Contracts For Innovation - Assessor scoring guidance

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. Public synopsis (not scored)

You must provide a short synopsis of your project. If your application is successful, we may publish this synopsis. This could happen before you start your project. This question is mandatory, but we will not assess this content as part of your application.

This synopsis should be different from the public description requested in the project details section and it should be a brief summary statement of the main project points. It should be understandable to the wider public and to the non-technical audience outside of the rail sector.

Describe your project in a way that you are happy to see published. Do not include any commercially sensitive information. We have the right to amend the description before publication if necessary but will consult you about any changes.

Question 2. Previous applications (not scored)

You must list out any previously funded Innovate UK, or other funded projects, that are the same, or similar to your solution, made over the last ten years.

In terms of your project goals, describe or explain:

Commented [JB1]: Can we move Q11 up with the other non scored questions?

Commented [JB2R1]: To be moved up to Q1, resolved.

Commented [KL3]: Please add a missing section of the text (copy from question no. 12) after the last paragraph and please limit this question to 50 words on IFS:

Describe your project in a way that you are happy to see published. Do not include any commercially sensitive information. We have the right to amend the description before publication if necessary but will consult you about any changes.

Your answer can be up to 50 words long.

Commented [JB4R3]: Edit made, resolved.

Commented [JB5]: Does this list have to be the funded projects for this particular applicant, or all projects similar to theirs?

Commented [JB6R5]: This can be either, so no need to make any changes. Resolved.

- the commonality and differentiation between this application and previous projects
- the outcomes of previous projects and their commercial success

Question 3. 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.

Question 4: 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 which 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 5: Proposed idea or technology and Rail Industry Readiness Level (RIRL)

You must provide evidence that what you are proposing is at Rail Industry Readiness Level 5 or above.

If your technology is below RIRL 5, the application will be rejected.

How does the project meet the challenge described in the competition scope?

Provide a description of your proposed idea or technology and how the railway will benefit from what you propose.

Include a description of the current state of development or readiness of the idea.

You can submit a single appendix as a PDF containing images and diagrams 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.

This question is scored against the assessment criterion: How well does the proposal meet the challenge?

Question 5: Proposed idea or technology and Rail Industry Readiness Level (RIRL) - Assessor guidance and scoring

If the proposed technology is below RIRL 5, the application must not be recommended for funding by the assessor. Please use Rail Industry Readiness Level 5 to support your decision.

If the proposed technology at RIRL 5 or above, the application is to be scored as per below:

Scores 9 - 10

The proposal provides a clear description and compelling evidence to show how the proposed idea and technology will meet the challenge or challenges identified in the competition scope.

Scores 7 - 8

The proposal somewhat explains how the idea and technology will meet the challenge or challenges identified in the competition scope, but further detail is required to give full confidence.

Scores 5 - 6

Commented [KM7]: Amended from “should” to “must “

Commented [KM8R7]: Should we also link to the guidance applicants have been given > Please use Rail Industry Readiness Level 5 to support your decision.

Commented [LJ9R7]: Edit made. Resolved.

The proposal provides some information on how the proposed idea and technology could meet the challenge or challenges identified in the competition scope, but a clear and compelling argument is not provided.

Scores 3 - 4

Little consideration has been given to how the proposed idea and technology could meet the challenge or challenges identified in the competition scope and it is unclear how the solution will meet the challenge need.

Scores 1 - 2

There is no evidence that the proposed idea and technology will meet the challenge or challenges identified in the competition scope.

Question 6: Technical project summary

What are the main technical challenges that you are addressing?

Explain:

- how you will address the challenge
- what the innovation is
- the main technical deliverables
- the research and development that will prove the scientific, environmental and commercial merit of the project
- what might be achieved by deploying the innovation to address the selected challenge

This question will be scored against this assessment criterion: How valid is the technical approach?

Question 6: Technical project summary - Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The technical approach is valid and highly relevant to the challenge identified. It provides confidence that technical project deliverables are achievable, giving credibility and merit to both the potential of the solution and works being undertaken.

Scores 7 - 8

The technical approach described is valid and relevant to the challenge identified, but a higher level of detail is required to provide confidence that technical project deliverables are achievable and to determine the merit of the potential solution.

Scores 5 - 6

Some information on key technical deliverables is provided, but the technical approach described is unlikely to be valid for the challenge identified, and it is unclear what the merit of the proposed solution will be.

Scores 3 - 4

The technical approach is poorly described or is not relevant to the challenge identified. No information is provided on key technical details.

Scores 1 - 2

There is very limited or no information given on the technical approach.

Question 7: Current state of the art and intellectual property

Are similar products currently available in the market?

How is your proposed project differentiated from them?

You must include details of:

- any existing intellectual property (IP)
- its significance to your freedom to operate

- novel concepts you develop or employ
- new approaches or technologies you use
- new tools or technologies

You must explain how you would handle any intellectual property (IP) issues which might arise during the project.

If you are working with subcontractors (specialist skills only), include details of how you will maintain freedom to operate and fulfil the IP requirements detailed in the contract

This question is scored against the assessment criteria: How innovative is this project? How much does the project develop or employ novel concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools or technologies for this area?

Question 7: Current state of the art and intellectual property - Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The proposed project is highly innovative, and a strong understanding of nearest state of the art is presented, showcasing how the concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools or technologies detailed in the proposal are novel within this area.

Scores 7 - 8

The proposed project shows some promising new concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools or technologies within this area, but some similarity with existing solutions is evident.

Scores 5 - 6

The proposed project shows some use of novel, innovative approaches but the concepts, approaches, methodology, tools or technology described are very similar to already available products.

Scores 3 - 4

The proposed project shows limited innovation, but it is unclear how the concept, approach, methodology, tool or technology outlined is different to already available products.

Scores 1 - 2

The proposed project shows no innovation and proposed concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools or technologies are already widely available.

Question 8: Project plan and methodology

Describe your project plan and identify the main milestones.

The plan for this project must be comprehensive. The emphasis throughout should be on practicality.

Commented [NPIUU10]: Template guidance:
Use for phase 1 of a 2 phase competition only.

Provide evidence that the technology works, can be made into a viable product and can achieve the proposed benefits.

You must:

- describe resources that will be needed to deliver the project
- describe what the main success criteria will be
- identify the project management processes that will ensure you achieve the milestones
- provide a clear plan for establishing technical and commercial feasibility
- describe the main technical, commercial and environmental risks and what you will do to mitigate them
- provide a clear plan for development of a working prototype
- provide a plan for your demonstration and trialling and include this in your milestones
- provide a plan for your project evaluation and include this in your milestones

Commented [NPIUU11]: Template Guidance:
This can be removed if phase 1 or re-written to request an ‘outline’ only.

You must upload a project plan or Gantt chart as an appendix in PDF format. It must be a PDF no larger than 10MB. It can be up to two A4 pages and must be legible at 100% zoom.

Your milestones must:

- be clear
- be defined using SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) criteria
- be associated with the appropriate deliverables and payments
- indicate your payment schedule by month

This question is assessed against the assessment criteria:

- does the proposal show a clear plan for establishing technical and commercial feasibility
- is there a clear management plan
- what are the main technical, commercial, and environmental risks to the project's success
- how will these be effectively managed
- are demonstration and evaluation plans outlined in the milestones
- are the milestones and evaluation procedures appropriate

Note: information from the finances section will be used to support the assessment of this question. Proposed milestones and associated payments stated in this section must match those entered in the finance summary on your application.

Question 8: Project plan and methodology - Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The proposal contains a detailed description of a project plan, including all key milestones, and the approach taken gives confidence in successful project delivery. Risks are comprehensively covered, including appropriate mitigation strategies, and are taken into consideration within the project plan.

Scores 7 - 8

The proposal contains a description of a project plan, but more detail is required to show how successful delivery will be achieved. Key risks are highlighted, with some mitigation plans in place, but could be expanded on to give greater confidence.

Scores 5 - 6

The proposal contains a high level description of a project plan. Some risks have been identified, but it is unclear how these are reflected in the project plan.

Scores 3 - 4

The proposal gives a few details about a project plan and risks.

Scores 1 - 2

The proposal does not contain a plan or milestones. There is no management plan or risks included.

Question 9: Technical team and expertise

Who is in the technical team? What expertise do they offer?

Provide a brief description of your technical team, including any subcontractors.

Describe:

- how each organisation has the skills, capabilities, and experience to deliver the intended benefits
- how much of their time will be spent on the project

This question will be scored against the assessment criterion: Does the applicant have the skills, capabilities and experience to deliver the intended benefits?

Question 9: Technical team and expertise - Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The team described, including any subcontractors where applicable, have the relevant skills, expertise and experience to give full confidence in the successful delivery of the project, including achieving commercial potential.

Scores 7 - 8

The team described broadly hold the skills and experience to be able to successfully deliver the project, but some skills gaps may be identified, or some areas are weaker than others. Subcontractor skills, where applicable, are identified, but more details would give a greater level of confidence in their input to the project.

Scores 5 - 6

It is not clear how the skills of the team will translate into the successful delivery of the project, or significant skills gaps are identified. Some information on subcontractors is provided (where applicable), but it is not clear if they are well placed to contribute to project delivery.

Scores 3 - 4

There is minimal information about the skills, capabilities and experience of the project team, or any subcontractors (where applicable), therefore it is difficult to establish whether the project team are well placed to successfully delivery the project.

Scores 1 - 2

There is no relevant information about the skills, capabilities and experience of the applicant or any subcontractors.

Question 10: Costs and value for money

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

Describe:

- the total costs inclusive of VAT (If applicable) you are requesting in terms of the project goals
- how this project represents value for money for you, the railway industry and the taxpayer
- your expected overall costs

Proposed costs stated in this section must match those entered in the finance summary.

All costs quoted must reflect actual costs at a ‘fair market value’ and not include profit.

You can submit a single appendix as a spreadsheet in PDF format. It must be a PDF no larger than 10MB. It can be up to two A4 pages and must be legible at 100% zoom.

Note that all payments are made quarterly in arrears on submission of an invoice. The invoice must be submitted within 30 days of the end of each monitoring period for all completed milestones. Your project will be monitored on a three monthly basis by Innovate UK monitoring services.

Commented [NPIUU12]: Template Guidance: Edit if necessary

Full Economic Cost (FEC) calculations are not relevant for Contracts for Innovation competitions. Contracts for Innovation is a competitive process and applications will come from a variety of organisations. Whatever calculation you use to arrive at your total eligible project costs your application will be assessed against applications from other organisations. Bear this in mind when calculating your total eligible project costs. You can include overheads but remember that this is a competitive process.

The assessors are required to judge the application finances in terms of value for money. They will score your finances against this assessment criterion: ‘Are the budget and costs realistic, justified and appropriate for the aims and methods?

Note information from the finances section will be used to support the assessment of this question.

Question 10: Costs and value for money Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

Project costs are fully justified and appropriate (reflecting fair market value), and there is sufficient detail in the explanation of their breakdown to give full confidence. Fully detailed and justified evidence is provided to demonstrate the project cost efficiency and excellent value for money.

Scores 7 - 8

Project costs are justified and appropriate (reflecting fair market value), but there is not enough detail in the explanation of their breakdown. More detailed evidence is required to demonstrate the project cost efficiency and how value for money is achieved.

Scores 5 - 6

Project costs are somewhat justified but there is insufficient detail in the explanation of their breakdown to determine if they are appropriate. Some evidence is provided to demonstrate the project cost efficiency and value for money.

Scores 3 - 4

Minimal project cost information and justification is provided. It is unclear whether costs represent good value for money.

Scores 1 - 2

No breakdown of project costs is provided and there is no evidence to demonstrate project cost efficiency or value for money.

Question 11: Commercial potential

What is the commercial potential of your project. You must focus on your proposed customer's needs.

Describe your:

- timescales
- projects commercial potential for a marketable product, process or service
- delivery plan
- expected route to market

Describe the competitive advantage that your project has over existing or alternative technologies that meet market needs.

Describe any existing commercial relationships relevant to the project.

Describe your potential customers within the UK railway industry.

With the focus on your proposed customer's needs, you can also mention the future commercial potential across the public or private sector and international markets.

This question will be scored against the assessment criteria:

- is there a clear commercial potential for a marketable product, process or service
- is there a clear plan to deliver that and a clear route to market
- how significant is the competitive advantage of this technology over the nearest currently available solutions to the challenge identified

Question 11: Commercial potential - Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The proposal gives confidence that the solution will be commercially feasible, with a detailed plan showing route to market, as well as strong competitive advantage.

Scores 7 - 8

The proposal gives some indication that the solution will be commercially feasible and provides a high level plan outlining possible route to market. An outline of competitive advantage is shown, but more in-depth analysis is required.

Scores 5 - 6

The solution may be commercially feasible, however there is little confidence in the approach described. Some planning to deliver route to market is shown, but competitive advantage is unclear.

Scores 3 - 4

It is not clear whether the proposal will be commercially feasible. There is little in the way of a plan to deliver to market or competitive advantage.

Scores 1 - 2

The proposal gives no indication that the solution will be commercially feasible. There is no plan to deliver to market and no indication of competitive advantage.