



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator (DCIA) Pilot

Application Guidance

Contents

Overview	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Background	4
DCIA Programme Objectives	4
Competition Categories	5
Competition Timeline and Events	5
Who can apply?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Eligibility	6
How to apply	6
Funding	6
Delivery Period	6
Competition Guidance	7
1. Programme and policy context	7
2. Competition outline	7
2.1 DCIA Competition ambition	8
2.2 Scope	8
2.2.1 Competition objectives	8
2.2.2 Functional Priorities	8
2.2.4 Pilot Success Criteria:	9
2.2.5 High Level Test Cases	9
2.2.6 Security Requirements	11
2.2.7 Sustainability	12
2.3 Funding	12
2.3.1 Subsidy Control	13
2.3.2 Grant Funding Agreement	14
2.3.3 Eligible cost and funding allocations	14
3. Eligibility criteria	15
3.1 Eligible applicants	15
3.2 Bids and partners	15
3.3 Roles	17
4 Further General Guidelines	18
4.1 Benefits monitoring	18
4.2 Collaboration	18
4.3 Dissemination	18
4.4 Proposal Forming Support	19
5. Competition process	19
5.1 Dates and deadlines	19
5.2 Project Development Review	20
5.3 How to apply:	20
6 How to apply	20

6.1 What to complete	20
6.2 How to submit your application	21
6.3 Application format	21
7 Application and assessment	21
7.1 Application structure	21
7.2 Supplementary Information	26
7.3 Assessment	27
7.4 Scoring	27
7.5 Quality threshold	28
8 Additional Information	28
8.1 Additional Documents	28
8.2 Notices	28

Overview

Background

The [Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review \(FTIR\)](#) highlighted the government's commitment to high quality mobile connectivity where people live, work and travel. Advanced wireless networks (including 5G) are likely to entail greater deployment of digital infrastructure including on publicly available assets (such as street furniture) to provide extra capacity in specific locations.

The Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator (DCIA) programme will help accelerate both investment in and the deployment of advanced wireless networks. This competition supports this aim by helping to create efficiencies for Local Authorities and network providers using publicly available assets to support digital infrastructure.

Market engagement with Local Authorities has shown that both cost and timescales are both significant barriers in using publicly owned assets for digital infrastructure. To address this, DCMS is launching this competition with the aim of making the transactions between public sector location asset owners and telecommunications companies as frictionless as possible, lowering costs of site acquisition and accelerating the rollout of digital connectivity across participating regions.

Those funded through this competition will work with their partners to pilot a digital asset management platform to build evidence on how the digital mapping and brokerage of assets can benefit mobile network operators and their network delivery partners, users of mobile services (business and consumer) and the public sector, who are the primary providers of assets for hosting network equipment.

A technical design specification for the use of a digital asset management platform is available for download at www.gov.uk/government/collections/digital-connectivity-infrastructure-accelerator. This design specification outlines the requirements for the Digital Asset Management Platform and has been co-developed with mobile telecommunication infrastructure providers (including all four major Mobile Network Operators), Local Authorities, government partners, and potential solution providers. Successful bidders are expected to either source platforms in line with functionality as described in the specification.

The DCIA programme also has a number of complementary workstreams to deliver on the programme objectives. This includes producing best practice guidance for local and regional authorities in terms of Public Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts relating to street furniture assets, creating a library of standard contracts for Local Authorities to engage with digital infrastructure providers and formalising Publicly Available Specifications (PAS) to help create a common framework for Smart Infrastructure.

DCIA Programme Objectives

The programme explores the challenges of using street furniture to support digital infrastructure and roll out of advanced wireless connectivity. It will focus will be to:

- Accelerate the deployment of digital infrastructure by improving the ability to access and acquire sites.
- Build evidence to understand the benefits and feasibility of using street furniture to host multiple technologies.

Competition Categories

Each pilot in this competition will see the application of a solution across regions and Local Authorities with varying levels of capability in asset management (specific to development of advanced telecommunications infrastructure).

We would encourage applications from a range of capabilities and industry demand, falling into two broad categories below:

- **Regions with advanced capabilities¹ and high Mobile Network Operator (MNO) demand²:** This pilot of the standard platform specifications will see chosen local and regional authorities and operators trialing a platform in line with the specification in environments for all publicly owned asset types where organisations with more advanced capabilities and high MNO demand are shown to be able to successfully adopt the solution.
- **Regions with capability constraints and challenging MNO business case:** This pilot of the standard platform specification will see chosen local and regional authorities and operators trialing the platform in line with the specification in environments for all publicly owned asset types where organisations with less advanced capabilities are shown to be able to successfully adopt the solution.

Competition Timeline and Events

There will be opportunities to learn more about the competition and discuss with potential collaboration partners at a series of direct engagement events:

Briefing Events	Date
Launch Event	15th September 2021
Matchmaking Event	Mid September 2021

For pilots the application window is open for 10 weeks and the timeline is:

Milestones	Date
Competition launch announcement	9th September 2021
Deadline for questions	5th November 2021
Applications deadline	18th November 2021
Assessment of bids	Late November 2021
Successful applicants notified	December 2021
Pilots start	January 2022

¹ "Capability" in this context refers to places (regions and their councils) having technical knowledge in asset management for telecoms and capacity to commission the platform and manage asset data inputs (e.g. 'data discovery', 'data ingestion', 'data governance'). This will be assessed by DCMS through competition bids.

² In this context "Demand" refers to places in which Mobile Network Operators (MNO) have expressed immediate interest for network densification.

Milestones	Date
Pilots End	December 2022 ³

Who can apply?

This competition is open to applications from Regional or Local Authorities (Please refer to section 3.2 for definition of eligible bodies that can apply), with DCMS funding available for activity taking place in the UK.

Eligibility

Please note the following eligibility criteria for the grant funding:

- Bids will be from a local or regional lead authority who will be the prime recipient of grant funding and who will be responsible for managing activities and for allocation of grant funding to its own partners.
- Lead regional applicants will be accepted on the basis of existing political/geographic entities (regional authorities). We will also consider applications from a group of multiple Local Authorities that have a contiguous geography, these applicants will be asked to demonstrate a signed collaboration agreement between themselves prior to any claim to DCMS for grant funding for the pilot.

How to apply

Please read the Competition Guidance, complete the Application Form and the Finance Forms provided and submit your documents to the following email address dcia-info@dcms.gov.uk by midday 18th November. You will receive an email acknowledgement of your registration.

Funding

There is **£4M of funding available from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport** in this competition. DCMS will make available grant funding ranging from £400k to £500k to individual pilots.

Delivery Period

Subject to completion of pre-grant set up and DCMS due diligence, pilots will be expected to sign a Grant Funding Agreement in early 2022. They should plan to complete delivery based on their category:

- Pilots should plan to complete delivery within twelve months of project start date. However Subject to individual/specific circumstances we will accept extending the pilot end date to March 2023.

Contact us

If you have any questions or would like more clarification, please contact us on dcia-info@dcms.gov.uk. Your question/s and respective answer/s will be aggregated, anonymised and added to a public Q&A document.

³ Subject to individual/specific circumstances we will accept extending the end date of some pilots to March 2023.

Competition Guidance

1. Programme and policy context

The [Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review](#) (FTIR), published in 2018, highlighted the government's commitment to high quality mobile connectivity where people live, work and travel and express the government's ambition to be a world leader in 5G and to take early advantage of the benefits that 5G will bring. High quality connectivity remains a top priority for the current government.

5G and advanced networks will improve the consumer's mobile experience, deliver faster internet speeds, a more reliable data connection in busy places, and a near-instant connection when opening apps and websites, playing games or connecting to your smart home devices.

The FTIR noted that 5G networks are likely to entail greater deployment of advanced networks to provide extra capacity in specific locations such as city centres, local high streets, factories, and sports and entertainment venues.

Accelerating 5G deployment will assist in realising the Government's aim to reduce the digital divide, and improve connectivity in rural areas. This measure may not change the fact that mobile network operators are likely to prioritise 5G deployment in urban areas, but the quicker that deployment can occur in urban areas, the quicker deployment will move on and reach more rural towns and villages. Improved access to connectivity will bring forward the digitisation of more public services, meaning those in remote areas can access services that they currently are unable to.

The expectation is that tens of thousands of small cells will need to be installed on street furniture (such as street lights, traffic lights, signposts, CCTV columns, benches, bins and bus stops) and on buildings.

In practice there are many challenges to the use of street furniture for this purpose, including poor asset registers. As a result, some Local Authorities are facing confusion and uncertainty and the mobile industry is struggling to acquire sites for 5G small cells and other advanced wireless technologies.

This could delay the economic benefits of 5G, which is estimated to add billions of pounds to the UK economy each year. There are a number of different studies into the estimated impact of 5G on the economy.

These pilots aim to address all of these challenges, through collaboration across multiple public and private sector organisations, with the aim of creating models of working and collaboration that can be rolled out and copied. The expected outcome is accelerated investment in 5G and mobile network densification, bringing benefits to citizens and the economy.

2. Competition outline

2.1 DCIA Competition ambition

The overarching objective of the DCIA competition is to help accelerate the deployment of advanced wireless connectivity services and to understand the benefits and feasibility of using public sector assets (including land, buildings and street furniture) to host multiple technologies.

DCMS plans to run pilot projects to demonstrate the feasibility and viability of Local Authorities using a digital asset management platform for their publicly owned infrastructure assets. The programme aims to work with local and regional authorities through pilot implementation to simplify identification of, access to and use of public sector assets for deployment of digital infrastructure.

By piloting a digital asset management solution, benefits will be felt by mobile network operators and their deployment partners, users of mobile services (business and consumer) and the public sector, who are the primary providers of assets for hosting network equipment.

The programme is part of the Shared Outcomes Fund and will be delivered through the 5G Testbeds and Trials Programme run by DCMS, on behalf of DfT and DCMS.

2.2 Scope

2.2.1 Competition objectives

Pilots applying to this competition are expected to address all objectives:

1. Local or Regional Authority led project teams will work with digital asset management platform providers and wireless infrastructure providers to test the process required to digitise elements of the site acquisition process, as defined in the Test Cases outlined in section 2.2.5 below
2. Pilots will build evidence of whether the use of a digital asset management platform enables more efficient industry access to public sector assets and whether it encourages deployment of infrastructure in the region.
3. The potential commercial models and economic viability of running a digital asset management platform from a local or Regional Authority will be tested, including a clear understanding of business and operational models that recognise constraints in affordability for both public sector asset owners and telecommunication infrastructure providers.
4. Increase the development of Regional Authority and Local Authority expertise and reach an understanding of what resource is required to expedite telecommunications infrastructure deployment. This should include an assessment of the resources required internally to support the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure through this pilot including asset data discovery and management, whether provided in-house or in-sourced from a rich ecosystem of professional service providers (preferably from but not exclusive to local SMEs).
5. Demonstrate the application of a digital asset management mapping platform across a diverse range of geographies (urban, suburban, rural) and socio-economic profiles (industrial, agricultural, leisure, business or residential etc).
6. Demonstrate that the platform has been tested with multiple asset types (e.g. Local Authority owned land, buildings and streetlights).

2.2.2 Functional Priorities

We believe this means priority in competition proposals should be given to

- Enabling the application of a digital asset mapping platform across regions and Local Authorities with varying levels of capability in asset management specific to development of advanced telecommunications infrastructure.
- Adoption and use of the digital asset management platform by telecommunication infrastructure providers, including most (if not all) of the four major Mobile Network Operators.
- Evidence of sustainable supplier diversity and fair competition for provision of Digital Asset Management Platform solutions, including clear understanding of business and operational models that recognise necessity for “neutral brokerage” and constraints in affordability for both public sector asset owners and telecommunication infrastructure providers.

2.2.4 Pilot Success Criteria:

The success measures of the competition pilots will be measured on the basis of the following measures of using a platform built to the standards specification developed.

Local Authorities

- Effectiveness of interactions with Wireless Network Operators
- Number of sites available vs utilised on the platform
- Asset use request response process time (and cost) reduction
- Intent to permanently adopt and use the platform

Wireless Network Operators

- Effectiveness of interactions with Local Authorities
- Percentage of sites taken up through the platform versus all new sites they have acquired within the pilot region.
- Site identification and acquisition process time (and cost) reduction
- Intent to permanently adopt and use the platform

2.2.5 High Level Test Cases

The broad aim of the pilots is to demonstrate the feasibility and viability of Local Authorities using a digital asset management platform for their publicly owned infrastructure assets, and to simplify identification of, access to, and use of public sector assets for deployment of digital infrastructure. To achieve this aim, DCMS will expect each of the participating regions and their partners to conduct a range of technical and operational test cases for the duration of the pilot.

This section outlines the basic test cases at a high level. Specific details of each test case and how it will be conducted in practice should be defined once pilots are in their mobilisation phase and the work is about to commence. This approach should be agreed jointly by the participating region and DCMS.

The list of the test cases should be seen as a core set required to provide key learnings and evidence. To broaden the learnings we encourage each of the pilots to devise additional test cases to reflect any other aspects of the use of Digital Asset Management Platforms as they are reflected in the local context. As for the core set, any additional test cases should be defined and agreed during the pilot mobilisation phase.

Test Cases

1. Sourcing and management of asset data

- 1.1. Define and confirm relevant asset types and their data attributes

Reflect on the Technical Specification and confirm which detailed asset types will be included in the pilot and exact data attributes for each type; highlight any differences to what is recommended in the Technical Specification with justification for inclusion of additional asset types or data, if any.

- 1.2. Asset data discovery (Local Authorities)
Specific to Local Authorities as the primary asset owners, assess and source existing assets data in terms of format, storage location, rights and ease of access, and data translation required by a selected platform; seek to understand relative speed and effectiveness of this process, including any technical barriers in sourcing of required data.
- 1.3. Asset data discovery (other additional asset owners)
Same as 1.2. above but specific to any other secondary asset owners participating in the pilot, either public sector or commercial organisations. Compare and contrast to 1.2.
- 1.4. Accuracy of asset data
Define the level of accuracy required for each data attribute; measure against this level in practice and identify critical gaps where accuracy is not sufficient to support the operation of the platform (e.g. asset height, location etc).
- 1.5. Additional data sets (contextual data)
Define any optional contextual data sets (e.g. local planning information, fibre backhaul availability, etc.) to be included in the platform to enhance asset data. Test the same for these data sets as in 1.2. and 1.3. above.
- 1.6. Data ingestion into the platform
Working closely with the platform provider, test the transfer of all data sourced in 1.2., 1.3. and 1.5. above into the platform; seek to understand relative speed and effectiveness of this process, including any technical barriers.
- 1.7. Data interactions between the platform and end-user systems
Working closely with the Telecom Infrastructure Providers, characterise required data exporting or data exchange requirements and test application of these through available platform APIs; identify any technical barriers and whether these are detrimental to the value of operating a platform.

2. Alignment of platform functionality with technical specifications

A series of functional tests to understand how closely the platform meets the requirements set out in Technical Specification; analysis of major points of divergence and recommendations of how Technical Specification should be updated and managed following the pilots.

3. Operating model for Digital Asset Management

Design, implement and test the operating model for the platform best suited to the specific regional context of the pilot, supporting a typical telecommunication site acquisition process and its supply chain roles and responsibilities; include a detailed analysis of Local Authority resource requirements and consider if a role of a 'neutral convener' is needed and how it may be established.

4. Impact of the platform on the existing asset/site acquisition process

- 4.1. Map the existing process and measure the time and effort before and after implementation of the platform to determine efficiency gains due to the use of the platform.
- 4.2. Analyse possible process improvements due to the functionality of the platform and implement these; measure efficiency gains compared to 4.1.
- 4.3. Apply a standardised commercial model for access to assets and standardised contracts for their use (for relevant asset types, with a model and contracts either provided by DCMS or developed locally); measure efficiency gains compared to 4.1. and 4.2.
- 4.4. Compare the number and nature of complex interventions (i.e. escalations) in Local Authorities' responses to Telecom Infrastructure Providers' requests before and after implementation of the platform; determine the degree to which 'friction' has been removed from process interactions.

5. Commercial sustainability

Determine the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) based on the commissioning and operation of the platform during the pilot period and assess potential funding options for possible adoption following the completion of the pilot, with consideration given to favourable procurement approaches.

6. Data governance

Carefully consider issues related to data ownership, confidentiality and value as these are affected by the platform; establish data sharing agreements that balance process needs and governance concerns, and test the validity of these agreements in day-to-day operation of the platform.

7. Data and physical asset security

With the assistance from DCMS and other relevant government stakeholders, identify any security weaknesses in the how the data is managed through the process and presented in the platform; devise and test mitigation strategies.

2.2.6 Security Requirements

During the assessment process, alongside the priorities identified, we will carefully consider the security of pilots. We will look for evidence that entrants have a clear understanding of security of the digital asset management platform architecture. Secure by design principles and good practice are required for all pilots, DCMS reserves the right to fail pilots if their security approach is not deemed sufficient by assessors.

Secure by design principles will include some of the security aspects as outlined in the Digital Asset Management Platform and technical specification document.

- The Web-based digital asset management platform conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 where appropriate.
- The digital asset management platform should be fully compliant with OWASP security principles.
- The digital asset management platform should be fully compliant with the National Cyber Security Centre's Cloud Security Guidance.

- The digital asset management platform should enforce 2-factor authentication for User access.

2.2.7 Sustainability

We consider this to include all of the technical, operational and commercial considerations for transitioning Digital Asset Management Platform solutions from pilots to standard practice (“BAU”) for public sector asset owners and telecommunication infrastructure providers.

Specifically we are expecting the pilots to provide evidence of the following:

- **Technical:** Evidenced assessment of how well the solutions available in the market meet the requirements set out in the technical specification co-developed by DCMS and end-user stakeholders. If there are significant gaps, understanding how end-users and solution providers may close these through further platform development. A view of how the technical specification will be managed in the future to reflect evolving needs of end-users.
- **Operational:** Appraisal of options and models for market delivery of asset management and associated services using the Digital Asset Management Platform, including recognition of a need for ‘neutral brokerage’. Understanding of how well the Digital Asset Management Platform user interfaces and APIs align with the business processes of end-users, in this case public sector asset owners and telecommunication infrastructure providers.
- **Commercial:** Assessment of the long-term financial sustainability of the Digital Asset Management Platform, in the context of profit generating solutions that may be offered in the market by the private sector, and set against the expectation that the tool will be self-sustaining without the need for continued government funding. Analysis of where ownership of the Digital Asset Management Platform should sit and the most suitable approaches to public-sector procurement of the tool beyond the pilots.

Based on the broad set of findings described above DCMS may conduct the follow-up stage in overall project delivery, “market transfer”, whereby we will determine the market need and the business case for further government intervention as appropriate.

2.3 Funding

There is up to **£4M** available from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) in this competition.

DCMS will make available grant funding ranging from £400k to £500k for individual pilots. Projects must complete all grant funded activities by 31 March 2023.

Funding will be made available to enable public sector members of the pilot consortium to secure sufficient capabilities and resources to deliver pilot outcomes, specifically to:

- Source a Digital Asset Management Platform solution to be used for duration of the pilot
- Secure sufficient level of asset data discovery and project management capability
- Secure sufficient level of technical and market expertise related to provision of telecommunications wireless network infrastructure
- Allocate Digital Champion and Digital Coordinator roles within each of Local Authority members of the consortium to affect contribution across functional departments as required by the pilot
- Secure adequate project leadership and general management resources, including

consortium partner management, administration of the GFA, benefits realisation, etc.

Telecoms infrastructure provider participants will not be receiving any funding from DCMS through the pilot. Our expectation is that they would provide 'in kind' contributions by way of their resources.

2.3.1 Subsidy Control

Following the end of the transition period on the 31st December 2020, and as of 1st January 2021 the UK must follow its international obligations on subsidy control. This includes commitments arising from the UK's continued membership of the World Trade Organisation's Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, and obligations set out in Chapter 3 of Title XI of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) between the European Union and the United Kingdom.⁴ Applicants are also advised to be aware of the potential relevance of the various non-binding (Joint) Declarations, made by the UK and the EU, which were published on 24th December 2020.⁵

Subsidy Control eligibility

The TCA establishes the principles of the UK's subsidy control arrangements, and DCMS has reflected upon how best to demonstrate its compliance with the principles for the purpose of this competition. DCMS seeks to deliver the DCIA pilot through a "no subsidy" route, falling under the exercise of governmental authority exemption in the TCA, which means that Local Authorities will need to ensure they are meeting the requirements. Applications must use and comply with the approach set out in the competition guidance and confirm that they are working within the Subsidy Control principles.

Before submitting an application for funding to DCMS, you must accept the terms and conditions of the grant. If you are in any doubt, you should seek independent professional advice about your eligibility. Applicants will be required to obtain their own independent subsidy control legal advice and, if requested to do so, commit to sharing that advice with DCMS and its professional advisers.

If an applicant receives a subsidy in breach of the domestic subsidy control arrangements, including the subsidy control provisions of the TCA, that applicant may be required to repay any subsidy received to the value of the gross grant equivalent of the subsidy, plus interest.

Further information on Subsidy Control

The Subsidy Control team at the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has lead responsibility within the UK for coordination and development of policy on subsidy control. BEIS has published guidance for public authorities which can be found on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complying-with-the-uks-international-obligations-on-subsidy-control-guidance-for-public-authorities>

Funding rules

As set out in section 2.3 DCMS will provide grants to Local Authorities. If Local Authorities seek to award grant funding to Telecoms Infrastructure Providers or the Digital Asset Management Platform Provider, DCMS has clarified that funds must be used for experimental development, as described in

⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/948119/EU-UK_Trade_and_Cooperation_Agreement_24.12.2020.pdf

⁵https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/948105/EU-UK_Declarations_24.12.2020.pdf

the “Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: General Guidance for Grant Applicants” document.

Grant recipients will be required to confirm that the costs they wish to claim for are capitalised and/or treated as capital expenditure in line with UK GAAP.

2.3.2 Grant Funding Agreement

Successful pilots should be prepared to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) within 6 weeks of notification of our intention to grant funding.

Projects must declare they have understood and accepted the terms of the grant agreement when submitting their application. The terms and conditions set out in the GFA are non-negotiable and are available on the gov.uk competition website. We recommend that you review this with your legal advisors and raise any queries you may have before submitting your application

2.3.3 Eligible cost and funding allocations

Eligible costs are costs that you incur in carrying out your pilot for which grant funding may be claimed - including the costs of your labour, overheads, materials, subcontracts and T&S among others. These eligible costs are intended to cover all activities directly associated with carrying out your project. Please see the 5G Testbeds and Trials - Eligible Project Costs Guidance document for full details and explanation. Sample evidence of these costs being incurred will be required as part of the grant claims process.

The applicant(s) selected at the end of this competition will need to follow the process and criteria that will be set out in a DCMS grant funding agreement to access funding (a template for which is available on the competition webpage) for individual activities.

Within your proposal, there must be a lead partner⁶ who will be the accountable body and recipient of any DCMS grant awarded. They will also be responsible for managing the consortium and for any distribution of DCMS funds to consortium partners, as set out in the consortium’s collaboration agreement. Please note that Grant Funding is paid quarterly and in arrears.

The applicant(s) selected at the end of this competition will need to follow the process and criteria that will be set out in a DCMS grant funding agreement to access funding (a template for which is available here) for individual activities.

The DCIA competition pilots should complete all DCMS funded activities by 31 March 2023, unless an extension is agreed with the DCMS. Non-DCMS funded activities could continue beyond this date.

DCMS funding available under the funding agreement will need to be:

- Complemented with additional financial and non-financial contributions by the private sector partner(s) and/or other pilot participants (including public sector participants) as agreed with the 5GTT Programme during the development of the project.
- Compliant with Subsidy Control rules.

⁶ Please refer to section 3.2 for definition of eligible bodies that can apply

Please read the “5G Testbeds and Trials - General Guidance for Grant Applicants” document for more information on the different categories of funding and the rules around our subsidy control framework.

3. Eligibility criteria

Regional and Local Authorities must demonstrate clearly in their application how they meet **all** the eligibility criteria set out in this section.

3.1 Eligible applicants

This competition is open to applications from regional or Local Authorities from across the UK. Specific eligibility criteria for the competition are below:

Eligibility Criteria

Please note the following eligibility criteria for the grant funding:

- Bids will preferably be from a regional or Local Authority (Please refer to section 3.2 for definition of eligible bodies that can apply) acting as the pilot lead who will be the prime recipient of grant funding and who will be responsible for managing a consortium’s activities and for allocation of grant funding to other consortium members.
- Lead regional applicants will be accepted on the basis of existing political/geographic entities (regional authorities). We will also consider applications from a group of multiple Local Authorities that have a contiguous geography, these applicants will be asked to demonstrate a signed collaboration agreement between themselves prior to any claim to DCMS for grant funding for the project.

All awards will be made subject to successful due diligence checks.

3.2 Bids and partners

We are open to receiving proposals led by any local or Regional Authority, providing that they can meet the following criteria:

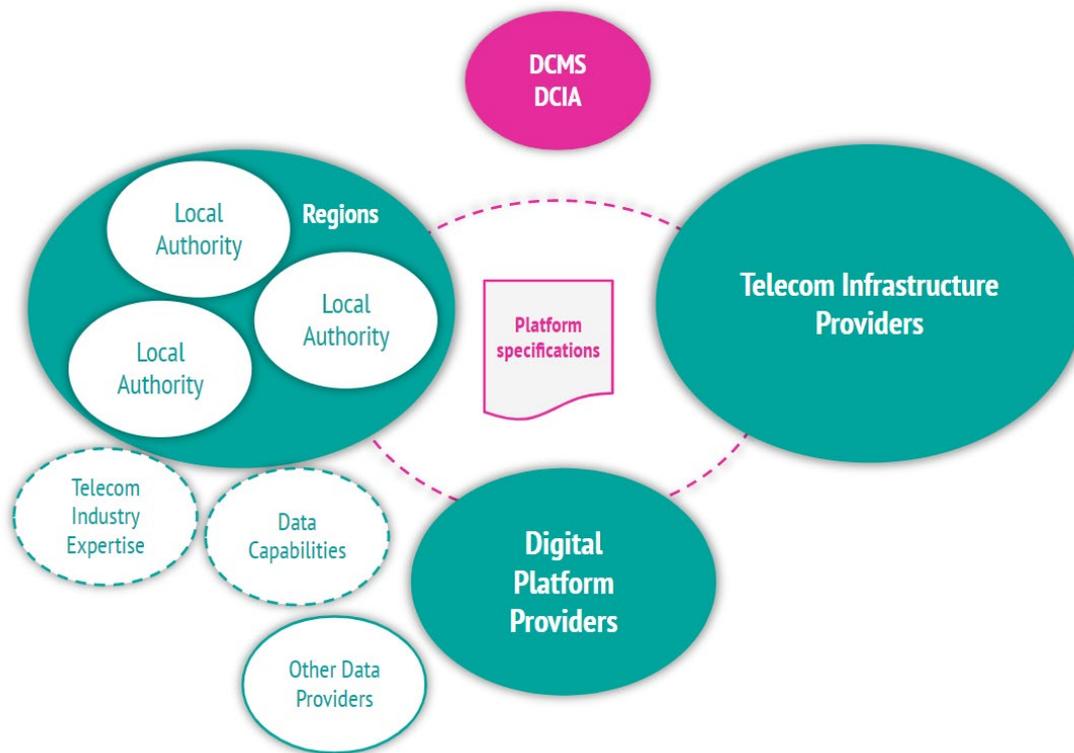
- The proposal must represent a region through a recognised administrative or governance structure such as Combined Authority, City/Growth Deal, Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ) or an equivalent.
- The proposal must contain asset-owning local authorities within the region as its core members. Regions with diverse geospatial and socio-economic characteristics (e.g. urban, suburban, rural, industrial, agricultural, visitor economy, etc.) will be preferred.
- There must be a lead authority that demonstrates that it can act as the accountable body, has the capability, and is able to manage the delivery of the project across the proposal with clear project governance and leadership.
- The proposal shows clear evidence of telecommunications industry partnership, specifically a committed participation of a Mobile Network Operator or an equivalent company representing asset demand end-users in the proposal.
- Participation of several other telecommunications infrastructure providers (such as neutral host or small cell network providers, tower companies, IoT connectivity service providers,

etc.) in the proposal (in addition to a Mobile Network Operator) is encouraged and preferred though not mandatory.

- Lead authorities are expected to demonstrate the following capabilities and products. This can be provided through an appropriate existing partnership or demonstrated through a suitable plan to procure/grant a partner in the required timeframes:
 - Availability of a Digital Asset Management Platform solution (sometimes also referred to as an Asset Register, Asset Map, or Asset Marketplace) to be utilised for the duration of the pilot, which adheres to technical specifications co-developed by DCMS and key stakeholders, at a TRL level viable to deliver pilot outcomes.
 - A degree of capability and resources in asset data discovery and management that is sufficient to deliver pilot outcomes; this capability and resource may be available in-house or sourced in from a partner organisation specialising in data discovery and data management in the public realm.
 - Suitable levels of technical and market expertise in the field of telecommunication infrastructure, either already available in-house or sourced in from private sector companies such as telecommunication industry consultancies.
 - It is not mandatory for bidders to include asset owner organisations and their asset data other than Local Authorities, however those that do will have an advantage. Some examples of other asset owning organisations are other public infrastructure operators (rail, road, utilities), NHS, large public estates, commercial landlords, private sector data aggregators and brokers, and many others.
- The bidders should demonstrate that they can meet the funding requirements as outlined in the “Subsidy Control” section above.
- The proposal demonstrates committed support from individuals with decision-making and budgetary responsibility from each member organisation.
- While we do not require small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) involvement in pilots, we do strongly encourage bidders to consider their involvement and will take this into account when considering our portfolio.

An indication of an ideal pilot composition considering the criteria above can be found in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Pilot composition



3.3 Roles

You should specify the following roles in your proposal, as applicable:

Organisation Role	Notes:
Project Lead	For all projects we expect that this will be Regional or Local Authorities (Please refer to section 3.2 for definition of eligible bodies that can apply) The proposal should make it clear why the project lead is the most appropriate organisation to lead the project.
Project Partner	These are any other organisations not receiving grant funding from DCMS or any other public sector source and which will undertake important activities during project delivery. These organisations may be involved in the project governance as appropriate.
Project Participants	These are any other organisations not receiving grant funding from DCMS or any other public sector source. These organisations may be identified at the proposal stage, or could be added to the project at a later date.
Key Project Suppliers	These are known key suppliers who are providing components or services that the project will rely on. They will not be involved in project governance and will not sign a Project Participation Agreement.

4 Further General Guidelines

4.1 Benefits monitoring

We expect bidding projects to focus particularly on the measurable benefits that could arise from their work, rather than just running demonstrations. In bids we expect to see quantitative estimates of these benefits, how they will be measured and evidenced throughout and after the pilots.

Once started, pilots will be required to agree benefits metrics with DCMS, focusing on the outcomes of the pilot, and monitor and report these to the Department.

A further key area for reporting will be lessons learnt and the knowledge dissemination activities undertaken by the project. Pilot reporting will be quarterly and will form part of the deliverables that the pilot is expected to achieve in order to access grant funding. It is important to note that the department expects the pilot to appoint someone that is responsible for the benefits monitoring and reporting and allocate specific time to undertake this work.

In addition, pilot partners will be expected to participate in occasional programme evaluation activities, e.g. surveys and interviews of grant recipients, which will be conducted by DCMS or a third party acting on its behalf to assess the outcomes of the 5GTT Programme and its constituent projects. Evaluation activities are expected to be undertaken both during and after the lifetime of the project

4.2 Collaboration

Pilots are expected to be carried out collaboratively with their partners. Where there is opportunity for mutually beneficial inter-working with other publicly funded projects, participation through UK5G, and other channels and the wider ecosystem, on topics of shared interest we expect pilots to take advantage. The aim is that by combining the efforts and knowledge base, producing tangible and useful outputs that can be shared and demonstrated, the collaboration activities will help to foster the ecosystem. DCMS will monitor collaboration, facilitate partnerships and support these efforts where relevant, respecting commercial confidentiality where appropriate.

All Pilot Leads, Participants and Partners in selected projects must sign up to the **5G Testbeds and Trials - Programme Participation Agreement** with DCMS as part of the application process. This outlines how members of the UK DCIA ecosystem should collaborate, share knowledge and join-up through the DCIA Project Participation Principles.

4.3 Dissemination

Communicating the findings and stories from projects will be a key responsibility of the lead Regional or Local Authorities that receive DCMS funding. The dissemination of shared learning throughout the DCIA ecosystem is an integral part of the project(s) and will be considered throughout the application process.

Working with DCMS, DfT and other organisations, projects will be expected to plan, support and deliver communications activities to ensure the benefits of the project(s) are demonstrated and shared as widely as possible with the telecoms ecosystem. Such activities should lead to the production of tangible outputs such as published reports, events and workshops.

4.4 Proposal Forming Support

DCMS is working with UK5G to provide the following activity, to support the competition launch and proposal formation:

- Marketing activity, to make as many relevant organisations as possible aware of the DCIA competition:
 - Competition guidance will be posted prominently on UK5G website
 - PR and Comms campaign will gather momentum during September 2021
 - Competition launch announcement & briefing event
 - Management of attendee registration and contact process
- The creation of consortia will be supported through match-making activity, including:
 - Pre-screened pitching activity to be coordinated, to encourage:
 - Regions to secure participation with an MNO
 - Regions to select a platform provider (or a shortlist based on the matchmaking event or existing relationships/knowledge)
 - Regions to recruit any other external partners or resources that they need, based on the matchmaking event or existing relationships/knowledge.
 - Online introductions, coordinated by KTN via a collaboration page.

5. Competition process

5.1 Dates and deadlines

For this competition, the application window is 10 weeks and the timeline is:

- Competition opens: 9th Sept 2021
- Competition closes: 18th Nov 2021
- Shortlist applicants notified: Dec 2021
- Successful applicants notified: Dec 2021
- Pilots Start: Jan 2022

The competition process will follow these steps:

- The project lead will submit applications with detailed financial plans that cover the full funding period.
- Submitted applications will be reviewed to make sure that they are eligible for the competition.
- All applications will undergo the triage process outlined above.
- Only applications that meet the eligibility requirements of the competition will be assessed.
- The lead applicants will be notified of the funding decision for their project.
- DCMS may elect to identify reserve applicants, in case the preferred applicant(s) is/are unable to complete a funding agreement with DCMS on a timely basis.
- A grant funding agreement will be issued to successful applicants.
- All eligible and in scope applications will receive assessor feedback.

5.2 Project Development Review

A Project Development Review at key milestones for each project will require lead authorities to submit updated proposals for the remaining funding period.

The purpose of the Project Development Review is to:

- Help ensure projects are delivering high quality outcomes by providing an opportunity for both the projects and DCMS to reconsider approaches and strategies and potentially make adjustments.
- Provide an opportunity to reassess the funding envelope for the project.
- Help ensure projects are aligned across the portfolio and working in collaboration, where appropriate, to maximise value for money and achieve common aims.

At the Project Development Review, updated plans will be reviewed for approval by DCMS against the projects' stated aims and those of the competition. The projects may use this opportunity to refine their approach or adjust the project's direction. The purpose of this Project Development Review point is to ensure projects are continuing to deliver suitable and value for money outcomes based on the developing digital connectivity landscape.

5.3 How to apply:

You must submit your documents to dcia-info@dcms.gov.uk by **midday on 18th November 2021**. You will receive an email acknowledgement of your registration.

The lead partner must submit:

- Your application form (mandatory) with:
 - Project Finance Forms for every organisation (including the lead organisation) in the project (mandatory), this should cover the full grant term.
 - Finance Summary Form for manufacturing proposals, covering the full grant term.
 - Project appendices as pdf documents, labelled correctly.

6 How to apply

6.1 What to complete

The following documents need to be completed as part of your application:

1. **Application Form** (one per project, plus any allowed appendices) - see Application and Assessment section below for further details of the application
2. **Project Finance Form** (one per applicant covering all proposed costs) - this document is used to understand how you have estimated your project costs - see **Eligible Project Costs Guidance** for further guidance.
3. **Programme Participation Agreement** (one per applicant) - which is provided for information and will need to be completed upon award

6.2 How to submit your application

You must submit your documents to the following email address: dcia-info@dcms.gov.uk
You will receive an email acknowledgement of your registration.

Applications for submission must be submitted by midday 18th November 2021

We strongly advise submitting well in advance of the deadline (i.e. days before) as there is always a risk that IT issues prevent you submitting promptly (e.g. issues sending large files).

6.3 Application format

You can only use the application form and templates provided. They contain specific guidance on information you must provide.

The application form and templates contain specific fields. It is important that you complete each field and submit a fully completed form. Incomplete forms may be considered ineligible and not sent for assessment. DCMS reserves the right to ask for additional clarifications and correction following the submission deadline.

The application form and templates must not be altered, converted or submitted as a different file type.

The submission must conform to the maximum length specifications stated in the “Competition questions” section below. Information in excess of this will be disregarded. Hyperlinks referencing further information may be included to inform more detailed understanding post-selection, but will be disregarded during the assessment of applications.

Additional information submitted at the request of the 5GTT Programme must meet any timing, format and length requirements we may specify at the time.

7 Application and assessment

7.1 Application structure

The structure for applications is as follows:

Applicant information (not assessed)

- Name of application lead organisation
- Contact details for application lead organisation
- Name(s) of additional organisation(s) forming part of this application
- Contact details for additional organisations
- Public description of the pilot
- Main technical or process categories of the project (refer to section 2.2, if other please specify)

Evaluated Questions

Responses will be evaluated using the general weighting scheme set out in the following table. Supporting questions, detailed marking and associated reasoning are set out in subsequent sections.

Section	Weighting	Ideal response
A. Pilot description and objectives	25%	Please provide a clear description of your approach to meet the pilot objectives. The description should outline the nature of assets which plan to be mapped and why; detail the expertise available to deliver this and summarise the expected benefits of the pilot's outcomes. The description should also outline pilot partners and their roles, along with key members and responsibilities.
B. Digital Asset Management Platform Provision	20%	Please provide a clear description of your approach to providing a suitable digital mapping platform solution, and how it meets the technical specifications. This will include details of the proposed Platform, capabilities and additional relevant information.
C. Outcomes	15%	Provide a clear description of project outcomes and a reasoned and credible comparison of the benefits and costs of the project. Outline how your successful pilot will inform DCMS to support deployment of viable Digital Asset Management Platform solutions at national scale sustained without further government funding as well as the additional Social Value your project will create.
D. Project delivery	20%	Evidence that the project plan and work package tasks have been thought through and that there is a robust approach to controlling the project in flight that is proportionate to the funding levels sought.
E. Financial	20%	A clear overview and explanation of the costs of the programme and confidence that financial management and control of the project will deliver good value for money.

In evaluating your responses we value brevity and the maximum word limit is fixed, but please give sufficient evidence to support your bid. Tables will not be included in this word limit but should be only used where necessary. Additional diagrams should not be provided unless requested. Content beyond the word limits will be ignored.

Your response should provide sufficient evidence to support any assertions made and state any underlying principles or assumptions. You should not include commercial sales messages about products or services being proposed.

Pilot description and objectives

A Pilot description and objectives (25%)

Please provide a clear description of your approach to meet the pilot objectives. The description should outline the nature of assets which plan to be mapped and why, detail the expertise available to deliver this and summarise the expected benefits of the pilot's outcomes. The description should also outline the consortia and their roles, along with key members and responsibilities.

A good response to this section will provide a clear and compelling description and understanding of the nature, scale and value of the proposed pilot, and why the proposed partners are best placed to deliver it. The priority is to demonstrate how you will meet the desired pilot objectives however, if there are additional relevant outcomes please outline them in the following **three questions**.

1. Describe how you will deliver against the competitions's strategic aims and objectives, highlighting the region specific challenges you plan to address. - 10% - 750 words (Triage Question)

- Describe your main motivation for the pilot and why you are appropriate to deliver on the challenges the pilot will address.
- Provide any relevant context which demonstrates you are well suited to deliver the pilot objectives. This includes outlining any relevant experience (for example demonstrating knowledge of demand or experience of issues in making publicly available assets available to operators in the region)
- State, in simple terms, what you will deliver in your project
- Explain how this pilot will deliver a positive difference to your region.

2. Describe the partners as part of your proposal and the roles within the pilot? - 5% - 450 words (Triage Question)

- Partners are described in the eligibility criteria in the Competition Guidance document. Additional partners are considered subcontractors. There must be a lead authority that demonstrates that it can act as the accountable body, has the capability, and is able to manage grant finances and the delivery of the project across the consortium with clear project governance and leadership.

3. Describe the capability and resources the proposal has to successfully deliver pilot outcomes; 10% - 750 words (Triage Question)

- Include details of assets, technical and market expertise in the field of telecommunication infrastructure such as:
 - Details of the available assets owned by Local Authorities including the number and nature of these assets, details of current mapping of existing assets and what data is currently held on such assets.
 - Demonstrating capability and resources in asset data discovery and project management that is sufficient to deliver pilot outcomes
 - Providing evidence of telecommunications industry partnership, specifically a committed participation of a Mobile Network Operator or an equivalent company representing asset demand end-users in the proposal.
 - Suitable levels of technical and market expertise in the field of telecommunication infrastructure, either already available in-house or sourced in from private sector companies such as telecommunication industry consultancies.

B. Digital Asset Management Platform Provision (20%)

Please provide a clear description of your approach to providing a suitable digital asset management platform solution which meets the objectives of the competition. This will include details of the proposed Platform, capabilities and additional relevant information.

Availability of a Digital Asset Management Platform solution (sometimes also referred to as an Asset Register, Asset Map, or Asset Marketplace) to be utilised for the duration of the pilot, which adheres to technical specifications co-developed by DCMS and key stakeholders, at a TRL level viable to deliver pilot outcomes. The platform can be provided by an external solution provider as a member of a consortium, or developed 'in-house' by authorities within the consortium. This will be addressed in the following **one question**.

1. Describe, in technical terms, details of the ‘Digital Asset Management Platform’ that will be used as part of the project and how it will meet requirements as set out in technical specification co-developed by DCMS and all end-user stakeholders - 20% - 750 words

- How will the platform meet the needs of stakeholders, which may reference the level of conformance with the Recommended Functional Requirements for a Solution
- Detail the application and data architectures and the proposed User Interface designs or wireframes (please add any additional relevant information in an appendix)
- Outline details of application programming interfaces (API) and other data import/export mechanisms. (please add any additional relevant information in an appendix)
- Who will own the Intellectual Property Rights for the Platform, i.e., will the development partner have sole ownership of the source code?
- Who is responsible for the management and maintenance of the deployed Platform?
- Who will own the data uploaded into the Platform?
- Who will be responsible for compliance issues, such as GDPR requests, DPIAs, etc.?
- How will users be trained to use the platform and who will be responsible for this?
- In the event that the Supplier is not hosting the Platform, has a reasonable estimate been provided of the technical requirements for the Platform Owner or a third party to host the platform?

C Outcomes, benefits and measurability (15%)

Throughout the life cycle of the pilot you will be asked to report on the measurable benefits and outcomes (as outlined in section 4). In addition you will be expected to report on lessons learned as well supporting knowledge dissemination. Please provide your approach to these outcomes.

It should address the following **two questions**:

1. Please describe what benefits and outcomes participation in this pilot would bring to your region, how this will be reflected in the core test cases that you will deliver as outlined in section 2.2.5 of the “Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: Application Guidance”, and whether you propose to conduct additional test cases specific to your local context. - 10% - 400 words

2. Please outline your approach to measuring the benefits and outcomes as you have described them in the previous question above. - 5% - 300 words

D Project Delivery (20%)

Please provide a detailed plan for the delivery of the pilot. A good response will provide evidence that the pilot proposal is credible and that there is a robust approach to controlling the pilot that is proportionate to the funding levels sought.

It should address the following **three questions**.

1. Provide a project plan: - 10% - 1000 word limit

- Describe how the pilot will be delivered. Specifically your plan to execute test cases (see appendix)
- Outline key activities, including purpose and objectives of these activities.
- Describe your mobilisation plan (from grant agreement to starting delivery).
- Highlight key decision points.
- Identify milestones, including grant payment milestones.
- Gantt Chart (required) and other supporting materials can be provided as an annex.

2. How will the pilot be governed and decisions be made? - 5% - 600 word limit

- Describe your proposed project management processes and governance structures
- Identify the participant(s) who will be responsible for the management and operation of the pilot and why they have the right skills and capabilities to deliver this.
- Describe how your consortium will deliver this pilot. How will the organisations achieve more working together than if they were working individually?
- Explain why the project lead is best placed to undertake this role.
- Describe which legal entities will own any pilot management outputs which are paid for by grant funding.
- Describe the details of any external parties, including sub-contractors, who you will need to work with to successfully carry out the pilot.
- Outline who will be responsible for compliance issues, such as GDPR requests, DPIAs, etc.
- Outline details of any collaboration agreements or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between partners.

3. Describe the most significant risks to the successful delivery of the pilot and how they will be managed (5%) - 600 word limit

- Identify the main risks and uncertainties of the pilot and provide a risk analysis for the pilot content and approach, with a ranking of the risks and mitigations. Include any cost, timing, technical, commercial, managerial and environmental risks as well as other uncertainties (for example ethical issues, device/service availability issues) associated with the project.
- Identify any internal and external dependencies, support or engagement that is required. Indicate what is agreed at the time of submission, and what is still to be agreed, for example any legal agreements or consents that need to be put in place to enable the works to be undertaken.
- Identify any risks associated with the ongoing operation of the Mapping Platform beyond the Pilot Project

E Financial (20%)

Please explain the financial and value for money approach of the project.

A good response to this section will provide a clear overview and explanation of the costs of the programme and confidence in financial management and control of the project.

It should address the following **two questions**.

1. Identify the major cost components and explain how these represent value for money - 10% - 600 word limit

- Provide a narrative description summarising what each pilot participant will be delivering and the costs associated.
- Describe the contributions in kind from each pilot participant (more detail in eligible project costs guidance).
- Provide a cost breakdown of forecast expenditure on the project. Explain how the costs have been calculated.
- Describe any subcontractor costs and why they are critical to the pilot.
- Provide an appendix separately identifying the following:
 - The estimated project cost for each work package. Make clear the level of contribution from each project participant and the level of funding involved.
 - The spend profile by month, linking it to milestones and deliverables as needed. This should be fully consistent with the dates you have specified in the project plan.
 - Specific to the Platform, what is the breakdown (or at least reasonable estimation) of ongoing operating costs, including hosting charges, additional development rates and technical support?

- In the event that the platform provider is not hosting the Platform, provide a reasonable estimate of the technical requirements for a third party to host the platform?

2. Explain how you will ensure value for money through your sourcing approach - 10% - 400 word limit

- Explain your sourcing approach for the requirements outlined in 2.3 Funding section (ie: a Digital Asset Management Platform solution, sufficient level of asset data discovery etc)
- Confirm that the grant amount requested includes any irrecoverable VAT, all fees and charges, and appropriate allowance has been made for any price inflation during the pilot period.

Note: As part of assessment of Section E, Assessors need to be confident the pilot is good value and can be delivered to the stated cost. They will consider:

- The response to these questions and the supporting financial information provided.
- The suitability of the proposed costs - costs considered excessive will be a cause for serious concern.
- The total amount of grant funding requested from DCMS.
- Any investment from regional and Local Authorities as part of the proposal.

7.2 Supplementary Information

Information provided here will be used to aid understanding of the (above) assessed responses.

Ref	Question/Request	Bidder Response
1	Please complete the finance summary table	Complete the table in the Application Form
2	Please confirm that your consortium has reviewed and understands the Subsidy Control principles under which you intend to receive grant funding, and that your application complies with said rules	Please state: 'Yes' or 'No' and which regime you intend to use
3	I confirm that the project has obtained a legal opinion and this bid would constitute allowable subsidy under the regime you intend to use. [Please note successful applicants will be required to submit their written legal advice to DCMS on request]	Please state: 'Yes' or 'No', If No, when would this be expected to occur?
4	Has the financial contribution of each partner to the project been signed-off at an appropriate level within their organisation?	[For each organisation please state: 'Yes' or 'No' If No, when would this be expected to occur?]
7	Please provide the addresses of the key locations in the project?	Location & address [Insert location name and address] <input type="text"/>
8	Please confirm that the grant amount requested from DCMS includes any irrecoverable VAT, all fees and charges, and appropriate allowance has been made for any price inflation during the project	[Enter 'Confirmed']

Ref	Question/Request	Bidder Response
	period.	
9	Please confirm that if you are successful in this competition, the Project Lead will accept the terms and conditions in the draft grant funding agreement provided? We expect projects to sign after notification of success and reserve the right to rescind offers of funding if delayed	[Enter 'Confirmed']
10	Please confirm whether partners have provided a letter of support or commitment to the project? Please submit a copy of such letters in PDF format.	[Enter 'Confirmed' and partner name]

7.3 Assessment

1 - Sift

Initial eligibility checks will be undertaken on all applications against the scope, funding and eligibility requirements in the application guidance. If an application passes the sift it will progress to evaluation. If an application does not pass the sift, we will notify the lead partner with an explanation as to why.

2 - Shortlisting

All applications passing the sift will be evaluated and moderated beginning with a triaging process in which they will be assessed based on one question before a full assessment on the application will be conducted in which they must reach a minimum threshold for evaluation to proceed. Successful applications will then be scored against the scoring scale and any pass/fail criteria and then ranked based on total score.

3 - Outcome and feedback

The result of the shortlisting will be shared with all evaluated applications. Feedback will be provided to all applications that have been fully evaluated once the competition has closed. It is the responsibility of the lead to communicate the feedback with the rest of the consortium, if applicable. No additional feedback can be provided.

4 - Post-shortlist

Shortlisted applications will be ranked in descending order, based on total score. The highest ranked application(s) will be selected as preferred applicants. This will be done in accordance with the above and taking into account a portfolio approach to ensure that there is an appropriate balance of pilots which support the competition and policy objectives as set out in the guidance.

The lead partners will be notified of the selection decision, at this point projects should be prepared to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) within 4 weeks of notification of our intention to grant funding.

Following the assessment, we will carry out a period of due diligence to validate and revise where appropriate the project scope, delivery plan and funding arrangements prior to the award of a grant. This will include both financial and reputational checks.

7.4 Scoring

Individual responses to each question will be scored in line with the following scheme. The assessors will score your answers to these questions. Each question will be given a score 0-10:

- 0-1 – Serious concerns: for example, does not meet requirements, and/or raises serious concerns.
- 2-3 – Some concerns: for example, meets some requirements but with gaps and/or some concerns.
- 4-5 – Adequate confidence: for example, meets most/all requirements, but lacks sufficient detail in some areas.
- 6-7 – Good confidence: for example, meets most/all requirements and provides a response that demonstrates a good understanding of the requirements.
- 8-9 – Very good confidence: for example, meets all requirements and provides a detailed response that also exceeds expectations in some areas and/or demonstrates a strong understanding of the requirements.
- 10 - Outstandingly good confidence: for example, meets all requirements and exceptional detail that exceeds expectations in many areas and demonstrates excellent understanding of the requirements.

Scores for each question will be weighted by the amount indicated against each question. Your application's total score will be the sum of the weighted scores.

7.5 Quality threshold

Following evaluation of the applications and moderation of scores, any application with an unweighted score of 1 or below (serious concerns) against any individual competition question, including where an error has been made by the applicant, will not be considered further for shortlisting (Step One).

All remaining applications with an average evaluation score against all competition questions (i.e. the weighted score across all competition questions) of 4 and above will be considered for shortlisting (Step 2).

DCMS also reserves the right to consider applications for shortlisting that do not meet the threshold above in the following cases:

- If an application fails to meet the threshold in Step 2 by a narrow margin as a result of the range of scoring by individual assessors being of significant variance from the average score for one or more competition questions for that application ("an outlier"). The application may be considered for shortlisting following a review of the outlier assessor's comments and approach if the outlier score may reasonably be eliminated and the average assessment score that is recalculated falls within the threshold above.
- If there is a very low volume of applications meeting Step 2 in respect of grant funding available, DCMS may lower the threshold that applies to Step 2 for the consideration of shortlisting. This will be on the grounds that DCMS will not want grant funding to be unallocated if there is a realistic prospect of consortia being able to improve their assessment score to a satisfactory level.
- If there is a significantly higher volume of applications meeting the thresholds in respect of grant funding available, DCMS may raise the threshold that applies to Step 2 for the consideration of shortlisting. This will be on the grounds that DCMS will not want consortia with lower assessment scores to invest time and effort in preparing for the interview stage if there is a very limited prospect of them being successful.

8 Additional Information

8.1 Additional Documents

The following additional documents are available on the DCIA website www.gov.uk/guidance/digital-connectivity-infrastructure-accelerator-dcia

- **“Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: Application form”** - which contains the form used by applicants to apply for the DCIA competition
- **“Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: Project finance form”** - which contains a spreadsheet that allows applicants for the DCIA competition to estimate their project costs
- **“Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: Participation Agreement”** - which contains a signatory agreement for applicants wishing to participate in the DCIA pilot
- **“Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: General Guidance for Grant Applicants”** - which contains general information relating to this competition and the processes DCMS will use to deliver it, including: funding rules guidance, information on the different categories of funding and the rules around our subsidy control framework
- **“Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: Eligible Project Costs Guidance”** - which contains detailed information on which project costs are eligible for funding
- **“Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: Template Grant Funding Agreement”** - which demonstrates the process and criteria to access funding for individual activities
- **“Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Pilot: Technical Specification”** - which contains a detailed description of the technical aspects of the proposed Digital Asset Management Platform.

8.2 Notices

This document is issued in text format to organisations wishing to make an application to 5G Create. Should you require access to this document in another format (e.g. Braille, large font or audio) please contact us at dcia-info@dcms.gov.uk

All applicants are solely responsible for all their costs and expenses incurred in connection with this selection process at all stages. Under no circumstances will DCMS be liable for any costs or expenses borne by or on behalf of the applicant or any party associated with this selection process.

We reserve the right to cancel the competition at any point. We will accept no liability for any losses caused by any cancellation of this competition nor any decision not to award grant funding as a result of the competition.

At any time prior to the deadline for receipt of proposals, we reserve the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of the competition material at any time during the competition. Any such amendments, additions, or removals will be notified identified in the documentation on the competition webpage.

Answers must be in English. Bidders should note that where any supplementary documents are not published in English, certified translations into English must be provided with the proposal (if applicable).

Proposals should remain valid for a period of 120 days from the competition closing date. A proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

Applicants must not inform anyone outside of their proposed consortium (even approximately) what their total proposal costs are, or will be. Furthermore, bidders must not try to obtain any information about anyone else's proposal or potential proposal.

We reserve the right to discuss, for the purpose of clarification, any aspect of a proposal with the relevant bidder prior to the award of grant funding.

We reserve the right to undertake a detailed financial and technical appraisal of each bidder and their proposal and for this process to continue up to the award of any grant funding. Any such appraisal will be conducted in line with government policy at the time of assessment. Further appraisal may continue if required through the duration of the grant funding period.

No representation, warranty or undertaking, express or implied, is or will be given by DCMS or any of its agents or advisers with respect to the information contained in the competition material, including with respect to its accuracy, adequacy or completeness.

Information provided in response to this document, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR⁷.

If you would want the information that you provide to be treated confidentially, please be aware that, in accordance with the FOIA, public sector organisations are required to comply with a statutory code of practice which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you wish that information to be treated confidentially. If we receive a request for disclosure of that information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances.

DCMS will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and the GDPR and, in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport www.gov.uk/dcms

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) OJ L 119/1, 4.5.2016, as retained in UK law by virtue of section 3 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 and as amended by Schedule 1 to the Data Protection, Privacy and Electronic Communications (Amendments etc) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/419)."