



Innovate
UK

Future Leaders Fellowships: Round 10, business and non-academic

Applicant Briefing

Date: 26 June 2025

The webinar will start at 10:00.

- Welcome, we are currently waiting for more people to join.
- This briefing will be recorded. A copy of the slides and the recording link will be made available on IFS.
- Please enter any questions that you may have into the Q&A Box.
- For more information on the competition process, please click [here](#) to access our YouTube channel.



Welcome and Introductions

Liam McCartney
Competition Manager

Jennifer Postles
Innovation Lead

Cherish Vines
Programme Coordinator



Agenda

- Key Dates
- Competition Summary & Scope
- Eligibility Criteria
- Innovation Funding Service (IFS)
- Funding Rules
- Assessment
- Use of AI
- Additional Support
- Q&A



Key Dates

Timeline	Dates
Competition Opens	23 June 2025
Submission Deadline	5 November 2025 at 11am
Interview Panel Starts	11 May 2026
Interview Panel Ends	31 May 2026
Applicants informed	31 July 2026 by 5pm
Project start	Start by 1 October 2026

Competition Summary & Scope



Future Leaders Fellowships

Funding the Top Ten Future Leaders of Research and Innovation in Business



£1.5m

over 4 years average award



UK Businesses of any size and sector



Flexibility

- Supporting diverse career paths
- Career break
- Reduced hours or part time



- Single programme
- Portfolio of projects
- Concurrent interlinked projects



Networking across cohort and investment for training and professional development



Collaboration

Option to collaborate with other organisations



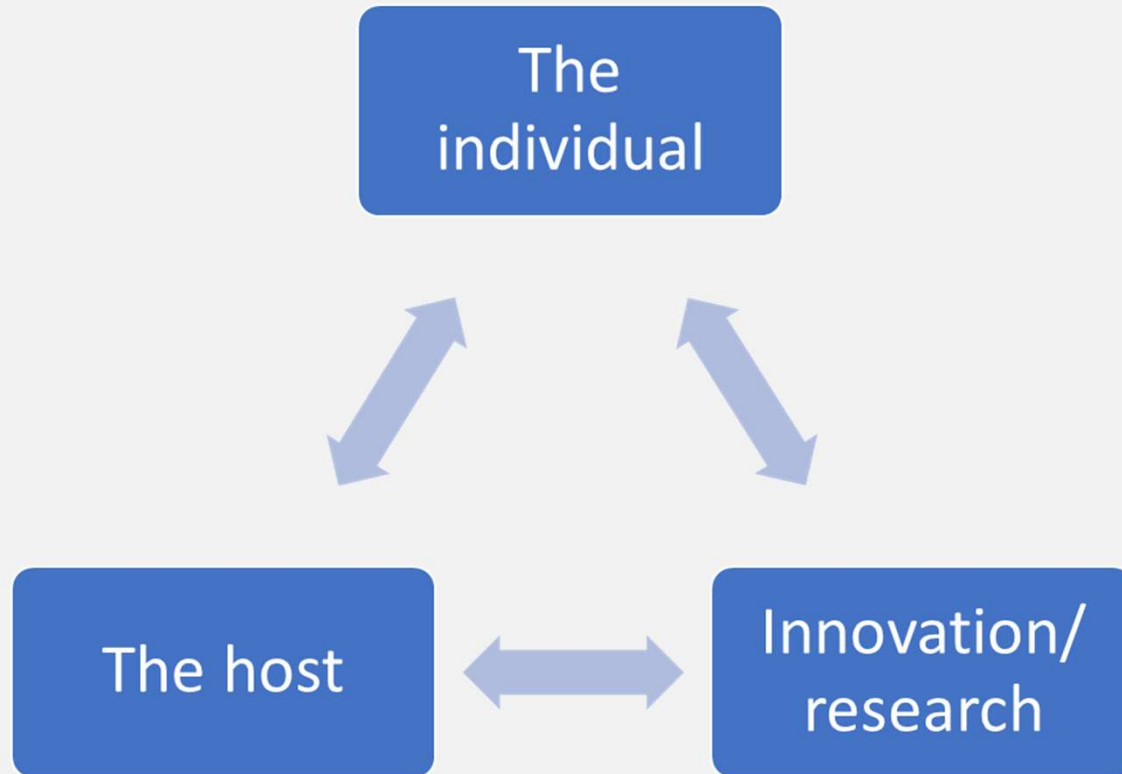
Interdisciplinary and cross-sector research



Summary

- Apply for funding over 4 years to fund ambitious innovation or research
- Flexible award sizes, from £100,000 to £3,000,000
- Salaries for fellow and team
- Project/portfolio costs
- Funding for leadership and career development activities
- Flexible and part-time working options

The Fellowship



Is FLF right for you?

- We're looking for the future leaders of research & innovation in business
- Significant commitment from the applicant and host organisation
- Host support and excellence
- Ambitious vision for the future

Scope

The aim of this competition is to:

- support ambitious research and innovation to tackle difficult and novel challenges
- support excellence in innovation, including at interdisciplinary boundaries, and across sectors
- develop, retain, and attract the next wave of research and innovation leaders

Your project must:

- deliver research or innovation above and beyond the standard activities of the organisation
- maximise the impact and influence of the proposed work
- include a clear programme of skills development, allowing you to fully develop your leadership potential through for example, mentoring and professional development training
- have the full support of your host organisation

Scope

Your project can:

- be made up of a single programme of work, or multiple consecutive or concurrent projects led by the Fellow, known as a 'Portfolio Fellowship'
- be altered once underway to react to changes in the research landscape or react to business needs

Intellectual property (IP)

All participants in the scheme and their Host Organisations are required to give due regard to the appropriate protection of any IP arising from the project. You must describe effective routes to exploitation which have the potential to achieve maximum benefit for the UK economy and wider society

Eligibility criteria



Eligibility Criteria – Your Project

Your project must:

- have a grant funding request of between £100,000 and £3 million last for a minimum of four years, with the option to extend for a further three years
- carry out all its project work in the UK
- intend to exploit results from or in UK
- be based at, or have the support of, an eligible non-academic host organisation
- Projects must always start on the first of the month, even if this is a non-working day, and this must be stated within your application. Your project can start from 1 October 2026, subject to agreement and authorisation. Your project start date will be reflected in your grant offer letter if you are successful.
- You must only include eligible project costs in your application. See our overview of [eligible project costs](#). For specific guidance, see the eligibility section in this competition.
- If you require further guidance on your proposal's grant funding request or duration you must provide justification by email to fellows@ukri.org at least 15 working days before the competition closes. We will decide whether to approve your request.

Eligibility Criteria – Lead Organisation

Lead organisation:

- The application must be started by the fellow as a representative of the host organisation.
- To host a Future Leaders Fellow your organisation must be a UK registered:
 - business of any size
 - charitable organisation
 - Catapult
 - public organisation
 - Agri-Tech Centre
 - eligible research organisation
- [Research organisations](#) eligible to receive UKRI funding can be part of a business or non-academic application as a partner. Applicants who will be hosted by an eligible research organisation must apply through the [UKRI Funding Service](#).
- This does not apply to Catapult centres; Catapult centres must apply for this competition through this application form.
- More information on the different types of organisation can be found in our [Funding rules](#).

Eligibility Criteria – Fellow Applicants

- You must demonstrate the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to deliver the proposed project.
- You do not need to hold a PhD, and there are no eligibility rules based on the number of years since your PhD. If you do not hold a PhD, you must be able to demonstrate equivalent research, innovation experience or training.
- Fellows are welcome from outside of the UK with the support of an eligible UK based host organisation. Researchers and innovators are eligible for a [Global Talent visa](#) under the ‘exceptional promise’ category for future research leaders.
- Future Leaders Fellowships (FLF) offer flexibility to support outstanding individuals:
 - from diverse career backgrounds
 - returning from a career break or returning to research or innovation following time in other roles
 - wishing to work part-time or in job shares to combine the fellowship with personal responsibilities.Fellows can spend up to 50% of their time (not funded by FLF) on other activities, where these activities are shown to benefit or be necessary for their career. Non-fellowship activities can include business as usual, other grant funding or ongoing contracts. Be advised no further salary can be claimed for non-FLF activities during the award. The duration of the fellowship can be increased to pro-rata the time spent on the fellowship, back up to a maximum of 100% if requested.
- If you are interested in applying as a job share, please contact fellows@ukri.org.

Eligibility Criteria – Partners

- Partners are only permitted when bringing complementary and different skills to the project. Their role should be clearly defined in the application.
- Partners must be from a UK based eligible organisation and hold a contract of employment for their time on the project. Eligible organisations can include all UK registered businesses, charities, Agri-Tech Centres, public organisations and Catapult centres. Research organisations eligible to receive UKRI funding can be found at [Research organisations eligible for UKRI funding](#).
- Each partner organisation must be invited into the Innovation Funding Service (IFS) by the lead to collaborate on a project. Once partners have accepted the invitation, they will be asked to login or to create an account in IFS. They are responsible for entering their own project costs in the application.

Eligibility Criteria – Partners

Non-funded partners

Your project can include non-UK partners, including partners based in the EU, who bring their own funding. Non-UK partners are permitted to carry out project work from within their home countries and exploit results overseas. Their costs will count towards the total eligible project costs.

Eligibility Criteria – Subcontractors

- Subcontractors and visiting researchers are allowed in this competition.
- Subcontractors can be from anywhere in the UK and you must select them through your usual procurement process.
- You can use subcontractors from overseas but must make the case in your application as to why you could not use suppliers from the UK.

You must provide a detailed rationale, evidence of the potential UK contractors you approached and the reasons why they were unable to work with you. We will not accept a cheaper cost as a sufficient reason to use an overseas subcontractor.

- Visiting Researchers are permitted from UK or abroad for a limited period of 12 months over the lifetime of the project.
- Visiting researchers must:
 - receive the same salary and conditions as staff at the organisation they are employed with
 - claim salary costs only for their time on the project
 - only claim expenses for travel for themselves, but not their family
 - All costs must be justified and appropriate to the total project costs.

Eligibility Criteria – Number of applications

Number of applications

A fellow can only lead on one application.

Previously submitted applications

This competition does allow you to submit a previously submitted application.

Previously submitted application	Not a Previously submitted application
<p>A previously submitted application is an application Innovate UK judges as <u>not</u> materially different from one you have submitted before (but it can be updated based on the assessors' feedback).</p> <p>If you have previously submitted an application that reached our assessment stage, you can re-apply once more with the same proposal.</p>	<p>A brand-new application, project or idea that you have not previously submitted into an Innovate UK competition.</p> <p>or</p> <p>A previously submitted or ineligible application which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• has been updated based on assessor feedback• <u>and</u> is materially different from the application submitted before• <u>and</u> fits with the scope of this competition



Innovation Funding Service (IFS)

How to apply

The lead applicant must create an account:

UK registered businesses

Use Companies House lookup as it speeds up our checks by providing your company number. You are unable to enter this at a later date.

Research organisations, academics and universities

To avoid being listed as a business and to ensure you receive the correct funding, enter your information manually on IFS



GOV.UK Innovation Funding Service

BETA This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

← Back

Create your account

Your organisation

i Your organisation must be UK based to receive funding from Innovate UK

Business

Find your organisation on Companies House

Enter your organisation name or registration number

Companies House search results

Select your organisation from the options below

[NOMENSA LTD](#)
04214477 - Incorporated on 10 May 2001
13 Queen Square, Bristol, BS1 4NT

GOV.UK Innovation Funding Service

BETA This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

← Back

Please sign in or create an account

Used this service before? Please sign into your Innovation Funding Service account.	New to this service? If you haven't used the new Innovation Funding Service before you will need to create an account.
<input type="button" value="Sign in"/>	<input type="button" value="Create account"/>

Innovation Funding Service Sign in

Email address
Please enter your email address.

Password
Please enter your password.

▼ [Need help signing in or creating an account?](#)

My email and/or password isn't working

If you applied previously using the old service, you will need to create a new account.

[Forgotten your password?](#)

Application Questions

Detailed guidance available on IFS

Application Form		Word Count	Appendix inc. no. pages
Question 1	Applicant location (not scored)	Multiple choice	No
Question 2	Host Organisation (not scored)	200	No
Question 3	Non- funded project partners(not scored)	Multiple choice	Yes – optional, 2 pages
Question 4	Core team members (not scored)	400 words	No
Question 5	Resubmissions (not scored)	400 words	No
Question 6	Reduced hours (not scored)	100 words	No
Question 7	Animal Testing (not scored)	Multiple Choice	No
Question 8	Permits and licences (not scored)	Multiple Choice	No
Question 9	Trusted research and innovation (not scored)	100 Words	No

Application Questions con't

Detailed guidance available on IFS

Application Form		Word Count	Appendix inc. no. pages
Question 10	Vision	1500 words	No
Question 11	Approach and innovation	1500 words	Yes – optional, 2 pages
Question 12	Your capability to deliver	1650 words	No
Question 13	Career development	1000 words	No
Question 14	Host organisation support	1000 words	No
Question 15	Ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI)	500 words	Yes – mandatory template
Question 16	Project management	500 words	Yes – mandatory, 2 pages
Question 17	Risks	500 words	Yes – mandatory, 2 pages
Question 18	Added value	500 words	No
Question 19	Costs and value for money	1000 words	No
Question 20	Data management and sharing	1000 words	No



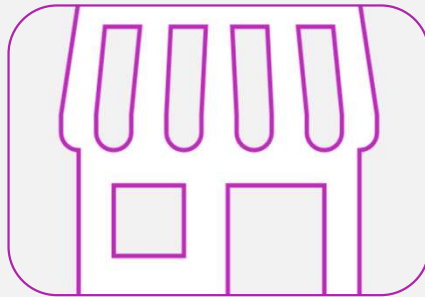
Innovate
UK

Your Project Cost Categories

View our [Application Finances Instructional Video](#)



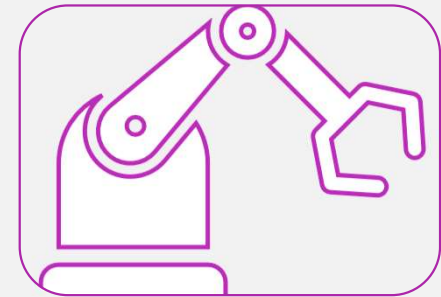
Labour



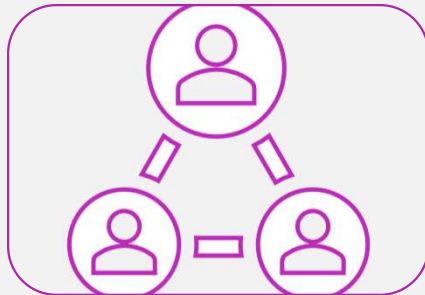
Overheads



Materials



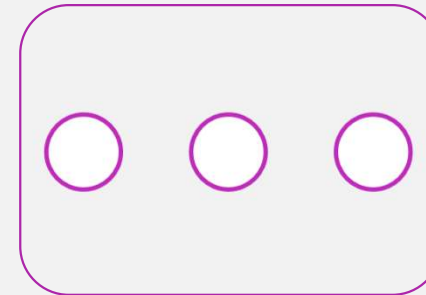
Capital Usage



Subcontractors



Travel &
Subsistence



Other

Your project finances

Finances

Your organisation is required to submit its project finances. Your organisation's project costs can be seen in the 'Finances overview'.

[Your project finances](#) ✎ Incomplete

[Finances overview](#) ✎ Incomplete

Finances

i Only members from your organisation will be able to see a breakdown of your finances.

Please complete your project finances.

[Your project costs](#) ✎ Incomplete

[Your project location](#) ✎ Incomplete

[Your organisation](#) ✎ Incomplete

[Your funding](#) ✎ Incomplete

Your project costs

Add your project costs by category – refer to previous slide for link to instructional video

Your project location

Enter postcode for where most of the project work will take place.

Your organisation

Add details of your organisation including size, turnover and number of employees

Your funding

Include your funding level percentage according to the competition's funding rules.

You can declare Other Public Sector Funding here if you have previously received public money for **exactly** the same activities

Checking your finances are complete

Finances summary

These organisations have not marked their finances as complete:

- Ludlow
- EGGs

This application cannot be submitted until all items in the finances section have been marked as complete by all partners.

		Total costs (£)	Funding level (%)	Funding sought (£)	Contribution to project (£)	Other public sector funding (£)
Empire Ltd Lead organisation	✓	200,903	30.00	57,803	140,632	2,468
Ludlow Partner	⚠	200,903	30.00	57,803	140,632	2,468
EGGS Partner	⚠	990	100.00	990	0	0
Total	⚠	£402,796		116,596	281,264	4,936

Check your finances have been correctly inputted, with the correct costs, funding level % and funding sought figure, as per the eligibility criteria of the competition.

*** IFS DOES NOT VALIDATE TOTAL PROJECT COSTS**

Terms and Conditions

Before you can submit your application, **all** organisations in an application must agree to the draft terms and conditions for this competition. Please ensure you share the T&Cs with your legal team at the earliest possible opportunity.


Terms and conditions

You must agree to these before you submit your application.

[Award terms and conditions](#)

 Incomplete

[Review and submit](#)

 [Print your application](#)



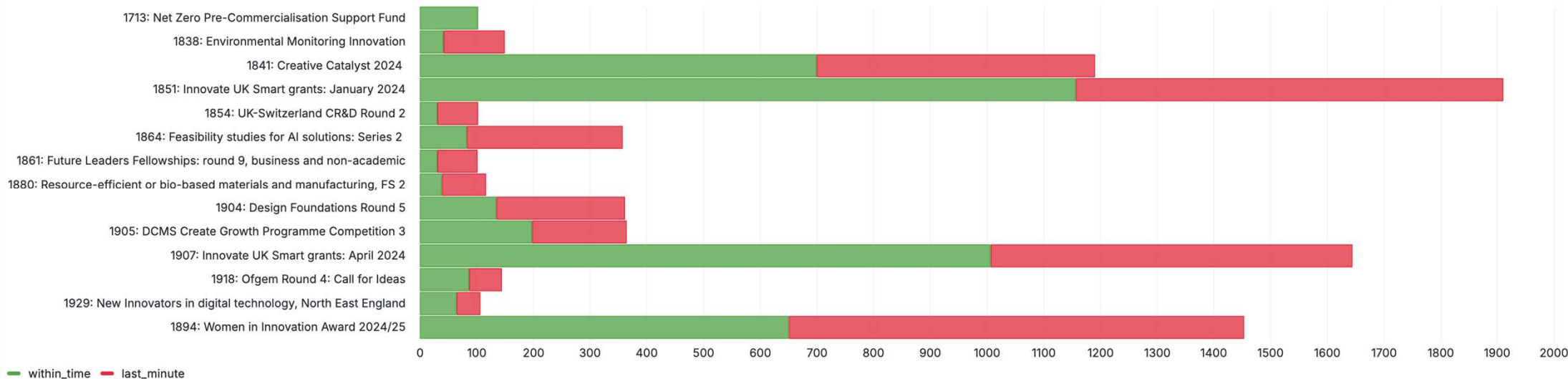
I agree to the [full terms and conditions](#) set out by the funding authority. I understand I need to agree to the final contract if my application is successful.

[Agree and continue](#)

Submitting your application

Customer Support can help resolve any issues you might have when submitting **but only if they are contacted before the deadline.**

Once the deadline has passed, your application cannot be submitted.



Pros & Cons of using AI to support you

With the advances in AI technology, it is only natural to use technology to support you in applying to our competitions. Whilst we don't recommend or advise against it, we would like to make you aware of the following which could potentially impact your project.

Pros

- Removes barriers for people with disabilities and non-English speakers
- Allows you to rephrase your content to meet the word count in a question
- Ensures all aspects of a question are answered
- Can aid a better understanding of:
 - intended/wider market
 - best practice in project management
 - complementary technologies and advances in the industry
 - expected project impacts

Cons

- It is not always accurate in its assumptions and can get things wrong
- AI learns from the information you give it as well as what it has already learnt
- May provide a generic response meaning your application could use similar phrasing to others
- AI can be detected as non-human as it lacks expression and insight because it relies on logic to summarise information based on the question asked

Whilst AI offers many benefits, it is important you are aware that **you are potentially sharing your idea with the world**, so be careful what you share as you have no control over how it is shared on once you do.

Funding Rules



Other Innovate UK projects

If you have an outstanding final claim or Independent Accountant Report (IAR) on a live Innovate UK project, you will not be eligible to apply to this competition, as a lead or a partner organisation.

We will not award you any further funding if you:

- applied to a previous competition as the lead or sole company and were awarded funding by Innovate UK, but did not make a substantial effort to exploit that award
- applied to a previous competition as the lead or sole company and failed to comply with grant terms and conditions.

Compliance with the UK Subsidy Control Regime

On 4th January 2023, the [Subsidy Control Act 2022](#) came into effect.

This provides a framework for public authorities to design and award subsidies in a compliant way, whilst minimising any negative effects of subsidies both within the UK and Internationally.

Innovate UK offers funding in line with the UK's obligations and commitments to Subsidy Control. To ensure that Innovate UK remains compliant with the UK's international Subsidy Control duties in respect of:

- the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement;
- the subsidy control act 2022
- Article 10 of the Windsor Framework (successful applicants which are affected by the Windsor Framework will be funded in line with [EU State aid regulations](#))
- Article 138 of the Withdrawal Agreement (some Union law applicable after 31 December 2020 in relation to the UK's participation in Union programmes and activities)
- the Subsidies and Countervailing measures within the WTO (ASCM)
- any other Free Trade Agreements active at the time of award

All awards will be conditional on compliance at all times with the UK's international obligations on Subsidy Control - this will be reflected in the terms and conditions of any award.

Subsidy Control (and State aid where relevant)

The Subsidy Control Act 2022 definition of a 'subsidy' means financial assistance which:

1. is given by a public authority. This can be at any level: central, devolved, regional or local government or a public body.
2. makes a contribution (this could be a financial or an in-kind contribution) to an enterprise, conferring an economic advantage that is not available on market terms.
3. affects international trade.

For awards made from 4 January 2023, the majority are subject to Subsidy Control Act 2022. EU State aid rules now only apply in certain limited circumstances.

Financial viability and eligibility

Innovate UK is unable to award funding to organisations that are considered to be in financial difficulty. All applicant organisations are subjected to financial viability and eligibility checks to ensure they are suitable for public funding.

[General guidance on Subsidy control \(and State aid where relevant\).](#)

Article 10 of the Windsor Framework

The EU and the UK formally adopted the [Windsor Framework](#) on 24 March 2023.

The Windsor Framework replaces the Northern Ireland Protocol, providing a new legal and UK constitutional framework.

Article 10 provides that European Union State aid rules will continue to apply to the UK in respect of measures which affect trade in goods or the electricity market between Northern Ireland and the EU.

Article 10 does not directly apply to subsidies for services and such subsidies will need to comply with the UK's subsidy control regime.

Undertakings in difficulty

In the unusual circumstance of an award having to be made under the EU GBER regulation (State aid), the applicant must pass **'undertaking in difficulty' checks as defined by GBER (2014)**.

Guidance on [Article 10 of the Windsor Framework](#).

Research, Development and Innovation Streamlined Subsidy Scheme

- Designed by Government to award subsidies to enterprises if they met defined criteria contained within the [Scheme](#)
- 3 categories available please check the competition you are applying for applicable categories
 - Feasibility Studies
 - Industrial Research and Experimental Development
 - Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) Research, Development and Innovation Support
- When submitting an application as part of our due diligence you will be asked to declare any previous awards made in the 'applicable period' to ensure limits are not breached.
 - The applicable period is made up of:
 - (a) the elapsed part of the current financial year
 - (b) the two financial years immediately preceding the current financial year

Category 2: Industrial Research and Experimental Development Projects

For Industrial Research projects, you could get funding for your eligible project costs of:

- up to 70% if you are a micro or small organisation
- up to 60% if you are a medium-sized organisation
- up to 50% if you are a large organisation

For experimental development projects which are nearer to market, you could get funding for your eligible project costs of:

- up to 45% if you are a micro or small organisation
- up to 35% if you are a medium-sized organisation
- up to 25% if you are a large organisation

Eligible costs please refer to the competition to which you are applying.

For a detailed definition of these research categories see [guidance document section 14.3](#).





Assessment





Assessment


[YouTube Playlist](#)

- 

1 **How do our assessors assess?**
Innovate UK • 8.1K views • 2 years ago
2:33
- 

2 **How are successful applications selected for funding?**
Innovate UK • 17K views • 2 years ago
2:39
- 

3 **What steps are there before a project starts?**
Innovate UK • 7.7K views • 2 years ago
3:45
- 

4 **How are successful projects monitored?**
Innovate UK • 4.1K views • 2 years ago
2:20
- 

5 **How successful applicants receive their funding.**
Innovate UK • 4.6K views • 2 years ago
2:51



Project setup

If you pass the technical assessment, you will have a further eight steps detailed in your notification to complete in Project Setup before being able to start your project.

These are:

- Project details
- Project team
- Documents
- You will be allocated a Monitoring Service Provider (MSP)
- Bank details
- Finance checks
- Spend profile
- Grant Offer Letter

Please share the T&Cs with your legal team at the earliest possible opportunity to avoid any delays.

You are expected to complete all the steps above **within 90 calendar days** of receiving your notification. Failure to do so may result in funding being withdrawn.

Work can only commence on your project once you have received your Go Live email.



Additional Support



Business Competition Support Webinar 30th June 2pm

Hear from:

- FLF Programme Director
- Innovate UK Team
- Innovate UK Business Connect
- Current fellows
- Interview panel members
- FLF Development Network

<https://iuk-business-connect.org.uk/events/future-leaders-fellowships-round-10-business-competition-support-webinar/>

Future Leaders Fellowships – Round 10 business competition support webinar

Join us to hear about how Future Leaders Fellowships has supported innovators and researchers working in business and find out about your opportunity to apply.

Event Details

When
30/06/2025
14.00 - 15.15

Where
Online

Share this event



[Register→](#)

Overview

UKRI FLF has invested over £900 million since 2018 to support the careers of innovators and researchers working in business, third sector organisations, and academia. Round 10 of the Future Leaders Fellowships will open for applications via the Innovation Funding Service on 23 June 2025. Click [here](#) to apply for Innovation Funding Service.

Why watch?

This webinar, organised and delivered by [InnovateUK](#) and [UKRI](#), will present case studies from current Future Leaders Fellows working in businesses and other non-academic organisations. Join us to hear about how FLF has supported their careers in research and innovation and find out about your opportunity to apply to the FLF in 2025. This online event will provide first-hand advice on the application and interview process from fellows who have successfully applied for funding. You will also hear from members of the assessment panel who can share top tips for the interview process, and the FLF Development Network who will talk about the development support provided to Future Leaders Fellows. Innovate UK and UKRI team members will also be available answer any questions you may have about the upcoming Round 10 competition.

Innovate UK Business Growth

<https://iuk.ktn-uk.org/business-growth/>

Innovate UK Business Growth (previously Innovate UK EDGE) is a key part of the UK innovation agency's deep investment in the pioneering businesses that drive economic growth. It is a publicly-funded service available to all high potential small to medium sized innovation-driven companies, including Innovate UK grant winners.

Exploit Innovation:

Grow your business by protecting your IP, improving innovation management and accessing the innovation ecosystem globally through us.

Source funding:

Grow and scale your business by accessing the right finance and funding for you and becoming investment ready.

Enter new markets:

Helping you to make connections to partners and leverage insights to expand into vertical and international markets and achieve scaling ambitions.

Ready to scale?

The Innovate UK Scaleup Programme helps the highest potential businesses realise their ambitions.



Useful Information

- UKRI's [General Guidance](#)
- Innovate UK Business Connect's [Good Application Guide](#)
- [Who we fund](#)
- Collaboration Agreement Guidance: [Lambert Toolkit](#)
- [Innovate UK: Shaping the Future](#)

Funding opportunities

To find out more about the competitions currently available you can visit either the [Innovation Funding Service \(IFS\)](#) or the [funding finder](#) on the UKRI website. Through these links, you can review the competitions available and decide which ones may be right for you.

You can [sign up to our newsletter](#) to receive all the latest information on our competitions straight to your inbox or [register for email alerts](#) to get page updates from Innovate UK.

The government also offers [other opportunities for businesses to get finance and support](#).

Innovate UK reserves the rights to host competitions on a needs basis and will adjust each competition criteria and scope accordingly. We may occasionally run closed competitions that are for invited applicants only. These are run based on the challenge requirement or need.

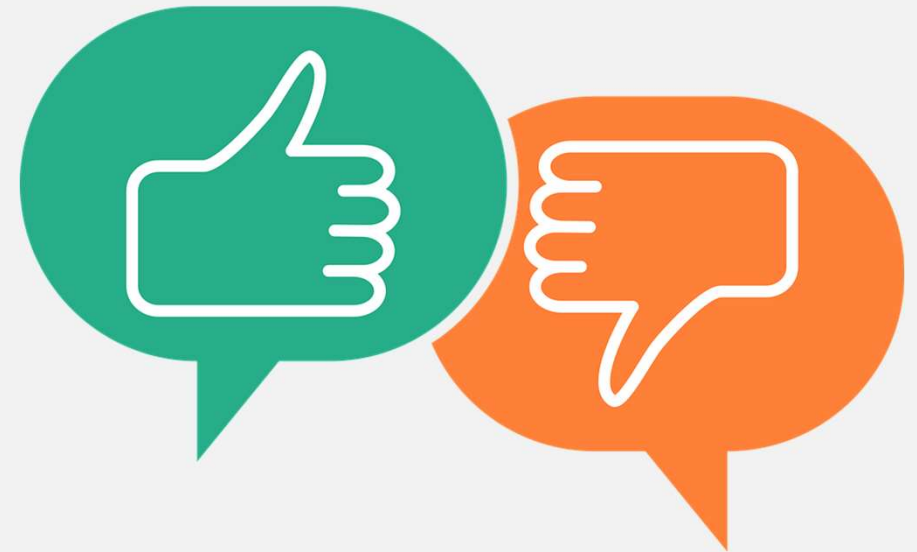


We'd love your feedback

We're considering a change to the applicant briefing process for our competitions.

Please let us have your feedback on this briefing.

FEEDBACK SURVEY



Q&A

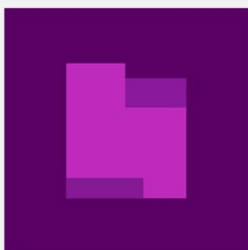


Contact

Customer Support Services

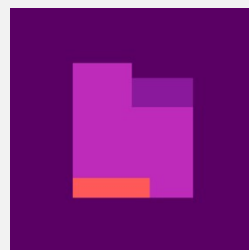
0300 321 4357 (Monday - Friday 9am-12pm and 2pm-5pm)

support@iuk.ukri.org



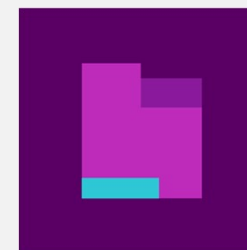
Innovate UK

ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk



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