

Nesta...

About us

**See
how
we...**



| | | |
|----------|--|----|
| Our work | Contents | 01 |
| | | |
| | 01. Introduction | 02 |
| | 02. Innovation policy | 04 |
| | 03. Inclusive models for economic growth | 06 |
| | 04. Public sector innovation | 08 |
| | 05. Citizen engagement | 10 |
| | 06. Digital arts and media | 12 |
| | 07. Health and ageing | 14 |
| | 08. Opportunities for young people | 16 |
| | 09. Impact investment | 18 |
| | 10. Future thinking | 20 |

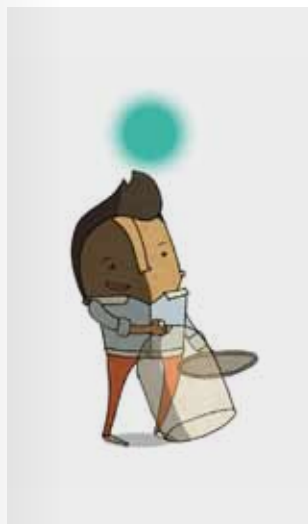
01.

See how we...
work

Introduction

We're a champion of good ideas.

We research and test the best ones from people and organisations all over the world to bring about a new way of doing things that will help shape a happier, fairer and more prosperous future.



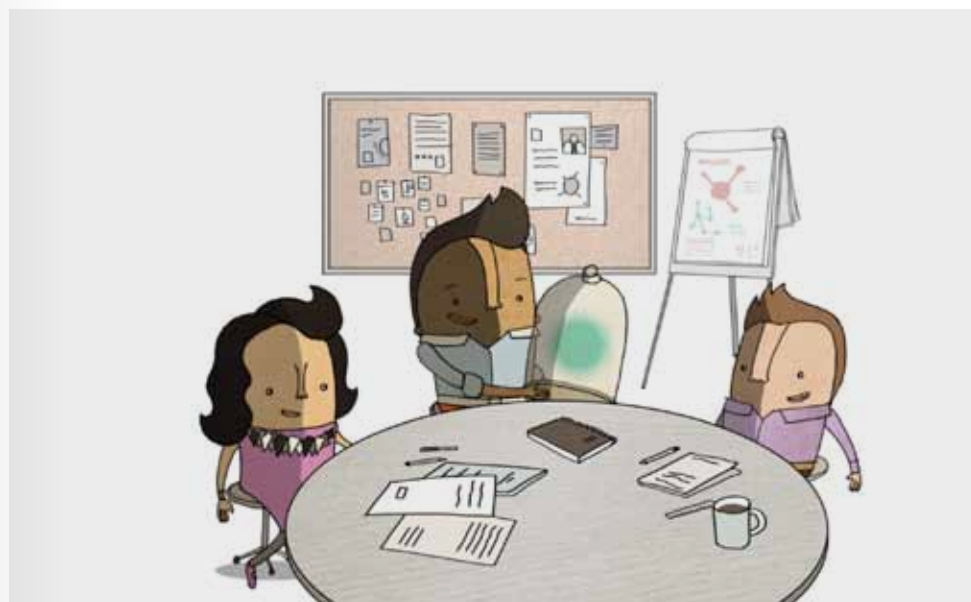
Innovation is the way we talk about having new ideas and making them happen. It's widely recognised by governments across the world as crucial not just to economic growth but also to greater human happiness and social justice.

But many of the systems that support innovation aren't working well. Our research shows that innovation investment is stagnating in business; that some fields are generating fewer good ideas than in the past; and that important sectors lack capacities for innovation.

People with potentially world-changing ideas still face innumerable barriers.

We exist to tackle these challenges and to help you bring your great idea to life.

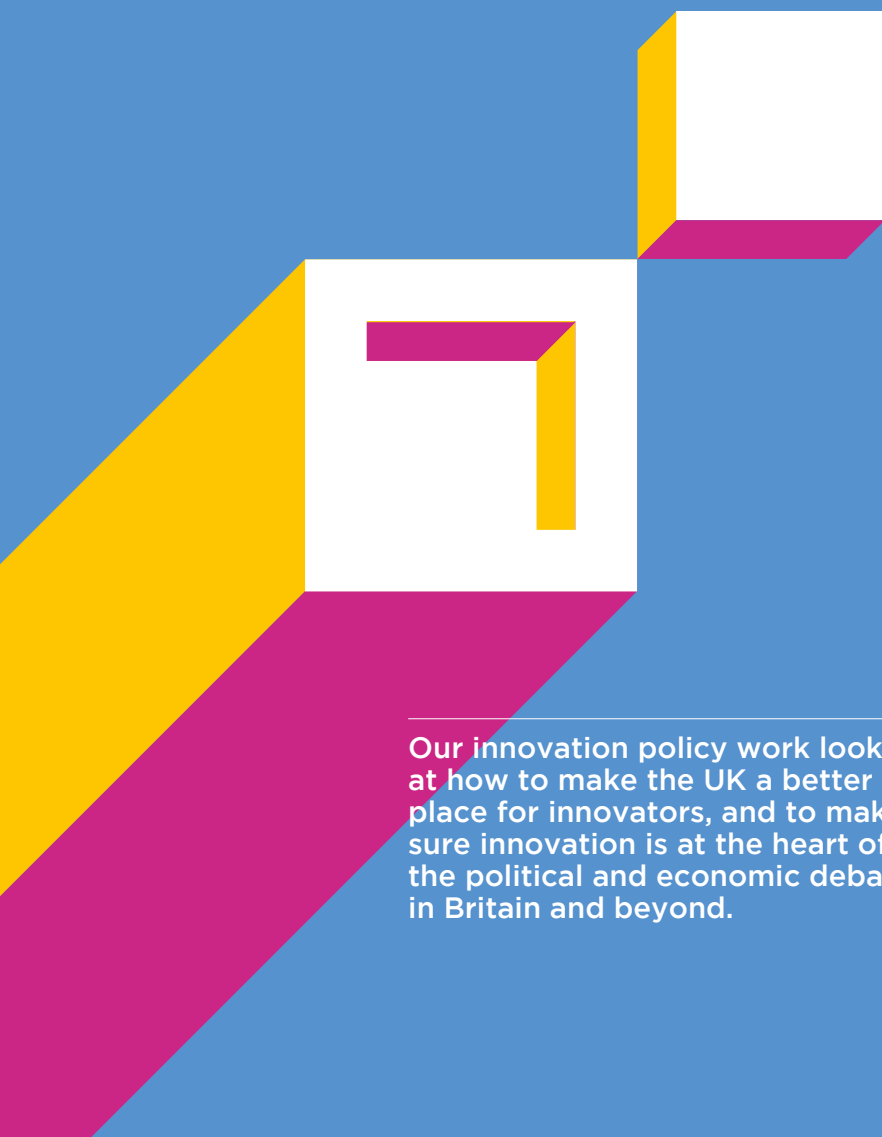
Over the next few pages you can read about some of the work we're doing to help make this happen. If you're interested in finding out more about us and how to get involved, we'd love to hear from you. You can visit our website www.nesta.org.uk to find out more.



02.

See how we...
shape

Innovation policy



Our innovation policy work looks at how to make the UK a better place for innovators, and to make sure innovation is at the heart of the political and economic debate in Britain and beyond.

2.5m

Our creative industries account for one-tenth of the UK economy and provide jobs for 2.5 million people

8%

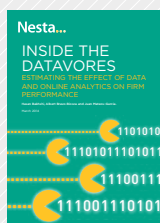
Businesses that use their data more intensively are 8 per cent more productive

Decades of research have shown that innovation is the most important driver of long-term prosperity, and that innovative businesses create more jobs and grow faster. Our Plan I campaign argues for an innovation-led change towards more sustainable growth. Following on from our Plan I for the UK, we launched *Plan I: an innovation plan for Europe*, with European Council President Herman Van Rompuy in Brussels. It has already begun to shape the European Commission's policy on digital startups.

Our creative industries account for one-tenth of the UK economy and provide jobs for 2.5 million people, more than financial services or construction. We are world-leaders in this space, but history shows us that we cannot take our leadership for granted. *A Manifesto for the Creative Economy* presents ten big ideas to bolster our creative industries. Since it launched, the manifesto has encouraged the UK government to improve its policy towards the creative industries and has led to a redefinition of the way that the UK government measures the creative industries.

We are also looking at how UK businesses can master the greatest challenge of the big data era: how to turn data into value. Our two reports: *The Rise of the Datavores* and *Inside the Datavores*, highlight the importance of a growing cohort of companies that put analytics and information at the heart of their business, and demonstrates how others can follow their example.


Innovation methods are constantly being reinvented, and we know that policymakers and innovators need to look beyond Silicon Valley for inspiration. That's why we're committed to mapping new approaches to innovation around the world. As part of this work we have published a major report into China's innovation system, *China's Absorptive State* and *Our Frugal Future: Lessons from India's Innovation System*.



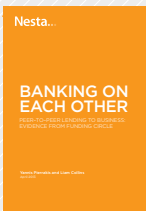
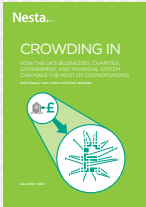
03.

See how we...
champion

Inclusive models for economic growth



The developed world faces a dual economic challenge. Rates of economic growth have been slow and at the same time inequality has been rising rapidly. New means of fostering economic growth are called for - and in particular, ones that can also promote fairer distribution of wealth.



Our work on collaborative consumption and the sharing economy focuses on how the internet is helping to bring people together to make better use of assets, from cars to DIY tools.

We are researching ways to apply the principles of the sharing economy to the world of finance. We've published a series of successful reports and blog posts on crowdfunding, including detailed research on how much money crowdfunding has raised in the UK, and reports on equity crowdfunding and peer-to-peer lending. Our directory of UK crowdfunding platforms, Crowdengin.org, has become a widely used resource for entrepreneurs looking to kickstart their ideas.

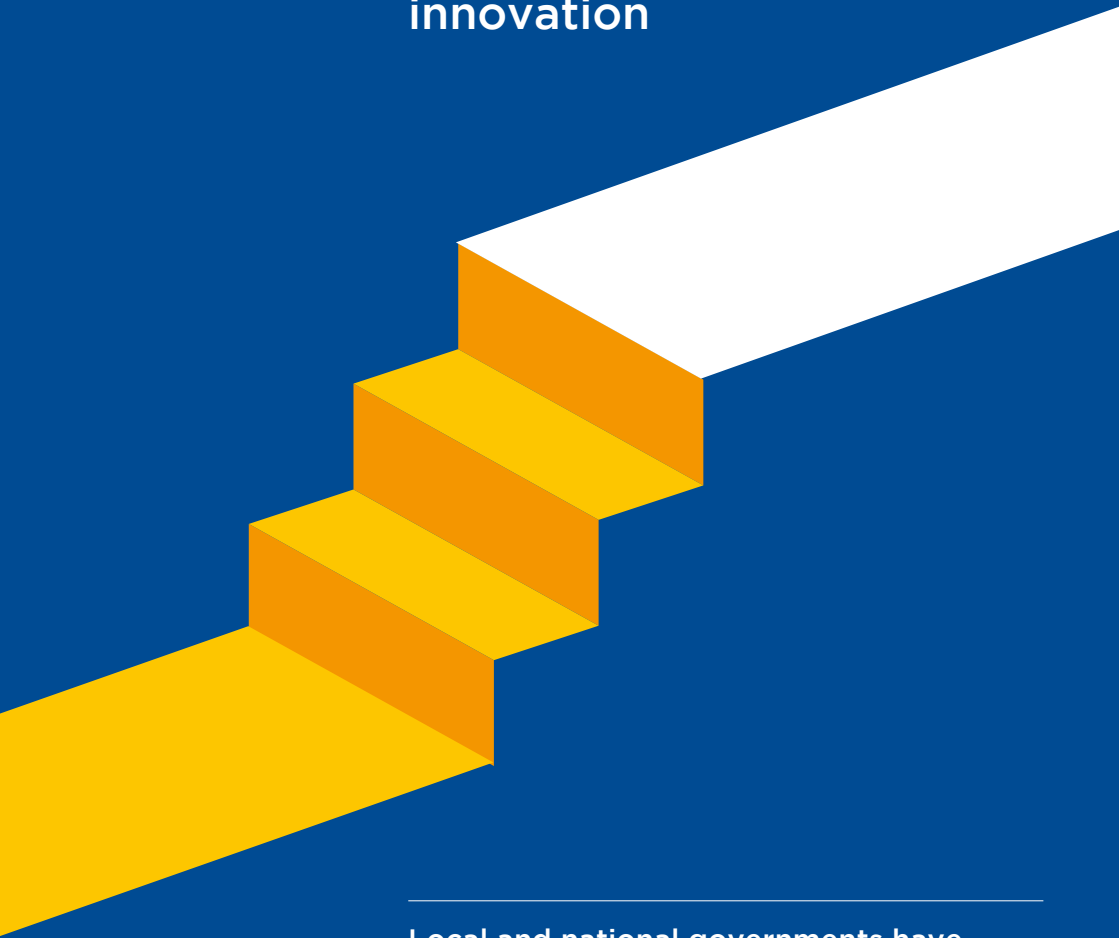
We also look at new ways to help turn great ideas into successful businesses, taking an active role so that our research is informed by data and practical experience. We have been working with several accelerators around Europe to build a network of accelerator programmes, called the Accelerator Assembly. We now also host the UK's leading social accelerator programme, run by Bethnal Green Ventures in partnership with the Cabinet Office's Social Incubator Fund, Nominet Trust and Google. This programme will accelerate over 80 social impact ventures over the next four years.

**Within five years,
crowdfunding could
provide around £15
billion of finance per
year in the UK.**

04.

See how we...
help

Public sector innovation



Local and national governments have pioneered some of the great public and social innovations of modern history. But in a time of rapid change they need new capabilities and new ideas to solve complex problems.



Rethinking Parks

Public parks are an enduring and defining feature of towns and cities across the UK. At their best, public parks don't just provide space for leisure and relaxation, they are also a hub of the local community and a 'green lung' in the urban environment.

Yet our public parks are at risk. With funding cuts of 60 per cent and more projected over the next decade for non-statutory services provided by local authorities, parks are at risk of becoming no-go zones or being sold off.

Through our Rethinking Parks programme we want people to develop new ways to operate, fund and use public parks so that they continue to thrive, despite traditional sources of revenue and support being eroded.

Our strategic partners, the Big Lottery Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund, have strong track records of supporting parks, having invested upwards of £700 million in them over the last two decades.

i-teams


We are working with Bloomberg Philanthropies to explore the teams, units and funds that make government innovation happen. Our aim is to understand the kind of structures needed and share these key lessons for other leaders looking to do the same.



05.

See how we...
promote

Citizen engagement



From school governors to special constables there are lots of great examples of people helping people. But we think there could be more.



People Helping People

The Centre for Social Action Innovation Fund, run in partnership with the Cabinet Office, is finding new ways for people to help others.

The fund increases the impact and reach of innovations that use local people's energy and talents to help each other. All the initiatives in the fund work alongside public services and include examples such as supporting people with long-term health conditions, and helping unemployed people improve their skills and get back to work.



Challenge Prizes

We know that challenge prizes are a great way to stimulate new ideas from a broad range of people and our Centre for Challenge Prizes is running its most ambitious challenge prize yet - Longitude Prize 2014.

Launched on the BBC and with the Technology Strategy Board as launch funding partner, Longitude Prize 2014 asked the British public to decide which of six major challenges they wanted to be the focus of a £10 million prize fund. The challenges were Antibiotics, Paralysis, Food, Water, Flight and Dementia.

The six scientific challenges were put to a vote on the BBC's programmes *Horizon* and *The One Show*, and the public chose the issue of Antibiotics. Now the race is on to find a way to keep Antibiotics effective for future generations. The prize will be open for the next five years, and we invite anyone with a good idea to participate.



Innovation Skills

The *Development Impact and You* toolkit, developed in partnership with and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, is a collection of 30 tried-and-tested tools to give practical support to busy people around the world, in helping them to develop, test and adapt their ideas. We have a growing network of supporters who have adopted the toolkit in their innovation practice, including the UNDP, Oxfam and Ushahidi.

06.

See how we...
create

Digital arts and media



The UK is a world leader in this space, but we need to act now to find new ways of supporting our creative industries so they remain competitive in the future.



Above and top left images courtesy of the Royal Opera

Digital R&D Fund for the Arts

Three funds, across England, Wales and Scotland, have encouraged more than 600 collaborations on R&D proposals between arts, cultural, technology and research teams – we want to sustain this level of activity and support further fantastic cross-sector experimentation.

By teaming up with the Arts and Humanities Research council (AHRC) and the respective Arts funding organisations of each nation, we hope to encourage public funders of the arts to adopt and embrace the collaborative approach to R&D as a way of encouraging digital innovation in the arts.



Destination Local

Our research into hyperlocal media showed that despite rising demand, advertising alone is not going to sustain these services. This fact presents a serious challenge to emerging, but already important, public service media – namely, how to make it pay.

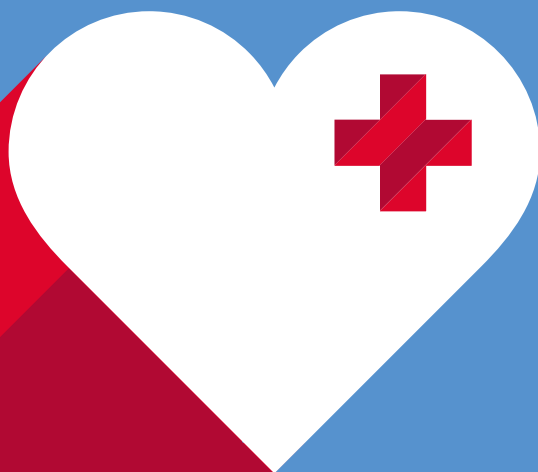
Some of the services we have supported through our Destination Local work have flourished despite this challenge and are running as sustainable businesses, with high levels of community engagement. One in particular is *Kentishtowner*. A daily publication serving London's Kentish Town community, it started as a blog and is now a multi-platform, award-winning publication.

The challenge now is to attract much-needed public investment into hyperlocal media as an emerging technology field.

07.

See how we...
support

Health and ageing



There has never been a greater
need for new ideas to solve the
problem of an ageing population.



People Powered Health

We've been working to influence the health system, to make it better-adapted to people with long-term conditions. Our People Powered Health work has looked at ways to re-balance our health and care system so that it is run for people, by people and with people. That means a system that cares for people when they need it, enables self-management by people, and connects people with other people with similar experiences so that they can support one another.

The programme supported six health teams across England by embedding and scaling-up collaborative approaches to long-term conditions. These ranged from community-based peer support groups to group 'prescriptions' that help people to do more exercise or connect with others.

Ageing Innovation

We all know that our population is ageing, but many of our systems have not yet fully adapted. Our working patterns, social care system and housing stock, for example, are creaking at the seams, and not fit to help an increasingly older population to age well.

We published a report, *Five Hours a Day: Systemic Innovation for an Ageing Population* which argues that ageing is a systemic challenge requiring innovation not only in products and services, but also in the political and cultural domains. We're continuing to support a number of innovative organisations in this field, including Shared Lives Plus, GoodGym and Social Finance.

We've been working to influence the health system, to make it better-adapted to people with long-term conditions.

08.

See how we...
develop

Opportunities for young people



Our aim is to help as many young
people as possible learn about
digital technologies through making
their own digital products.



Digital Makers

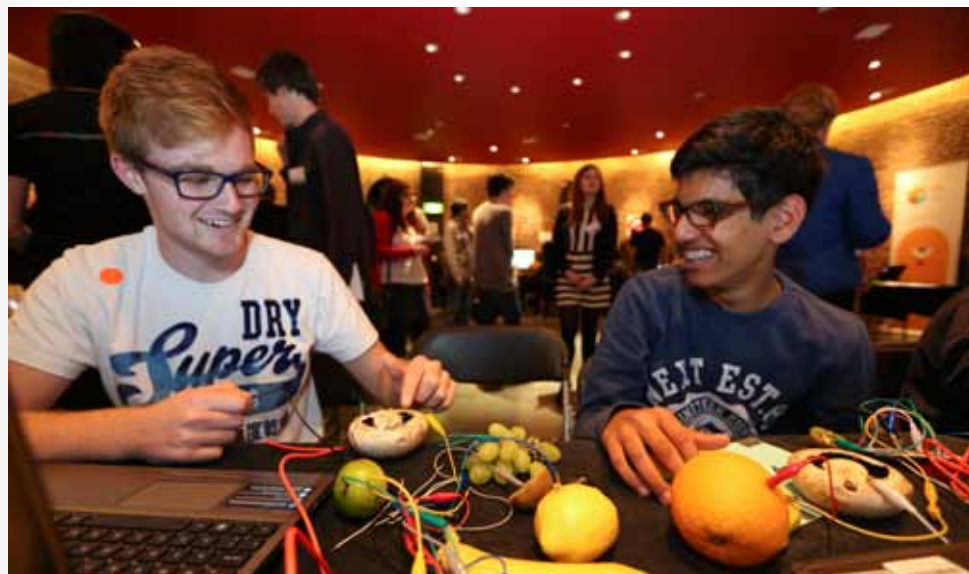
The digital environment is ubiquitous. Understanding the way that digital technologies are made and controlled is important to understanding the world in which we live. Increasingly, the ability to make and adapt digital technologies is key to creative expression, social inclusion and business creation, and it is a skill that is increasingly in demand in the job market.

Make Things Do Stuff is a campaign run with our partners Nominet Trust and Mozilla, to create a platform for young people to test out and upload their own digital products. Since it launched thousands of young people from all over the UK have taken part and experimented, demonstrating the creative potential that technology can unlock for their generation.



Digital Makers Fund

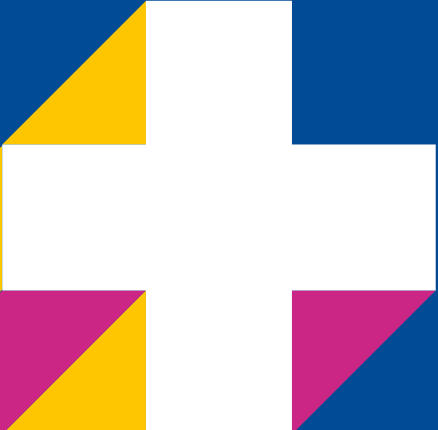
We are backing organisations with bright ideas for significantly increasing the number of young people who participate in digital making. Notable successes include Code Club and Technology Will Save Us. Code Club has increased the number of schools it works with from 470 to 1,971 in the last year, and it has leveraged significant additional funding. Technology Will Save Us has developed its most successful maker kit (the DIY Gamer Console) and forged partnerships with Code Club and the Prince's Trust.



09.

See how we...
invest

Impact investment



We are a catalyst in the field of social impact investment, investing primarily for a positive social impact, but also for a financial return.

**Nesta
Investment
Management**



FUTUREGOV

Through our research work, direct interventions and support, we have helped to create a vibrant impact investment sector in the UK.

Bethnal Green Ventures runs accelerator programmes for early-stage social entrepreneurs and their organisations. We have provided funding, alongside the Cabinet Office and Nominet Trust, to help create 80 new ventures over four years. We believe that creating this early support for ventures is vital if we want to help build a vibrant, innovative and impact-focused entrepreneurial community.

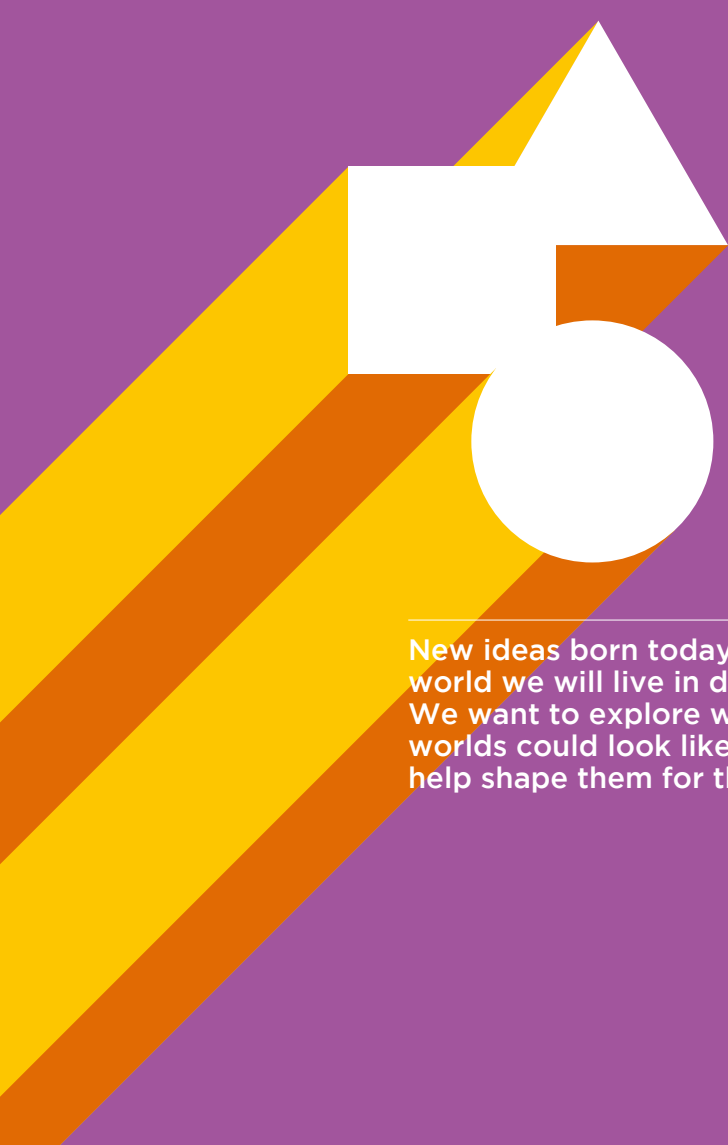
We have established our first direct social impact investment fund. Nesta Impact Investments provides risk capital to early-stage ventures that have an impact for older people, younger people and community sustainability. In its first 12 months of investing, the fund has made five new investments, totalling £2.5 million. We aim to back organisations that can make a major impact and prove the effectiveness of their intervention. Notable investments to date include Oomph! and FutureGov.



10.

See how we...
connect

Future thinking



New ideas born today can change the world we will live in decades from now. We want to explore what these possible worlds could look like, and how we can help shape them for the better.



FutureFest

Our FutureFest events gather some of the planet’s most radical thinkers, makers and performers to create an immersive experience of what our future might feel like a few decades from now. FutureFest is an answer to the fatalism that often stifles talk about the future, and encourages people to look at the future as something that can be shaped for the better – and shaped by them.



Hot Topics

Our thought-provoking event series looks at how cutting edge tech will affect our lives in the near future. We cover ideas as wide-ranging as the potential of drones to the future of prosthetics, and each event showcases the latest technology in action.

Predictions

Every December we bring together our in-house experts to make predictions about what the year ahead holds. The predictions range from the rise of robot overlords, to new science parks dedicated to social innovation. Our predictions series is a popular destination for people looking to us to get a sense of what the big trends for the year ahead might be.



nesta.org.uk

Nesta
1 Plough Place, London EC4A 1DE
information@nesta.org.uk
[@nesta_uk](#)
www.facebook.com/nesta.uk
August 2014



Nesta is a registered charity in England and Wales with company number 7706036 and charity number 1144091. Registered as a charity in Scotland number SCO42833. Registered office: 1 Plough Place, London, EC4A 1DE.