

Minister for Europe supports stronger United Kingdom-Spain ties at annual talks

Christopher Pincher joined Spanish Europe Minister Luis Marco Aguiriano at the event in Edinburgh which celebrates the United Kingdom's strong bilateral and cultural links with Spain and commitment to strengthening the United Kingdom-Spain relationship after Brexit.

The Minister for Europe Christopher Pincher said:

The annual Tertulias dialogue illustrates the breadth and depth of the relationship between the United Kingdom and Spain. We have participants from politics, business, media and civil society, coming together to discuss some of the most important issues facing both our countries, such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and the future of financial services.

The richness of this dialogue reflects the close people to people links that exist between the United Kingdom and Spain and our commitment to strengthen those links once we have left the EU.

The United Kingdom and Spain have a deep and broad bilateral relationship. Our bilateral trade was worth £50 billion pounds last year and growing. Spain is the eighth largest investor in the United Kingdom (£50bn inward FDI stock), while Spain is the fifth destination for British investment (£71bn outward FDI stock).

The United Kingdom and Spain collaborate closely on justice, defence, security and preventing organised crime. We also have strong people to people links, over 300,000 British nationals living in Spain, and nearly 200,000 Spanish nationals resident in the United Kingdom.

Further information

Next generation of new towns and economic growth opportunities to be

developed, levelling up every region

- New development corporations will kick-start work towards creating new towns and communities on the scale of Canary Wharf and Milton Keynes
- Government provides £10 million in seed funding for councils to develop initial proposals for up to 10 new communities to unlock jobs and growth across the country
- Supporting Sir John Peace and his proposal for a Development Corporation for Toton, Nottinghamshire, to deliver a “once-in-a-generation economic and regeneration opportunity”

New funding totalling £10 million will enable ambitious councils to develop locally-led proposals to deliver more new towns and economic growth opportunities on the scale of Canary Wharf or Milton Keynes, the Housing Secretary has announced today (26 October 2019).

As part of the Prime Minister’s commitment to level up every place in the UK, the government wants local leaders to draw up proposals that could kick start the delivery of thousands of new homes, boost local growth and deliver new jobs for communities after Brexit.

Councils will compete by submitting transformational proposals to win a share of the new funding. These will be locally-led by the people who know their community best.

Sir George Iacobescu, founding father of Canary Wharf, will advise the Housing Secretary on which project to take forward for further government support.

The Housing Secretary has today announced intent to establish the first project with a new Development Corporation at Toton, which will be led by the former chairman of Burberry, Sir John Peace.

Located close to the M1 and East Midlands Airport, civic leaders in the East Midlands want to maximise the area’s international links to create tens of thousands of new jobs and new homes needed – including exploring the potential for a new freeport.

Alongside today’s announcement, a [consultation](#) has been launched to ensure development corporations have the legal powers they need to deliver high-quality new communities at the right speed.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

We want to drive economic growth outside London and the South East. Our new development corporations will empower local areas to come forward with ideas for new towns that deliver jobs, houses and economic growth – creating the future Canary Wharfs of the North and Milton Keynes’s of the Midlands.

That's why I am announcing this competition to find major growth opportunities that will receive government support and investment.

Today I am proud to announce that we are supporting Sir John Peace and the local area on their proposal for a new Development Corporation which could be a catalyst for growth in the region.

In the future, development corporations could also be used on a smaller scale – and used to plan high street and town centre redevelopments as consumer trends change.

Up to 10 local areas will receive money to help them make the case to government for development corporations which could deliver thousands of new homes for local people.

Sir John Peace, Midlands Engine chairman said a new development corporation at Toton could have a transformational impact on the region.

In taking forward our proposal for a Development Corporation, we will capitalise on a once-in-a-generation economic and regeneration opportunity, of scale.

Coming together in partnership to plan and develop a new model for a Development Corporation means we will realise a much greater breadth of social, environmental and economic benefits for our communities, as we invest jointly in the future of our region.

We're delighted to be bringing forward the first in a new approach of development corporations, designed to address market failure, accelerate our path to delivery and embed innovation.

By working in partnership, around regionally significant opportunities and by investing together, we will ensure the future success of our communities and our region.

Sir George Iacobescu, CEO of Canary Wharf Group, Champion of New Development Corporation Competition, said:

Thirty years ago, development corporations breathed new life and energy into towns and cities across Britain.

This New Development Corporation Competition will be a chance for local areas to promote their plans for delivering the Milton Keynes's and Canary Wharfs of the 21st century.

I would like to encourage local authorities and their private sector partners to come forward with ambitious programmes and ideas.

I am pleased to have been asked to share our experience and to work

with the next generation of development corporations.

I am looking forward to seeing some innovative proposals which will help drive transformational growth across the country.

The [fund](#) will be open nationwide to help areas with ambitious plans for transformational housing and regeneration where it is most needed.

New towns and developments will be planned in close and detailed consultation with local areas – and councils will be expected to demonstrate they want to build not just houses, but new infrastructure and vibrant communities where people want to live.

Development corporations can help boost developments by providing focus, help coordinate plans for new development across different council boundaries and give builders the confidence to invest in sites.

Many of the laws date from the early 1980s – when new towns were being delivered – and a review is being undertaken to see whether they need to be updated. A response will be published in due course.

Historically development corporations have helped over 20 new towns rise from the ground – including Milton Keynes and Telford, as well as delivering transformational urban regeneration projects such as Canary Wharf.

In recent years, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation has been driving the delivery of new homes in Kent in the first garden city of the 21st century.

Collectively, all the new towns are now home to over 2.5 million people.

Development corporations will be subject to appropriate vision and business cases.

[UK Government Minister for Wales to commemorate the liberation of 's-Hertogenbosch](#)



53rd Welsh Division memorial 's-Hertogenbosch

UK Government Minister for Wales Kevin Foster will travel to the Netherlands on the 26 October to take part in a service of remembrance for those from the Welsh army division who fought and died in the liberation of 's-Hertogenbosch in 1944.

The 53rd Welsh Infantry Division spent four days in October 1944 battling to free the city in the southern Netherlands during the Second World War. The city and surrounding area saw allied forces enter the freed city on 27 October 1944 after fierce fighting which claimed the lives of 764 civilians and 146 British soldiers.

The UK Government Minister for Wales will honour the memories of the fallen soldiers and civilians at the memorial service, laying a wreath on behalf of the UK Government.

UK Government Minister for Wales Kevin Foster said:

“The commemorations offer an important opportunity to honour the lives and bravery of all those in the 53rd Welsh Division who fought so bravely to liberate 's-Hertogenbosch during the Second World War, with many making the ultimate sacrifice.”

“I am proud to represent the UK Government and to share in this special moment of reflection at the memorial service for the British Soldiers and civilians who lost their lives 75 years ago. It is important we continue to take the time to remember those who fell in the liberation of 's-Hertogenbosch and thank those who served alongside them to ensure their bravery continues to be honoured.”

ENDS

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Care robots could revolutionise UK care system and provide staff extra support

- UK today moves a step closer to developing health care robots which could improve the provision of health support and care around the world
- Within the next 20 years, autonomous systems like self-driving cars and surgical robots will become a normal part of our lives, transforming the way we live, work and travel
- Part of the government's aim to solve the [Grand Challenges](#) facing our society, including giving people five years of longer, healthier life

The UK moves one step closer to developing robots capable of providing support for Britons and making caring responsibilities easier, thanks to £34 million government investment announced today (Saturday 26 October).

With one in seven people in the UK now expected to be over 75 years old by 2040, so-called "care robots" could help provide the UK's dedicated adult social care sector with more assistance for those who need it most.

The government today launched the UK's biggest research programme entirely dedicated to making autonomous systems safe and trustworthy for public use with investment that could help develop robots to one day fulfil tasks such as helping an elderly person up after a fall and raising the alarm, delivering food to an older person at mealtimes, and even ensuring they take crucial medication at the correct time.

Autonomous systems are currently built across industries to solve challenges, but in order to be used by people they need to be designed to be safe, keep data secure and have a clear set of rules in order for them make effective decisions.

This cutting-edge programme will undertake research into their design, for example ensuring robots are better protected against cyber-attacks and that they demonstrate principles like respect, fairness and equality enabling them to eventually be used in environments like care homes and hospitals. It will provide developers, policy makers and regulators with access to world leading experts, as well as the to the latest information and guidelines around this technology. In the healthcare sector, resulting applications, such as care robots, could work in tandem with professionals to assist and complement their work, and help relieve pressures.

Science Minister Chris Skidmore said:

A staggering one in seven people in the UK are now expected to be over 75 years old by 2040. As our society ages, most of us will have to care for a loved one, whether it's a grandparent or a parent or a partner.

It's vital that we meet the needs of this ageing society, and through cutting edge research like this we will ensure that as technology advances, the UK leads the way in designing and adopting it, growing our status as a global science superpower.

This announcement follows previous government investment in a Bristol based project which has already developed a prototype of a robot called [CHIRON](#) – designed to support older adults with mobility and other ageing-related impairments. The robot could eventually assist with anything from bringing a tray of food or drink to a patient, to helping those with mobility issues to their feet from their chair. The latest phase of the project in the [Bristol Robotics Laboratory](#) is conducting research to ensure that these robots are trustworthy and safe for use.

Praminda Caleb-Solly, Professor of Assistive Robotics, Bristol Robotics Laboratory said:

Assistive robots can provide essential support for those who need help carrying out everyday tasks – so they can maintain their independence for as long as possible. But making sure we can trust these robots by reducing the risks associated with this technology is essential.

Unlocking their full potential means they could assist with anything from physiotherapy, to assistance for older people with mobility issues, improving people's quality of life significantly.

The impact of the government-backed autonomous systems programme could also be substantial for the transport sector – where lack of public trust is also a key challenge. Self-driving cars alone are expected to create an outstanding 320,000 UK jobs, and deliver £51 billion in economic benefits. By developing safer systems, self-driving vehicles could be widespread on our roads in just a couple of decades, revolutionising journeys, improving road safety, reducing congestion and making transport more accessible for people with mobility issues.

Funded through the government's [Strategic Priority Fund](#) and delivered by [UK Research and Innovation](#) (UKRI), the £34 million investment will help tear down public trust barriers by ensuring autonomous technologies like robots and self-driving vehicles are shown to be ethical, viable and safe.

The programme will look at developing reliable autonomous systems across all sectors – from automated personal shoppers, to robots that select the best mortgages, by bringing together researchers and experts, as well as involve the general public so that their needs are understood. Ethical and legal considerations will be incorporated when developing autonomous systems, so that new advances will be more resilient to cyber-attacks and be as safe as possible for consumers.

ENDS

Notes to editors

About the Strategic Priorities Fund:

The Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) supports high quality multidisciplinary research and development priorities and is delivered through UK Research and Innovation. This is from the second wave of SPF funding of £496.8 million.

About the programme:

Trustworthy Autonomous Systems (EPSRC)

- Funding: £33.9 million over 5 years
- Location(s): The intention is to build a national capability through calls which are open to HEIs, Institutes, PSREs and/or businesses across the UK.

Examples of existing care robots:

- [PARO](#) is an advanced interactive robot developed by AIST, a leading Japanese industrial automation pioneer. It allows the documented benefits of animal therapy to be administered to patients in environments such as hospitals and extended care facilities where live animals present treatment or logistical difficulties and has been found to reduce patient stress and improve their relaxation
- [Pepper](#) is the world's first humanoid robot able to recognise faces and basic human emotions and has been adopted by over 2,000 companies around the world. In the Healthcare sector, Pepper can improve awareness of prevention care and reduce anxiety on treatment and disease. Last year, the government also launched the [Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation](#) aiming to give the public a voice in how data-driven technology is governed and promoting the trust that's crucial for the UK to make the most of AI and data-driven technology

This opportunity for unrivalled innovation will ensure that the UK becomes a world-leader in the development of trustworthy autonomous systems and encourage international companies to operate in the UK.

The announcement follows the government reaffirming its commitment to invest at least 2.4% of GDP in R&D by 2027. The programme supports the UK government's Ageing Society Grand Challenge and Future of Mobility Grand Challenge, and complements the recently launched Robotics Growth Partnership, aiming to realise our ambition to place the UK at the cutting edge of the global smart robotics revolution.

Government investment backs museums of the future

- Investment will give the public the chance to engage and share experiences of interactive exhibitions on an ambitious scale
- pioneering digital catalogues will facilitate knowledge-sharing and increase access to the best material for the UK's world-leading research community

Museum exhibits could soon be viewed in people's homes, libraries and schools as part of a new £19 million government-backed programme announced today (26 October).

The initiative could revolutionise the way visitors can interact with our cultural collections by placing visitors at the heart of exhibits and helping design novel technology and digital tools. These include augmented and virtual reality, sound and interactive exhibits, creating sensory and emotional experiences for visitors.

This programme will build on the UK's reputation as a major tourist destination and leading light in innovative research, creating new possibilities and innovations for museum storytelling and opening up the public's imagination by bringing together entire collections together online.

UK museums attract millions of visitors every month, while government-sponsored museums make up 7 of the 10 most visited free attractions in the country. The new programme could eventually see art and culture made fully accessible to everyone, with digitisation of cultural collections allowing people across the country to enjoy Britain's national collections from the comfort of their own home. This could expand cultural treasures to those in remote areas and help local museums – large and small – to engage visitors with innovative, immersive experiences.

Science Minister Chris Skidmore said:

Museums can be the perfect fusion between the sciences and the arts, with the creative sector and the humanities working together with new technologies to change how we can experience culture. Creating more ways of seeing and engaging with the treasure trove of experiences available at museums and exhibitions of all kinds means that we are at the forefront of designing the museums of the future.

The government is determined to build on this reputation by investing through programmes like this to expand access to our cultural riches.

This cutting-edge programme will help UK museums engage visitors

with innovative new immersive experiences – as well as supercharging knowledge-sharing within our world-leading research sector.

Online interactive tours or live streams would open up the national collection to a diverse audience consuming culture and research – such as younger generations who spend more time online – and would also offer remote access options to those with mobility issues or in rural areas.

Arts Minister Helen Whately said:

Our museums and galleries teach us about our past and help us to better understand the world around us. This funding will see cutting-edge tech enhance the visitor experience, providing exciting new ways for people to explore our history.

The programme announced today has the potential to build on the work of previous exhibitions which have plunged visitors into new worlds through technologies such as 3D holograms and artefacts encouraging visitor interaction.

The David Bowie exhibition at the V&A, using an innovative 3D audio display attracted more than 1.5 million visitors, while the Leonardo Exhibition at the National Gallery – opening in November – provides visitors with an immersive experience where they can see the layers of a painting using projection technology.

Meanwhile, following a separate £4 million government investment earlier this year, content creators Factory 42 will produce 2 multi-sensory, interactive worlds in London's Natural History Museum and Science Museum to open in 2020. At the Science Museum, visitors will take part in a mixed-reality experience featuring high-resolution 3D images of robots, while the Natural History Museum will bring dinosaurs to life through the story of a palaeontologist's discoveries.

John Cassy, CEO, Factory 42 said:

Given our work at Factory 42 combining new immersive technology with new ways of storytelling – in projects such as Hold the World with the Natural History Museum and Sir David Attenborough, Painting the Future with the Royal Academy, and now our latest project re-imagining museum experiences at both the Natural History Museum and Science Museum next year – we welcome further opportunities for these iconic institutions to apply ground-breaking technology and content to engage visitors.

The new programme also aims to create a centralised, digital collection of research assets to open them up to both students and researchers across the

UK, accelerating knowledge-sharing and boosting the UK's world-leading research community's capability. Museums across the UK take part in thousands of research partnerships each year including the Natural History Museum's mosquito data helping to combat the Zika virus.

Researchers will identify the best approach for joining up research data and digital assets online to create one, unified collection which is widely available to anyone who wishes to view it. The programme aims to do this by exploring new digital search and cataloguing tools. 'Discovery' is an example of an existing online catalogue from The National Archives – which enables searches of archives across the country.

John Sheridan, Digital Director at The National Archives said:

This investment expands our horizons. Through the advanced digital linking of our collections we can transform everyone's ability to research our nation's incredible cultural heritage.

The £19 million investment from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is the latest move by government to ensure the UK remains one of the most attractive places in the world to study and conduct research in the world; as currently 37% of all arts and humanities postgraduate students are from abroad. The announcement follows the government reaffirming its commitment to invest at least 2.4% of GDP in R&D by 2027.

Jonathan Newby, Managing Director, Science Museum Group said:

Our mission is to inspire futures and we are constantly innovating in how we engage with people and exceed their expectations when they visit the museum. This kind of funding can be transformative in helping museums and their partners to attract new audiences and deliver educational experiences that have a lasting impact.

Today's announcement follows the publication of the Culture Is Digital report in 2017 which set out how the government would work with museums and galleries to explore how culture and technology can work together to increase participation by providing access to cutting-edge technology and digital skills.

About the Strategic Priorities Fund

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About the project

Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World (AHRC)

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) with DCMS and AHRC Independent Research Organisations (IROs)

Funding: £18.93 million over 5 years

Location(s): Several across the UK, based on participating IRO or HEI location

The AHRC's Independent Research Organizations (IROs) include many of the world's pre-eminent museums, galleries and archives, playing a highly significant role in the UK's international prestige and in its multi-billion heritage tourist economy.

These institutions are not only unrivalled windows on research for the general public, but outstanding centres of research in their own right. But their potential is still underexploited. Moreover, the benefits they bring are still too concentrated in metropolitan centres, and on familiar audiences.

Details:

This project forges new partnerships between IROs and universities, amplifying and deepening their joint research power. Using the potential of new technology, it will dissolve barriers between different collections, opening them up to new cross-disciplinary and cross-collection lines of research, and at the same time radically diversifying their visitor base.

It will therefore realise the collections' full potential not only for research but for social good and for the tourist and heritage economy, and take the first important steps towards creating a unified virtual 'national collection'.

The project will be delivered via funding a leadership fellow who will oversee and coordinate up to 8 foundational collaborative projects and up to 5 major discovery research projects via commissioning and open calls.

About Factory 42's exhibitions

In January this year the government announced £18 million of government/Industry funding for projects developing the next generation of immersive experiences – as part of the [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund Audience of the Future programme](#)

[Factory 42](#) are the company behind Hold the World with David Attenborough, a first of its kind immersive and interactive virtual reality experience at the Natural History Museum for Sky VR.