

# Gloucestershire company to make underwater energy device for MoD

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A Gloucestershire tech company has secured a £350,000 contract with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to develop a renewable energy device that will support underwater national security operations.

WITT Limited, based at Gloucestershire Science and Technology Park in Berkeley, has created ground-breaking technology that captures energy from all planes of movement and turns it into storable electrical power.

The company will now tailor its eponymous WITT (Whatever Input to Torsion Transfer) device for the subsea environment.

Vortex induced vibrations (VIV) created by ocean currents will be converted into electricity stored in the WITT, which is contained within a sealed vessel, providing a low maintenance source of off-grid power to remote and hard-to-reach locations.

WITT Limited has recently been trialling the technology at Turnchapel Wharf in Plymouth, a cutting-edge hub for marine robotics.

The business secured the funding through the Defence and

Security Accelerator (DASA) – a cross-Government organisation and part of the MoD that finds and funds innovation to support UK defence and security.

Mairi Wickett, business development director and co-founder of WITT Limited welcomed the DASA's backing as a "huge boost."

Ms Wickett said: "[The funding] will facilitate additional development of the technology and enable us to investigate new applications for the system subsea – such as providing power for sensors, data gathering and mammal and temperature studies.

!It also further reinforces the WITT's credibility in the sector and puts us in a strong position for our next round of fundraising."

She said the device had "countless applications", with the company's main aim to "revolutionise" off-grid power generation and reduce global CO2 production.

The firm previously attracted almost £2.4m of investment during a record-breaking crowdfunding campaign in 2016, achieving the largest-ever crowdfunded equity raise by a clean tech company.

The WITT device has been granted patents worldwide including UK, USA, China and Europe and has patents pending in Brazil, Canada, India and Russia.

It was recently recognised with the Solar Impulse Foundation/World Alliance Efficient Solution Label for being one of the '1,000 Best Clean Green Affordable Solutions to Protect the Planet and Reduce CO2'.

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Mike Madden, the DASA Innovation Partner for the South West of England, said it was “great” to see growing companies like WITT Limited secure funding.

Mr Madden said: “It is attractive that this idea also has potential cross-sector appeal in addition to the clear defence need.

“While the DASA funding has clearly been welcomed by the company, the benefits they will accrue as a result of this successful bid will include increased access to the defence user, and science and technology communities. It’s hard to put

a value on that, but it is not to be underestimated.”

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