



PRESS RELEASE

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Major UK companies partner up to crowdsource eco-innovations

Following the success of its first three [Innovation Gateway](#) rounds in 2014 and 2015, which have seen it trial solutions from 30 innovative small businesses, **RBS** is once again on the hunt for small companies with big ideas to help drive resource efficiency across their estates – and this time it will be working with three new partners – one of UK's largest chain of supermarkets **Sainsbury's**, leading integrated services company **Carillion** and the UK's leading independent contract catering services provider group **BaxterStorey**.

The four leading UK companies are looking for projects focused on employee engagement and cutting consumption of energy, water and waste across their property estates.

Applicants can submit their ideas via the [Innovation Gateway](#) from April 14th, after which the four partner companies will come together to review the entries and pick a short list of innovators who will be asked to pitch in person for the opportunity to implement their innovation.

The Innovation Gateway, established by RBS, provides innovators and SMEs with access to new markets by piloting their solutions on the estates of four of Britain's biggest companies. Not only will the successful technologies get the opportunity to prove that they work in real world situations and provide future clients with datasets to demonstrate this, they will also gain the credibility of having worked for a major UK plc. The Gateway also provides SMEs with peer to peer networking opportunities and other tools such as tailored workshops to help build their capability to access markets.

John Hayes, Head of Workplace Services, Royal Bank of Scotland recently said: "From talking to entrepreneurs we've learnt that it's getting access to a market rather than finance which is their greatest barrier to success. We believe that's where the Innovation Gateway, either with RBS or our new partners, can play an important role through supporting trials allowing more entrepreneurs to prove the effectiveness of their products and services."

Over the coming year, with four companies involved, there are will be more opportunities and – because of the very different nature of the companies- a wider range of opportunities for the innovators to tackle new resource efficiency challenges across many different property types.

For the new corporate partners, the Innovation Gateway offers a proven method of sourcing eco-innovations that has seen RBS benefit from access to a range of cutting edge technologies.

Mike Hanson, Head of Sustainable Business, BaxterStorey said, "We are now really pleased to have the chance not just to be involved with the judging panel but also to trial some of the innovations within our business."

Paul Crewe, Head of Sustainability, Sainsbury's said "We're proud of the work we have done over the years to use technology to reduce our energy consumption. We're excited to be working with 2degrees to discover new ideas and technologies."

Phil Shepley, Managing Director Corporate & Government Services at Carillion said, "The RBS Innovation Gateway has proved its value as a forum for new ideas as well as a much needed interface between entrepreneurs and big business."

The Centre for Global Eco-Innovation at Lancaster University will also join the partnership to provide independent benchmarking and verification of the selected innovations as they undergo trials.

The initiative is being managed by [2degrees](#), the world's leading collaboration platform and service for sustainable business, which will bring to bear its proven track record in crowd-sourcing innovation, helping the Gateway partner companies to find and foster resource efficient innovations, and assess them in a structured way with minimum time and cost. 2degrees has designed the innovation crowdsourcing process at the heart of the Gateway programme and will administer the innovation rounds.

Martin Chilcott, 2degrees founder and CEO said: "I am delighted to welcome our new corporate partners to the RBS Innovation Gateway, forging a unique partnership and redefining how large corporates can collaborate to source and accelerate the uptake of innovation. This new partnership will allow us to open up a wider, more diverse, testbed for innovators to trial their cutting edge solutions and increase the adoption of new resource efficiency technologies and solutions by some of our largest companies."

The deadline for applications is May 12th 2016.

Visit www.innovationgateway.rbs.com for more information and to apply.

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About The Innovation Gateway

The first Innovation Gateway saw 10 innovators win the opportunity to test their ideas and innovations on RBS's 2,500 buildings and branches. A further 6 conceptual innovations received a £3,000 grant and development support. Successful Innovators in the first challenge included Certero, whose PowerStudio product cuts energy use from PCs; Propelair, a new water-efficient toilet; and Chalmor's eTRV+ retrofit for radiator thermostats.

A follow-up Innovation Round in 2015, the Gogarburn Innovation Challenge, saw another eight technologies picked to be trialled at Gogarburn, RBS's Edinburgh HQ. These included Waterblade, a flow modification device that halves the amount of water used in washing hands; and air2eau: an atmospheric water generator which extracts moisture from the atmosphere and filters it into the purest drinking water available. In a demonstration of the springboard effect the Innovation Gateway can have, both these devices made the final of the Big Innovation Pitch at the Ecobuild Exhibition in March, with Waterblade, which has had its devices installed on 30 taps at Gogarburn for testing since December 2015, going on to take the top prize.

The Bristol Go Green Challenge also took place in the latter half of 2015 with a focus on sourcing eco-innovations for the RBS Bristol properties in order to support Bristol's year as the European Green Capital, 2015. Twelve successful innovations were chosen to pilot on the banks large office in Trinity Quay and also help create the first low carbon branch at Fishponds. Successful innovations include Endotherm, an energy saving central heating additive; and JUMP, an employee engagement programme that has already achieved an 86% sign up rate amongst employees at Trinity Quay.