

Frimley, UK

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BUSINESS LEADERS OUTLINE DIGITAL ROADMAP FOR INDUSTRY

- Leaders from the UK's most prominent businesses to develop roadmap for digitalising Britain's industrial base.
- Industrial Digitalisation Review launches, and will assess which technologies could boost productivity and create many more high skilled jobs.
- Review to be published this year hopes to become a 'Sector Deal' with a plan for the wider economic take up of new digital technologies.

Business leaders from the UK's most prominent firms are to begin work on a roadmap for digitalising British industry, hoping to find ways new technologies can increase national productivity and improve the skills of employees across the country.

The Industrial Digitalisation Review was announced as part of the Government's new Industrial Strategy on the 23rd of January, and meets for the first time at the Digital Catapult Centre in London this morning.

The review is chaired by Juergen Maier CEO Siemens UK and Ireland and is tasked to assess how the UK can benefit from the accelerated adoption of digital technology across advanced manufacturing. The review is backed by the newly formed Productivity Leadership Council, which received support from the Government in the November Autumn Statement.

Representatives from business include Sir Charlie Mayfield (Chairman, John Lewis), Phil Smith (Chairman, Cisco UK & Ireland), Carolyn Fairbairn (Director General, CBI) David Stokes (CEO UK & Ireland, IBM), Oliver Benzecry, (CEO of Accenture

UK) , Roger Connor (Head of Global Manufacturing, GSK) and Nigel Stein, (CEO of GKN).

They will be joined by Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State at the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy who alongside the Secretary of State Greg Clarke will receive the outputs of the review.

The Industrial Digitalisation Review leadership team will engage with large and small businesses alongside academics to see how the design, development and deployment of digital technologies can drive increased national productivity.

The completion of the review will result in a blueprint for a 'Sector Deal' for manufacturing and industrial sectors, which could see government and business partners increase the take up of new technologies in the UK.

It is expected that the leadership team will look at the following challenges across UK industry;

- driving productivity improvement;
- boosting skills and the number of high value, high productivity jobs
- promoting competition and innovation;
- facilitating long term investment between suppliers and large companies
- identifying where the greatest value can be gained from new technology
- developing and growing the strengths of particular clusters;
- increasing exports; looking at trade and investment deals
- commercialising research

Juergen Maier, CEO of Siemens UK and Ireland said: "Our review is about defining how the UK can best adopt radical new technologies that will boost productivity and create new high tech jobs across manufacturing and industry. We want the end result to be a sector deal for manufacturing that makes a real difference to companies regardless of their size or market."

"It is not yet too late for the UK to take the global lead in this space, but we are in danger of falling behind if we do not take up the challenge now – so our aim is position UK manufacturing and industry at the heart of a new global industrial

revolution much like it was over 170 years ago when we first started doing business here.” he added

Climate Change and Industry Minister Nick Hurd MP said “The launch of the Industrial Strategy Green Paper shows our commitment to improving growth and driving productivity across the whole country. Industry is best placed to identify what firms really need and we want them to come to us with proposals to transform and upgrade their sector. The independent Industrial Digitalisation Review will set out how the UK can maximize the use of digital technology to increase productivity, and create the high-skilled jobs we need for a successful, modern economy.”

The leadership team will also identify industrial sectors with the maximum opportunity to benefit from the adoption of industrial digitalisation technologies, looking at global best practice. They will also identify the digital technologies with the highest likelihood of being able to create new industries and new jobs.

These include artificial intelligence, robotics, augmented reality solutions, automation technology, robotics, blockchain and data analytics.

The Industrial Digitalisation Review leadership team will also identify the key policy interventions that will encourage advanced manufacturing and broader industry to invest in new technologies.

Phil Smith, Chairman of Cisco UK & Ireland added “Business is backing this review with enthusiasm because we are all passionate about supporting UK industry through an immense period of change, both politically and technologically. If we can shape a sector deal that helps the UK compete with world leaders in this space, notably Germany and the US, the jobs payoff could be substantial. At the forefront of our minds are the new tech jobs for Britain underpinned by the new technologies driving changes in the labour market.”

The Industrial Digitalisation Review leadership team is set to complete its work in the summer of 2017 and will report interim findings in the coming months.

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