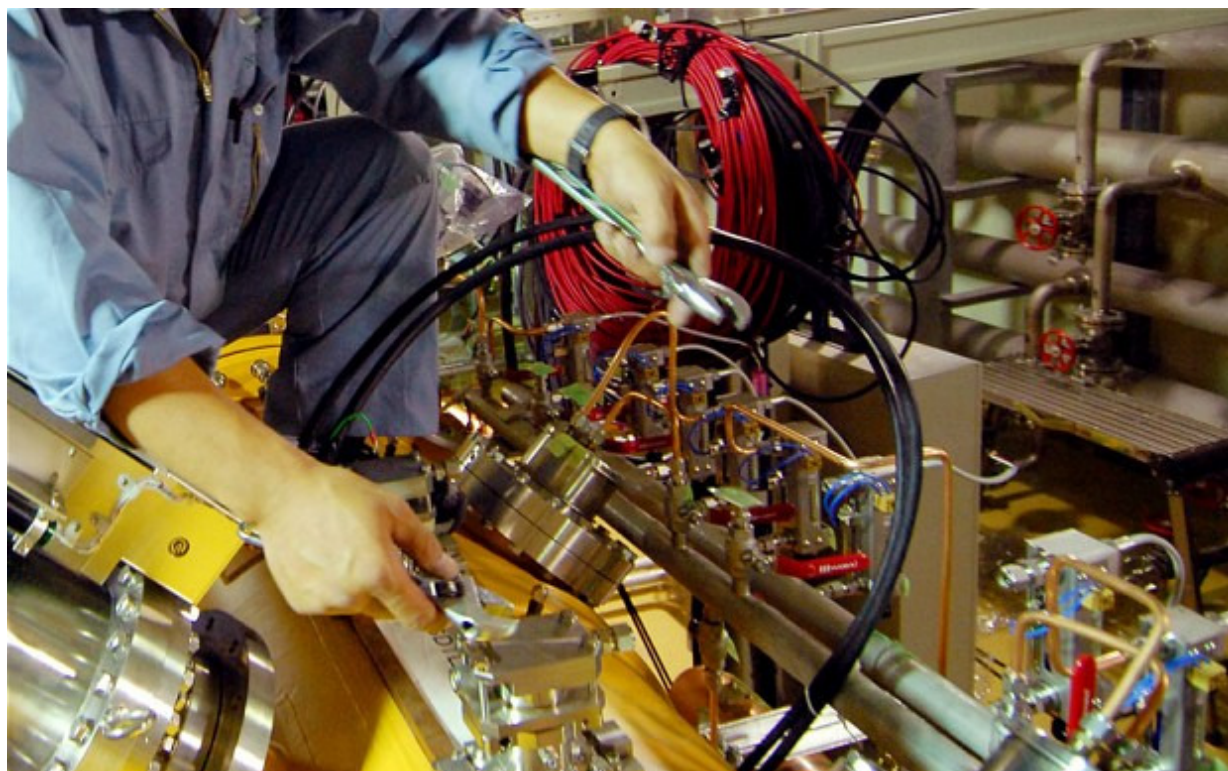


## Thousands of engineers to gain from £350m training boost

Universities minister to announce creation of 70 centres to develop skills crucial to Britain's economic growth



The money will be used to create more than 70 Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) at 24 universities where 3,500 graduates will work on research and development of physical sciences and engineering. Photo: AP



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By Alan Tovey

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The engineers and scientists of tomorrow are getting a £350m boost with funding for new facilities to train postgraduate students working in areas that are key to Britain's economic growth.

The money will be used to create more than 70 Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) at 24 universities where 3,500 graduates will work on research and development of physical sciences and engineering.

These centres bring together groups of students from different universities to do research with industry backing while they work towards their PhDs. Having industry involved means businesses can back areas of research where they see a need, giving it practical applications and fitting with the government's plans to double exports to £1 trillion a year by 2020.

Science minister David Willetts is due on Friday morning to detail how the investment, of which

£250m comes from industry and is being allocated by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), is to be used.

Mr Willetts said: “Scientists and engineers are vital to our economy and society. It is their talent and imagination, as well as their knowledge and skills, that inspire innovation and drive growth across a range of sectors, from manufacturing to financial services.

“I am particularly pleased to see strong partnerships between universities, industry and business among the new centres. This type of collaboration is a key element of our industrial strategy and will continue to keep us at the forefront of the global science race.”

Sir James Dyson, the inventor and founder of Dyson, whose company is involved in seven CDTs and is a strategic partner with the EPSRC, welcomed the Government’s input but said it needs to be a prolonged commitment.

“Research in universities can take 10, 15, even 20 years so this must be a long-term commitment by the Government to encourage more British research to filter down to British companies. Universities in Britain do excellent research but we need more of it and we need more British people doing research at British universities.

“This type of investment by Dyson and by other companies will result in increased exports globally over the next 20 years and the creation of the wealth we need. To compete internationally Britain needs to export world-beating inventions which are the result of intellectual property developed by our companies and universities.

“We must support British engineers and scientists at all levels, rewarding them properly for their work. This investment is heartening, but genuine research and development takes time. Continuing robust investment is required if we are to see the breakthroughs which will deliver the growth we require.”

Paul Golby, chairman of the EPSRC, added: “CDTs have proved to be a great success and the model is popular with students, business and industry. These new centres will give the country the highly trained scientists and engineers it needs and they will be equipped with skills to move on in their careers. .

“They are designed to bring the best students through and train them as PhDs, 40pc of them of them go into industry and the general economy and all the past evidence shows these are the people who make key decisions to drive future growth.”

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