interventions will boost the sector over the long-term and aid its immediate recovery from Coronavirus.

The new measures jointly announced by the Department for International Trade and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, will seek to increase tech exports to fast-growing international markets, including Asia-Pacific, strengthen scaleups' market readiness to export, and attract investment to drive innovation and create jobs.

The comprehensive range of measures include the creation of a new Digital Trade Network for Asia-Pacific, which will support UK SMEs to break into the Asian market. The plans also include the launch of a new Tech Exporting Academy, which will provide expert advice to UK scaleups on subject areas essential to expansion, including regulation, intellectual property, and compliance. The Academy will be led and delivered in partnership with leading professional services firms.

The measures are being announced as part of a wider programme of support for UK tech to ensure the industry benefits from trade opportunities, including future free trade agreements (FTAs). The UK is currently a world-leader in tech and digital, attracting more than £10bn worth of investment in 2019, ranking third only behind the US and China. Future FTAs with partners like the US and Japan will enable the UK to go further, setting new standards in areas of digital technology and e-commerce, and encouraging further investment into the UK's world-leading tech companies.

This week the Department for International Trade launched the first round of negotiations with Japan. Government analysis shows a UK-Japan FTA will benefit every region and nation of the UK, with the greatest benefits in Scotland, London and the East Midlands. Trade talks will cover all areas set



out in the UK's published negotiating objectives, including cutting edge provisions on digital trade, professional and financial services and support for SMEs.

A number of digital tech subsectors are seeing increased demand as a result of Coronavirus – including EdTech, MedTech, fintech, and cyber security – leading to more export opportunities. Recent research by Sage UK shows 37% of UK SMEs are looking to grow their trade in international markets over the next 3 months.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

The measures we have announced today will help businesses take advantage of opportunities in fast-growing markets overseas, and provide the support that firms need to grow and eventually 'go global'.

Trade agreements we are negotiating with key partners will go further than others in addressing barriers to digital trade, opening up huge opportunities for our exporters and also for inward investment into the UK.

I want the UK to be the leading global voice in digital trade and the intellectual driving force in the space, breaking new ground in trade policy and pushing forward innovative new ideas like a global single market for digital trade.

Now is the time to harness our talent and potential and unleash it on the world stage. The measures announced today are an important step forwards in achieving that.

Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

The UK is home to a globally renowned tech-sector and we are determined to help it grow further by taking an unashamedly pro-tech approach.

Through this strategy we will give tech businesses of all sizes and all over the country the tools they need to expand their operations overseas and succeed on the world stage.

Gerard Grech, Chief Executive, Tech Nation said:

The UK needs a tech-fuelled recovery and that means opportunities to grow businesses from domestic ideas to international brands. 80% of companies on our Upscale 5.0 programme listed International Expansion as one of their top scaling challenges in 2020.

We are therefore delighted to support a new Digital Trade Network. Connecting businesses into local networks using on-the-ground expertise will help innovative UK businesses make the leap to new markets.

We look forward to working with the Digital Trade Network to support great British technology.

The full range of measures announced today include:

- Launch of an £8m Digital Trade Network (DTN) for Asia Pacific, a joint DIT-DCMS network, to support UK tech businesses to internationalise in this fast-growing region, attract capital and talent to the UK and enhance UK digital economy collaborations internationally. By increasing UK digital tech expertise on the ground across a number of key markets – including Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and Australia, government will help innovative UK companies access new trade and investment opportunities, and forge new international partnerships for the digital economy. Tech Nation – the UK tech scale up experts – will be joining the Digital Trade Network, which will see UK businesses participate in an international mission to Asia Pacific, as part of Tech Nation’s programmes in fintech, AI and cyber, to support their expansion into the region.
- Creation of a new Tech Exporting Academy, to provide expert advice for high-potential SMEs to support growth into priority markets. Led by leading professional services firms (including Linklaters, Deloitte, KPMG, BDO, Taylor Wessing, EY and Clifford Chance) UK SMEs will receive expert advice across a wide range of areas including legal, tax, intellectual property, regulatory and compliance to help reduce the time to market for exporting and increase UK exports. The support will ensure that women tech founders are represented on the cohorts of companies selected for the export academy.
- A new DIT platform to supercharge UK tech engagement on the global stage and mitigate the impact on firms unable to attend international industry events and investor meetings. This will include a greater presence at international industry events and access to virtual trade shows and virtual event platforms to support international buyer-seller meetings and companies-to-investors introductions. This will be launched in

September. Virtual trade shows will allow UK businesses to showcase their capabilities and network with overseas businesses and investors. Technology will be at the heart of the government's new Ready To Trade campaign with specific campaigns on edtech, medtech, cyber, VR, gaming and animation.

- As part of the government's efforts to help level-up the tech industry's success, we will be creating a new tech network to enhance the English regions' ability to grow international tech partnerships. This will include the creation of 25 tech export champions across the Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine, London and the South. The new network will work with the most promising regional scaleups on their international expansion plans, in partnership with TechNation. DIT and DCMS will continue to work closely with colleagues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure high performing tech companies across the whole United Kingdom receive the support they need to expand internationally.
- An expansion in support for DIT's High Potential Opportunities (HPOs) tech programme, to drive foreign direct investment (FDI) into emerging subsectors including 5G, Industry 4.0, Photonics and Immersive Technology, ensuring the UK remains the most attractive destination for tech investment in Europe post-Coronavirus. Working closely with the Devolved Administrations, LEPs and industry partners, government will seek to promote the full spectrum of UK tech capability to overseas investors and identify emerging growth markets for UK firms.
- The launch of a new fintech campaign in the UK, including promoting UK fintech companies who enable digitisation and resilience in priority export markets, to enhance UK tech competitiveness on the global stage after Coronavirus and ensure we remain the best place to start, scale and internationalise a fintech business.
- An uplift in outreach and engagement by UK Export Finance's (UKEF) marketing and communications to raise awareness of UKEF's offer among UK tech firms and how UKEF and Trade Finance can help them win and fulfil export contracts.

Tech is a key growth area for the UK, contributing £149bn to the economy in 2018, (7.7 % UK GVA) and employing more than 2.9 million people. Last year, the UK attracted a record £10.1bn worth of investment (up 44% from the previous year), more than Germany and France combined.