

# Pioneer Places Phase 1 - Q&A

31st October 2022

<p>Net Zero Living Programme</p>	<p><b>Are you able to share a link to the PWC report cited in last slide, please?</b> - Details can be found here - <a href="https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/IUK-090322-AcceleratingNetZeroDelivery-UnlockingBenefitsClimateActionUKCityRegions.pdf">https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/IUK-090322-AcceleratingNetZeroDelivery-UnlockingBenefitsClimateActionUKCityRegions.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Will there be any funding to support the Fast Followers?</b> - Yes</p> <p><b>Can you give some more information about how the 20 Fast Followers part of the competition will work please?</b> - We are hoping to provide some further communications in the coming weeks</p> <p><b>Is a successful Round 1 application vital to secure funding in round 2?</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Can you apply for phase 2, without taking part in phase?</b> - No</p>
<p>Definition / Scope</p>	<p><b>So this fund is aimed at businesses with products or services?</b> - No - it is about collaboration to achieve net zero locally across the whole system, there may be new products and services that emerge as part of your project to help people in places benefit from the local net zero transition - Businesses must be in collaboration with a local authority.</p> <p><b>What role do you envisage the business will play in the first phase - we'd engage them as stakeholders, so what is expected to be different if they were collaborators?</b> - The role of the business would be dependent on your project or programme that you are considering. They could range from being an existing delivery partner to offering new thinking about addressing the non technical barriers to delivery to consultancy</p> <p><b>Please can you define the phrase "non-technical barriers"?</b> - Non technical barriers including but not limited to: Financing, Capacity, Capability and skills, Policy and regulation, System governance, Common data standards for open source and interoperability, Ability to influence strategic grid reinforcement</p> <p>These are any barriers that are preventing effective delivery eg policy, regulation, financing, skills and capability, procurement, data availability - this list is not exhaustive</p> <p><b>What is the minimum size of a place?</b> - No minimum scale however the proposal does need to be replicable and scalable</p> <p><b>Reiterate the questions about geographical scale, District? County? And do we have to address all listed barriers?</b> - There is no minimum geographic area as a requirement. We would like evidence that the potential solution (s) are scalable and replicable</p> <p><b>How do we define "place"(whole neighbourhood, whole city)? What are the parameters of this?</b> - A place is a geographic area where multiple sectors and vectors combine to service the needs of the population. There is no given size for this competition but the applicant must be able to show that the proposal is scalable and replicable</p> <p><b>Are you looking for solutions which address multiple non technical barriers or could they focus on one only e.g. capacity, capability and skills? Could you also confirm if there are any limits on the number of applications which non profits can collaborate on?</b> - There is no minimum number of barriers to be addressed. We would like proposals to demonstrate a good understanding of the barriers and the impact of overcoming them. In terms of number of applications; A local authority or business can only lead on one application but can be included as a collaborator in a further single application, If an organisation is not leading any application, it can collaborate in any number of applications.</p> <p><b>Is the delivery plan for the delivery on the net zero plan (ie. CAPEX) incl. overcoming the non technical barriers (ie OPEX) or just one of the two?</b> - The plan should be how to overcome non technical barriers to accelerate the delivery of existing net zero programmes</p>

that use a systems approach. For more information on eligible costs please refer to the guidance: <https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/costs-we-fund/costs-guidance-for-non-academic-organisations/>

**The competition scope states that it is not intended to fund 'net zero infrastructure' but are feasibility studies in phase 1 that enable finance / investment decisions to be made into net zero infrastructure projects in phase 2 eligible for funding?** - Yes, the feasibility should address how innovative approaches will be financed and resourced. We are seeking applications which build on existing portfolios and projects. The feasibility can cover more than a project or programme for Phase 2 as it is expected that this phase will deliver value to the successful organisations in reviewing approaches to delivering net zero.

**Any Net Zero project will have to have some sort of infrastructure involved in it, so will it be desk rejected if the idea involves developing a Net Zero infrastructure even though it is addressing other non-technical barriers?** - No, but non-technical barriers must be the focus and the balance of activities must reflect this.

**The eligibility criteria state that "infrastructure" projects are out of scope - does this include data collection from hardware (e.g. charge points, heat pumps, solar, sub-meters etc.)? Infrastructure is required to build out data and insights that can be used to overcome non-technical barriers.** - The purpose of this competition is to fund activities that will support the removal of non technical barriers. If data acquisition will support the feasibility study, is proportionate to the value of the work and can be justified then this would be funded. We are not seeking to fund the purchase and trial of new infrastructure technologies

**Can we get clarity on what's expected to be covered in Phase 1. Do all 4 sectors have to be represented in the plan. ie: Mobility AND Heat AND Energy AND manu/materials use?** - No - we are expecting a whole systems approach to be taken and all four themes to be considered as part of the proposal.

**Can you please confirm that the guidelines define that a net zero plan is the same or similar to a climate emergency action plan, as in is having a CEAP acceptable to apply for the funding** - Yes a CEAP is in scope

**Looking at different scenarios - do we need to have a local area energy plan if our application is energy based? And also would it work to support behaviours, campaigns etc. around funding we have already been awarded (e.g. Bus service improvement plan)?** - We are not prescriptive about the type of energy plan you need, so no you don't need a LAEP but you do need a plan.

**Should every application for the feasibility phase cover off all four areas: Manu/usage, power, heat and mobility? In other words, you can't just pick one or two of these sectors.. you have to cover all four.** - We are looking for a whole systems approach so would expect multiple sectors to be considered within the application

**The slide says 'heat, power, manufacturing OR mobility' - is it 'or' or 'and'?** - We would like to see multiple sectors/vectors being considered as part of the application

**Can you focus on one vector? For example hydrogen.** We believe that removing the non technical barriers to delivering a single vector is unlikely to demonstrate a whole systems approach to the transition to net zero in a place.

**The Devon Carbon Plan covers a range of areas (built environment, transport, energy supply), can a NZL application focus on one element such as agriculture and land management and barriers relating to power, heat, mobility and product manufacture?** -

	<p>We are looking for applications that address barriers encountered when trying to deliver using a whole systems approach. If you can demonstrate how the unlocking the barriers impacts on other sectors and drives broader benefits then this would be in scope. If you would like to drop us an email we would be happy to take a look at further detail</p> <p><b>Do I understand correctly? The whole system approach should cover all 4 sectors - power, heat, mobility, product manufacture and usage rather than focus on one of these sectors.</b> - We are looking for multiple sectors to be considered as part of a whole systems approach. It is key to identify the sectors that are most relevant to your place challenges</p> <p><b>Please can you define innovative in the context of this project?</b> - Innovative means trying a new approach, developing a new process that is not to our knowledge being applied elsewhere in the UK</p> <p><b>Can we build on current place based projects, or are you looking for something entirely new?</b> - We are looking for projects that build on existing projects and portfolios</p> <p><b>Do you consider adaptation and replication of a successful model in a new area innovative?</b> - No - innovative needs to be something new and different</p> <p><b>Would you define innovative as having no existing demonstration of a similar approach anywhere in the UK?</b> - Yes</p> <p><b>Are there any requirements around delivery of the innovation project, were it to be successful in the competition?</b> This competition only involves delivery of a feasibility report. It is expected that a Phase 2 competition will be run where delivery of those ideas would be demonstrated</p> <p><b>Is phase one revenue only or can capital elements be funded?</b> - We are seeking feasibility proposals to address non technical barriers and would expect that the majority of costs will be revenue however if capital activities can be justified as being essential to the feasibility then this will be considered</p> <p><b>Could you explain further on manufacturing, is this about how industry fits into the wider system - energy demand ,flexibility and need to decarbonise?</b> - Examples would include linking with industry located in your place as part of a net zero system; it could be circular economy, or encouraging citizens to change behaviours</p> <p><b>Is food processing seen as product manufacture?</b> - Yes</p> <p><b>Are nature-based solutions in scope? As part of manufacturing for food</b> - It would be good to understand the query in a bit more detail. Nature based solutions can be considered as part of a broader systems approach to delivering net zero in a place.</p> <p><b>Ref: 'Describe which net zero tools you will be using' - Can you expand upon this or offer a definition of tools?</b> - There are many net zero tools available. We would like to understand which tools that you have selected that would be most relevant to your project/programme or place</p>
Application	<p><b>As a local authority can we apply for the funding as we have looked to register but it is saying we cannot?</b> - Local Authorities entering the competition should choose 'public sector, charity or non Je-S registered research organisation' then enter their details manually. IFS offers a 'company' search but you don't have to use it</p> <p><b>1-3 months is a very short and challenging timeframe for delivery, where has this timeframe come from?</b> - It's so we can deliver as much as possible within our funding timescales, we expect these feasibility projects to emerge from existing plans and</p>

collaborations. This is not a competition for new projects and plans, or local authorities who don't yet have a plan.

**This is all very tight given periods many people have to get internal agreements etc (esp councils and universities)** - We recognise the timescales may be a challenge, the brief was published on 5th October and is for a feasibility proposal. We are looking for applicants who already have plans or projects that they would use to consider innovative approaches. Partners can change following the feasibility stage.

**When are the timescales please, deadlines etc?** - Competition closes on 30 November. Projects notified early Jan of outcome; projects to run April-June (1-3 months)

**As a local authority can we apply for the funding as we have looked to register but it is saying we cannot?** - Yes - Local Authorities entering the competition should choose 'public sector, charity or non Je-S registered research organisation' then enter their details manually. IFS offers a 'company' search but you don't have to use it

**How many applications can one LA put in?** - Local Authorities can lead on one application and collaborate on a second or be a collaborator on any number of applications - however they would need to be able to resource the projects if they were successful on more than one

**Can a project be made up of an LA and an RTO, or does there need to be a commercial partner?** - There needs to be a UK registered business partner

**National Parks are 'special purpose local authorities'. Can National Parks be the lead applicant?** - They can be a collaborative partner but not a lead

**Could a utility company be a partner with a local authority?** - Yes

**In the local authorities landscape, when it comes to Combined Authorities, would IUK consider applications coming from CAs and individual Boroughs separately, if the two are complementary?** - Yes

**Are charities or community interest organisations able to be the lead partner alongside an LA?** - They can be a collaborative partner but not a lead

**Can RTO's lead an application?** - No - only Local authorities or UK registered businesses

**A minimum of two grant claiming partners must be included to be an eligible collaboration and projects must include a minimum of one UK registered business and one Local Authority - so to clarify, an LE and an HEI who wanted to work together would need to have business on board too?** - Yes

**If we are a local authority, do we still need to provide a letter?** - Yes - we would like a letter of support

**What is the email address for submitting queries-also to facilitate a partner search? Is there a contact for discussing potential project ideas with, ahead of applying?** - Please email [support@iuk.ukri.org](mailto:support@iuk.ukri.org) or attend a surgery date provided

**What about % for LAs? the guidance is ambiguous** - If the LA is not acting in a commercial capacity then they can receive 100% of the grant funding. However they can only receive a max of 80% of the total grant costs

**The slides don't cover public procurement issues relating to choosing a commercial project partner without competition. This has been problematic in the past - do you have any advice?**

**Clarity required re local authority public procurement - it will be difficult for a council**

**to directly appoint / partner with a commercial company without due process / competition**

**To pass on any funding to a business, local authorities are likely to have to go through procurement if amount being passed on to a business is over a threshold - often quite a low threshold - so may not be able to name business in an application which needs to be submitted in 30 days - unless already procured as part of a wider scope which includes this project**

**It does not matter if there is an existing relationship already - this would be a new source of funding and a new project so would need to ensure it complies with procurement once again. Unless there is a framework in place that can be used, many councils may not be able to deliver a submission in time whilst being in line with procurement rules?**

Collaborative business partners are funded directly from IUK rather than as a subcontractor. It is key to check this with your internal governance/procurement processes as to whether this is allowable

**Can project beneficiaries be exclusively businesses - through resilient local energy generation (for example), rather than domestic buildings, for 'living'? - Yes**

**Reduced % for private sector partners is going to prompt many to want to be subcontractors which means LA procurement timelines could be key to any phase 2 activities - The % contributions align to the standard practice for Innovate UK.**