



Department for
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David Lane and Paul Clarke
Co-Chairs, Robotics Growth Partnership
Response via e-mail

Dear David and Paul,

Thank you for your recent letter to the Secretary of State and me and for your considerable effort and work in creating and sharing your strategic vision for cyber-physical infrastructure (CPI).

The Integrated Review set out our ambitions to be a Science and Tech Superpower and highlights the importance of strengthening national resilience (including specifically how a national capability in digital twinning could play an important role in this). In addition, our Innovation Strategy sets out our ambitions for delivering innovation-led growth as an “Innovation Nation” to enhance productivity across the economy, and in turn bring jobs, growth and prosperity to all parts of the UK through developing clusters of tomorrow’s technologies and companies. We want to boost private sector investment across the whole of the UK, creating the right conditions for all businesses to innovate and giving them the confidence to do so. The role of technology and innovation is critical to the UK’s recovery from the pandemic as well as our long-term growth.

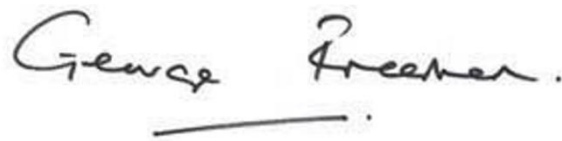
As you know, we identified robotics as one of our seven technologies of tomorrow. I was therefore very pleased to read your compelling vision for how a national capability in CPI to develop and connect robots and smart machines could contribute to these objectives, accelerating the innovation process and enhancing national resilience through improved strategic planning and the ability to respond to shocks.

There are of course a number of important policy and affordability questions to consider, to help Government make informed choices about its own potential role in this ecosystem and to ensure we are creating an environment where academia and industry can co-invest, innovate and flourish. It is therefore crucial that we build on the valuable engagement and dialogue you have undertaken to date, including through your successful Cyber Physical Fabric Summit in July. That is why, in our Innovation Strategy, we committed to consult on the potential value of and options for a UK capability in digital twinning and CPI to help unleash such innovation. Your work to date has played a crucial role in helping identify this potential opportunity, and I will of course consider your vision as an important contribution to this consultation.

Alongside this, since the Innovation Strategy commitment was made, my officials with the support of Digital Catapult, have undertaken wide-ranging initial stakeholder engagement to help us develop and refine our consultation thinking. I'm particularly keen that we look across the whole 'ecosystem' (from 'deep tech' to procurement, adoption and regulation) to identify the most impactful intersections. I look forward to being able to set out next steps on this in due course.

Thank you again all for your efforts and in particular the role your work has played in driving forward this agenda, and I look forward to continuing to work together to ensure we make the most of the potential of these exciting and potentially transformational technologies in the years to come.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Freeman." The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

GEORGE FREEMAN MP
Minister for Science, Research and Innovation