

# Cranfield University and Johnson Matthey partnership looks to nurture fresh growth in agritech

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## Cranfield University and Johnson Matthey announce first companies joining pilot agritech programme.

Cranfield University and Johnson Matthey have today announced the first cohort of companies to join the Johnson Matthey Agritech Partnership Programme (JMAPP). The announcement follows a five-week global search for companies and individuals who want to develop their innovative agritech solutions.

The companies will be given an opportunity to develop their product or idea within an intense programme of collaboration and scientific and management support.

In an innovative new partnership programme, created by Cranfield and Johnson Matthey, more than 35 businesses entered a competitive pitch process to receive a package of advice, support and funding within a new three-month programme. The overall support for the companies will be worth in excess of £50,000 each.

From a strong field, three emerging companies were chosen by experts from Cranfield University and Johnson Matthey, a leader in science that makes the world cleaner and healthier.

The first companies in the pilot programme are:

- [Azotic Technologies](#), whose R&D Laboratories are based in Nottingham, is developing a unique natural nitrogen-fixing technology based on a symbiotic endophyte that could allow any crop variety to fix nitrogen directly from the air.
- [Bionema](#), a company based out of Swansea University's Institute of Life Science, is working on chemical-free pest management solutions and has devised a non-toxic bio-based microencapsulation technology.
- [Water&Soil](#), based in Budapest, Hungary, has developed an organic soil enhancement product, which aims to improve water efficiency, whether saving on irrigation costs or enabling cropping in areas of marginal cultivation where water is scarce.

This cohort will enjoy the use of the world-class research facilities located at Cranfield, including those of the UK Government's Agritech Centres, Agri-EPI and CHAP. The Agritech Centres' facilities at Cranfield have recently received £10million of investment. A broad package of support – ranging from seminars, masterclasses and networking opportunities through to one-on-one mentoring – will also be on offer.

Along with access to Cranfield and its acclaimed team, Johnson Matthey's scientists and business experts will now work with the companies to develop their ideas within a Proof of Concept framework. Johnson Matthey has a wealth of commercial and scientific expertise on offer, from research and prototyping support to scaling lab work into full commercial propositions, managing supply chains or help with navigating complex regulatory environments.

The pilot programme reflects Johnson Matthey's continued commitment to collaboration with organisations throughout the innovation ecosystem to develop breakthrough ideas, drawing upon their knowledge and networks to utilise their core science expertise in new opportunities for growth.

"We're really looking forward to the next few months at Cranfield," said Kristin Rickert, Innovation Director at Johnson Matthey. "Johnson Matthey is committed to collaboration as part of our open innovation approach. Our ultimate goal is to help develop fresh ideas into sustainable new products and technologies. This new programme supports that perfectly and these are great ideas to work on together."

Professor Leon A. Terry, Director of Environment and Agrifood at Cranfield University, added: "This is an exciting time for innovation in agritech, as demonstrated by the volume, global breadth and strength of the applicants to the programme. One of the greatest challenges for the sector is creating an environment where ideas and innovations can become reality.

"By combining the scientific and business expertise of Cranfield and Johnson Matthey, we are giving our first cohort the best possible chance to succeed by bringing forward their innovations to market."

For more information about the programme visit [www.cranfield.ac.uk/jmapp](http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/jmapp)

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**Notes to editors:**

**About Cranfield University**

Cranfield is an exclusively postgraduate university that is a global leader for education and transformational research in technology and management.

**About Johnson Matthey**

Johnson Matthey is a global leader in science that enables a cleaner and healthier world. With over 200-years of sustained commitment to innovation and technological breakthroughs that improve the function, performance and safety of our customer's products. Our science has a global impact in areas such as low emission transport, pharmaceuticals, chemical processing and making the most efficient use of the planet's natural resources. Today more than 13,000 Johnson Matthey professionals collaborate with our network of customers and partners to make a real difference to the world around us. For more information, visit [www.matthey.com](http://www.matthey.com)

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