



PRESS RELEASE

26th November 2015

ENERGY RESEARCH AT THE BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY SET TO ACCELERATE FOLLOWING £180m INVESTMENT

The British Geological Survey (BGS) is set to play a crucial role in the next step towards the transformation of the UK's energy sector after the Government confirmed £60m investment for the Energy Research Accelerator (ERA). The investment is backed by a further £120 million from the private sector and Midlands Innovation universities.

Professor Mike Stephenson, Director of Science and Technology at the BGS, said:

"The British Geological Survey is pleased to be involved in this transformative initiative to develop energy technology research in the Midlands. ERA will build on the science and technology expertise and industrial momentum of the Midlands to create a unique and world class hub."

ERA is set to become a world-leading hub of energy talent, technology research, development and deployment, based on the internationally renowned academic expertise and industrial heritage of the Midlands. Industry investors include Blueprint, Cofely, Dearman Engines, Highview and Jaguar Land Rover.

The announcement is a milestone for the British Geological Survey who will now work in partnership with the six leading UK universities forming the Midlands Innovation group – Aston University, The University of Birmingham, The University of Leicester, Loughborough University, The University of Nottingham and The University of Warwick.

The funding will create new world-class facilities to meet the challenges of developing affordable low-carbon energy and technologies for greater energy efficiency. The initiative will bring together the best in energy research and build upon the Midlands' extensive industrial base.

ERA's research will be focused on the complementary Thermal (T-ERA), Integrated Systems (I-ERA) and Geo-Energy (G-ERA) research themes.

The British Geological Survey will be supporting the G-ERA theme through its work to develop subsurface energy technology, including new sensors and analytical facilities

Gordon Waddington, ERA CEO, added:

"This announcement by the Government allows us to take the next step to accelerate the transformation of the UK energy sector and invest across the whole of the Midlands. ERA is putting the UK on the global map of energy innovation. The amount of private sector funding is a testament to the fact that this is a critical opportunity for growth and productivity in the UK."

Ends



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Notes for Editors

The following are available for interview:

- Professor Mike Stephenson, British Geological Survey

For additional information go to: www.bgs.ac.uk

The British Geological Survey

The British Geological Survey (BGS), a component body of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), is the nation's principal supplier of objective, impartial and up-to-date geological expertise and information for decision making for governmental, commercial and individual users. The BGS maintains and develops the nation's understanding of its geology to improve policy making, enhance national wealth and reduce risk. It also collaborates with the national and international scientific community in carrying out research in strategic areas, including energy and natural resources, our vulnerability to environmental change and hazards, and our general knowledge of the Earth system. More about the BGS can be found at www.bgs.ac.uk.

The Natural Environment Research Council

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is the UK's main agency for funding and managing world-class research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences. It coordinates some of the world's most exciting research projects, tackling major issues such as climate change, food security, environmental influences on human health, the genetic make-up of life on earth, and much more. NERC receives around £300 million a year from the government's science budget, which it uses to fund research and training in universities and its own research centres. www.nerc.ac.uk