

CASE STUDY

T-TRIG Programme

Accelerating business growth for SMEs and start-ups

WHO WE ARE

The Connected Places Catapult (CPC) is an independent, trusted, expert broker operating at the intersection between the public and private sectors and between local, regional and national decision making. We promote UK innovation and broker relationships between government, academia and industry providing support and solutions for innovators to commercialise their projects and research. With our deep expertise in technology, we bridge the gap between buyers, suppliers, innovators and industry. Our agile approach enables us to convene our partners to act rapidly to create new market collaborations responding to public funders and industry needs. We boost demand for innovation to unlock wider economic and environmental benefits.



Our client says

The Minister was very pleased with the session and really enjoyed her involvement. Her office emphasised she would be keen to be involved in similar events in the future. This was her first public appearance speaking about the Future of Transport Grand Challenge and I am pleased that this happened in the context of T-TRIG and the CPC, especially given innovation and SMEs are themes that strongly resonate with her.

Professor Phil Blythe CEng FIET –
Chief Scientific Adviser, Department
for Transport

Challenge

Science and technology and the business models underpinning future transport services are advancing apace. **The Industrial Strategy** [\[Link\]](#) published by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy in 2017 sets out **Grand Challenges** to put the UK at the forefront of industry. **The Future of Transport Grand Challenge** [\[Link\]](#) states the ambition to make the UK a world leader in the way people, goods and services move while achieving a safer, cleaner, and user-centred transport system.

The challenge is identifying early on where to fund research and then identifying which innovative products and services in engineering, technology, and business models to develop, test and launch to enable beneficial changes to the transport system. SMEs are proving to be the **cornerstone of innovation and growth** in generating innovative products, services, and solutions in the UK Connected Places market. Reaching the right ones at the right time with funding and support takes expertise.



Transport-Technology

RESEARCH INNOVATION GRANTS

Department for Transport

Solution

Department for Transport (DfT) established the Transport-Technology Research Innovation Grants (T-TRIG) programme in 2014 to provide grant funding to projects across transport technology. The programme bridges the early stage, proof-of-concept funding gap in transport innovation. Projects typically last six months and are granted funds of £30k to prove the concept of proposals. The T-TRIG programme has delivered great successes, including an electric HGV range extender, a station navigation app for the visually impaired, drone navigation collision avoidance technology and electric cargo delivery bikes.

Successful SME's that have benefitted from the T-TRIG programme include: Alsitek, Biella Research, Cenex, Faster Route Ltd, Imtech Traffic & Infra UK Ltd, J&M Inertial Navigation Ltd, OneSails GBR (South), Sunamp Limited, The Floop and Vivacity Labs. See how T-TRIG helped kick-start the journey of Vivacity Labs, see founder and COO Peter Mildon's blog on the Industrial Strategy [\[Link\]](#).

DfT selected Connected Places Catapult (CPC) to work on the 10th funding call to leverage the synergies with the organisation's SME Programme. This Programme harnesses the CPC's strengths as an independent agent with deep technical knowledge, market expertise and regulatory experience. CPC convenes academia, and industry together to support start-ups and SMEs to create new markets. A CPC T-TRIG Ministerial Round Table was held on 24th September 2019 announcing the new DfT partnership with CPC and launching the T-TRIG competition.



Nicola Yates OBE, CEO, CPC said:

We're excited to be using our expertise to manage the latest T-TRIG competition for one of our key partners the Department for Transport. Early stage funding is a vital component to driving great solutions from the drawing board to reality and the areas covered in this competition, including decarbonisation and accessible transport, are key areas to tackle in the UK today. We're looking forward to working with the successful applicants to ensure T-TRIG leads to tangible benefits for transport users.

Outcomes

The September 2019 T-TRIG call for applicants resulted in 99 applications of which 85 were assessed by the CPC and DfT. Moderation took place on 27th November 2019.

CPC welcomed new Future of Transport Minister Rachel Maclean MP to give her first speech and to meet T-TRIG innovators at a virtual cohort event on 31 March 2020 – halfway through their funding periods. The Minister championed the importance of the future of transport and acknowledged the exciting developments emerging through T-TRIG's key themes: Supporting decarbonising in the transport system; potholes and resilient infrastructure; age-friendly and accessible transport.

<https://cp.catapult.org.uk/2020/04/03/transport-technology-research-and-innovation-grants-programme-cohort-welcomed-by-transport-minister-in-exclusive-t-trig-webinar/>

Professor Phil Blythe, Chief Scientific Adviser for the DfT, spoke of boosting the UK's R&D budget, iterating that he's never known another time in our history when science and technology had

been in so much demand. He reported that the government is set to increase R&D innovation investment from 1.7% to 2.4% of GDP by 2027, a pledge that is articulated in the DfT's Science Plan. For full details of the successful T-TRIG candidates go to Transport-technology research innovation grants (T-TRIG): funding winners.

CPC creates value

- ◆ The T-TRIG programme has already provided £4.6m of grants to support over 146 transport innovation projects. The CPC and DfT partnership will build on this achievement to ensure that the current crop of some 30 SMEs have the best chance to making it to market.

Benefits

- ◆ T-TRIG bridges the early stage, proof of concept funding gap in transport innovation, where small investments can de-risk emerging solutions.
- ◆ The T-TRIG programme provides the long-term opportunity for DfT, SMEs and industry to work in partnership to put the UK at the forefront of addressing transport ecosystem solutions.

Next steps

At the end of the six months grants, CPC will leverage our extensive network and in-house capability to help build these businesses around the best technology within each grant cohort. CPC provides the opportunity to work with industry partners to turbocharge all aspects of products and services to create new markets.

Contact the CPC SME Development Programme via SMEDevelopmentTeam@cp.catapult.org.uk. See summaries of recent T-TRIG projects at this link and register your business with us to be considered.

To find out more about the Connected Places Catapult and how we can help you develop the future skills that address the needs of your organisation please contact info@cp.catapult.org.uk

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