

03.11.2022

Innovate UK funds collaborative sessions between Manufacturing and Built Environment Sectors

Government and Industry leaders have urged the manufacturing and built environment sectors to collaborate on digital twin common language and information management in a new Innovate UK funded programme.

Speaking at the launch of The Apollo Protocol on 25th October, leaders from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), The Construction Leadership Council, BAE Systems and The High Value Manufacturing Catapult gave their support to the new initiative that seeks to open channels of communication between practitioners working with digital twins, or who have the potential to benefit from cross sector digital twins.

Asset owners, manufacturers and others interested in overcoming barriers to cross-sector information sharing are invited to participate in a series of 'Hacks' across the country and online events, starting on 17th November at AMRC's Factory 2050 in Sheffield.

The events will see participants articulate their data needs or technology offerings to begin mapping out a unified value chain, exploring solutions and unblocking practical barriers.

The initiative is fully backed through Innovate UK as part of the move to develop the UK's Cyber Physical Infrastructure.

The initiative is seen by BEIS as complementary to the department's National Digital Twin Programme (NDTP) which acts as the focal point to grow national capability in digital twinning as set out in the Integrated Review.

Fergus Harradence, Deputy Director Construction at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy commented at the launch:

"Congratulations to everyone who worked on the Apollo Protocol for the work that they have done, we think it is a big step forward. Having a common language and approach between the manufacturing and construction sectors can only be beneficial to both. The challenge is to take this forward into the next phase; the Apollo Protocol sets out the roadmap for that and we think it is an extremely good start."

Simon Hart of Innovate UK, remarked:

"Having a connected ecosystem of virtual and physical infrastructure is vital to drive decisions that are faster, cheaper and with decreased risk for benefits to be reaped across multiple sectors. The cyber-physical infrastructure we are establishing within the UK will provide a foundation towards numerous activities within the UK including innovation environments, digital twins and emulation tools all to aid solving real problems that will have a real benefit across society. The Apollo Forum being established here is an exemplar for how to discuss sectoral interfaces and key to exploring grand challenges."

Speaking for the Apollo Project, Neil Thompson, Digital Manufacturing and Performance Lead at the Construction Leadership Council and IET Built Environment Panel Chair explained,

"The data needs of manufacturers and asset owners across our sectors are hampered by a lack of collaboration and language barriers. The Apollo Forum events we have planned will enable us to map out those needs, identify technical and other support and ultimately develop valuable cross-sector solutions for the participants. Along the way we will begin to identify how to write The Apollo Protocol, but we will achieve it by taking practical steps to solving real life problems."

The dates of the Hacks are:

- Value Hack – 17 November in Sheffield followed by 24 November online
- Performance Hack – 12 December in Coventry followed by 15 December online
- Circularity Hack – 19 January in Birmingham followed by 26 January online
- Human Capital Hack – 9 February in London followed by 16 February online

Details of all the events have been published on the new Apollo Protocol Network on the Digital Twin Hub and an article about the first hack has been published on the IET's EngX platform.

Manufacturers and asset owners of all kinds interested in participating in the 'Hack' events are encouraged to join the Network to receive notification as the events are announced.

- The Network can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/ApolloProtocolDTHub>
- Read the article about The Value Hack events: <https://engx.theiet.org/b/blogs/posts/digital-twins-apollo-protocol-value-hack>
- The launch of the Apollo Protocol was live streamed and can be viewed on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1Wy9kLvFOY>

ENDS

Notes to Editor

About the Apollo Protocol

- The Apollo Protocol was initiated with a white paper, published in September 2022 which sets out a proposal to unlock the benefits of digital twins between the built environment and manufacturing sectors, with the support of the technology sector. It argues for the establishment of The Apollo Forum to explore four key themes:

- o A single value chain for information and data services and requirements
- o Circular supply chains between the sectors
- o Optimised performance through technology enabled information sharing, and
- o Managed human capital and resources between the sectors.

- To Download the White Paper please visit www.theiet.org/Apollo-Protocol

- The Apollo Protocol represents the combined efforts of the IET, The Construction Leadership Council (CLC), The University of Sheffield Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC), The High Value Manufacturing (HVM) Catapult, The Centre for Digital Built Britain (CDBB), The Construction Innovation Hub, The Digital Twin Hub, techUK and The Alan Turing Institute. The project has the support of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Innovate UK.

Media enquiries to
Su Butcher
Project Manager, Apollo Protocol
su@justpractising.com **Ends**

About the Construction Leadership Council (CLC)

The CLC's mission is to provide sector leadership to the construction industry. The expanded CLC has twelve workstreams that operate collaboratively to address the biggest issues facing the sector. Workstreams include skills and inclusion, building safety, Net Zero and business models. The CLC is co-chaired by the Minister for Business and Industry, and Mark Reynolds, Mace Group Chairman and Chief Executive.