

The UK Research Partnership Investment Fund (UKRPIF) August 2021

UKRPIF is a competitive grant funding scheme which has proven successful in building core research and innovation infrastructure across the UK and leveraging industry investment in UK R&D. UKRPIF aims to create state-of-the-art research facilities and spaces for university researchers to work alongside clinicians, industrial partners, and local SMEs. UKRPIF-funded facilities help level-up opportunity across the UK, exploiting regional pockets of R&D excellence and strengthening local research and innovation ecosystems.

Unlocking private R&D investment across the UK

Research England work with devolved administrations to fund R&D infrastructure projects across the UK. Since UKRPIF's inception in 2012, £900m has been spent on 54 state-of-the-art research centres and facilities in research-intensives across the UK (see Annexe for a list of projects). UKRPIF awards are conditional on double-matched non-public co-investment, meaning that **for every £1 awarded through UKRPIF, universities must attract £2 from non-public sources. To date, the scheme has secured commitments of over £2bn** from industry partners, charitable organisations, and philanthropic donors.ⁱ

Opportunity to scale

The latest round of UKRPIF funding totalled £210m.ⁱⁱ UKRPIF has been an incredibly successful initiative, leveraging significant co-investment and building research and innovation infrastructure capacity across the UK. Launching a new round of funding worth £315m (a 50% increase on the latest round) could:

- **Leverage at least an additional £630m co-investment** from non-public sources.
- **Create critical R&D infrastructure for areas that have attracted relatively few, or no, awards to date**, helping to build core innovation capacity in areas such as the North East.
- **Help create new, and scale existing, regional, tech-themed, innovation clusters**, characterised by high concentrations of R&D intensive firms, high levels of high-skilled employment, and the exploitation of innovative ideas (e.g. through high levels of durable, technology-focussed spin-outs).
- **Help accelerate progress towards net-zero**, by creating low carbon or carbon-neutral R&D facilities, as well as research facilities dedicated to green technology research.
- **Facilitate further collaboration between industry and academia.**
- **Increase the number of PhD and post-doctoral research associates**, with evidence linking this to the prevalence of industry sponsorship in UKRPIF facilities.ⁱⁱⁱ

University of Birmingham • University of Bristol • University of Cambridge • Cardiff University • Durham University
University of Edinburgh • University of Exeter • University of Glasgow • Imperial College London • King's College London
University of Leeds • University of Liverpool • London School of Economics and Political Science
University of Manchester • Newcastle University • University of Nottingham • University of Oxford
Queen Mary University of London • Queen's University Belfast • University of Sheffield • University of Southampton
University College London • University of Warwick • University of York

Illustrative impact case studies: UKRPIF-funded projects

University of Nottingham: Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Chemistry/The GlaxoSmithKline Carbon Neutral Laboratory for Sustainable Chemistry

The Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Chemistry is developing new chemistries that are both energy and resource efficient, providing British customers with high value products that have minimal environmental costs, and training the next generation of sustainability-aware researchers. The Centre attracted over £12m of funding from GlaxoSmithKline and is located within their Carbon Neutral Laboratory. The Centre will further enhance the University of Nottingham's industry collaborations around sustainable chemistry.

The University of Warwick: National Automotive Innovation Centre (NAIC)

Building on regional R&D strengths in advanced manufacturing, the Centre will drive the future of the automotive industry, bringing together the brightest minds from industry and academia to develop future vehicles and mobility solutions. The Centre will deliver wide and sustained economic growth to the region, with the initial 15-year programme projected to exceed £650m in turnover, and add over £5bn in gross value. The NAIC is the largest research centre of its kind in Europe, with 33,000m² space dedicated to automotive innovation, and 1,000 staff set to work across design, engineering and research. The facilities will also be utilised by talented engineering undergraduates in the region. The Centre is a partnership between the University of Warwick and industry, with UKRPIF's £15m grant leveraging double-matched co-investment from Jaguar Land Rover and Tata Motors European Technical Centre.

Queen's University Belfast: The Wellcome-Wolfson Institute for Experimental Medicine

The Institute has already become an international hub of research excellence in biomedicine, with researchers developing novel therapeutic treatments for eye disease, infectious diseases and respiratory disease. The Institute houses over 300 staff, and has tripled the income leveraged from industry in the last three years. The project received co-funding from a number of philanthropic partners, including the Wellcome Trust and Wolfson Foundation.

University of Sheffield: Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre Factory 2050

Factory 2050 will help to accelerate innovative manufacturing research into industry. The Factory is the centrepiece of the university's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre and will focus on areas of competitive research strengths, spanning robotics, automatics, AI, and other areas which can help give UK-based firms a competitive edge. The project leveraged significant private investment, with double-matched funding from industry partners including BAE systems, Rolls Royce and Airbus.

University of Glasgow: Imaging Centre of Excellence (ICE) and Clinical Research Facilities for Stratified Medicine

UKRPIF investment has driven the development of over £80m of academic infrastructure at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, providing state of the art facilities for academics, NHS and industry partners to drive implementation of precision medicine. ICE has been equipped with ultra-high resolution scanners, and is located next to Clinical Research Facilities specialising in adult and paediatric medicine. UKRPIF investment has also underpinned an award-winning Clinical Innovation Zone, which is a space for industry and other partners to co-locate with academic researchers and NHS staff, collaborating to ensure ground-breaking medical research in chronic diseases and multimorbidity translates to treatments for UK patients.

Annex – list of UKRPIF-funded projects

Region	University	Project
East	Cranfield University	Aerospace Integration Research Centre
	Cranfield University	Digital Aviation Research and Technology Centre
	University of Cambridge	Cambridge Centre for Crop Science
	University of Cambridge	Chemistry of Health
	University of Cambridge	Heart and Lung Research Institute
	University of Cambridge	Institute of Therapeutic Immunology and Infectious Disease
	University of Cambridge	Maxwell Centre
East Midlands	University of Leicester	Manufacturing, Engineering, Technology and Earth Observation Research Centre
	University of Nottingham	Research and Innovation Centre for Power Electronics and Machines
	University of Nottingham	Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Chemistry/The GlaxoSmithKline Carbon Neutral Laboratory for Sustainable Chemistry
London	Brunel University	Advanced Metal Processing Centre
	Brunel University	The Future Metallurgy Centre
	Brunel University	National Structural Integrity Research Centre
	Imperial College London	Michael Uren Biomedical Engineering Hub
	Imperial College London	Molecular Sciences and Research Hub and the Translation and Innovation Hub
	Institute of Cancer Research	Centre for Cancer Drug Discovery
	King's College London	Advanced Therapies Centre
	King's College London	London Institute for Healthcare Engineering
	King's College London	Hub for Neuropsychiatry and Imaging Research and Therapeutics
	King's College London	Research and Innovation Hub in Cancer
	London School of Economics and Political Science	International Inequalities Institute
	University College London	Zayed Centre for Research into Rare Diseases in Children
	University College London	Project Oriel
	University College London	The Institute of Immunity and Transplantation
	University College London	Translational Neuroscience
North West	University of Liverpool	Materials Innovation Factory
	University of Manchester	A Globally Leading Cancer Research Centre
	University of Manchester	Graphene Engineering Innovation Centre
	University of Manchester	Multidisciplinary Characterisation Facility
	University of Manchester	Manchester Cancer Research Centre
	University of Manchester	Alliance Manchester Business School
NI	Queen's University Belfast	Wellcome-Wolfson Institute for Experimental Medicine

Region	University	Project
Scotland	The University of Edinburgh	Building a New Biology
	The University of Edinburgh	Centre for Tissue Repair
	University of Dundee	Centre for Translational and Interdisciplinary Research
	University of Glasgow	Imaging Centre of Excellence and Clinical Research Facilities for Stratified Medicine
	University of Strathclyde	Continuous Manufacturing and Advanced Crystallisation
South East	University of Oxford	The Big Data Institute Li Ka Shing Centre for Health Information and Discovery
	University of Oxford	The Oxford Target Discovery Institute
	University of Southampton	Experimentation facilities in engineering science
	University of Surrey	5G Centre
South West	University of Bath	Institute of Advanced Automotive Propulsion Systems
	University of Bristol	Bristol Digital Futures Institute
	University of Exeter	Centre for Resilience in Environment, Water and Waste
Wales	Cardiff University	Institute for Compound Semiconductors
	Swansea University	Centre for Integrative Semiconductor Materials
	Swansea University	Energy Safety Research Institute
West Midlands	University of Birmingham	High Temperature Research Centre
	University of Birmingham	UK Rail Research and Innovation Network
	University of Warwick	Advanced Propulsion Research Laboratory
	University of Warwick	National Automotive Innovation Centre
Yorkshire and Humber	University of Leeds	Institute for High Speed Rail and System Integration
	University of Sheffield	The AMRC Factory 2050
	University of York	York Global Initiative for Safe Autonomy

ⁱ This sometimes includes philanthropic funds run directly by universities

ⁱⁱ Round 6 funding ran for the 20/21 year <https://re.ukri.org/documents/2019/ukrpif-round-6-guidance-research-england/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://re.ukri.org/sector-guidance/publications/interim-evaluation-of-the-uk-research-partnership-investment-fund/>