

Budget 2017

The Chancellor's [Autumn Budget](#) was announced on 22 November. As expected it was closely linked to the Industrial Strategy:

"The Budget sets out a long term vision for an economy that is fit for the future – one that gives the next generation more opportunities. It is an economy driven by innovation that will see the UK becoming a world leader in new and emerging technologies, creating better paid and highly skilled jobs."

Government action at this Budget to boost productivity includes:

- Transport: A £1.7 billion new transforming cities fund through the NPIF to improve connectivity and support jobs across England's great city regions
- Research and Development: The largest boost to R&D support for 40 years with a further £2.3 billion investment from the NPIF in 2021-22
- Long Term Investment: Unlocking over £20 billion of patient capital, over the next 10 years so that innovative high-growth firms can achieve their full potential
- Emerging Tech: Leading the world in developing standards and ethics for the use of data and AI, and creating the most advanced regulatory framework for driverless cars in the world
- Skills: Creating a new partnership with industry and trade unions to deliver a National Retraining Scheme, giving people the skills they need throughout life to get a well-paid job, and equipping young people with the science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM) skills to become innovators of the future.

Commitments to research and development, emerging technology, and skills are all potentially positive for heritage science.

Extracts from the sections that present actual or potential opportunities for the heritage science community have been copied into the document below together with page numbers to enable reference to the full document. Notably, all of these extracts come from within the main section heading of 'Productivity'.

Technology (p.45)

"In recognition of the potential that that digital technologies have to transform the economy the government will:

- create a new Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation to enable and ensure safe, ethical and ground-breaking innovation in AI and data-driven technologies
- establish a new £10 million Regulator's Pioneer Fund to help regulators to develop innovative approaches aimed at getting new products and services to market.
- invest £21 million over the next 4 years to expand Tech City UK's reach – to become 'Tech Nation'
- provide a further £1 million to extend the UK Games Fund until 2020, aiding access to finance and business support for early stage video game developers.
- establish a new Geospatial Commission to provide strategic oversight to the various public bodies who hold this data." (The UK has some of the best geospatial data in the world, and much of it is held by public bodies. The potential economic value of this data is huge.)

Research and development (p.46)

"Supporting the government's ambition of increasing R&D investment in the economy to 2.4% of GDP by 2027, the Budget confirms that the £4.7 billion NPIF investment in science and innovation

announced at Autumn Statement 2016 will grow by a further £2.3 billion of additional spending in 2021-22, taking total direct R&D spending to £12.5 billion per annum by 2021-22.

The Industrial Strategy White Paper will provide further detail on what this funding will support, including:

- support for our creative and digital industries by developing pioneering immersive technology for creative content, and launching a new AI and machine-learning programme targeted at the services sector
- £170 million for innovation to transform productivity in the construction sector
- new support to grow the next generation of research talent and ensure that the UK is able to attract and retain the best academic leaders globally.”

“To support its ambitions on innovation and R&D, the government is encouraging the best and the brightest international scientific and research talent to work in the UK. The government will: change immigration rules to enable world-leading scientists and researchers endorsed under the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route to apply for settlement after three years; make it quicker for highly-skilled students to apply to work in the UK after finishing their degrees; and reduce red tape in hiring international researchers and members of established research teams, by relaxing the labour market test and allowing the UK’s research councils and other select organisations to sponsor researchers. This is alongside the expansion of the exceptional talent route, benefiting current and future leaders in the digital technology, science, arts and creative sectors.”

Skills and jobs for a new economy p. 47

“Nearly 50% of UK employers working in STEM report that they struggle to recruit people with relevant skills. Studying STEM subjects at university is correlated with higher average wages. The Budget invests an additional £406 million in maths and technical education, and in helping people develop the skills they need to succeed in the new economy.”

“Apprenticeship levy – The government will continue to work with employers on how the apprenticeship levy can be spent so that the levy works effectively and flexibility for industry, and supports productivity across the country.”

“Gender disparity in STEM – Girls are disproportionately less likely to study most STEM subjects at A level, hindering progress into higher education and careers in STEM. To deepen the understanding of the gender disparity in subject choices at age 16, the government will explore how to improve the accessibility and transparency of data on this issue by institution and subject.”

Local growth policies (p.56)

“Cultural Development Fund – To support the role culture can play in regeneration and local growth, the government will provide £2 million funding to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport for place-based cultural development.”

[Read the full Budget – Autumn 2017](#)