



Innovate
UK

New Innovators Launchpads

Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

[Who can apply](#)

[How do I apply](#)

[My application](#)

[My Assessment](#)

[My live project](#)

[General questions](#)

[Additional support](#)

[Glossary](#)

Who can apply



Who can apply

Can we apply if we have only recently formed our business?

Absolutely, so long as by the time your project starts you are registered on Companies House as a micro or small business and have a business bank account. The definition for a micro or small business is [here](#).

We have not yet registered on Companies House – does this make us ineligible?

If you register as a micro or small business before your project start date and provide us your Company Number, then you will be eligible to apply.

I am a sole trader – am I eligible?

As long as you are registered, or you will register, on Companies House by the project start date, then yes

My organisation is a charity – can we apply?

Unfortunately not – this funding is for micro or small businesses

We are a Community Interest Company (CIC) – are we eligible?

Possibly – you must be registered on Companies House as a micro or small business and you must be eligible to receive Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) in order to be eligible

Who can apply (cont)

As a subsidiary of a non-UK company but one who is registered on Companies House, would we be eligible for funding?

Possibly. You must be registered as a micro or small UK subsidiary business to be eligible. You are not eligible if you are the UK-registered office of a non-UK company.

Are we eligible to apply if our organisation is not for profit?

You must be registered on Companies House as a micro or small business and must be eligible to receive Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA)

Can we lead an application as a research and technology organisation (RTO) or academic institution?

Regrettably not – applications are to be led by UK-registered micro or small businesses

We have already started our project – is it too late to apply?

You can still apply, assuming you are currently self-funding your project. You will only be able to claim for costs approved as eligible and incurred after the formal start date state of your project, as stated on the Grant Offer Letter (GOL).

Who can apply (cont)

Can Medium size businesses apply? Is this programme open to all SMEs?

No. This funding is only for micro and small businesses who need the funding. Further information on these categories is provided [here](#)

I am a Medium or Large size business, what does the Launchpad programme offer me?

Our last round of Launchpad competitions were open to Medium and Large businesses and many were selected for funding. This current competition is for New Innovators who are micro or small. We are planning further funding opportunities for Medium or Large businesses in a future phase of Launchpads. We are also funding a Cluster Management Organisation for each Launchpad who can support organisations of any size.

Can we apply in a collaborative partnership with other organisations?

Not in this competition as “New Innovator” funding and support is open to single applicants only. You can include subcontractors but not collaborative partners.

We have previously received funding from the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS) or Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) – can we apply?

Please seek your own independent advice – Innovate UK is not licensed to offer this.

Who can apply (cont)

If my application uses a technology developed for one sector, but is repositioned for an innovative approach for a Launchpad from a different sector, can I still apply?

If you are looking at a novel use of an existing technology relevant to the cluster, that could be in scope. This is covered by existing wording in the Scope section of competition documentation

Am I eligible if I have been a collaborative partner, rather than the project lead, on a project that has received Innovate UK funding before?

If you have been a partner, either lead or not, you are ineligible for New Innovator funding.

If my company was sub-contracted (commissioned) in the past to deliver a work package for an Innovate UK funded project, does that make me ineligible?

You can apply for New Innovator funding if you have only been a sub-contractor, rather than as a lead or collaborative partner

Can an RTO apply if they plan to fund research that could form the basis for a new spin-out

RTO's are not eligible, you have to be a registered micro or small business to apply for New Innovator funding. So in this example the spinout company could apply (subject to the other requirements)

Who can apply (cont)

Is it possible to start the project before November?

The possible start dates are described on the Eligibility tab of the competition documentation

Can I operate two different Micro start ups to address two different Launchpad New Innovator competitions?

Yes, as part of company due diligence checks the resource allocated to both projects will be reviewed, but multiple startups could be eligible (subject to the other requirements)

Can an application take advantage of other schemes (outside of Innovate UK) to subsidise contractor costs for a New Innovator application?

New Innovators projects are 100% paid, so there should be no requirement for any other costs to cover in your project. If you have separate activity underway alongside the proposed project, those costs must not be included in the project proposed for Innovate UK New Innovator funding.

Should applications outsource to specific companies?

Subcontractors can be from anywhere in the UK and you must select them through your usual procurement process.

Who can apply (cont)

What sort of previous support from Innovate UK would make me ineligible to apply for New Innovator funding? How do I know if I've received funding from Innovate UK before?

You will not be eligible for New Innovators funding if your business has had any funding delivered by Innovate UK in the past, with the exception of having received funding through a Catapult scheme or from Innovate UK Business Growth (previously named Innovate UK EDGE) only.

You can search for your company name on the [IUK funded projects list](#). Please note that details of these Grant funding awards are not published until the month after a Grant Funding Offer letter is agreed and any embargo on publication has been lifted.

If you are unsure, or want confirmation, contact our [customer support team](#) by email at least 10 working days before the submission deadline.

How do I apply

How do I apply?

How do I apply for the competition?

You will need to apply online on the [Innovation Funding Service \(IFS\)](#) platform

How do I reset my password in the Innovation Funding Service (IFS)?

Go to the login page and read the information in the 'Need help signing in or creating an account?' section

How many applications can I submit?

You can submit only one application for this competition

My application

My application – cluster impact

How should we show our project will grow our innovation activities and impact in the cluster both during and after the project?

This is an important aspect of Innovate UK's Launchpad programmes. One of our objectives is to increase business innovation activity in the clusters.

As an applicant you may be located anywhere in the UK.

If you are in the cluster, increasing your innovation activities will increase the innovation activity in the cluster.

If you are outside the cluster, you should describe in detail your project's connection to the cluster and the local impact of your activities. Give as much information as you can. For instance, if your project activities will involve others in the cluster, be clear on who they are.

The cluster is defined in the Scope section of the competition documentation.

Provide an explanation in your 'Scope' answer. Also describe how your activities will grow innovation activities and impact after the project as well as during. This will be looked at by the programme team to help determine your eligibility for funding.

The information in your 'Applicant location' answer will also assist. You can provide information for your business' registered address and, if it differs, your project work address.

You can also provide this for any subcontractors on your project.

My application – Project costs and grant request

Is the ‘project cost’ range the total costs for the entire project, or the grant funding which can be awarded?

On this competition, your total project costs and the grant funding request must be the same.

Can the project costs be greater than £50,000? What if I only request £50,000 grant and make an additional contribution from my business?

No. The total project costs stated in your application must not be greater than £50,000 or your application will be ineligible. Your total project costs and the grant funding request must be the same figure.

Is my application eligible if the project costs are under £25,000?

No - the minimum total project costs are £25,000

What type of costs are eligible? What is eligible innovation activity?

[Costs guidance for non-academic organisations – UKRI](#)

My application

Can we upload additional attachments to our application, such as a Gantt chart, Risk register, CVs or Letters of support?

The only supporting document required for this competition is the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) declaration form.

Where is the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) declaration form?

The form is available to download in the application – it must be completed and uploaded via the link in the application form.

How do I know if I have received Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) or De Minimus before?

Please seek your own independent advice – Innovate UK is not licensed to offer this. Consult the funding paperwork if you have received previous grant funding from elsewhere.

Can I make changes to my application once it has been submitted?

Unfortunately not. You will need to contact us on our customer support team to tell us to ignore your incorrect application. Then you will need to create and submit a new application before the same competition deadline.

My assessment



My assessment

Who will assess my proposal?

Innovate UK maintains a pool of independent and non-conflicted assessors who cover all innovation specialisms from across the UK. On this competition we will allocate proposals to assessors who are well matched by Innovation Theme - not by geography.

Who decides which projects are offered funding and how?

Innovate UK's Launchpad competitions are run in partnership with the local civic leadership organisation(s) named in the documentation. After all applications are assessed, Innovate UK and the partner organisation(s) will review those that score over 70% and select the portfolio offered funding. Only the 'portfolio criteria' described in the documentation will be used.

Can I expect to receive feedback on my application?

No, feedback is not offered as part of New Innovators competitions, whether you are successful or unsuccessful. To improve accuracy and efficiency of assessment, we follow cabinet office guidance, ensuring an external assessor reviews your application. This process is then validated by an internal senior official.

My live project



My live project – Start

When do I need my project to start by?

Between 1 October 2024 and 1 January 2025. Your project should finish by 31 March 2025

Can I start earlier?

You cannot start the project before the formal start date in your Grant Offer Letter (GOL), which will be from 1st October 2024. Please do not incur costs before you have had your start date confirmed by Innovate UK (in a project 'go live' email) and returned your GOL.

Can I claim for costs incurred on the project before the official start date?

You can only claim for costs incurred after the confirmed start date, as shown on your GOL.

Can I start my project, and incur costs, before I receive the advance grant payment?

Please do not incur any costs until you have had your start date confirmed. If your start date is before you receive the advance grant payment, then you can start to incur costs.

My live project - Costs

Do we have to set up PAYE or can we report and claim with just time sheets?

Our preference is for you to have a HMRC registered payroll in place as this will evidence your gross employee costs. If you are a micro/small registered company, not operating a PAYE scheme, please refer to the link to the cost guidance at the end of this guide.

Do we need to pay for an Independent Accountants Report (IAR) at the end of the project?

These grants are under £50,000, so you will only need to submit a Statement of Expenditure (SOE) at the end of the project. No IAR is required. More information on the SOE process will be sent to you when your project is live.

How do we bill for project overheads?

Overheads are allocated at 20% of the labour costs. No further breakdown is required

My live project – Costs - Subcontractors

Is there a limit to how much of the project can be sub-contracted?

There is no limit on the amount of sub-contracting work. The eligible costs associated with sub-contracting must be well-articulated, justified and necessary for project success.

What should we do if subcontractors suddenly request more money than was agreed upon once the project is live?

Unfortunately, we are not able to increase the amount of the grant. However, you may be able to reallocate some funds within your project through a project change request (PCR).

Can I change subcontractors during the project?

Yes, you will need to submit a project change request (PCR). Your Monitoring Service Provider (MSP) will assist you.

My live project - Close

When do I need to finish the project by?

The programme states that the project must last between 3 months and a maximum of 6 months. The duration of your project will be shown on your Grant Offer Letter, which will be the project length you state in your application.

General Questions



General Questions

How many projects are you looking to support?

The nominal budget for the competition is stated in the documentation and each project will be awarded between £25,000 and £50,000. The number of projects we may support can be calculated from this.

In the competition documentation we state we reserve the right to adjust the funding allocations between all Launchpad competitions and strands.

Are the results of the competition going to be published online?

All funded projects feature on our transparency data. We include details of the project title, who the lead company is and the public description (as provided in your application). You can view our transparency data here:

<https://www.ukri.org/publications/innovate-uk-funded-projects-since-2004/>

Can we change the public description that we put on our application before it's released?

Please contact our customer support team as soon as possible to arrange this

General Questions

Is there a deadline for contacting the press office about our project?

There is no deadline in place – please get in touch with the press team if you wish to promote your project once it has started

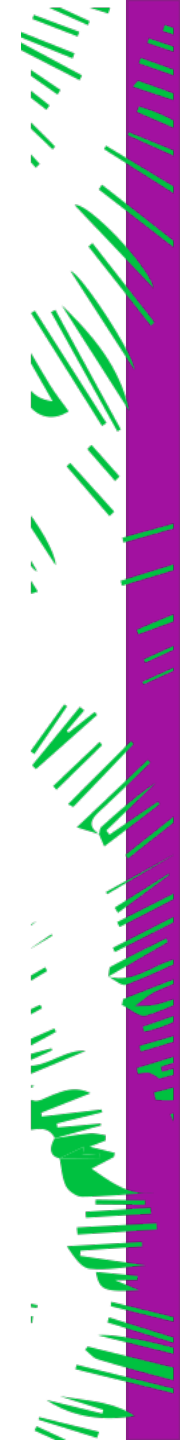
What happens if I need to make changes to the project once its live?

Any changes to your project would need to be discussed with your Monitoring Service Provider in the first instance. There is a Project Change Process that can be initiated if appropriate.

If I apply for New Innovators funding, will this preclude me from applying for (and receiving) future rounds of MFA or Collaborative R&D funding from future Launchpads?

No, receiving New Innovator funding will not make you ineligible for applying to other CR&D and MFA competitions

Additional Support



Additional Support

Is there additional support that I can access?

Absolutely, please see some options below

Online guidance for applicants -

<https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants>

Innovate UK Business Connect - <https://iuk.ktn-uk.org/>

Innovate UK Business Growth - <https://www.innovateukedge.ukri.org/>

Local business support agencies – follow the links in the competition documentation

Sign up for the Innovate UK Newsletter – <https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/news/>

Glossary



Glossary

CIC	<i>Community Interest Company</i>
GOL	<i>Grant Offer Letter</i>
IAR	<i>Independent Accountants Report</i>
IFS	<i>Innovation Funding Service</i>
MFA	<i>Minimal Financial Assistance</i>
MSP	<i>Monitoring Service Provider</i>
PCR	<i>Project Change Request</i>
RTO	<i>Research and Technology Organisation</i>
SOE	<i>Statement Of Expenditure</i>