# UK government launches qualifying process for AI Growth Zones to drive economic growth



The UK government has initiated the formal qualifying process for the establishment of flagship Artificial Intelligence (AI) Growth Zones, highlighting a major step in its Plan for Change aimed at boosting economic growth through advanced technology. Following more than 200 expressions of interest from across the nation, the government is preparing to select locations that will become hotbeds of AI development, attracting substantial private investment and creating thousands of high-skilled jobs.

The announcement took place on 30 April at TechUK in London, where investors and local authorities gathered to engage with senior government officials including AI Minister Feryal Clark and the Prime Minister's AI Adviser, Matt Clifford. The event focused on discussing proposal submissions and elaborating on the vision for the AI Growth Zones.

These zones are designed to rejuvenate local communities by drawing billions of pounds in private sector investment, stimulating employment opportunities, and reinforcing the UK’s role as a global frontrunner in AI technology. The government plans for these zones to facilitate the rapid development of infrastructure critical to AI, such as data centres and high-capacity energy connections, by streamlining planning approvals to enable faster construction.

Potential sites for the AI Growth Zones, identified through the expressions of interest, include former industrial areas equipped with the necessary land and infrastructure for redevelopment. A key qualification criterion for these sites is access to large power connections, with a baseline requirement of at least 500 megawatts—enough to supply energy for approximately two million homes—or a credible plan to achieve this capacity. Additional evaluation factors will include site readiness and the anticipated local impact.

Minister for AI Feryal Clark emphasised the transformative potential of AI, stating, "Just like coal and steam powered our past, AI is powering the future. Our AI Growth Zones will transform areas across the UK into engines of growth and opportunity—unlocking new jobs and revitalising communities across the UK. This is our Plan for Change in action, ensuring the benefits of AI are felt in every region and securing the UK's place as a world leader in this vital technology."

Matt Clifford, the Prime Minister’s AI Adviser, commented on the urgency of the initiative, saying, "The UK has an extraordinary opportunity in AI, but speed is everything. Today's launch sends a clear signal to investors and local communities that we've already moved into high gear. I'm looking forward to discussing these proposals in more detail today as we continue to work alongside investors and local authorities to deliver a once-in-a-generation opportunity."

The government intends to announce the first additional sites for AI Growth Zones this summer, aiming to commence construction activities by the end of 2025. This initiative marks a significant step in the UK’s strategic development of cutting-edge technologies, anchored in regional growth and infrastructural readiness for the next generation of AI advancement. The Mirage News is reporting on this development, underscoring the importance of investment and local partnerships in realising the government's vision for an AI-driven future.

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

## Bibliography

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