

## News story: £21m to boost UK's world-class tech sector and spread the benefits across the country

Today the Government announced that Tech City UK and Tech North are to become a national organisation, Tech Nation, to speed up the growth of the UK's pioneering and innovative digital companies and clusters, helping spread the benefits even further.

Successful companies which have benefitted from Tech City UK's work include Just Eat, Zoopla and Funding Circle.

Building on the organisation's work helping to turn London's Silicon Roundabout into a globally recognised tech hub, the funding will see the new Tech Nation work alongside existing tech partners and business organisations to accelerate the expansion already underway by rolling out its tech-hub model.

As part of the plans, Tech City UK will give more than 40,000 people the opportunity to develop the skills needed to start or grow a digital business and will offer support for up to 4,000 UK tech businesses through targeted growth programmes.

Minister for Digital, Matt Hancock, said:

This new funding is an important part of our plans to make the UK the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business, with the benefits spread right across the country.

This regional network will accelerate the growth of the digital tech sector, cement the pipeline of talent and spark the next generation of innovative firms to seize the future opportunities of digitisation – bringing jobs, skills and higher productivity to our regions.

Eleven regional hubs will form the backbone of a national network of digital excellence to reflect the country's standing as a global powerhouse for tech industries and help the Government achieve aims outlined in the Industrial and Digital Strategies.

The funding will also help entrepreneurs in emerging tech sectors, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Fintech, by connecting them to peers and potential investors in other hubs across the country and by offering tailored development programmes.

Gerard Grech, CEO of Tech City UK (soon to be Tech Nation), said:

We are thrilled the Government is backing our model which has played an important role in helping the country's tech firms accelerate their growth.

Tech Nation will help transform the UK from a series of standalone tech clusters into a powerful national network that will reinforce the UK's position at the top of global tech rankings.

This will ensure we continue to be at the forefront of digital innovation, developing tech talent and attracting international investment.

Eileen Burbidge, Chair of Tech City UK (soon to be Tech Nation), said:

We are delighted to hear that the Government wants to increase Tech City UK's funding for the next four years.

Under the Tech Nation banner, this country that has brought so much innovation to the world and leads in sub-sectors such as fintech, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, robotics and life sciences will build a national network of digital excellence so that the UK will continue to be recognised as one of the best places in the world to start or grow a digital tech business.

Britain is already a global tech powerhouse and the Government is determined to see that continue. More than 1.4 million people work in the UK's digital tech sector and jobs are being created at twice the rate of other sectors in the economy. Average advertised salaries are £50,000, 30 per cent higher than the national average.

The sector has a turnover of more than £118 billion and figures on foreign investment published in July found in the first half of 2017 there was a record £5.6 billion investment in tech in the UK.

In the face of international competition for this high-value employment industry, Tech Nation will help the UK accelerate the growth of the tech sector.

Successful Tech North programmes such as Founders Network and Northern Stars will be extended nationally, and existing national programmes such as Future Fifty and Upscale will be strengthened.

David Buttress, Partner at 83North and former CEO and co-founder of Just Eat, a Future Fifty alumni company, said:

Tech City UK and the Future Fifty programme have given fast-growing companies like ours a great opportunity to learn from our peers and exchange ideas. They have also enabled us to get our voice heard in government, so that we can give our point of view on the way our

working world is changing. That will continue to be extremely important for all emerging tech sectors.

Samir Desai, Funding Circle, a Future Fifty alumni company, said:

Tech City UK has been an excellent advocate for the tech sector, understanding the needs of startups and scaling businesses and representing this coherently to Government. The programme they deliver is comprehensive and has supported us across a range of issues and business priorities.

Cherry Freeman, co-founder LoveCrafts, a Future Fifty company, said:

Being involved in Tech City UK's Future Fifty has been fundamental in helping us to drive LoveCrafts' growth on an international scale. They have been a great supporter and resource to us and it's great news that they are going to expand their role over the next four years. I know that they will make a great success of working with entrepreneurs and founders in tech clusters across the country.

Virraj Jatania, founder of Pockit, an Upscale company, said:

Exchanging ideas with people who are going through similar things as yourself, as we do on Tech City UK's Upscale programme, has been a great way for me to improve my personal performance and make sure that I am sufficiently ambitious for my company. They understand the challenges facing the sector and makes sure that people are speaking out for people like us, so that we can get on with building our businesses.

The first set of clusters to form Tech Nation will be located in:

- Midlands – Birmingham
  - Scotland – Edinburgh and Glasgow
  - Northern Ireland – Belfast
  - Wales – Cardiff
  - Greater London – London
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# Press release: Minister for London welcomes £1.4 billion Croydon redevelopment

The redevelopment of Croydon town centre passed a major hurdle today (14 November) as Croydon Council's planning committee approved the £1.4 billion scheme, backed by global investment.

Three years after it was first proposed, the redevelopment of the Whitgift Shopping Centre will now progress with government support following meetings hosted by Minister for London Greg Hands at the Department for International Trade.

Croydon will join Stratford and Shepherd's Bush as London's third Westfield shopping centre and one of the company's 17 flagship centres across the world, from China to the USA. Westfield's investment of £700 million represents a huge commitment from the Australian firm to Croydon, and London, as a global retail destination.

Construction is now set to begin next year, creating 7,000 new jobs and 1,000 new homes for the borough. The final proposals were put to the planning committee after a series of meetings chaired by the Minister for London, where Croydon Council, Westfield and the Greater London Authority (GLA), along with all three of Croydon's MPs, agreed the funding needed to move the project forwards.

The redevelopment follows a record year for overseas-backed projects in the UK and London, with 891 projects in London made possible through foreign direct investment in the last year.

Minister for London Greg Hands said:

I am delighted that after convening two meetings of all concerned parties, here at the Department for International Trade, we will now see construction taking place. This major redevelopment of the Whitgift site will bring huge benefits to Croydon and London with thousands of new homes and jobs.

This is a great example of local and central government working together with private investors, and as Minister for London I'm delighted to be supporting the project, and seeing it secure planning approval.

As Minister for Trade it is also yet another example of London and the UK's appeal to international investors, bringing much-needed regeneration projects to life. Croydon will join locations across the world, from San Francisco to Sydney, with a flagship Westfield site, once again proving London's enduring strength as a leading

global retail destination.

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## [News story: Research partner announced for children's social care project](#)

Cardiff University has been named as the research partner for a new What Works Centre for Children's Social Care.

Working closely with social innovation charity Nesta, which was awarded the contract to deliver the What Works Centre last month, researchers at Cardiff will develop a strong evidence base around effective interventions and practice systems.

This will include using the findings from projects in Round One of the government's Children's Social Care Innovation Programme, published in the [Final Programme Evaluation Report](#) today.

The independent report found that in many cases, projects funded through the Innovation Programme led to fewer children in care and more children being reunited with their birth families.

Minister for Children and Families, Robert Goodwill, said:

All children deserve the best possible care and support and that's why we are investing £200 million in the Innovation Programme to help organisations to drive improvements in children's social care.

It's encouraging to see the positive findings from the projects so far, many of which have already started to improve the lives of vulnerable children and their families.

The What Works Centre will play an important role in building evidence to both help improve outcomes for children and deliver cost effective innovation, and I am delighted that Cardiff University has been awarded the research partnership. I look forward to hearing more about the centre's work to improve outcomes for children.

Professor Donald Forrester, from the Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre at Cardiff University, and new Director of Research for the What Works Centre said:

We are delighted to be involved in this important initiative. The

What Works Centre aims to provide useful evidence of the highest standard for workers and leaders across children's social care, and we look forward to delivering an ambitious programme of work aimed at making a tangible difference to services for children and their families.

The learning from the Innovation Programme is being collated as a bank of good practice and tools the sector can use to improve services for children and deliver better value for money.

These are available on the new Children's Social Care Innovation Programme's [website](#), launched this week and run by the delivery partner, the Spring Consortium.

This new website will make the evaluations of projects more accessible for social workers, children's services and others involved in caring for children, to use the evidence to improve their own practice and services.

To complement this, a new national learning conference will be held on February 27 2018, which will share the evidence and best practice from the evaluations of Innovation Programme projects.

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## **[Press release: PM meeting with Nicola Sturgeon: 14 November 2017](#)**

The Prime Minister met the First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon in Downing Street today.

Both discussed domestic issues, including the recent allegations of improper behaviour and sexual assault in politics and agreed this behaviour was completely unacceptable. They agreed to work collaboratively to ensure that the right systems are in place to protect and support those working across the UK's parliamentary institutions.

They spoke about the UK's EU exit – the Prime Minister said that it remains her priority to provide certainty to businesses and people both in Scotland and across the country, as well as protecting our UK internal market.

They spoke about progress in agreeing principles on common frameworks at the recent Joint Ministerial Committee and the Prime Minister reiterated that as powers are repatriated from Brussels back to Britain there will be a significant increase in the decision-making powers for the Scottish Government and other devolved administrations.

The Prime Minister encouraged the Scottish Government to continue to work

with counterparts to secure the best outcome for the people of Scotland and the whole of the UK.

The First Minister spoke about BiFab who has filed a notice of intention to appoint administrators with the Scottish Courts. The Prime Minister said this is a worrying time for the workers of BiFab and their families and the UK Government is ready to provide whatever support we can.

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## **News story: Plans to further boost teacher recruitment and development**

Staff at the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) and the Department for Education will combine into one team to help better align efforts to attract the best and brightest into the profession, and support teachers at every stage of their career.

The department will take on teacher recruitment functions and the move will mean even closer coordination between the work already underway to improve schools and strengthen the profession, and the delivery of support to teachers in classrooms.

Regulation of the teaching profession, including misconduct hearings, will continue to be handled by an executive agency of the Department for Education. Led by existing teams at the NCTL, the executive agency known in future as the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Today's announcement is part of the ongoing work to support teachers to deliver a world-class education that will broaden horizons for young people.

Schools Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

There are now a record number of teachers in our schools – 15,500 more than in 2010 – and overall the number of new teachers entering our classrooms outnumbers those who retire or leave. We need to continue to attract the best and brightest into the profession, and to support their development throughout their careers.

Bringing these teams together within the Department will enable us to build on the work already underway to invest in the profession and better support teachers in the classroom.

The Teaching Regulation Agency will continue to be an executive agency of the Department for Education and will begin to operate from April 2018.

Chair of the National College of Teaching and Leadership Roger Pope said:

Having worked with the NCTL since October 2015, I have seen first-hand the benefits of the fantastic work by hard working staff across the organisation. It is right that as the education sector changes we adapt. This new approach will help ensure that all teachers get the support and recognition they deserve.

The department will work closely with staff, unions and stakeholders in the education sector to deliver these plans.

Today's announcement follows the recent confirmation of a number of measures to recruit and retain more great teachers, including:

- naming the 25 areas across England selected to run a pilot programme to reimburse student loan repayments for modern foreign languages and science teachers in the early years of their careers. For a teacher on £29,000, the new student loan repayments pilot and the increased student loan repayment threshold of £25,000 will mean £720 cash in pocket per year. This is the equivalent of an approximate £1,000 increase in salary
- naming the projects that will receive a share of the £75 million Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund. These projects will help provide tailored training opportunities for teachers on both managing challenging pupil behaviour and developing leadership, so they can make the most of their talent in the classroom
- the opening of the Institute for Teaching, a new specialist graduate school for teachers to support their continued training and development