

Press release

11 October 2011

£8.5 million investment targets growth in the UK space industry

The first £8.5 million of investment from the UK's National Space Technology Programme was announced today by the Science Minister, David Willetts. This boost to the UK space sector will match-fund a range of projects with industry to develop commercial products and services using space technology or space-derived data.

The competition is funded by the UK Space Agency, in partnership with the Technology Strategy Board and the South East England Development Agency. Proposals are sought for projects that fall into one or more of the following market areas: Satellite Telecommunications; Sensing: Position, Navigation and Timing; Robotics and Exploration and Access to Space. All projects must be collaborative, business-led and have a clear route through to commercial exploitation.

Minister for Universities and Science David Willetts said:

“The UK space industry is an important driver of growth and supports thousands of the most high-tech jobs we have in this country. This investment will take that success further, as part of the £10 million for space technology announced in the Budget. It will help innovative British businesses design and manufacture highly commercial, cutting-edge products that will be in global demand.”

Dr David Williams, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

‘Having a National Space Technology Programme means helping UK researchers and businesses develop the technology and services for the future of space. The Agency is committed to maintaining the momentum that the UK has gained since our launch last year, and developing our domestic space capabilities will be a large part of that.

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board, said:

“The Technology Strategy Board's role as the UK's innovation agency enables it to play an important role, working closely with the UK Space Agency, in engaging the space industry and UK space capability to enable the development, commercialisation and exploitation of space technologies to address broader challenges and growth opportunities across a wide range of emerging markets.”

Oona Muirhead CBE, Chief Executive of SEEDA, said:

“We are delighted that SEEDA’s £500,000 investment will provide vital support to businesses in the South East to develop new commercial opportunities in the space industry and engage in research and development programmes. This programme builds on our support in 2010/11 to small businesses to help them access facilities at the International Space Innovation Centre at Harwell and the Surrey Space Centre. The South East is at the forefront of the global space industry and there are huge commercial and export opportunities for businesses, particularly in down-stream technologies such as phone applications.”

‘Space for Growth’ will provide up to £2 million for flagship projects and up to £100,000 for smaller projects. The competition opens on 31 October and will be managed by the Technology Strategy Board. It will encourage businesses to work together to design new products, a model established by the International Space Innovation Centre at Harwell and Guildford. Further elements of the National Space Technology Programme will be announced in due course.

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Notes to Editors:

1. To see all press releases issued today at Innovate11, and suggestions for potential features and other stories around the event, please visit: <http://www.innovateuk.org/deliveringinnovation/innovate-11/innovate-press-centre.ashx>.
2. The UK has a long heritage of involvement in space and British industry contributes to most aspects of space activity – including hardware, software, infrastructure and services. Currently, the UK's space industry contributes £7.5 billion to the economy, employs 25,000 people and supports 60,000 more jobs across a variety of industries. There is enormous potential for growth in the sector and it could be worth £40 billion to the British economy by 2030 if the UK can increase its share of the global space economy from the current 6% to 10%. This could be achieved if the recommendations of the Space Innovation and Growth Strategy are implemented, and this investment will contribute significantly to the aims of the strategy.
3. Full details of the competition are available at: <http://www.innovateuk.org/content/competition/national-space-technology-programme-space-for-grow.ashx>
4. The **UK Space Agency** became fully operational on 1 April 2011 and is at the heart of UK efforts to explore and benefit from space. The UK Space Agency is responsible for ensuring that the UK retains and grows a strategic capability in the space-based systems, technologies, science and applications. The UK Space Agency therefore leads the UK's civil space programme in order to win sustainable economic growth, secure new scientific knowledge and provide benefits to all citizens. For more information visit: [UK Space Agency website](#).
5. The UK Space Agency is contributing £6 million to this competition, which forms a core element of the National Space Technology Programme. This contribution is subject to the approval of a full business case. For further information about the National Space Technology Programme and the Space Innovation and Growth Strategy please visit: <http://www.bis.gov.uk/ukspaceagency/funding/national-space-technology-programme>.
6. The **Technology Strategy Board** is a business-led government body which works to create economic growth by ensuring that the UK is a global leader in innovation. Sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Technology Strategy Board brings together business, research and the public sector, supporting and accelerating the development of innovative products and services to meet market needs, tackle major societal challenges and help build the future economy. For more information please visit: [Technology Strategy Board website](#).
7. In January 2009, the Technology Strategy Board took on responsibility for UK European Space Agency (ESA) satellite telecommunications and satellite navigation R&D programmes. The Board is contributing £2 million to this competition, as part of the strategy to encourage new collaborations across technology sectors which lead to the development of new applications and services using Space data.
8. SEEDA (www.seeda.co.uk) is a founding member of the International Space Innovation Centre at Harwell and supports R&D activity that drives economic growth in the South East. SEEDA are contributing £500,000 to this competition and are particularly interested in projects which accelerate the development of the

Centre for Climate and Environmental Monitoring from Space. SEEDA's Chairman Rob Douglas CBE has been selected by the government to chair the UK Space Agency Steering Group, and he will bring to this role a focus on jobs and growth from his experience at the South East's economic development agency.

9. Companies and other organisations seeking information about Technology Strategy Board funding competitions should visit the Competitions page of the Technology Strategy Board website – [Competitions page](#) , email <mailto:competitions@innovateuk.org> or phone the Competitions Helpline at 0300 321 4357.