

UKAEA awards £2.3million of innovation contracts to address technical challenges of fusion energy

Fifteen organisations have secured UKAEA contracts to demonstrate how their innovative solutions and technologies can contribute to the development of commercial fusion energy.

The contracts – worth between £50,000 and £250,000 – were funded by UKAEA's new 'Fusion Industry Programme' and awarded through the UK Government 'Small Business Research Initiative'. They focus on challenges in digital engineering and hydrogen technology and are relevant across the range of approaches to developing commercial fusion energy.

Organisations awarded contracts to help accelerate fusion power plant design with next-generation digital tools include Assystem, CAE Tech, CRA, First Light Fusion, Full Matrix, Hybird Ltd, Slingshot Simulations and the University of Manchester.

Aqsorption, CageCapture, Gencoa, IDOM, IS-Instruments, Jacobs and the University of Bristol have all been successful securing funding to reduce fusion power plant fuel requirements by researching advanced production and handling technologies for hydrogen isotopes.

Tim Bestwick, UKAEA's Chief Technology Officer, said: "Fusion energy holds enormous promise as a low-carbon energy source for the world, but it is technically very challenging. This scheme is helping engage a range of organisations and industrial partners to address these important challenges. We are very pleased to have the opportunity to work alongside these organisations, and hope to include many others as the scheme develops".

Lyndsey Mooring, FIP Delivery Manager, said: "By using the established Small Business Research Initiative to seek innovations to these fusion challenges, UKAEA has been able to support a diverse set of organisations. This is important to bring us all closer to commercial fusion energy."