

[Nine-Leading UK Fintech Companies Land in Australia](#)

The UK's Department for International Trade (DIT) has brought nine-leading UK fintech companies to Australia under the [UK-Australia Fintech Bridge Pilot Programme](#).

Here to explore business opportunities and partnerships in the Australian market, the Fintech Bridge cohort will showcase the strengths of the UK fintech sector at Intersekt in Melbourne – Australia's leading fintech industry conference – before heading to Sydney for a program of meetings and events.

Launched in March 2018, the [UK-Australia Fintech Bridge](#) has been instrumental in forging strong links between these two fintech eco-systems. This bilateral agreement aims to strengthen engagement on fintech policy and regulation; facilitate trade flows and access to capital opportunities; and address barriers to international growth. UK fintech businesses expanding into Australia and Australian fintech businesses expanding into UK are eligible to benefit from the Fintech Bridge.

The UK-Australia Fintech Bridge Pilot Programme was launched by UK Investment Minister Graham Stuart during UK Fintech Week in April this year. This is a programme which lends selected UK fintechs support to accelerate their Australian expansion and vice-versa – last month DIT supported 10 Australian fintechs on a visit to the UK for a similar programme.

Michael Ward, British Consul General and UK Deputy Trade Commissioner, Asia Pacific – Australia & New Zealand says:

The UK has long been a world-leader in financial services; it remains one of our most important sectors. And, with our highly developed tech eco-system attracting unprecedented levels of capital investment – more than anywhere else in Europe – our innovative fintech sector is thriving. It is great to see such a strong cohort of UK fintechs visiting Australia – it says a lot about the opportunities in this market and the potential to further build our two-way trade and investment links.

The UK-Australia Fintech Bridge has been a tremendous success to date with over 24 Australian fintechs setting up in the UK since its inception and more than 14 new UK fintechs doing business in Australia and I encourage companies in both countries to take advantage of the opportunities it offers.

Ends

Fintech in the UK:

- UK is recognised as the no.1 global fintech hub and the best place in the world to grow and start a fintech firm
- Growth in fintech has been driven by the UK's leading reputation as one of the best global financial services hubs, its rapidly growing tech sector with deep pools of entrepreneurial and tech talent, progressive regulators and policymakers and access to capital.
- The UK accounts for 11% of the global fintech industry
- The UK fintech sector is worth £7 billion to the UK economy and employs over 76,000 people – one of the largest in the world.
- The UK hosts five fintech unicorns, with several more expected to join their ranks soon.
- More than 1600 fintechs in the UK estimated to double by 2030
- 89,000 financial and insurance firms in the UK
- Fintech adoption rate in the UK is 42% compared to the global average of 33%
- AUD\$4.7 billion (approx) of investment into UK fintech in 2018 – more than anywhere else in Europe
- 56% of traditional financial institutions have put disruption at the heart of their strategy
- A 2017 EY Australia report identifies the UK as the preferred destination for Australian fintechs seeking to expand globally.

Changes to the currency of UK State Pension and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit paid into Yemeni bank accounts



If you receive UK State Pension or Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit in Yemen, you will be paid in Yemeni rial (YER) from Monday 14 October 2019.

Contact the International Pension Centre if you need advice on how your

payment will be affected:

State Pension

Telephone: +44 (0) 191 218 7777

Textphone: +44 (0) 191 218 7280

Monday to Friday, 8am to 7.30pm

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit

Telephone: +44 (0) 191 206 9390

Monday to Friday, 8am to 7.30pm

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Breaking the Silence: There can be no health without mental health

It was difficult to believe that the confident and self-assured man standing by me had for years suffered from severe mental health issues, was ostracised by his family, and left destitute.

My encounter with Ahmad (not his real name) was one of the most memorable moments of my recent 'Ghana Grand' cycle ride, from Tumu to Accra.

Ahmad, who joined us for the 20km ride out of Tamale that morning had, just five years earlier, been found chained to a tree having suffered from recurrent psychotic incidents.

Basic Needs Ghana, a UK Aid funded organisation helping those with mental health challenges, not only found him and helped connect him to Ghanaian psychiatric services but offered ongoing counselling. Ahmad is now married, has two children and – serendipitously – runs a bicycle repair shop.

Thanks to the Basic Needs self-help group, and good community care, Ahmad has become the family breadwinner and owner of a thriving business. He is supporting others in his community to lead equally rewarding and prosperous lives. He is not a "cost" to society; he is an active contributor.

Mental health remains a taboo and is one of the most neglected issues of our time. But this is – thankfully – starting to change. Around the world, mental health, neurological and substance use conditions (MNS) are the leading cause of disability and ill health and it is coming – literally – at a cost to the global economy; estimated at \$16.3 trillion between 2010-2030.

The message is loud and clear: there can be no health, no lasting wealth,

without mental health. UK-Ghana Partnership on Mental Health

The UK is proud of our global leadership in Mental Health, demonstrated by our hosting of the first ever Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit in 2018. The Summit united leaders around a commitment to address key mental health challenges, to tackle stigma and discrimination, to increase investment in mental health, and improve access to mental health services and research.

Whether it is family, friends, neighbours or colleagues, the chances are that we all know someone who is affected. 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem each year. We will continue to work to ensure that everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets support and respect. But there is much that needs to be done in the UK – and elsewhere.

The UK Government has been investing £10 million (GHS 65 million) of UK Aid to support mental health services across Ghana. Our support has centred on improving access to quality community based mental health care services; and supporting the gradual erosion of stigma.

The UK shares His Excellency The President Nana Akufo-Addo's vision for a self-reliant Ghana. "Ghana Beyond Aid" must leave no one behind, and that includes every Ghanaian affected by a mental health condition. We welcome the leadership and foresight behind the decision to make mental health a priority. Backing this commitment with sufficient resourcing and appropriate legislation will be the key to affecting real change. We have seen considerable change in a short space of time. All districts in Ghana now provide mental health services compared to 32 districts just six years ago. More than 5,000 health workers have been trained on how to treat mental health conditions, with more than 100,000 people receiving treatment for mental health conditions in 2018. Community self-help groups like the one I visited in Tamale have reached 32,827 people, reuniting many with lived experience with their families and providing the tools to enable them live productive lives.

Looking ahead, with UK support, 250,000 Ghanaians will have access to quality mental health services. We are working with the Government of Ghana and the World Health Organisation to put human rights at the heart of Ghana's approach to mental health.

World Mental Health Day 2019 This year, the main theme of World Mental Health Day 2019 (10 October) is suicide prevention. Attempted suicide is a criminal offence in Ghana. It's not for me or the UK to argue the rights and wrongs of this decision. Whatever the laws says, the impact of suicide on families and our communities is devastating and long-lasting. According to the WHO, more than 800,000 people die by suicide a year – mostly men – making it the principal cause of death among young people. Suicide is a global public health problem.

A conversation is healthy. But what is more important is that, together, we nurture an environment in which people receive support so that fewer people decide to take their own lives. The factors and causes are wide-ranging but

mental health plays a significant part. As the writer Simone de Beauvoir captured “what chills your spine when you read an account of suicide...[is] what happened inside that heart immediately before”. Suicide prevention and support must be part of the solution. Addressing the stigma and discrimination around mental health will support the full, active inclusion of those suffering.

Individuals, families, communities, schools and offices all have a role to play. Working together to improve access to quality mental health services, particularly in more remote areas, will help address the desperation experienced by those suffering the most.

For our part, the UK Government will continue to work with Ghanaian partners at the grassroots to erode the stigma and discrimination around mental health. Next month, a UK Aid supported programme will address stigma among the urban youth, who are among the most vulnerable but are also the key to securing Ghana’s long-term future.

As we mark World Mental Health Day, let us recognise that mental health issues can touch us all; and vow to take action to break the stigma as a first step to protecting our mental health and wellbeing. For me, meeting Ahmad will always be a reminder of the power of hope; the power that we all have in our communities to give hope to others who need it most.

[Defence Secretary Ben Wallace addresses the NATO Parliamentary Assembly 2019](#)

Thank you for inviting me here to address you all today. Could I thank our president Madeleine Moon MP and Richard Benyon MP for their leadership in hosting these past few days and David Hobbs for all the work in putting this excellent event together.

Seventy years ago, a group of 12 nations came together to establish our Alliance. They did so to protect their common values and the freedoms so recently won in the Second World War. The then common need of the founding members; as is it is now; is not one of offence but of defence – mutual self-defence. NATO members chose freedom and democracy to be our guiding principles.

The NATO alliance is a unique balance between democracy and military. As parliamentarians you not only clear the way to ensure that new challenges to our security are appropriately met by our governments but you also act as that vital check on power to ensure that the most vital ingredient of democracy – consent – is upheld. The power of the 14 articles and the

doctrine of mutual self-defence cannot be maintained without the constant reaffirmation of our consent.

We must, however, be realistic. Upholding the articles of the treaty aren't free. They take investment and innovation. For a long time there has been pressure for us all to increase investment in defence. And the United Kingdom is proud to have heeded that call. Last month our spending review granted my department and extra £2.3bn. This takes us to an overall budget of £41.23bn and the leading spenders in Europe.

The motto of our Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst is "serve to lead" – its meaning is simple – to lead you must give. As a platoon commander it means you give your time, your effort and your loyalty, often long after everyone else has gone to bed. And for a country it is no different. Leadership must not be defined as "working to rule" or doing just enough. It is proven by going that extra kilometre. That's why we believe, in the United Kingdom, that our nuclear deterrent is for all your defence. It is why we believe it is important to contribute over 2% of GDP on defence spending and it is why we intend to continue to seek to support and strengthen this alliance and its membership.

All of us can lead in our own way. Whether by extending the hand to new members or leading development of niche capability our collective forward momentum is the glue that can keep us unified. We can never be static at NATO. And while the methods might have changed the threat and challenge to us all has not.

In 1949 as we were coming together for common good others were learning new ways to challenge us. Our adversaries realised that if you couldn't beat us by playing by the rules they would seek to change them. Just a few years before that founding of NATO, Georgy Isserson was rewriting them in the Soviet Union. With social media and open borders, Hybrid warfare that he projected has come of age.

In 2013 , the Russian Chief of the General Staff , Valery Gerasimov stated "The very "rules of war" have changed. The role of non-military means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness."

He went on to say in the same article "Long-distance, contactless actions against the enemy are becoming the main means of achieving combat and operational goals.". Our friends in Ukraine and the Baltics know that too well.

For the last 3 years before taking up this position I was the United Kingdom's Security Minister – I got to see into the shadows and see the daily attacks on our societies that many do not. Cyber, Disinformation, assassination, corruption. All prosecuted on our open and liberal societies. All engineered to divide us and weaken us. Be under no illusion that it is happening across all of our membership. To date our response has not been good enough. We are neither nimble enough nor deterring enough and that is where we must aim our investments.

The UK will soon solidify plans for a National Cyber Force to ensure a stronger presence in the new contested frontier. And we should not be naive to think that China and Russia are not interested in offensive capabilities in Space. If they go high we must go high, if they go deep we must go deep.

In the 70 years that NATO has been, we have achieved great things together. From 12 to 29 Members. Today we still stand guard on our borders and now we reach deep across continents. Still holding dear the same values but dealing with a wider range of threats and adversaries.

I am proud of what we have all achieved together and I am determined that under the leadership that I give to the Ministry of Defence, we will continue to contribute to NATO's readiness, deployments and thinking. What ever happens over Brexit our moto will be that security is not a competition it is a partnership.

As Harry Truman said at the founding of the Alliance: "Men with courage and vision can still determine their own destiny, they can chose slavery or freedom , war or peace, I have no doubt which they will choose."

Public consultations

The SSR0 has today launched three public consultations on matters related to its work and the pricing of contracts regulated under the Single Source Procurement Framework. Details of each consultation and how you can engage with us on these matters are provided below:

We welcome your views and supporting evidence in response to these consultations. The consultation period runs for eight weeks from today until 5.00pm on Friday 6 December 2019. A response form for each consultation has been published alongside the consultation documents. Completed response forms should be sent by email to consultations@ssro.gov.uk (preferred), or by post to SSR0, Finlaison House, 15-17 Furnival Street, London, EC4A 1AB.