



# Our offerings for SMEs

Catapults are best thought of as taskforces for putting technology to work to tackle big issues facing the UK. The Energy Systems Catapult is supporting British industry to unleash innovation and exploit the opportunities of the global energy revolution. We will be helping businesses like yours – whether big or small – along the way.

## What sort of specific help can my company get?

### 1. Universal assistance

We either offer, or plan to offer shortly, a variety of specific benefits that will be available to you in one of three delivery models.

Firstly, the Catapult intends to provide a certain level of support **universally** to any stakeholder who wants it.

This means collaboration tools, events and knowledge exchange with industry peers; signposting to contacts, funding routes and network innovation support through the Energy Innovation Centre (EIC). It also means access to a network of test facility providers, collaboration workshops and events at our Cannon House office in central Birmingham, for those who want to participate.

For example, our user-accessed Energy Knowledge Exchange allows SMEs to access results, information flow, discovery, spot-lighting, community development and ultimately data analytics. Where appropriate, free limited access to research, and technical and commercial expertise may also be provided in our priority areas, such as smart energy and low-carbon heat, to help SMEs shape proposals, products and services.

#### How it could work: universal assistance

- Imagine you're an early-stage SME with a new energy storage technology but you're not sure how to find the right test facility provider.
- You would engage with the Catapult through our website and be signposted to our Energy Knowledge Exchange (EKX) tool. This is a flexible resource that you can use for free.
- When you use the EKX it highlights a particular test provider and allows you to contact them through detail provided on the platform.

### 2. Collaborative working

Next, there will be a raft of shared-cost opportunities for **collaborative** working, particularly in smart energy systems, whereby your business can choose to engage with the Catapult, either alone or in conjunction with other SMEs. These could mean something arising from your own vision and plans; pooling resources to reduce costs and overcome common technology, market or regulatory issues; or whole-system test and demonstration of new products or services through our programmes and partners.

Collaborative working also potentially offers your business the chance to work on ongoing projects either under Catapult control or with our associates via future public funding calls from bodies such as Innovate UK. Sub-projects will also arise from our existing Smart Systems and Heat initiative and we expect other equivalent opportunities in future.

Meanwhile, the electricity and gas network operators are identifying technical and commercial projects for application into their network innovation funding programmes, which are designed to attract SMEs. We are best placed to help you understand and get involved in these either directly or through our partners like the EIC.

#### How it could work: collaborative working with the Energy Systems Catapult

- Imagine the Catapult identifies a need to accelerate the demonstration of demand-response technologies in a range of environments. In other words, someone needs to make this happen as part of the move towards the customer-driven energy future.
- Funding would be secured, by us, from BEIS or the Network Innovation Competition, to carry out a Joint Industry Project (JIP).
- Our Catapult sets up and programme-manages the JIP, and identifies and selects the right innovators (including SMEs) on a shared-cost basis to achieve programme plans.

### 3. Commercial support

Finally, the Catapult will be providing straightforward **commercial** support to the entire sector. You can access services, insight and technical or commercial validation on an attractive commercial basis, where gaps exist in the marketplace

and the Catapult holds unique skills, capability or resource. This will help you in areas like system modelling, consumer attitudinal research, export markets, understanding the impact of government policy and regulation, specific

technologies, new business models, and whole-system test and validation of new products or services through our methodologies, frameworks and demonstration access.

#### How it could work: Catapult commercial services

- Imagine your SME develops a service innovation relating to the supply of new energy services in the home, but needs better consumer insight before roll-out.
- The Energy Systems Catapult can give you a consultative quote for providing that consumer view, based on access to existing consumer panels – and also advise on the fit between your commercial innovation and the way the overall market is developing.

# How do I get the ball rolling, at no obligation to myself?

Right now, we are early in our lifecycle, so some of the things we expect to be able to offer over the next months and years are still in the pipeline. That doesn't stop you getting in touch – once we know about each other, co-operative possibilities abound. Of course, we hope that you can immediately see a product idea, a service idea or a specific business issue with which the Catapult might help you.

**Partnerships** – The Catapult already has a number of helpful partnerships in place, such as the EIC, with whom we are funding joint ventures. Find out more at [energyinnovationcentre.com/what-we-do/smes-innovators](https://energyinnovationcentre.com/what-we-do/smes-innovators)

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**CATAPULT**  
Energy Systems

**Events** – We are already delivering regular industry events, specifically insight-sharing presentations, consultations, workshops covering particular industry opportunities from new integrated energy systems, and informal discussion sessions around progress and policy. We are well connected to local business and industry organisations across the UK, so you can expect these to happen across a broad geography. Email us to discuss ways in which we can collaborate to produce an event.

## What SMEs tell us they want

During setup, the ESC carried out extensive consultation with cross-sections of many different types of organisation. SMEs told us their particular concerns, some of which we are aiming to address through future offerings:

1. Building confidence for investors in the direction of change for energy systems
2. Having consistent government policy
3. Demonstration of how new technologies can integrate into networks and systems
4. Understanding changing consumer behaviour and the impact on their propositions
5. Helping identify and test new business models and value propositions
6. Access to finance and help to find new ways of funding their innovation
7. Sharing of best practice and data/knowledge
8. More flexible access to test facilities
9. Access to new skills, capabilities and training, including modelling, datasets and methods
10. Collaboration with others around shared interest, including pooling resources to overcome common technology issues and reduce costs
11. Route to market advice and acceleration
12. Awareness and navigation of policy and regulation

**“The ESC has worked with us to help identify the early-stage support we need. They are an accessible ‘sounding board’ for developing our commercialisation strategy.”**

Dr Martin Caton, CEO, MC Power Innovations

**“Here at Caparra we recognise the scale and complexity of the challenge facing the ES Catapult team, so it's great to see how open they all are to new ideas and approaches to deliver the best overall solution for UK plc.”**

Richard Starkey, CEO & Co-founder, Caparra Technologies