

# Chemical Engineering Matters



## UK General Election 2015: Manifesto digest of the main political parties on Manufacturing

### Key differences:

- All the main political parties recognise the importance of supporting innovation and industry.
- The Conservatives and Lib Dems will continue to at least **ring-fence the science budget**, with continued support for **Catapult Centres**.
- Labour will establish a **British Investment Bank** to provide growth finance and support a network of regional banks whose core purpose will be to support small business growth in their area.
- There is more emphasis from Labour, the Lib Dems and the SNP on developing the **green economy**.
- In comparison with the other parties, the SNP have not included detailed proposals for the funding of science and engineering in their manifesto.

### Conservatives (see [here](#))

- Will continue to invest in science, back industrial strategies and make Britain the technology centre of Europe.
- Will back the Midlands' strength in advanced manufacturing, engineering and science with major projects such as the Energy Research Accelerator and support for innovation in the motor industry.
- Will support the creation of new jobs by backing the East's great strengths – agri-tech, high-tech businesses around Cambridge, and energy businesses at Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.
- Ring-fenced the science budget and will invest new capital on a record scale – £6.9 billion in the UK's research infrastructure up to 2021 – which will mean new equipment, new laboratories and new research institutes.
  - This long-term commitment includes £2.9 billion for a Grand Challenges Fund.
  - Will continue to support the network of University Enterprise Zones, ensuring that universities are able to make money from the technology they develop.
  - Will support modern industrial strategies, such as their Life Sciences strategy, to help people compete and win globally for high value, high knowledge jobs.
  - Will work with the Automotive Council in support of our resurgent car industry.
  - Will direct further resources towards the Eight Great Technologies – among them robotics and nanotechnology.
- Will continue with the network of catapult centres and create more to ensure that we have a bold and comprehensive offer in place for Britain's researchers and innovators.
- Will back scientific and technical strengths by creating new institutions such as Health North; the Royce Institute for Advanced Materials in Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool and Sheffield; the National Centre for Ageing Science and Innovation in Newcastle; the Cognitive Computing centre at Daresbury; and by making investments in energy research in Blackpool, Cumbria and Thornton.
- Will support a long-term economic plan by fostering research, innovation and jobs in the life science industry.

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- Will champion our farmers and food producers and will set out a long-term vision for the future of British farming, working with industry to develop a 25 year plan to grow more, buy more and sell more British food.
- Will speed up access to new medicines by implementing the findings of the Innovative Medicines and Medical Technology Review.
  - Will increase the use of cost-effective new medicines and technologies, and encourage large-scale trials of innovative technologies and health services.
- Will provide start-up funding for promising new renewable technologies and research, but will only give significant support to those that clearly represent value for money.

## Labour (see [here](#) and [here](#))

- Will have an active industrial strategy that supports high skill, export sectors and also supports productivity growth in firms of all sizes and across all sectors and regions.
- Will back the sectors where the UK has a competitive edge (eg pharmaceuticals, advanced manufacturing, and digital industries);
- Will introduce a new long-term funding policy framework for science and innovation, providing the stability and continuity that companies and research institutes need to succeed.
- Will work to make Britain a world leader in low carbon technologies over the next decade, creating a million additional green jobs.
- Will support vital sectors such as construction and advanced manufacturing to make long term investments in low carbon technologies and the 'green' economy.
- Will support the model of knowledge clusters, where universities form strong links with industry, especially outside the South East.
- Tackle skills shortages by introducing a new gold standard Technical Baccalaureate for 16-18 year olds and ensuring that all young people study English and maths to 18.
- Give employers more control over apprenticeships funding and standards in exchange for driving up the number and quality of apprenticeships.
- Introduce a universal gold standard for apprenticeships and transform high performing FE colleges with strong links to industry into new Institutes of Technical Education.
- Will ensure that apprenticeships can lead to higher level qualifications by making new Technical Degrees the priority for expansion. Co-funded, co-designed and co-delivered by employers and universities, Technical Degrees will give firms real influence over the curriculum to ensure they can meet their specialist skills gaps
- Will establish a proper British Investment Bank, building on the Business Bank, to provide growth finance and support a network of regional banks with a core purpose to support small business growth in their area.
- Protect leading firms from short term pressures by reforming takeover rules to strengthen the public interest test to protect the UK's science and research base.

## Lib Dems (see [here](#))

- Continue to develop an Industrial Strategy, working with sectors critical to Britain's ability to trade internationally – motor vehicles, aerospace, low-carbon energy, chemicals, offshore and subsea technology and more.
- Ensure UKTI and UK Export Finance can prioritise support for key sectors identified in the Industrial Strategy, including exports of green products and technologies, and press for higher environmental standards for export credit agencies throughout the OECD.
- Will continue to ring-fence the science budget and ensure that, by 2020, both capital and revenue spending have increased at least in line with inflation.

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- Aim to double innovation and research spending across the economy, supported by greater public funding on a longer timescale, more 'Catapult' innovation and technology centres and support for green innovation from the Green Investment Bank.
- Aim to stimulate local economies, working with Local Enterprise Partnerships to improve their effectiveness and coordination.
- Will promote the development of off-site manufacturing techniques, which improve the energy performance of buildings.
- Increase R&D and commercialisation support in 4 key low-carbon technologies: tidal power, carbon capture and storage, energy storage and ultra-low emission vehicles.
- Work with industry to accelerate the commercial introduction of zero emission fuel cell electric vehicles, and facilitate the UK-wide introduction of hydrogen fuelling infrastructure.
- Create a Resource Efficiency and Zero Waste Britain Act which will include (amongst other things) regulation to promote design that enhances repairability, reuse and recycling, requiring specified products to be sold with parts and labour guarantees for at least five years.
- Build on the success of Tech City, Tech North and the Cambridge tech cluster with a network across the UK acting as incubators for technology companies.
- Develop a skilled workforce with a major expansion of high-quality and advanced apprenticeships.
- Develop National Colleges as national centres of expertise for key sectors, like renewable energy, to deliver the high-level vocational skills that businesses need.
- Ensure the UK is an attractive destination for overseas students, not least those who wish to study STEM subjects. Will reinstate post-study work visas for STEM graduates who can find graduate-level employment within six months of completing their degree.
- Identify and seek to solve skills gaps like the lack of advanced technicians by expanding higher vocational training like foundation degrees, Higher National Diplomas, Higher National Certificates and Higher Apprenticeships.

### SNP (see [here](#))

- Will support businesses, the third sector and public sector organisations working to boost productivity by using energy, materials and water more efficiently.
- Will stimulate remanufacturing networks and supply chains through the Scottish Institute of Remanufacturing, one of only four international centres of excellence.
- Use full economic powers for a fully cohesive industrial strategy focused on strengthening manufacturing and boosting innovation, to revitalise Scotland's industries.
- Support international collaboration by piloting Innovation and Investment Hubs at key global locations and promote innovation in, and through, the public sector.
- Will work closely with universities to maintain their position of global excellence in areas of cutting-edge science and technology, and boost innovation base.
- Focused on four key themes to narrow economic gap – Investment, Innovation, Inclusive Growth and Internationalisation.
- Will seek investment in energy infrastructure to continue to maximise renewables generation, creating of a strong domestic renewables industry, including a sustainable supply chain.
- The Scottish Government will provide targeted support and advice to help companies export, grow, innovate and become more productive.
- Will encourage a strategy to be developed by the MOD to ensure more small and medium sized enterprises in Scotland are part of the manufacturing support chain for major defence projects.