Expression of interest: Biomedical Catalyst Accelerator Provider Pool: Assessor guidance for applicants

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 more about 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. 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 4. International collaboration (not scored)

Does your proposed work involve any international collaboration or engagement?

You must provide details of any expected international collaboration or engagement.

You must include a list of the names and the countries, any international project co-leads, project partners, visiting researchers, or other collaborators are based in.

You must also include details of any subcontractors or service providers.

If your proposed work does not involve international collaboration or engagement, your answer must confirm this.

Question 5. Export licence (not scored)

You must indicate whether an export control license is required for this project under the academic export control guidance.

You must select one option:

- Yes
- No

Question 6. Trusted Research and Innovation (not scored)

You must explain if your proposed project work relates to UKRI's Trusted Research and Innovation (TR&I) Principles, including:

- a list of any dual-use (both military and non-military) applications to your research
- a list of the areas where your project is relevant to one or more of the 17 areas of the UK National Security and Investment (NSI) Act
- whether an export control license is required for this project under the academic export control guidance and the status of any applications
- a list of any items or substances on the UK Strategic Export Control List

If your proposed work does not relate to UKRI's TR&I Principles, your answer must confirm this.

We may ask you to provide additional TR&I information at a later date, in line with UKRI TR&I Principles and funding terms and conditions.

Question 7. Programme management and implementation

How will you manage and implement your programme effectively?

Describe:

• how your programme will be structured and delivered under the Biomedical Catalyst brand, including approaches to cohort management, curriculum design, and engagement with SMEs
• your approach to managing the programme, identifying major activities, tools and mechanisms you will use to achieve innovative and measurable outcomes
• how activities link to the accelerator stage you are applying for
• how you will tailor delivery to SMEs working in Biomedical Catalyst themes
• example work packages, programme durations, leads and costs
• previous accelerator experience with biomedical or healthcare SMEs, including measurable outcomes and lessons learned
• how your programme will help SMEs develop credible initial propositions that can progress to feasibility stage R&D funding
• where your programme will be delivered, for example, online or in person, location

You can submit one appendix with an overview of programme activities and delivery methods to support your answer. It must be a PDF, up to four A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question 7. Programme management and implementation: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The approach to managing and implementing the programme is robust and well evidenced.
The programme structure, cohort management, curriculum design and delivery approach are clearly described and aligned to the stage accelerator. Major activities, tools and mechanisms are well explained, with clear tailoring to Biomedical Catalyst themes. A coherent implementation plan is provided, including work packages, leads, timelines and costs. Strong prior experience is demonstrated, with measurable outcomes and a clear pathway for SMEs to progress to feasibility stage R&D funding.

Scores 7 - 8

The approach to managing and implementing the programme is strong and clear. Programme structure and delivery are appropriate, with activities and resources identified and explained. The implementation plan identifies work packages and delivery leads. Some evidence of relevant prior experience and SME outcomes is provided, though detail or tailoring may be limited.

Scores 5 - 6

The approach to managing and implementing the programme is adequate. Programme activities are described at a high level with limited explanation of delivery, cohort management or SME engagement. Work packages or delivery

responsibilities are partially defined. Evidence of prior experience or SME outcomes is limited.

Scores 3 - 4

The approach to managing and implementing the programme is weak.Programme structure, activities and delivery responsibilities are poorly described, with little evidence of how the programme will be implemented or support SME progression.

Scores 1 - 2

There is insufficient information on how the programme will be managed or implemented.

Question 8. Project team and subcontractors

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

Describe:

- the roles, skills, and experience of all team members relevant to delivering high quality accelerator support for biomedical or life sciences SMEs
- resources, equipment and facilities needed, and how you will access them
- the subcontractors critical to delivery, including past collaborations and outcomes
- any roles you plan to recruit and how they will enhance delivery and impact
- how you will create and leverage relevant innovation ecosystems, including investors, industry partners, clinicians, regulators, or trade associations, to maximise participant outcomes

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

Question 8. Project team and subcontractors: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The project team is highly credible and well matched to delivering high-quality accelerator support for biomedical and life sciences SMEs.

Roles, skills and experience are clearly described and directly relevant. Access to required resources, facilities and equipment is clear and realistic. Subcontractors critical to delivery are well justified, with evidence of effective prior collaboration and outcomes. Any planned recruitment is appropriate and strengthens delivery. The team demonstrates strong links to relevant innovation ecosystems, maximising SME outcomes.

Scores 7 - 8

The project team is well suited to the proposed accelerator.

Most roles, skills and experience are clearly relevant. Access to resources, facilities and equipment is identified. Subcontractors and partnerships are appropriate, though evidence of outcomes or ecosystem leverage may be limited. The team is likely to work well together.

Scores 5 - 6

The project team is adequate for delivery.

Key roles and skills are identified but some gaps or weaknesses remain. Access to resources or facilities lacks clarity. Subcontractors or partnerships are mentioned with limited justification. It is unclear how effectively the team and wider ecosystem will support SME outcomes.

Scores 3 - 4

The project team is weakly justified.

There are significant gaps in skills or experience relevant to accelerator delivery. Roles, subcontractors or access to resources are poorly described. Limited evidence is provided of effective collaboration or ecosystem engagement.

Scores 1 - 2

The project team is not capable of delivering the accelerator or supporting meaningful SME outcomes.

Question 9. Recruitment and application assessment process

What is the recruitment and application assessment process for your accelerator and how does it ensure fairness and inclusivity?

Describe:

• how you will attract, recruit, and support UK registered SMEs and spin-outs in biomedical and healthcare R&D sectors, and how you will ensure participants are appropriate for the accelerator stage applied for
• how you will ensure fair, inclusive recruitment and assessment
• how you will assess applicants' readiness for early or late stage accelerators
• your management of any conflict of interests
• evidence from previous programmes demonstrating successful SME selection and progression

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

Question 9. Recruitment and application assessment process: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The recruitment and assessment approach is robust, transparent and well evidenced.

Clear and effective methods are described for attracting and supporting UK based biomedical and healthcare SMEs and spin-outs. The assessment process clearly determines stage suitability and readiness for the accelerator applied for. Fair and inclusive recruitment is well addressed, with strong conflict of interest management. Evidence from previous programmes demonstrates effective selection and SME progression.

Scores 7 - 8

The recruitment and assessment approach is clear and well planned.

Recruitment channels and applicant engagement are appropriate, with a clear assessment process aligned to accelerator stage. Fairness, inclusivity and conflict of interest management are addressed. Some evidence of prior SME selection or progression is provided, though outcomes may be limited.

Scores 5 - 6

The recruitment and assessment approach is adequate.
Recruitment and assessment processes are described at a high level, with limited detail on stage readiness or inclusivity. Conflict of interest management is mentioned but not fully explained. Evidence of successful SME selection or progression is limited.

Scores 3 - 4

The recruitment and assessment approach is weak.
Recruitment methods are poorly defined, with limited explanation of assessment criteria, stage suitability or fairness. Conflict of

interest management is unclear or absent. Little evidence is provided of effective SME selection.

Scores 1 - 2

There is insufficient information to assess recruitment or application assessment processes.

Question 10. Risks

What are the main risks for this project?

Describe:

• main risks and uncertainties, including delivery, SME engagement, regulatory, commercial and managerial risks
• mitigation strategies

• critical inputs such as expertise, data, and resources
• how regulatory or ethical requirements will be managed
• how risks could impact delivery outcomes and SME impact

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

Question 10. Risks: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The main risks and uncertainties are clearly identified, well understood and appropriately mitigated.

Delivery, SME engagement, regulatory, commercial and managerial risks are considered, alongside critical inputs such as expertise, data and resources. Regulatory and ethical requirements are clearly identified and managed. The applicant demonstrates a strong understanding of how risks could impact delivery and SME outcomes. The risk analysis is clear, proportionate and professional.

Scores 7 - 8

The main risks and uncertainties are well considered with appropriate mitigations.

Key delivery and engagement risks are identified, and relevant regulatory or ethical constraints are addressed. Critical inputs are acknowledged, though links to SME outcomes or delivery impact may be less explicit.

Scores 5 - 6

Most major risks are identified at a high level, but there are gaps or weaknesses in mitigation or management.

Some risks relevant to delivery, SME engagement or regulation may be underdeveloped, and the impact on programme outcomes is not clearly articulated.

Scores 3 - 4

The risk analysis is weak.

Significant risks are missing or poorly described, with limited or ineffective mitigation. Regulatory, ethical or SME related risks are not adequately addressed.

Scores 1 - 2

The risk analysis is superficial, with minimal identification of risks or mitigation strategies.

Question 11. Costs and value for money

How much will each accelerator programme cost for cohorts of 10-20 UK SMEs and how does it represent value for money for the taxpayer?

In terms of your project goals, explain:

- your total eligible project costs per cohort of 10-20 UK SMEs
- your breakdown of costs across the programme per activity and for each subcontractor, if applicable
- how this project represents value for money for you and the taxpayer

Question 11. Costs and value for money: Assessor guidance and scoring

Scores 9 - 10

The programme costs are clear, justified and represent excellent value for money for the taxpayer.

Total eligible costs per cohort of 10–20 SMEs are clearly stated and well broken down by programme activity and subcontractor where applicable. Subcontractor use is well justified and critical to delivery. Costs are proportionate to the outcomes proposed, and value for money is convincingly explained in terms of SME impact and programme objectives.

Scores 7 - 8

The programme costs are appropriate and reasonable for delivering the accelerator.

Costs per cohort are clearly described, with a breakdown by activity and subcontractor. Subcontractor use appears justified. The applicant explains how the programme represents value for money, though the link to outcomes or efficiencies could be stronger.

Scores 5 - 6

The programme costs are generally acceptable but lack sufficient justification or clarity.

Cost breakdowns by activity or subcontractor are incomplete or unclear. The rationale for value for money is limited, and the proportionality of costs to expected SME outcomes is not well articulated.

Scores 3 - 4

The cost information is weak or incomplete.

Significant gaps exist in the cost breakdown, subcontractor justification or explanation of value for money. Costs appear disproportionate to the proposed programme activities or outcomes.

Scores 1 - 2

The programme costs are not appropriate or justified.
There is insufficient information to assess costs or value for money.

Question 12. Evaluation of the accelerator

Describe:

- your methodology, metrics and criteria for evaluating accelerator success
  • how you will identify areas for improvement and adapt content to SME needs
- post-accelerator feedback, mechanisms and how outcomes informed future programme design
  • examples from previous programmes demonstrating measurable impact on biomedical or healthcare SMEs

You can submit evidence of previous accelerator delivery, evaluation and impact as appendix to support your answer. It must be a PDF, up to two A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

Question 12. Evaluation of the accelerator: Assessor guidance and scoring:

Scores 9 - 10

The evaluation approach is robust, well evidenced and appropriate for an accelerator.

Clear methodologies, metrics and success criteria are defined, with meaningful measures of SME impact. Feedback mechanisms before, during and after the accelerator are well described and used to adapt delivery. Strong evidence from previous programmes demonstrates measurable impact on biomedical or healthcare SMEs and informs continuous improvement.

Scores 7 - 8

The evaluation approach is strong and clear.

Methodologies, metrics and success criteria are appropriate, with clear feedback mechanisms in place. Some evidence of learning from previous programmes or measurable SME impact is provided, though depth or consistency may be limited.

Scores 5 - 6

The evaluation approach is adequate.

An evaluation methodology is described, but metrics, success criteria or feedback mechanisms lack detail or robustness. Limited evidence is provided of how outcomes have informed programme improvement or demonstrated SME impact.

Scores 3 - 4

The evaluation approach is weak.

Methodologies, metrics or feedback mechanisms are poorly defined, with little evidence of learning, adaptation or measurable impact on SMEs.

Scores 1 - 2

The evaluation approach is insufficient.

Methodologies, metrics, feedback mechanisms and success criteria are unclear, inappropriate or largely absent.