

Whisky goes green thanks to UK government funding

- £10 million fund announced to help UK distilleries go green and cut emissions by switching to low carbon fuels such as hydrogen
- funding will enable our world-famous distilleries to cut emissions by almost a million tonnes of CO2 every year – equivalent to taking 100,000 cars off the road
- Hydrogen Advisory Council set up to help other industries follow distilleries in going green

Whisky and spirit lovers the world over will soon be able to enjoy their favourite tippie in the knowledge that they are helping to cut carbon emissions and support new green jobs, thanks to a new UK government scheme which opened today (17 August 2020).

Kwasi Kwarteng, Minister for Energy and Clean Growth, today announced the opening of the £10 million fund, which is being made available to kick-start green innovation across Scotland's iconic distillery industry. The move gives backing to distilleries across the UK to harness energy sources such as low-carbon hydrogen, biomass and repurposed waste to power their operations.

The funding will help prevent pollution equivalent to emissions from 100,000 cars from entering the atmosphere, contributing towards the UK's legally-binding target to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Energy and Clean Growth Minister, Kwasi Kwarteng, said:

Our plan to deliver a carbon-neutral future doesn't just mean new jobs in new industries but helping some of our oldest industries to play their part as well.

We want to harness the tremendous innovation of our distilleries so customers can enjoy their favourite tippie in the knowledge they are helping us to tackle climate change.

In 2019, the UK distilleries industry grew by 20%, demonstrating the opportunity for the sector to be at the heart of a clean and resilient recovery.

The funding has been welcomed by trade bodies in both Scotland and Northern Ireland, which are home to the vast majority of the UK's world famous distilleries.

Dagmar Droogsma, Director of Industry at the Scotch Whisky Association, said:

The Scotch Whisky industry welcomed the new Green Distilling Fund

announced in the March Budget as an important step on our sustainability journey. The use of innovative technology is among several approaches that the industry could adopt as it works towards net zero by 2045, as outlined in our recent net zero report.

This Fund will provide us with the opportunity to put forward bids for demonstration projects for so-far untested technologies, helping the Scotch Whisky industry play its part in reaching Scotland's emissions targets.

Michael Bell, Executive Director of the Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association, said:

Greening is essential to our industry's future and this is to be welcomed. Interestingly, in the last five years I've seen more distilleries in Northern Ireland than in the last 50.

It's good to see the Government investing in food and drink businesses.

Notes to editors

- the Green Distilleries Competition supports the government's approach for a clean, resilient recovery across the UK to support the creation of new jobs in the distillery sector.
- the funding is supported by the £505 million BEIS Energy Innovation Portfolio which aims to accelerate the commercialisation of innovative, cheap, clean and reliable energy technologies, enabling the UK to meet its net zero commitment.
- more details, including information on how distilleries can express interest in the funding, can be found on the [Green Distilleries Competition page](#)