

This document contains the guidance and scoring used by the Assessors when reviewing your application. Assessors will review your answers for each scored question and mark each of them between 1 and 10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest).

Any questions that are not scored will not be reviewed by the Assessor.

Question 1: Applicant location (not scored)

You must state the name and full registered address of your organisation and any partners or subcontractors working on your project.

We are collecting this information to understand the geographical location of all applicants.

Question 2: Animal testing (not scored)

Will your project involve any trials with animals or animal testing?

You must select one option:

- Yes
- No

We will only support innovation projects conducted to the highest standards of animal welfare.

Further information for proposals involving animal testing is available at the [UKRI Good Research Hub](#) and [NC3R's animal welfare guidance](#).

Question 3: Farmers, growers or foresters location (not scored)

You must provide the address for any farmers, growers or foresters requesting grant funding in your project. This is required for subsidy control and eligibility purposes. If no farmers, or growers or foresters are requesting grant funding, please leave this box blank.

Please note: If your project has farmers, or growers or foresters requesting grant funding, a minimum of 50% of the amount requested by those organisations, must come from farmers or growers geographically based in England.

Question 4: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (not scored)

How have you incorporated equality, diversity and inclusion into your project delivery and project outcomes?

Describe or explain the details relating to any challenges or opportunities relating to equality, diversity and inclusion arising from your project and the methods and approaches used to address them:

- during project delivery
- for governance
- for project team and advisory boards
- for stakeholder and end-user engagement
- for design thinking

Please note: Questions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion will not form part of the funding decision but will be used to inform the development of EDI activities for the competition cohort.

Question 5: Need or challenge

What is the business need, technological challenge, or market opportunity behind your project, and how will this deliver the competition aims?

Explain:

- the farming or agricultural problem, need, technological challenge or market opportunity identified
- how your project outputs would deliver large improvements in productivity, resilience and sustainability, while significantly decreasing the environmental impact of farming
- how your project is helping the industry transition towards net zero emissions, and benefiting farmers, growers or foresters in England
- the wider economic, social, environmental, cultural or political challenges which are influential in creating the opportunity,

Question 5: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 – 10

There is a clear and compelling need, opportunity or challenge for the project. The applicant has provided insightful evidence that the need or challenge is a critical issue for farmers, growers or foresters in England. The applicant has clearly demonstrated how the project output could deliver significant increases in one or more of productivity, resilience, sustainability, while significantly decreasing the environmental impact of farming, helping the industry rapidly transition towards net zero emissions across a breadth of the sector. There are significant wider factors identified as driving this opportunity.

Scores 7 - 8

There is a good need, opportunity or challenge for the project. The applicant has shown the need or challenge is a major issue for farmers, growers or foresters in England. The applicant has demonstrated how the project output could result in large increases in one or more of productivity, resilience, sustainability, while decreasing the environmental impact of farming, helping the industry transition towards net zero emissions within the sector. The wider factors influencing this opportunity have been identified and are reasonably strong.

Scores 5 - 6

The project's need, opportunity or challenge is good and it is a common issue for farmers, growers or foresters in England. The applicant has demonstrated how the project output could result in moderate increases in one or more of productivity, resilience, sustainability but its impact within the sector is likely to be limited. There is mention of decreasing the environmental impact of

farming and how this links to helping the industry transition towards net zero. However, there is a lack of understanding of wider factors influencing this opportunity.

Scores 3 - 4

Need, challenge or opportunity is poorly defined or it is a minor issue for farmers, growers or foresters in England.

The project output could make minor increases in productivity, sustainability or resilience of farming. References to decreasing the environmental impact of farming or the wider factors influencing this opportunity are very limited or are not relevant.

Scores 1 - 2

The need, challenge or opportunity is a peripheral and minor issue for farmers, growers or foresters in England.

The project outputs will have negligible impact on productivity, resilience, sustainability and references to the environmental impact of farming or wider factors influencing this opportunity are not offered or are not relevant.

Question 6: Approach and innovation

What approach will you take and where will the focus of the innovation be?

Explain:

- what is the approach or innovation and how will it address the identified problem, need or challenge
- any work you have already done to respond to this need, for example, if the project focuses on developing an existing capability or building a new one
- how your project will complement existing technologies to deliver a more efficient and sustainable farm production systems
- the nature of the outputs you expect from the project, for example, report, demonstrator, know-how, new process, product or service design, and how these will help you to target the need, challenge or opportunity identified

You can submit one appendix to support your answer. It can include diagrams and charts. It must be a PDF, up to 2 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question 6: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The approach is clearly defined and incorporates R&D that will enable innovation that will transform, the need, challenge or opportunity identified in question 5. The focus of the innovation is commercially or technically significant and will make a significant contribution to the field. Solid evidence is presented to substantiate the level of innovation. The nature of the project outputs are clear and very well aligned to address the need or challenge identified, and will complement existing technologies and systems to deliver a more efficient and sustainable farm production systems.

If applicable, the applicant has shown how the project will build on previous relevant work.

Scores 7 - 8

The approach is well defined and incorporates R&D, that will enable innovation that will satisfactorily addresses the need, challenge or opportunity identified in question 5. The innovation is good from a technical or commercial perspective and the evidence provided, indicates it will have a good contribution to the field. The nature of the outputs are appropriate to addressing the need or challenge identified, and are likely to complement existing technologies and systems to deliver a more efficient and sustainable farm production system.

If applicable, applicant has shown how the project will relate to previous work in the area.

Scores 5 - 6

The approach is moderately defined with some important aspects missing. It incorporates R&D, that may address the need, challenge or opportunity identified in question 5 but is not fully substantiated. The innovation focus is plausible and shows a link to improvements in competitiveness and/or productivity. Moderate evidence is presented to substantiate the level of innovation but there are important gaps in the evidence. The nature of the outputs may complement existing technologies and help target the need or challenge identified.

If applicable, previous work is referenced, but it is not clear or relevant.

Scores 3 - 4

The approach lacks any significant R&D and innovation is poorly defined with an unconvincing link to the need or challenge identified in question 5. Improvement in competitiveness and/or productivity is not very convincing. The nature of the outputs are not clear or are inadequate to address need or challenge.

Scores 1 - 2

The approach and innovation is not well defined or inconsistent with the need or challenge identified in question 5. No R&D is evident. There is no identification of how this will improve productivity or sustainability of farming. The outputs are not relevant for addressing the need or challenge identified.

Question 7: Team and resources

Who is in the project team and what are their roles?

Explain:

- the roles, skills and experience of all members of the project team that are relevant to the approach you will be taking
- the resources, equipment and facilities needed for the project and how you will access them
- how you will work with farmers, growers or foresters throughout the project to ensure outputs remain focussed on end-users' needs
- the details of any vital external parties, including subcontractors, who you will need to work with to successfully carry out the project
- the current relationships between project partners and how these will change as a result of the project
- any roles you will need to recruit for

You can submit one appendix. This can include a short summary of the main people working on the project to support your answer. It must be a PDF, up to 4 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question 7: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

Given the approach described in question 6, the consortium is well placed to carry out the project and exploit the results. There is a clear and convincing plan to obtain all the resources, equipment and facilities they will need, including access to external parties where project skills are inadequate. There is strong evidence that the consortium will be collaborative and work well. Detailed roles and plans of engaging with the end-users (farmers, growers or foresters) throughout the project are clearly stated.

Scores 7 - 8

Given the approach described in question 6, the consortium is suitable to carry out the project and exploit the results. There is a clear plan to obtain all the resources, equipment, and facilities they will need. There is a plan of including external parties where project team skills are inadequate. The consortium is likely to be collaborative and to work well. Plans for engaging with the end-users (farmers, growers or foresters) are satisfactory.

Scores 5 - 6

The consortium has most, but not all, of the required skills and experience required. Plans of including external parties where project team skills are inadequate or are not clear. It is unclear whether the consortium will work well together or not. Plans for engaging with the end-users (farmers, growers or foresters) are limited.

Scores 3 - 4

There are significant gaps in the consortium with little or no information about how these will be filled. There may be some partners with little relevance to the project activities. Plans for engaging with the end-users (farmers, growers or foresters) are weak.

Scores 1 - 2

The applicant or consortium will not be capable of either carrying out the project or exploiting the results. There are no plans to engage with the end-users (farmers, growers or foresters) during the project.

Question 8: Market awareness

What does the market you are targeting look like?

Describe:

- the target markets for the project outcomes, any other potential markets (domestic, international or both)
- the size of the target markets for the project outcomes, backed up by references where available
- who are your actual target customers or end users, what is the value to them and why they would use or buy your product or service
- the structure and dynamics of the target markets, together with predicted growth rates within clear timeframes
- the target markets' main supply or value chains and business models

If your project is highly innovative, where the market may be unexplored, describe or explain:

- what the market's size might be
- how your project will try to explore the market's potential

Question 8: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The target market size, drivers and dynamics are fully quantified and evidenced. There is a detailed and convincing description of target customers or end users and the value proposition of the output to them. The applicant provides highly credible information on the market structure with a justified and realistic estimate of the expected market share. Where the market is new or unexplored, possible routes are identified based on precedents.

Scores 7 – 8

There is a good awareness of the target market's drivers and dynamics. The market size is quantified with some evidence. There is a clear description of target customers or end users and the value proposition of the output to them. The applicant has provided valid information on the market structure and a realistic estimate of the expected market share.

Scores 5 - 6

The general market size and dynamics are understood but the addressable market is poorly quantified. There is a broad overview of target customers or end users and the value proposition of the output to them. The applicant has provided moderate information on the market structure and a broad estimate of the expected market share.

Scores 3 - 4

Some information about the general market is offered but the extent of the addressable market for the project is not described. There is a vague description of target customers or end users and the value proposition of the output to them. The applicant has provided limited information on the market structure and an unrealistic estimate of the expected market share.

Scores 1 - 2

The market is poorly defined or is irrelevant to the motivations of the project. There is no description of target customers or end users and the value proposition of the output to them. The applicant has not provided any information on the market structure or the expected market share.

Question 9: Outcomes and route to market

How will you commercialise your project outputs? How will you grow your business and increase long term productivity as a result of the project?

Explain:

- your current position in the markets and supply or value chains outlined, and whether you will be extending or establishing your market position
- your route to market

- how you will protect and exploit the outputs of the project, for example, through know-how, patenting, or designs
- how you are going to profit from the innovation, including increased revenues or cost reduction
- how the innovation will affect your productivity and growth, in both the short and the long term

If there is any research organisation activity in the project, describe:

- your plans to spread the project's research outputs over a reasonable timescale
- how you expect to use the results generated from the project in further research activities

Question 9: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

There is a detailed and highly credible plan of how to take the outcomes of the project forward. The routes to market and how profit, productivity and growth will increase are clearly explained and evidenced. The project has a highly relevant business model and a clear understanding of routes to adoption.

The exploitation and/or dissemination of the main project outputs is evidenced and the research organisations have convincingly shown how they would use the results generated.

Scores 7 - 8

There is a clear and credible plan of how to take the outcomes of the project forward. The routes to market and how profit, productivity and growth will increase are identified with evidence. The project has a clear business model and understanding of routes to adoption. Research organisations have described with evidence how they would use the results generated.

Scores 5 - 6

There is an adequate outline of how to take the outcomes of the project forward. The routes to market and how profit, productivity and growth will increase is identified but little evidence is presented. The project has a satisfactory business model and

understanding of routes to adoption. Research organisations have provided some evidence of how they would use the results generated.

Scores 3 - 4

There is a limited discussion of how to take the outcomes of the project forward. The routes to market and how profit, productivity and growth will increase are not identified. The project appears to have little understanding of routes to adoption. Research organisations have provided little information on how they would use the results generated.

Scores 1 - 2

The applicant provides little or no information about the route to market, adoption and business model. Research organisations have provided no information on how they would use the results generated.

Question 10: Competitors and barriers

Who else is operating in this space and what barriers limit your ability to exploit your project output?

Explain:

- the process you have completed to evaluate the work of competitors including those near market, or in development
- how does your proposal build on, or differentiate from competitor offerings
- where applicable, what regulatory, cultural or other barriers exist, both in the UK and internationally that prevent you from fully exploiting this opportunity

Question 10: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

There is a detailed understanding of competitor activity and the strengths and weaknesses of competing products in the market. Detailed and credible descriptions of how the outputs of the project are significantly different from competitor offerings are included.

Where applicable, there is a crisp and detailed awareness of the barriers, both in the UK and internationally, that may prevent the applicant from exploiting this opportunity.

Scores 7 - 8

There is a good understanding of competitor activity and the strengths and weaknesses of competing products in the market. Comprehensive descriptions of how the outputs of the project are significantly different from competitors' offerings are evidenced. Where applicable, there is a good level of awareness of the barriers, both in the UK and internationally that may prevent the applicant from exploiting this opportunity.

Scores 5 - 6

There is a basic understanding of competitor activity and the strengths and weaknesses of competing products in the market. Some description of how the outputs of the project are significantly different from competitor offerings are presented. Where applicable, there is a moderate level of awareness of the barriers, both in the UK and internationally, that may prevent the applicant from exploiting this opportunity.

Scores 3 - 4

There is a lack of basic understanding of competitor activity and the strengths and weaknesses of competing products in the market. Applicants have provided limited information on how the outputs of the project are significantly different from competitors' offerings. Where applicable, there is very little awareness of the barriers, both in the UK and internationally, that may prevent the applicant from exploiting this opportunity.

Scores 1 - 2

There is no understanding of competitor activity and the strengths or weaknesses of competing products in the market. Applicants have provided no descriptions of how the outputs of the project differ from competitors' offerings. Where applicable, there is no mention of the barriers, both in the UK and internationally, that may prevent the applicant from exploiting this opportunity.

Question 11: Wider impacts

What impact might this project have outside the project team?

Describe and, where possible, measure:

- the environmental, sustainability and resilience benefits from the project to external parties for example, contributing to net-zero targets for emissions and reduction of waste
- the economic benefits from the project to external parties, such as productivity increases and import substitution at a regional or national scale
- the long-term social and welfare impacts from the project
- how you have determined that the project outputs will not widen any farming inequalities, including any negative impacts that you have identified, and how will you mitigate against these

Question 11: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The project has a strong environmental, sustainability and resilience benefit to the English farming sector. The expected economic and environmental impacts are considered and described with compelling evidence to justify claims. Any possible negative impacts are addressed and fully mitigated where appropriate. The positive impact on others outside of the team, such as supply chain partners, customers and broader industry, is clearly understood, realistic and of significantly positive social, economic and environmental impact in the long term

Scores 7 - 8

The project has a clear environmental, sustainability and resilience benefit to the sector. There is good awareness and description of the expected long-term economic, social and environmental impacts the project may have on external parties. Any possible negative impacts are partially mitigated where appropriate.

Scores 5 - 6

The project has a satisfactory environmental, sustainability and resilience benefit to the sector. There is basic awareness of the economic, social and environmental impacts the project could have on others outside the project. Little mitigation is offered where there may be negative impacts.

Scores 3 - 4

The applicant provides limited information about environmental, sustainability and resilience benefit to the sector but significant gaps remain. Impacts to external parties are vaguely or not considered. There is little consideration for possible negative impacts and where appropriate, no mitigations are considered.

Scores 1 - 2

There is no information about the environmental, sustainability and resilience benefit to the sector. No information is provided about how the project might impact on external parties or how the project may have negative or detrimental impacts upon the sector.

Question 12: Project management

How will you manage the project effectively?

Explain:

- the main work packages of the project, indicating the lead partner assigned to each and the total cost of each one
- your approach to project management, identifying any major tools and mechanisms you will use to get a successful and innovative project outcome
- the management reporting lines
- your project plan in enough detail to identify any links or dependencies between work packages or milestones

You must submit a project plan or Gantt chart as an appendix to support your answer. It must be a PDF, can be up to 2 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question 12: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The project work packages are outlined with the research category, lead partner and total cost provided for each one. The approach to project management is described. The plan is designed to meet the objectives of the project in a realistic and efficient way. Any links or dependencies between work packages or milestones are identified.

Scores 7 - 8

The project work packages are outlined with the research category, lead partner and total cost provided for each one. The approach to project management is stated. The plan seems appropriate to the project objectives. Any links or dependencies between work packages or milestones are identified.

Scores 5 - 6

The project work packages are outlined but there are some details missing. The plan seems reasonable but not tailored to the objectives of the project.

Scores 3 - 4

The plan has serious deficiencies or major missing aspects. The plan has little chance of meeting the objectives of the project.

Scores 1 - 2

The plan is totally unrealistic or fails to meet the objectives of the project.

Question 13: Risks

What are the main risks for this project?

Explain:

- the main risks and uncertainties of the project, including the technical, commercial, managerial and environmental risks
- how you will mitigate these risks
- any project inputs that are critical to completion, such as resources, expertise, data sets

- any output likely to be subject to regulatory requirements, certification, ethical issues and so on, and how you will manage this

You must submit a risk register as an appendix to support your answer. It must be a PDF and can be up to 2 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question 13: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The key risks and uncertainties of the project are considered and mitigated. Critical inputs to the project are identified. Relevant constraints or conditions on the project outputs (regulatory requirements, certification or ethical issues) are identified. The risk analysis is appropriate and professional.

Scores 7 - 8

The key risks and uncertainties of the project are considered with appropriate mitigations. Relevant constraints or conditions on the project outputs are identified.

Scores 5 - 6

Most major risks have been identified, but there are some gaps or the mitigation and management is insufficient to properly control the risks.

Scores 3 - 4

The risk analysis is poor or misses major areas of risk. The mitigation and management is poor.

Scores 1 - 2

The risk analysis is superficial with minimal mitigation or management suggested.

Question 14: Added value

How will this public funding help you to accelerate or enhance your approach to developing your project towards commercialisation? What impact would this award have on the organisations involved?

Explain:

- what advantages would public funding offer your project, for example, appeal to investors, more partners, reduced risk or a faster route to market. This list is not exhaustive.
- the likely impact of the project outcomes on the organisations involved
- what other routes of investment you have already approached
- what your project would look like without public funding
- how this project would change the R&D activities of all the organisations involved

Question 14: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

There is a compelling case for the positive difference funding will make in terms of the outcomes and speed at which they will be achieved. Alternative sources of support are described with an explanation of why they are discounted or used in conjunction with the grant funding. The project will significantly increase the industrial partners' R&D spend during the project and afterwards.

Scores 7 - 8

The arguments for public funding are good and justified with increased level of outcomes and speed of delivery described as a result of funding. The project will significantly increase the industrial partners' commitment to R&D.

Scores 5 - 6

The public funding arguments are acceptable, but the difference made by the grant will be modest. The project will improve the industrial partners' commitment to R&D.

Scores 3 - 4

The funding arguments are poor or not sufficiently justified. There is not likely to be any improvement to the industrial partner's commitment to R&D.

Scores 1 - 2

There is no justification for public funding and no reason why the applicant should not fund the work.

Question 15: Costs and value for money

How much will the project cost and how does it represent value for money for the team and the taxpayer?

In terms of your project goals, explain:

- your total eligible project costs
- the grant you are requesting
- how each partner will finance their contributions to your project
- how this project represents value for money for you and the taxpayer
- how it compares to what you would spend your money on otherwise
- the balance of costs and grant across the project partners
- any subcontractor costs and why they are critical to your project

Question 15: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The project costs are entirely appropriate and represent excellent value for money compared to alternative approaches outlined, including doing nothing. The partners have a clear idea of how they will finance their contribution. The balance of costs and grants between partners, and use of subcontractors, is justified and reasonable for the proposed project.

Scores 7 - 8

The project costs are appropriate and should be sufficient to successfully complete the project. The balance of costs and grants between partners, and use of subcontractors, seems reasonable. The project represents good value for money compared to alternative outlined approaches, including doing nothing.

Scores 5 - 6

The project costs seem appropriate but the justifications are not clear. The balance of costs and grants between partners is acceptable. Little information is offered about alternative approaches and the value for money this project offers.

Scores 3 - 4

The project costs seem too high or too low given the proposed project. The split of costs and grants between partners is unbalanced, or inappropriate use is being made of subcontractors.

Scores 1 - 2

The costs are not appropriate or justified. The balance between partners and subcontractors is not justified.

Question 16: Knowledge exchange and dissemination

What approach and resources you will use to increase awareness of the research and drive uptake of the outputs developed during the project?

Explain:

- how you will communicate and work with the target market and how this will inform your knowledge exchange plan
- how you will encourage use of the outputs beyond the initial target market
- what new or different approaches will you use to encourage farmers, growers or foresters in England to use the outputs developed
- how you will measure progress and success during and after the dissemination activities

You can submit one appendix to support your answer. It can include diagrams and charts. It must be a PDF and can be up to 2 A4 pages long. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question16: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

There is an innovative approach to demonstration and knowledge exchange which will enable effective engagement with, and adoption by, the target market and broader potential users. These approaches are relevant and realistic measures of success.

Scores 7 - 8

The approach to demonstration and knowledge exchange will be effective and enable effective engagement with, and adoption by, the target market. However, this approach has limited innovation. Broader potential users are considered and embedded in the demonstration and knowledge exchange plans. There are relevant and realistic measures of success.

Scores 5 - 6

The approach to demonstration and knowledge exchange is likely to be effective in engaging with and encouraging adoption by the target market. Broader potential users are not considered. Some relevant and realistic measures of success are given but these are narrow in scope.

Scores 3 - 4

The approach to demonstration and knowledge exchange may be effective in engaging with and encouraging adoption by the target market but insufficient evidence is provided. Broader potential users are not considered. Measures of success are given but these are narrow in scope or flawed.

Scores 1 - 2

The approach to demonstration and knowledge exchange is unlikely to achieve the objectives of the project.

