



Innovate
UK



The RetroNetZero proposition

A regulatory science and innovation network to unlock the adoption of innovation in domestic retrofit

RetroNetZero is an Innovate UK-funded project currently in its 'discovery phase'. This phase allows the necessary relationships to be built, and for information and data gathering to take place, so the Network concept can be developed into a proposal for further funding to facilitate a subsequent 'implementation phase' with the following ambitions.

Overview

The RetroNetZero Network will guide innovators through the regulatory aspects of deploying products into domestic retrofit. There are currently numerous challenges in this space, preventing potential new solutions from making a valuable contribution to the rapid upscaling of retrofit that is required for the UK to meet its net zero carbon targets.

The Network would bring together stakeholders from across the product innovation journey (from inception to eventual deployment) to gather evidence to identify and prioritise actions ('projects') in the regulatory science space that could accelerate adoption of innovation. Proposals for solutions would be presented to Regulators, policy makers and procurers to enable action. The network will provide an important 'multiplier effect':

- For innovators (who may be SMEs) who may unknowingly face equivalent issues, thus presenting a stronger, unified voice on what is needed, and
- Bringing together existing networks to present a trusted consensus to Regulators and others on potential activities and priorities that would allow regulations to adapt to drive adoption of innovation in retrofit.

Building on relevant work undertaken in other key projects (e.g. the Energy Systems Catapult, IUK TransformER), the Network would also provide information and signposting through the current regulatory landscape to demystify the required processes for new entrants, including setting out the existing regulatory science capacity (i.e. certifiers, testing laboratories, field-test opportunities, data sources) that may be utilised by innovators.

Scope

Innovation in products, materials, heat and power, efficient processes and techniques for delivery of net zero solutions into domestic retrofit. A core principle of the Network will be to uphold safety, consumer protection and the delivery of reliable energy/ carbon performance in homes.

Partners

RetroNetZero is intended to be a 'network of networks' to leverage existing structures, remove silo-working and ensure the necessary linkage between innovators, regulatory science providers, regulators, trade associations and other stakeholders, to facilitate meaningful change. Network partners include:

- BRE/ Constructing Excellence
- National Retrofit Hub
- Construction Products Association
- National Energy Foundation
- Planet Mark

Proposed Network activities

- Provide signposting to existing resources on regulatory pathways and regulatory science organisations via the Network's online presence.
- Hold regular working group sessions/ forums to identify common regulatory challenges for innovative product/ process deployment in the retrofit sector, formulate these as priority projects, and prompt discussions to generate solution ideas.
- Convene a steering group/ challenge panel to prioritise concepts against an agreed framework, based on the anticipated impact the actions could have on desired outcomes (i.e. on the scale and pace of the transition to net zero).
- Obtain consensus/ support for the proposed solutions with the sector.
- Discuss/ present potential solutions and/ or routes to deriving solutions via regulatory science with Regulators (e.g. through calls for specific scoped research projects, development of new Standards, etc).

During the implementation phase, the Network's online presence will be created, and a structure developed and piloted for running the challenge identification and prioritisation process (project identification), and exploring the ways this information can be used by Regulators or others to enhance the net zero retrofit pathway for innovators.

