Launchpad CR&D competitions, October 2024

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 and the work location for the project if different to the registered addresses.

We are collecting this information to understand the geographical location of all applicants and your answer may be used in our portfolio approach.

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. Permits and licences (not scored)

Will you have the correct permits and licences in place to carry out your project?

We are unable to fund projects who do not have the correct permits or licences in place by your project start date.

You must select one option:

- Yes
- No
- In process of being applied for
- Not applicable

Question 4. Need, challenge and market awareness

What is the business need, technological challenge, or market opportunity behind your innovation? What does the market or markets you are targeting look like?

Explain:

- the main motivation for the project
- the business need, technological challenge or market opportunity
- the target markets for the project outcomes and any other potential markets, either domestic, international or both
- the size of the target markets for the project outcomes, backed up by references where available
- the structure and dynamics of the target markets, including customer segmentation, together with predicted growth rates within clear timeframes
- the target markets' main supply or value chains and business models, and any barriers to entry that exist

- whether you have identified any similar innovation and its current limitations, including those close to market or in development
- 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

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 4. Assessor guidance and scoring:

Scores 9 - 10

There is a compelling business motivation for the project. The target markets size, drivers and dynamics are fully quantified and evidenced. Where the market is new or unexplored, possible routes are identified based on precedents. There is a clear understanding of similar innovations available. The applicant has shown, if applicable, how the project will build on previous relevant work.

Scores 7 - 8

There is a good motivation for the project. The markets size is quantified with some evidence. For a new market, a good attempt is made at describing the possible routes to market and estimating the market size. There is a good awareness of similar innovations available and some reference to previous relevant work.

Scores 5 - 6

The project motivation is good, and the general markets size and dynamics are described but the addressable market is poorly quantified. There may be limited description of similar innovations available or previous work.

Scores 3 - 4

Project motivation is poorly defined or not relevant to the applicant or team. Some information about the general market(s) is offered but the extent of the addressable market is not described. References to similar innovations available or previous work are not offered or are not relevant.

Scores 1 - 2

There is little or no business drive to the project. The market is poorly defined or is irrelevant to the motivations of the project. References to similar innovations available and previous work are not offered or are not relevant.

Question 5. Approach and innovation

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

Explain:

- how you will respond to the need, challenge or opportunity identified
- how you will improve on any similar innovation that you have identified
- whether the innovation will focus on existing technologies in new areas, the development of new technologies for existing areas, or a totally disruptive approach
- the freedom you have to operate
- how this project fits with your current product, service lines or offerings
- how it will make you more competitive
- the nature of the outputs you expect from the project, for example, reports, 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 no larger than 10MB. It can be up to two A4 pages and must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question 5. Assessor guidance and scoring:

Scores 9 - 10

The approach addresses the need, challenge or opportunity identified in Question 4. The main innovations and risks are identified. Evidence is presented to show how the innovation and project outputs will differentiate from those of competitors. The project is significantly innovative either commercially or technically and will make a substantial contribution to the field. Solid evidence is presented to substantiate the level of innovation and freedom to operate.

Scores 7 - 8

The project addresses the need, challenge or opportunity identified in Question 4 and the main innovations and risks are highlighted. Evidence shows that the proposed development is innovative and that the applicant has the freedom to operate. It is demonstrated how the project outputs will differentiate from those of competitors.

Scores 5 - 6

The project may address the need or challenge identified in Question 4 and the innovations are highlighted. The level of innovation or freedom to operate is not strongly backed up with evidence. The main risks are not fully identified. Innovation focus is plausible and shows a link to improvements in competitiveness and productivity.

Scores 3 - 4

The approach is poorly defined with an unconvincing link to the need or challenge identified in Question 4 Improvement in competitiveness and productivity is not very convincing.

Scores 1 - 2

The approach is not well defined or inconsistent with the need or challenge identified in Question 4. There is no identification of how this will improve competitiveness.

Question 6. 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
- 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
- the main work packages of your 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 no larger than 10MB. It can be up to two A4 pages and must be legible at 100% zoom.

You can also submit one appendix with a short summary of the main people working on the project to support your answer. It must be a PDF no larger than 10MB. It can be up to two A4 pages and must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question 6. Assessor guidance and scoring:

Scores 9 - 10

The applicant or consortium is well placed 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 strong evidence that the consortium will work well.

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 applicant or consortium makes sense given the approach described in Question 5. The applicant indicates how access will be obtained to all the resources, equipment and facilities they will need. The consortium is likely to work well.

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 applicant or consortium has most, but not all, of the required skills and experience required. It is unclear whether or not the consortium will work well together.

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

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.

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 applicant or consortium will not be capable of either carrying out the project or exploiting the results.

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

Question 7. Outcomes and route to market

How are you going to 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 target customers or end users, and the value to them, for example, why they would use or buy your product
- your route to market
- 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
- how you will protect and exploit the outputs of the project, for example, through know-how, patenting, designs or changes to your business model
- your strategy for targeting the other markets you have identified during or after the project

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 7. Assessor guidance and scoring:

Scores 9 - 10

Target customers are identified along with the value proposition to them. The routes to market and how profit, productivity and growth will increase is identified and evidenced. The exploitation and dissemination of the main project outputs are outlined.

Scores 7 - 8

Target customers are identified along with the value proposition to them. The routes to market and how profit, productivity and growth will increase is outlined with some evidence. The exploitation and dissemination of the main project outputs are outlined.

Scores 5 - 6

Target customer types are described but the value proposition to them is less clear. There is some information about how profit, productivity or growth increases may be achieved at some point.

Scores 3 - 4

There is some information about the target customer types but there is little about the value proposition or how profit, productivity or growth will be affected.

Scores 1 - 2

The applicant provides little or no information about the target customers.

Question 8. 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, and data sets
- any output likely to be subject to regulatory requirements, certification, ethical issues and other requirements identified, and how you will manage this

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

Question 8. 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 9. Costs, value for money and added value

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

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
- what advantages public funding would offer your project, for example: appeal to investors, more partners, reduced risk or a faster route to market
- the likely impact of the project outcomes on the organisations involved
- what other routes of investment or means of support you have already approached and why they were not suitable
- how any existing or potential investment or support will be used in conjunction with the grant funding
- what your project would look like without public funding
- how this project would change the R&D activities of all the organisations involved.

Question 9. 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.

There is a compelling case for the positive difference funding will make. 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 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.

The arguments for public funding are good and justified. The project will significantly increase the industrial partners' commitment to R&D.

Scores 5 - 6

The project costs seem ok 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.

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 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.

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

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

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