



Innovate
UK

AI Champions: Frontier AI Phase 1

Applicant Briefing

Date: 18 March 2026

The webinar will start at 11:00

- 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 [view our YouTube channel](#)



Welcome and Introductions

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Competition Manager

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Head of Foundational Capabilities for AI & Digital



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	Date
Competition Opens	17 March 2026
Submission Deadline	29 April 2026 at 11am
Applicants informed	3 June 2026 by 5pm
Project start and end dates	Start by 1 August 2026

Competition Summary & Scope



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Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scene setting

Why?

Advanced capabilities with LLMs have demonstrated the market growth potential of advanced AI and ML technologies

Capabilities and opportunities in the language domain continue to develop but the UK has not benefited from this paradigm shift.

Aim:

The Frontier AI Innovate UK programme has identified key sectors and opportunities that are prime for development of new transformative new AI driven capabilities that we think will shape how entire industries operate.

This competition aims to support UK AI champions from PoC to scale

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scene setting

How?

Focusing our investment to support development of frontier AI solutions for industries with high data readiness, high R&D intensity and high potential for market growth.

Theme 1, **AI-Enabled Health and Life Sciences**. Making the UK the best place to develop and deploy AI for drug discovery, development and manufacturing of medicines, clinical trials, and healthcare delivery.

Theme 2, **Advanced Materials with AI**. Building a world-leading AI-first materials R&D capability (including applications in aerospace, net zero technologies, defence and semiconductors)

Theme 3, **Secure AI for National Security & Defence (NS&D)**. Enable the UK's defence sector to become a leading integrator of secure AI-enhanced command & control and AI enabled sensors.

Theme 4, **Fundamental AI**. Advancing foundational AI capabilities that can underpin multiple sectors and future applications.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scene setting

Theme 1, **AI-Enabled Health and Life Sciences**. Making the UK the best place to develop and deploy AI for drug discovery, development and manufacturing of medicines, clinical trials, and healthcare delivery.

- 2023/2024 UK Government statistics Life Sciences industry in the UK generated **£146.9 billion** in turnover, with the biopharmaceutical subsector generating 67% of turnover.
- The global prescription pharmaceutical market is estimated ~ **€1.2 trillion**
- **£9 billion** was the UK pharmaceutical spend on R&D
- >810,000 genomic tests in England in 2024
- Clinical trial design and recruitment are global bottlenecks

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scene setting

Theme 2, **Advanced Materials with AI**. Building a world-leading AI-first materials R&D capability (including applications in aerospace, net zero technologies, defence and semiconductors)

- 2023/2024 UK Government statistics advanced materials-related activity contributing **£14.4 billion** GVA
- The global-lithium battery market exceeds **\$150 bn**, semiconductor sales ~ **\$791 billion**
- Materials innovation drives UK manufacturing sector output, which accounts for over **9%** of UK GVA
- Aerospace, defence, power electronics and netzero and semiconductors are key downstream beneficiaries of AI first materials discovery and optimisation

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scene setting

Theme 3, **Secure AI for National Security & Defence (NS&D)**. Enable the UK's defence sector to become a leading integrator of secure AI-enhanced command & control and AI enabled sensors.

- 2024/2025 UK Parliamentary report shows that the UK spend **£60.2 billion** on defence
- UK Government committed to increase defence spending to **2.5%** of GDP by 2027
- SIPRI estimated that world military expenditure rose to **\$2.7 trillion** in 2024
- Strategic Defence Review 2025 calls for a shift towards greater use of autonomy and AI

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scene setting

Theme 4, **Fundamental AI**. Advancing foundational AI capabilities that can underpin multiple sectors and future applications.

- UK Government is investing to scale national UK compute, DSIT is investing up to **£2billion** in public compute by 2030
- UK AI revenues exceeding **£4.4 billion** (2024),
- UKRI committed a record **£1.6 billion** of funding targeted at the AI sector over the next four years
- Global investment in 2025 ~ **\$258 billion**
- Explainable artificial intelligence is listed as key priority in UKRI strategy

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Hypothetical scope

Theme 1, **AI-Enabled Health and Life Sciences**. Making the UK the best place to develop and deploy AI for drug discovery, development and manufacturing of medicines, clinical trials, and healthcare delivery.

In Scope

Sparse data causal model that predicts treatment response using mechanistic priors, validated against trial-like retrospective cohorts

New causal model/representation and learning from sparse data validated against retrospective cohorts

Out of Scope

Drug Discovery Co-pilot with agentic interface for knowledge base literature search

Application layer automation. No method novelty, hard to attribute capability advance.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Hypothetical scope

Theme 2, **Advanced Materials with AI**. Building a world-leading AI-first materials R&D capability (including applications in aerospace, net zero technologies, defence and semiconductors)

In Scope

Physics-ML surrogate + generative design for multi-objective optimisation candidate battery materials

New algorithm + architecture for improved target properties under constraints

Out of Scope

Workflow automation against public datasets + existing models for ranking candidate materials

Application integration without frontier method development

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Hypothetical scope

Theme 3, **Secure AI for National Security & Defence (NS&D)**. Enable the UK's defence sector to become a leading integrator of secure AI-enhanced command & control and AI enabled sensors.

In Scope

Multimodal fusion of heterogeneous spatial information or fusion of degraded sensor data

New robust algorithmic fusion for sparse, degraded information

Out of Scope

Dashboard for visualisation of disparate signal modalities

Application integration without frontier method development

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Hypothetical scope

Theme 3, **Secure AI for National Security & Defence (NS&D)**. Enable the UK's defence sector to become a leading integrator of secure AI-enhanced command & control and AI enabled sensors.

In Scope

Novel sensing capability through development of AI signal processing on top of hardware layer

New robust algorithmic fusion for sparse, degraded information, unique integration of hardware-software layers with novel output

Out of Scope

Generic AI inference hardware development

Lack of unique capability development, lack of specific tactical advantage

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Hypothetical scope

Theme 4, **Fundamental AI**. Advancing foundational AI capabilities that can underpin multiple sectors and future applications.

In Scope

Structural Causal Model architecture that unlocks generalisation from mechanistic priors

Novel architecture with strong downstream applications

Out of Scope

Domain fine-tuning of an open weight LLM without novel methodological techniques or benchmarked improvement

BAU fine-tuning with no broader applicability outside domain specific layers

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Hypothetical scope

What are we trying to achieve with this competition

- Support teams with strong AI/ML expertise and help them grow
- De-risk ambitious, uncertain projects that could unlock significant value if successful
- Create conditions for sustained growth pre Series A funding
- Enable conditions for the next-generation of frontier AI UK Champions

What is broadly out of scope

- Teams that lack defensible IP and differentiation
- Teams that depend on subcontractors and new hires for the AI/ML development during Phase 1
- Projects that can't demonstrate innovation in:
 - *Model and system architecture*
 - *Training methodology*
 - *Core control and learning algorithm*

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Introduction

Competition context

The [AI opportunities Action Plan](#) outlines key priorities that will ensure the UK not only benefits from advancements in AI, but also is home to UK grown national champion AI companies with frontier AI capabilities.

Sovereign AI Unit

“The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) has set up the [Sovereign AI Unit](#) to build and harness the UK’s AI capabilities to unlock economic growth and enhance UK national security.”

Aim:

The AI Champions: Frontier AI Phase 1 funding opportunity seeks to inspire ambitious UK businesses to demonstrate innovation capability within principle & the ability to scale and set the foundations for the creation of the frontier AI systems of the future.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Competition aim: we have £3 million to advance the development of state-of-the-art artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) in the UK.

We will fund UK SMEs to validate the technical feasibility of ambitious AI, and ML innovations that could deliver step-change improvements in capability and enable new products, services or platforms.

This a **three-phase stage-gated** funding pipeline approach, to support the next wave of UK AI Champions, from early technical validation through to scale-up.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Competition aim:

- We are seeking ambitious AI and ML innovations grounded in strong scientific evidence and engineering breakthroughs, with the potential to become scalable products and services that will create and shape new markets.
- We are looking for applications with a clear route to defensibility, such as protectable IP, proprietary data advantage, specialist know-how or other credible barriers to entry, with a path to scale.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Frontier AI context:

Within the context of this competition series, we consider Frontier AI to be any AI, ML systems that deliver state-of-the-art performance against benchmarks or genuinely new-to-the-world capability in clearly specified area, where the advance is attributable to innovation in one or more of:

- Model, system architecture
- training methodology
- core control or learning algorithm

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Your project must deliver one or more of the following:

- proof of concept of architecture or subsystem component
- technical validation of capability of system or subsystem component
- frontier AI performance that delivers new to the world capability or state of the performance of existing capability
- ability of architecture and business model to scale
- demonstrate a clear path for access to data
- demonstrate strategy to access compute infrastructure and quantify requirement for compute

Projects must start at a Technology Readiness Level of 3 or below at time of application

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Phase 1: This competition is Phase 1 of the pipeline and is intended to de-risk technical feasibility and generate robust evidence that the core approach works in practice.

For phase 1 your proposal must deliver:

- proof of concept prototype of the whole stack or the core architecture or critical subsystem component
- a clear validation methodology against predefined metrics
- evidence of technical novelty
- a scaling rationale for the technology and business model
- a technical white paper

Your technology must have in principle the ability to scale at pace, but you are not required to prove or validate scalability during Phase 1 and your project must focus on novel AI and ML technology and methodology development and validate the objectives of Phase 1 outcomes with clear metrics.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Phase 1 end: At the end of your phase 1 project, you will be required to submit a technical whitepaper summarising:

- technical progress and outcomes: concise description of what was built and learned in Phase 1
- evidence and validation: quantified results against pre-defined success criteria, test conditions and a clear statement of remaining technical risks and limitations
- innovation defensibility plan
- phase 2 readiness and delivery plan: clear and explicit translation of Phase 1 evidence into Phase 2 objectives
- business scaling assumptions and investability

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Aim recap: supporting UK SMEs to validate the technical feasibility of ambitious AI, and ML innovations that could deliver step-change improvements in capability and enable new products, services or platforms.

To be in scope your project must sufficiently describe:

- Serviceable market and customers
- Background IP and route to defensibility
- Technical novelty and benchmarked validation
- One key uncertainty you will resolve during Phase 1

Funding will be reserved for projects in which AI is the core technical contribution and the main source of operational advantage.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Themes: Your project must focus on one or more of the following themes:

1. Theme 1: AI-Enabled Health and Life Sciences
2. Theme 2: Advanced Materials with AI
3. Theme 3: Secure AI for National Security & Defence (NS&D)
4. Theme 4: Fundamental AI

If your application does not align with the theme and specific priority you select, it will not be sent for assessment.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Theme 1: AI-Enabled Health and Life Sciences

Making the UK the best place to develop and deploy AI for drug discovery, development and manufacturing of medicines, clinical trials, and healthcare delivery.

You must focus on one of the following priorities:

- predictive healthcare
- medicines discovery
- medicines manufacturing optimisation
- genomics and multi-omics

Your proposal must fall within one or more of the four themes and must focus on at least one specific priority within each theme.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Theme 2: Advanced Materials with AI

Building a world-leading AI-first materials R&D capability (including applications in aerospace, net zero technologies, defence and semiconductors).

You must focus on one of the following priorities:

- material prediction, generative models & multi objective optimisation
- physics-ML models for discovery and simulation acceleration
- multimodal knowledge discovery platforms

Your proposal must fall within one or more of the four themes and must focus on at least one specific priority within each theme.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Theme 3, Secure AI for National Security & Defence (NS&D)

Enable the UK's defence sector to become a leading integrator of secure AI-enhanced command & control and AI enabled sensors.

You must focus on one of the following priorities:

- AI driven assured multi-source fusion and analytics for distributed heterogeneous information, multimodal systems for decision support
- edge autonomy and robust decision, control AI systems, Low-Swap inference, quantum-AI & semiconductor-AI for novel underwater sensors
- secure and robust AI, ML driven signal processing, AI for acoustic signal processing & digital EW

To note: UKRI maximises the contribution of research-derived intellectual assets to national security and defence. Application information for Defence projects *may* be shared with our NS&D partners.



Your proposal must fall within one or more of the four themes and must focus on at least one specific priority within each theme.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Theme 4: Fundamental AI

Advancing foundational AI capabilities that can underpin multiple sectors and future applications.

You must focus on one of the following priorities:

- abstract reasoning and generalisation
- novel AI, ML architectures & methodologies, online learning and world model learning systems
- generalisable explainable AI

Your proposal must fall within one or more of the four themes and must focus on at least one specific priority within each theme.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Technology Readiness levels (TRL)

We are expecting phase 1 projects to start at a Technology Readiness Level of 3 or below at time of application.

- **TRL 1:** basic principles observed and reported
- **TRL 2:** technology concept or application formulated
- **TRL 3:** analytical and experimental critical function or characteristic proof-of-concept

Your technology must have in principle the ability to scale at pace, but you are not required to prove or validate scalability during Phase 1.

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Competition aim: supporting UK SMEs to validate the technical feasibility of ambitious AI, and ML innovations that could deliver step-change improvements in capability and enable new products, services or platforms.

We are not funding projects that:

- do not sufficiently provide a quantified serviceable addressable market
- do not sufficiently provide clear background IP ownership or rights
- do not sufficiently provide a specific defensibility route
- do not align with the competition theme and specific priority areas
- do not sufficiently provide a named baseline with metrics and numeric targets for validation
- do not sufficiently address the scope of the competition
- are primarily literature review studies, requirement gathering, without substantive experimental R&D
- propose routine integration, deployment, orchestration or productisation of existing AI tools or third-party models without novel AI or ML development

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

Competition aim: supporting UK SMEs to validate the technical feasibility of ambitious AI, and ML innovations that could deliver step-change improvements in capability and enable new products, services or platforms.

We are not funding projects that:

- are not delivering measurable and specific objectives
- are primarily routine integration or deployment of existing AI tools without substantive technical innovation
- don't have clear technical novelty and feasibility challenge
- do not result in defensible foreground IP
- focus primarily on non-AI, ML R&D and development (cross-cutting projects)
- develop fully autonomous targeting
- whose primary purpose is the development of hardware, including sensor hardware, quantum hardware, platforms, or other enabling infrastructure, where AI is only a secondary feature, add-on analytics layer, or downstream application

Frontier AI SME Champion Pipeline Phase 1: Scope

This a three-phase stage-gated funding pipeline to support the next wave of UK AI Champions, from early technical validation through to scale-up.

Phase 2

Will enable projects to develop demonstrators of the innovation you developed in Phase 1 and we would expect you to advance the technology readiness level (TRL) by 2 points in TRL scale.

Phase 2 projects will be able to submit applications for projects for up to 12 month long with a costs of up to £1 million. Progression to Phase 2 will be invite-only for applicants who successfully complete Phase 1.

To note: Funding for Phase 2 and Phase 3 of this opportunity is subject to business case approval by the Department of Science for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) and HM Treasury.

Eligibility criteria



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Eligibility Criteria – Your Project

Your project must:

- have total costs between £150,000 and £250,000
- last between 3 to 6 months
- start by 1 August 2026
- end by 31 January 2027
- carry out all of its project work in the UK
- intend to exploit the results from or in the UK

Eligibility Criteria – Lead Organisation

Lead organisation:

To work alone your organisation must be a UK registered SME.

More information on the different types of organisation can be found in our [Funding rules](#).

Eligibility Criteria – Subcontractors

Subcontractors are not allowed in this competition.

Eligibility Criteria – Number of applications

Number of applications

A business can only lead on one application

Previously submitted applications

This competition **does not** 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 using your company number. This facilitates our checks later if you are successful.

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.

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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.

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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.

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 (unscored)

Application Form		Word Count	Appendix
Question 1	Themes (not scored)	Multiple choice	No
Question 2	Applicant location (not scored)	400 words	No
Question 3	Animal testing (not scored)	Multiple choice	No
Question 4	Permits and licences (not scored)	Multiple choice	No
Question 5	International Collaboration (not scored)	400 words	No
Question 6	Export licence (not scored)	Multiple choice	No
Question 7	Trusted Research and Innovation (not scored)	400 words	No

National Security and Investment Act - overview

Subject to certain criteria, UK applicants are legally required to tell the government about acquisitions of certain entities in 17 sensitive areas of the economy (called 'notifiable acquisitions').

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-security-and-investment-act-guidance-on-notifiable-acquisitions/national-security-and-investment-act-guidance-on-notifiable-acquisitions>

These 17 areas are:

- Advanced Materials
- Advanced Robotics
- Artificial Intelligence
- Civil Nuclear
- Communications
- Computing Hardware
- Critical Suppliers to Government
- Cryptographic Authentication
- Data Infrastructure
- Defence
- Energy
- Military and Dual-Use
- Quantum Technologies
- Satellite and Space Technologies
- Suppliers to the Emergency Services
- Synthetic Biology
- Transport

If there is significant uncertainty about whether an acquisition is notifiable, you may contact the government on **investment.screening@cabinetoffice.gov.uk** to seek a view or get legal advice from your own sources.

UK Strategic Export Controls - overview

[UK strategic export controls - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-strategic-export-controls)

The UK government has put together this guidance for those who export or transfer goods, software or technology (including data, information and technical assistance) which might be subject to strategic export controls.

It explains what control lists are, as well as who they apply to and when, so that exporters can make sure they comply with the law.

Applicants should assess how these controls may impact the project and confirm if they will need a licence (see question 5).

Q4 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.

Q5 Trusted Research and Innovation (not scored)

You must explain if your proposed project work relates to UKRI's Trusted Research and Innovation 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

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

Application Questions – scored

Application Form		Word Count	Appendix
Question 8	Intellectual property (IP) position, freedom to operate and defensibility	400 words	No
Question 9	Need, technical development, validation and outputs	800 words	Yes – optional, 2 pages
Question 10	Team and resources	400 words	Yes – optional, 2 pages
Question 11	Market awareness	400 words	No
Question 12	Outcomes and route to market	400 words	No
Question 13	Wider impacts	400 words	No
Question 14	Project management	400 words	Yes – mandatory, 2 pages
Question 15	Risks	400 words	Yes – mandatory, 2 pages
Question 16	Added value	400 words	No
Question 17	Costs and value for money	400 words	No

Project Impact questions

- Each organisation in your application will complete the Project Impact questions within the 'Supporting information' section
- The Project Impact questions ask for data about your business and innovation and its contribution to the UK economy, society, and the environment
- Visit the [Project Impact guidance](#) page for more information, the types of questions you will be asked and how to get further support
- By providing this data, you are enabling us to better understand the impact of our support. It will help us identify success stories and provide evidence to government and the public of the value of supporting innovative businesses



For more information:

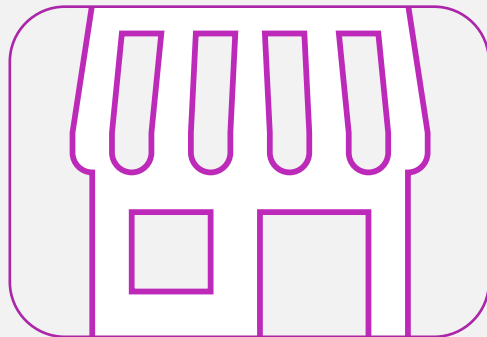
- [Watch Our Impact Management Framework video](#)
- [How is the Project Impact data collected? video](#)

Your Project Cost Categories

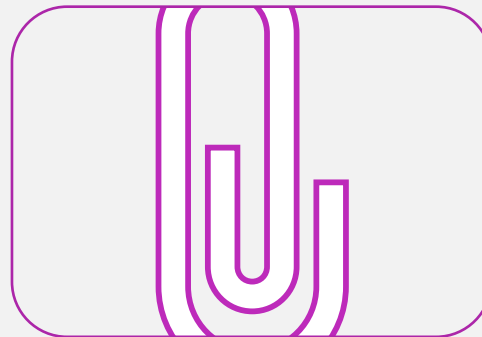
View our [Application Finances Instructional Video](#)



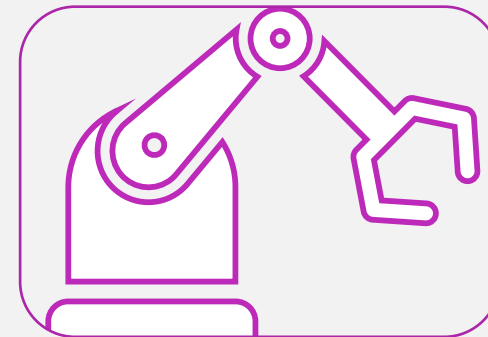
Labour



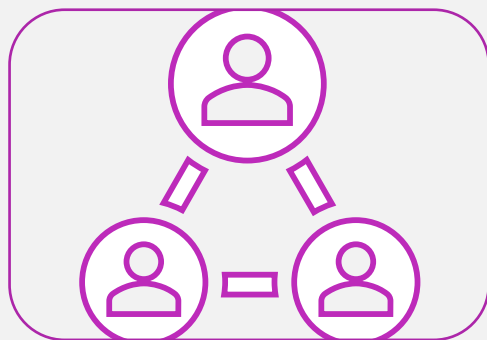
Overheads



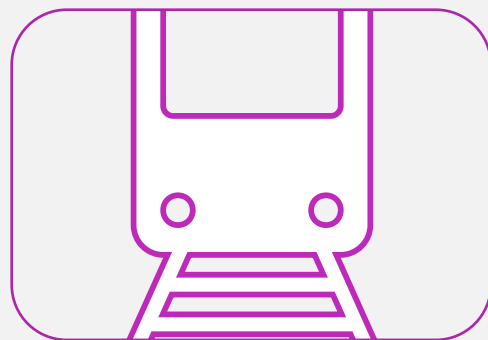
Materials



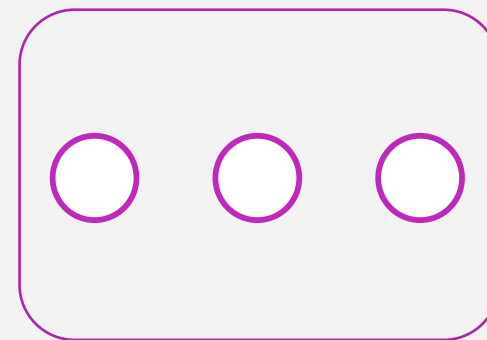
Capital Usage



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


 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 entered, with the correct costs, funding level % and funding sought figures, as per the eligibility criteria of the competition.

If collaborative, the lead must ensure that all partners have marked their finances as complete.

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](#)



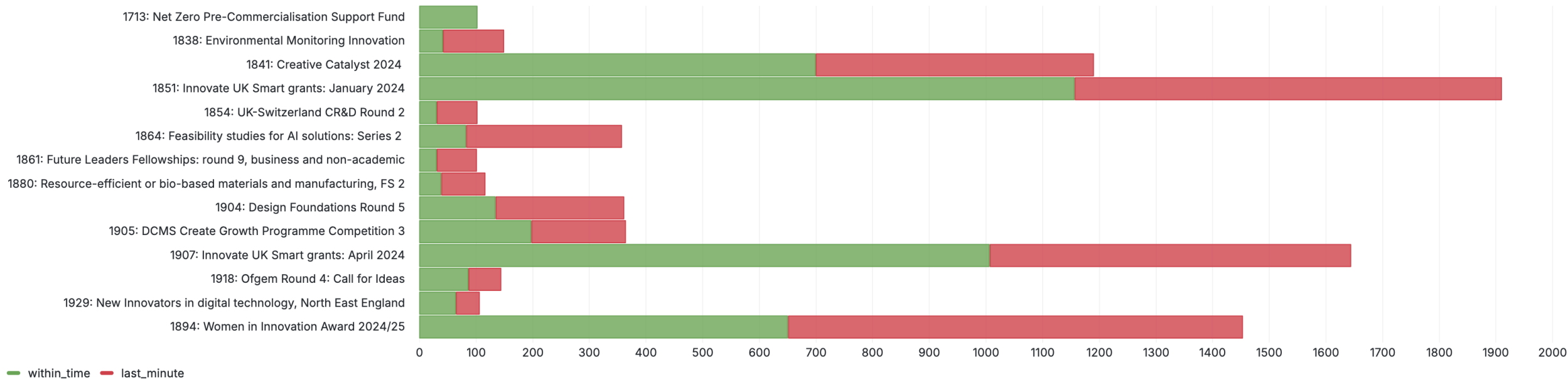
I agree to the [full terms and conditions](#) set out by the funding authority. I understand I need to agree to the final contract if my application is successful.

[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.



Editing a submitted application

test
Application number: 242
Competition: 599 Covid de minimis round 2

Awaiting assessment

Application submitted

[Reopen](#)

Reopen by clicking here

Terms and conditions
You must agree to these before you submit your application.

[Award terms and conditions](#) ✓ Complete

[Review and submit](#) [Print your application](#)

Remember to press
'Submit application'

Terms and conditions Open all

[Award terms and conditions](#) ✓ Complete +

[Submit application](#)

Need help with this service? [Contact us](#)

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

Funding Rules



You are unable to claim funding if

- you are an **overseas organisation** - your company number begins with **FC**
- your organisation is **setup as a branch** - your company number begins with **BR**
- you are a **collaboration with no formal structure of ownership or control** - your company number begins with **ML**
- you are a **Crown Dependency**:
 - if your company is based in **Jersey** - your company number begins with **JE**
 - if your company is based in **Guernsey**
 - if your company is based in the **Isle of Man**

Other Innovate UK projects

If you have an **overdue** 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
- please note if you have a live project in progress this does not prohibit you from entering this competition

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 1 & 2: Feasibility Studies and Industrial Research

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

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 **60 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.

How you get paid

- Grants are claimed and paid out following authorisation, **quarterly in arrears**
- Organisations being funded at less than 100% will need to provide evidence that they will have funding available to meet their share of costs
- You can only claim for costs incurred between your project's start and end date
- Grant can only be paid into an approved UK bank account

Bank account – Guidance



Accepted business bank accounts – subject to change

- Advance Payment Solutions (Part of Cashplus Ltd)
- Allica Bank
- Allied Irish Banks
- Bank of Ireland (UK)
- Bank of Scotland
- Bank of America
- Barclays
- BNP Paribas
- C Hoare & Co
- CAF Bank
- Citi Bank UK
- Clear Bank
- Commerz Bank
- Coutts
- Danske Bank
- Deutsche Bank
- DNB Bank ASA
- Guaranty Trust Bank (UK) Limited
- Handelsbanken Plc
- HSBC
- J.P. Morgan UK
- Lloyds
- Metro Bank
- Mettle
- Mizuho Bank Ltd
- MUFG Bank Ltd
- Monzo
- NatWest
- Nordea
- Revolut
- Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS)
- Santander
- Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken Ab (Publ) [SEB]
- Starling
- The Bank of East Asia
- The Co-operative Bank
- Tide Bank
- Triodos Bank
- TSB Bank
- Ulster Bank
- Unity Trust Bank
- Virgin Money
- Wells Fargo Bank N.A.

Additional Support



Reasonable adjustments

We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and are committed to making our application process accessible to everyone. This includes making [reasonable adjustments](#), for people who have a disability or a long-term condition and face barriers applying to us.

You can contact us at any time to ask for guidance. We recommend you contact us at least 15 working days before this competition's closing date to allow us to put the most suitable support in place. The support we can provide may be limited if you contact us close to the competition deadline.

You can contact Innovate UK by [email](#) or call 0300 321 4357. Our phone lines are open from 9am to 12pm and 2pm to 5pm UK time, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

Reasonable adjustments – what we need from you

To apply for a reasonable adjustment we will need to collect some information from you, below is the list of what we need:

- Name
- Organisation
- Email address
- Phone number
- Competition you are applying to
- Application number if you've started an application
- Consent to pass info to Innovate UK Business Connect

This information must be given to Innovate UK Customer Support Services, Business Connect are unable to provide support without a referral from CSS

Further information on the process can be found here <https://iuk-business-connect.org.uk/how-we-help/reasonable-adjustments-service/>

Reasonable adjustments – what we can do

Below is a list of possible adjustments we can make, this list is not exhaustive and not every adjustment will be appropriate for you, adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis:

- Proofreading
- Clarifying language
- Resources
- Introduction to experts
- Time management
- Note-taking

Reasonable adjustments – what we can not do

The reasonable adjustments offered are designed to remove barriers to applying, they are not designed to make decisions for you or give you advice on an application. With that in mind, the support we offer does not include the below:

- Providing deadline extensions
- Choosing which competition to apply to
- Developing an idea
- Advising whether your idea is in scope for a competition
- Offering financial advice
- Helping with research



Innovate UK Business Growth

The indispensable partner for ambitious innovators

We equip innovation-focused businesses to **make the best strategic choices** and **harness the right resources** to accelerate their growth.

Thousands of innovators benefit from our **intensive and tailored advisory support** to achieve their ambitious goals every year.

We are in their corner – do you want us in yours? Visit iukbg.ukri.org to learn more.

97% of clients would recommend us

94% report that our service has had a positive impact on their growth

“Innovate UK Business Growth gave us the tools to grow with confidence”

Natali Georgieva, Co-founder at ALIANAz

Who do we support?

- Ambitious, innovation-focused businesses that have won an Innovate UK competition, and are growing strongly or have high growth potential, may be contacted about support
- Registered at Companies House with up to 250 employees
- Management teams motivated to engage fully with us to help achieve growth milestones

Cyber Action Toolkit

The NSCS has created a free [Cyber Action Toolkit](#) that gives clear bite-sized actions to protect small businesses, their money and reputation from cyber crime' The NSCS has created a free [Cyber Action Toolkit](#) that gives clear bite-sized actions to protect small businesses, their money and reputation from cyber crime

Search “NCSC cyber toolkit” or click here: <https://cybertoolkit.service.ncsc.gov.uk/>



The screenshot shows the landing page for the Cyber Action Toolkit. At the top left, there is a green shield icon followed by the text "Cyber Action Toolkit". At the top right, there are two buttons: "Sign in" with a user icon and "Get free toolkit". The main heading in the center reads "Start protecting your business with our free cyber toolkit", with "free" underlined in yellow. Below this, a sub-headline states: "The Cyber Action Toolkit gives you clear, bite-sized actions to protect your business's money and reputation from cyber criminals." At the bottom, it says "Provided by" followed by the logos for the National Cyber Security Centre and the UK Government.

Contact Us

Whether you need help to set a strategic direction or with progressing your innovation, financing your growth or unlocking the potential of international partnerships.

visit our website:

www.iukbg.ukri.org

or call us on:

0300 123 3066



Contact Business Growth

The preferred way to get in touch with us is via email using the form below – we aim to reply within 2 working days. However, we will also be available by telephone during working hours (9am-5pm) and an answerphone will be available at all other times or when our lines are engaged (we will return your call as soon as possible). Please note that you cannot access our colleagues at Innovate UK through these channels.

If you're not from the UK, please [contact your local EEN branch](#).

You can also refer to [our FAQs page](#) to find answers to frequently asked questions about our services.

Telephone | 0300 123 3066

Name

Email

Telephone

Company name

Registered company name or intended trading name

Note: The service is offered to all Innovate UK competition winners but any suitable ambitious innovation-focused businesses with under 250 employees can be supported

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.

Q&A



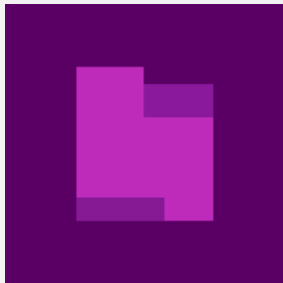
Innovate
UK

Contact

Customer Support Services

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

support@iuk.ukri.org



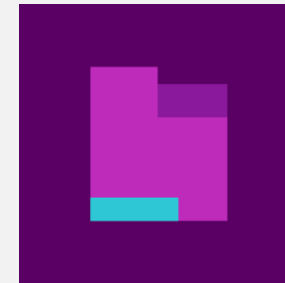
Innovate UK

ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk



**Innovate UK
Business Connect**

<https://iuk-business-connect.org.uk/>



**Innovate UK Business
Growth**

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Thank You

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