

Run for Heroes, HS2 update and a slow government business scheme

Maddyness provides you with a quick digest of three news items to keep you up to date with the startup scene, emerging trends and other noteworthy stories.

Run for Heroes fundraised over £2M for NHS

Launched at the end of March, the Run For Heroes 5K challenge called on people to run, walk or cycle the distance, donate £5 and nominate five people to do the same to raise money for the NHS through their [fundraising page](#). The campaign smashed their original £500K target in just four days, and the charity has now beaten its new £2M goal.

Many celebrities took part in the challenge including Ellie Goulding, model Adwoa Aboah, Made In Chelsea's Oliver Proudlock and the 800m runner Lyndsey Sharp.

£2 MILLION ☐☐☐

YOU ARE ALL AMAZING ☐☐☐ collectively you've raised A MILLION in a day (causal).

You've officially spread the word to over 400,000 runners globally.

Thank you again ~ and mostly to all the NHS workers & volunteers working around the clock☐ [#RunForHeroes](https://twitter.com/PFc0sDhezP) [pic.twitter.com/PFc0sDhezP](https://twitter.com/PFc0sDhezP)

— RUN FOR HEROES (@RunForHeroes) April 15, 2020

If you're interested, you can attend the Run for Heroes challenge as well, and here's a few things to bear in mind:

If you're going for a run this week can you do it for the NHS workers?

Run 5K, Donate £5 & Nominate 5 people on your social channels to do the same by tagging [@Run.For.Heroes](https://twitter.com/RunForHeroes) to help spread the word (you can do this inside or outside, and if you can't run the full 5k don't worry!)

All proceeds are going to [NHS Charities Together](https://www.nhs.uk/charities-together) who's mission statement is to support the welfare and the wellbeing of NHS staff as they fight COVID-19.

Your health and safety is important, so only do this by yourself, social distancing by 2 meters from others, and if you're feeling healthy enough to do so.

Read [NHS COVID 19 GUIDELINES](#)

Important: Following the government lockdown measures, people are allowed to do one form of outdoor exercise a day while maintaining a safe two-metre distance from others.

HS2 construction is on with a £1.6B budget

A few months ago, when the HS2 project was confirmed by the government, environment-focused organisations such as Greenpeace expressed concerns over the potential environmental impact of HS2.

Despite this, it's been officially announced that the next phase of the HS2 project has started. This week, the government has issued HS2 a notice to proceed to deliver the C1 package, which marks the construction of the first rail routes. The package, which was awarded to [Align](#), is worth £1.6B and sits within the first phase of the project. Align is a joint venture of three international and privately-owned infrastructure companies, Bouygues Travaux Publics SAS, a subsidiary of Bouygues Construction, Sir Robert McAlpine and VolkerFitzpatrick, a subsidiary of VolkerWessels UK, and its design partners Jacobs Engineering and Ingérop-Rendel.

The C1 route starts approximately 20km to the west of Central London and runs across the Colne Valley and then through the Chiltern Hills to the north-west. It consists of 21.6km of high-speed rail infrastructure that includes what will become a 3.37km viaduct across the Colne Valley and a 16.04km double tunnel with five ventilation shafts.

Only 6,000 UK loans granted to businesses out of 300,000 enquiries

According to new figures, only 6,000 loans have been made to UK businesses through the coronavirus business interruption scheme. UK Finance said lending through the scheme has grown by £700M over the past week, an increase of around 150%. It said 6,020 loans have now been provided to businesses through the programme. However, around 300,000 businesses have made inquiries regarding the loan scheme.

“The scheme is simply not working well enough. We need change now. The Chancellor must move to a 100 per cent guarantee of loans for smaller businesses as other countries have done. In this economic emergency, it is the right thing to do.” – Business Secretary Ed Miliband

The pace of loan approvals has gone faster these last days, rising from 240 loans on April 2 to 910 on April 8, with a further 1,800 loans worth over £300M recorded over the Easter weekend. This comes after pressure from groups such as the British Chamber of Commerce (BCC) for the loan scheme to be accelerated to ensure SMEs can survive the crisis.

UK Finance said lenders have received 28,460 formal applications from businesses, meaning that fewer than one in four applications have currently been approved.

“Frontline staff in local branches and call centres are working incredibly hard to help firms access finance as quickly as possible amid unprecedented demand. Like all businesses they are working at reduced capacity as many staff are self-isolating or looking after family.” – Stephen Jones, CEO of UK Finance

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Support for businesses during the coronavirus crisis

Article by MADDYNESS