



For immediate release

### **Carbon Connections Fills the Gap - Carbon innovators benefit from early seed money**

16 October 2007. From today onwards, Carbon Connections can fund any carbon reduction project partnership between any UK education institution and UK based business. With £3 million to invest in innovative carbon reduction project partnerships it fills the gap between good ideas and development of market-ready solutions to reduce carbon in the UK.

The aim is to facilitate knowledge transfer between business communities, universities and research laboratories. By nurturing each project in a higher education-business partnership, Carbon Connections' funding model is expected to speed commercial development of technological or behavioural carbon-saving projects.

Based at the UK's leading school of environmental sciences at University of East Anglia, Carbon Connections is now linked to every university and college in the UK. Funding of up to £200,000 is available for each successful applicant. It is hoped that expansion of the programme will help launch ventures that will go on to attract corporate or venture capital investment.

Prof Trevor Davies, pro-vice-chancellor of UEA, said: "Carbon Connections has received more than 150 expressions of interest and we are delighted that we have already been able to fund a number of novel, exciting carbon-cutting projects. However, spreading the net to all Higher Education Institutions will enable us to capture more ideas and an even greater breadth of expertise."

Programme Director Dr Chris Harrison said: "We have already seen a fantastic range of outline concepts as part of our first phase. It is evident that the HE sector has a great deal of know-how, research output and intellectual property that can be applied to the issues of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and climate change. We look forward to receiving proposals and to supporting our second stage of projects."

The current group of 154 institutions has expanded from an original group of 8 that were mainly in the East of England. As projects are measured over a 12-month cycle, all applications must be received by 14 December 2007.

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## **Notes to Editors:**

### **Carbon Connections**

[www.carbon-connections.org](http://www.carbon-connections.org)

The key criteria are:

- Carbon reduction – the project must show that it will potentially contribute to reducing carbon emissions, ideally both during the lifetime of the funding and beyond.
- Innovation – the project must be novel, demonstrating that it will break new ground in technical or social innovation.
- Partnership and knowledge transfer – the project must demonstrate knowledge transfer and/or exchange between university or higher education institute partners and business/non-HEI partners. The project should show that input from both partners is integral..

Sustainability of the Carbon Connections fund – the operating model provides for reinvestment of income in future projects. In addition, Carbon Connections may take a stake in income producing projects and will also seek private equity to provide additional seed money.

To date, Carbon Connections has funded ten projects (awarded almost £1 million), including further research into the potential of biofuel to heat British homes, car sharing software to cut road traffic and a carbon literacy simulation game that teaches users how to save fuel. The funding for Carbon Connections comes from the government's Higher Education Innovation Fund.

The University of East Anglia has an exemplary track record in climate change research and the Carbon Connections programme is linked to:

- the CRed carbon reduction scheme now in use in London, Birmingham and other locations across Britain, as well as in the USA
- Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research
- School of Environmental Sciences, UEA