

UK Space Agency seeks international partnerships

At the end of July it was announced by the UK Space Agency that it is working with research institutions, industry and non-profit organisations to develop strong international partnerships to help tackle economic, societal and environmental issues using satellite technology.

It is understood that the Agency will award funding through its International Partnership Programme (IPP), which is designed to partner UK space expertise with overseas governments and organisations. This is part of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), which aims to support cutting-edge research and innovation that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries.

Ten small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and research organisations have been given a total of £338,000 to use to establish partnerships in countries including Zambia¹, Ethiopia² and Vietnam³.

Once the partnerships have been formed the companies can then develop their proposals which will then go to the IPP Call 2 to unlock further funding to put the plans into practice.

Earlier this year IPP Call 1 saw £70 million in funding given to projects in partnership with the UK space industry, applying inventive satellite solutions to a range of areas such as deforestation, illegal fishing, marine pollution, disaster recovery, drought and flooding.

Call 2 for funding will close on 5 September 2017.

The assessment is due to take place in October 2017 and successful projects will begin by the end of the year.

¹ e2E Services Ltd Virtual Doctors Over Satcom (ViDOS)

Location: Zambia & Malawi

Cost: £47,210

The theme of the proposal addresses the use of satellite communications to provide telemedicine services in sub-Saharan Africa. E2E plan to work with The Virtual Doctors to use satellite communications to extend the range of their current mobile phone-based telemedicine system.

² Barefoot Lightning Ltd -Pasture for Africa: Earth Observation to deliver solutions for African livestock farmers

Location: Malawi & Ethiopia

Cost: £40,619

The widespread pastoral system where herders leave their homesteads to drive their herds to greener pastures has come under significant pressure in recent years during a number of severe droughts which reduced the

availability of good common grazing land and water supplies. This has resulted in serious conflicts as pastoralists infringe on private farms and ranches and cross into neighbouring territories where they are not seen as having traditional grazing rights. To help prevent conflict and also enhance sustainable intensification of production in the target regions Barefoot are looking at an integrated solution with ILRI which incorporates the three main ruminant production systems and connects them through common requirements for animal health / feed / fodder / water supply, herd replenishment / improvement and market access.

³ An executive Agency of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. HR Wallingford: Multiple stress impact on water resources and diseases in Vietnam (MOVIE)

Location: Vietnam

Cost: £34,892

This short study will form partnerships in order to define the requirements for the first investigation of the water resource, land cover, climate and health nexus in Vietnam. The project will develop an innovative Earth-Observation-based tool that will allow beneficiaries in Vietnam to issue alerts of dengue epidemics and to carry out assessments of the water availability and will set out the framework for MOVIE, a new integrated modelling system that will link earth observations, weather forecasting, and a land-surface model to understand and predict for the first time the impacts of our four primary stressors on water resources and dengue epidemics in Vietnam.

Pic caption and credit

The Amazon Basin.

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