# Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park launches Building Better challenge offering £16,000 apiece and three‑month in‑park trials for healthy‑building tech



Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park has opened the fourth round of its Future Industries Demonstrator programme, inviting London‑based small and medium‑sized enterprises to bid for funding and in‑park trials of technologies and design approaches intended to improve indoor environmental health. The Building Better challenge will award £16,000 apiece to five SMEs whose proposals address problems such as poor indoor air quality, damp, overheating and energy inefficiency, with funding provided by the Mayor of London and the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. According to the Park’s announcement, shortlisted teams will be supported to scale solutions in a real‑world urban setting.

The selection process is staged. Organisers will first invite 25 applicants to refine their concepts at a design hackathon and a series of workshops; five teams will then be chosen to deliver three‑month trials on the Park, culminating in a showcase at the Innovation Forum in March 2026. The programme documentation states applications opened on 4 August 2025 and close on 14 September 2025, and that participating ventures will receive not only grant funding but access to workspace, mentoring and practical validation opportunities.

Organisers frame the demonstrator as a timely response to intersecting social and climate pressures. The Park and the London Legacy Development Corporation say their brief targets the ways in which ageing building stock, rising temperatures and inefficient heating systems combine to harm health and drive energy use — problems the challenge seeks to tackle through adaptable, scalable interventions. Shazia Hussain, chief executive of the London Legacy Development Corporation, said in the announcement that the funding comes at a crucial moment given both the prevalence of household energy stress and the growing risk of overheating in the capital’s buildings.

London’s deputy mayor for business and growth, Howard Dawber, described the competition as a route to “unlock new solutions to major social and environmental challenges”, and the call‑out to SMEs emphasises demonstrable innovation, measurable impact and clear scalability as the core assessment criteria. The Park’s materials signal a preference for interventions that can be validated quickly in situ and rolled out beyond the trial sites if successful.

The Future Industries Demonstrator is embedded in a broader drive to nurture London‑based innovation: previous cycles of the programme tackled themes such as Natural Cities, Sustainable Structures and Food Systems, and Park partners point to a package of support for awardees that includes expert guidance and access to the Innovation District’s networks. Shift London, a specialist organisation working with the Park, highlights that the programme is designed to help start‑ups and SMEs accelerate from prototype to tested product or service within an urban testbed.

The financial underpinning is delivered through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which the Greater London Authority administers for the capital. GLA programme materials explain that UKSPF is intended to target local investment in businesses, skills and places; mayoral decisions setting out grant allocations to London partners show the fund is being channelled into business support projects intended to boost growth and broaden access to opportunities for under‑represented founders. The Park’s demonstrator is one of a number of innovation and business support initiatives receiving UKSPF backing.

Some of the claims used to justify the programme’s urgency are worthy of context. The Park’s announcement cites more than 700,000 London households experiencing fuel poverty as part of its rationale for intervention. Independent city data compiled on the London Datastore, however, shows a slightly different picture when measured by the standard fuel‑poverty metric: recent regional estimates put just over ten per cent of London households in fuel poverty, with borough‑level variation and sensitivity to how the measure is calculated. That difference underlines the complexity of quantifying household energy stress and the importance of clear definitions when designing retrofit and healthy‑building responses.

For SMEs considering an application, the demonstrator offers a compact route to testing and visibility: a competitive shortlisting process, focused funding, in‑park trialling and public presentation at the Innovation Forum next March. The Park and its partners say the programme is intended to surface ideas that can be scaled across the capital and beyond; whether the five chosen projects in 2025 will prove transferrable will depend on the rigour of their evaluation during the three‑month trials and the extent of any follow‑on support they secure. Applications close on 14 September 2025.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article), [[3]](https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-stories/building-better-queen-elizabeth-olympic-park-launches-innovation-challenge-rethink-3), [[4]](https://shiftlondon.co.uk/future-industries-demonstrator/), [[5]](https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/funding-and-innovation/uk-shared-prosperity-fund)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article), [[2]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article), [[3]](https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-stories/building-better-queen-elizabeth-olympic-park-launches-innovation-challenge-rethink-3), [[4]](https://shiftlondon.co.uk/future-industries-demonstrator/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article), [[3]](https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-stories/building-better-queen-elizabeth-olympic-park-launches-innovation-challenge-rethink-3)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://shiftlondon.co.uk/future-industries-demonstrator/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[5]](https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/funding-and-innovation/uk-shared-prosperity-fund), [[6]](https://www.london.gov.uk/md3149-uk-shared-prosperity-fund-grant-funding-london-partners)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article), [[7]](https://data.london.gov.uk/economic-fairness/living-standards/fuel-poverty/)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article), [[3]](https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-stories/building-better-queen-elizabeth-olympic-park-launches-innovation-challenge-rethink-3), [[4]](https://shiftlondon.co.uk/future-industries-demonstrator/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bdonline.co.uk/news/olympic-park-invites-funding-bids-for-innovations-in-healthy-building-design/5137475.article> - Building Design (BD) reports that Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park has opened the fourth round of its Future Industries Demonstrator programme, seeking design and technology bids to improve indoor environmental health. The article says five London-based SMEs will each receive £16,000 to trial scalable solutions addressing poor indoor air quality, damp, overheating and energy inefficiency. Funded by the Mayor of London and the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the initiative will shortlist 25 applicants, invite a hackathon and select five teams for three‑month trials, culminating in a showcase at the 2026 Innovation Forum. Applications close 14 September 2025.
3. <https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-stories/building-better-queen-elizabeth-olympic-park-launches-innovation-challenge-rethink-3> - Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park’s press release announces the fourth Future Industries Demonstrator challenge, Building Better, aimed at healthier, more sustainable buildings. It states five London SMEs will each receive £16,000 to trial solutions tackling poor indoor air quality, damp, overheating and energy inefficiency. Funded by the Mayor of London and the UK Government via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the programme will shortlist 25 applicants for a design hackathon and select five projects for a three‑month trial. Successful teams will attend workshops and present outcomes at Innovation Forum March 2026. Applications open 4 August 2025 and close 14 September 2025.
4. <https://shiftlondon.co.uk/future-industries-demonstrator/> - The Future Industries Demonstrator page on Shift London describes a programme supporting London-based start‑ups and SMEs to scale climate and healthy‑building solutions within Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park’s Innovation District. It outlines previous challenge themes—Natural Cities, Sustainable Structures and Food Systems—and explains the fourth cycle, Building Better, will focus on healthier built environments. The page states successful applicants receive funding, support, workspace access and expert guidance, and confirms part‑funding by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. It emphasises innovation, impact and scalability criteria, and notes that trials will be delivered on the Park to validate solutions in a real‑world urban environment setting.
5. <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/funding-and-innovation/uk-shared-prosperity-fund> - The Greater London Authority’s UK Shared Prosperity Fund page explains the fund’s purpose in delivering local investment across communities, business support and skills. It details London’s allocation and how funds are distributed to support small businesses, people and place projects, and highlights achievements and evaluation work. The page confirms that the GLA manages London’s UKSPF allocation and that funding is used to back programmes including innovation and business support initiatives. It provides information on investment priorities, case studies and how funding is delivering economic growth and opportunities across London, supporting projects such as the Future Industries Demonstrator and local partners.
6. <https://www.london.gov.uk/md3149-uk-shared-prosperity-fund-grant-funding-london-partners> - The Greater London Authority’s Mayoral Decision MD3149 describes grant funding awarded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to London & Partners to deliver business support projects. The decision details objectives to simplify and expand support for small businesses, including Grow London programmes, and authorises expenditure of UKSPF funds to back business support initiatives. It sets out financial allocations and expected outcomes for business growth, job creation and support for under‑represented founders across London. The paper explains the GLA’s role in managing London’s UKSPF allocation and demonstrates how government funds are channelled into local programmes supporting innovation districts and accelerating SMEs.
7. <https://data.london.gov.uk/economic-fairness/living-standards/fuel-poverty/> - London Datastore’s fuel poverty briefing provides regional estimates and contextual analysis of households in fuel poverty across London. It explains measurement changes and notes that just over ten per cent of London households were estimated to be fuel poor in the latest period, discusses drivers such as energy prices and housing stock, and sets out differences between boroughs. The page highlights data limitations, projection methods and how energy efficiency improvements affect estimates. It offers access to underlying datasets and commentary for policymakers, giving context for statements about many London households facing fuel stress and the need for targeted retrofit measures.