

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1. What are the market opportunities?

Range services are an essential enabler of launch operations around the world, with several different commercial providers in the US alone. As the UK launch market develops, this presents a new opportunity for UK or foreign businesses. Range services could potentially address a market underpinning multiple UK spaceports and launch services.

In terms of the wider market, the global space community forecasts significant growth in the markets for launching small satellites and offering sub-orbital spaceflight. Launching small satellites alone could be worth £25bn globally over the next 20 years. A number of major market international consultancies and surveys (such as Frost & Sullivan, EuroConsult and Spaceworks) pointed towards significant expected market growth. We have also commissioned several industrial research studies to examine these growth opportunities and check our expectations.

Q2. Why provide grant funding?

The market is not yet mature and we are trying to stimulate and enable commercial opportunities in particular. Grant funding might help enterprises work together to develop business models and UK-centric approaches they would not have capacity to examine without government support. In order to meet our target to begin commercial spaceflight operations in the early 2020s, we believe firms need to start considering their approaches now.

Q3. Which potential spaceports or launch companies should we be working with?

Applicants do not have to work with any specific spaceport or launch company, although the eventual range services offered are expected to be developed in collaboration with UK spaceports and launch vehicle operators. A number of UK spaceports and launch services are under development and we encourage applicants to consider their potential requirements.

Q4. Is the intention to create a single, national range control provider?

No. The Government's intent is to enable industry to provide range services solutions to meet the requirements of the UK spaceflight sector, which could support multiple spaceports and launch vehicle operators.

Q5. Will this influence who receives a licence to launch from the UK?

No. An application for a range control licence is entirely separate to this call. Being selected for grant funding or participating in this call will not influence licensing decisions, which will be based on clear and transparent requirements. Our priority for licensing is to make sure that any spaceflight from the UK is safe.

Q6. What happens if I don't submit a proposal?

If you do not submit a proposal, then you will not be considered for grant funding under this call. However, this does not mean that you cannot apply for a licence to be a range control provider or work in partnership with a spaceport or operator to provide those services.

The UK Government will still work with any range service provider that doesn't apply for, or receive, grant funding from this call. We will provide ongoing advice, networking and other support opportunities to all organisations who are interested in establishing spaceflight services in the UK.

Q7. I would like to enter a proposal that considers using some of the UK government's own capabilities or equipment (such as radars). Would this proposal be considered?

No. At this time we only intend to consider proposals that wish to examine providing range services on a purely commercial basis. The use of government furnished equipment, such as radars, would mean the proposal is not entirely commercial.

Q8. How do I show that my proposal aligns with the Spaceflight Programme?

The Announcement of Opportunity includes information about the Spaceflight Programme, and Annex A, Application Guidance, provides specific guidelines for preparing an application.

Q9. Is this a UK-only Announcement of Opportunity?

No, it is open to all companies that are registered or incorporated in a country that is a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime, although we expect proposals to outline how they intend to realise benefits in the UK.

All proposals must be submitted in English, and with any financial data in pounds sterling (£) and all events, meetings etc. throughout the process will take place in the UK or via video-link or telephone conference.

Q10. How many proposals can I submit?

There is no limit on the number of proposals you may submit.

Q11. Will you only select one proposal to fund?

We have not set a limit on the number of proposals we may select to fund.

Q12. What is the maximum amount I can ask for?

The UK Space Agency will be funding this call under a de minimis grant funding arrangement and therefore de minimis State Aid limits apply. Under the de minimis rules the maximum amount a single undertaking can receive is €200,000 over any rolling 3-year period. Further guidance on de minimis funding is available at the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-aid-the-basics>

Q13. Will you need me to match the grant with my own investment?

Yes. Applicants must provide a minimum of 20% of the total project cost from their own resources or funding. Put another way, and for the avoidance of doubt, a maximum of 80% of the total project cost can be grant funded.

Your proposal must also comply with de minimis state aid limitations.

Q14. Who will be on the assessment panel?

The panel will comprise a selection of independent professionals selected for their relevant expertise and experience. This may include representative from government, industry and academia.

Q15. If I need to ask a question, how do I do that?

The UKSA Spaceflight Programme team can be contacted by email at Spaceflight@UKSpaceAgency.gov.uk.

We are happy to respond to any clarification questions which participants raise via email to that address, although we will publish a consolidated list of these Q&A to all those participating so that every participant has the benefit of whatever clarifications we make.

As per para 38 of the Announcement of Opportunity document, a live webchat for businesses interested in submitting a proposal will be held on Tuesday 18 December 2018 from 1400-1600 (GMT). The deadline for submitting any questions relating to this Announcement of Opportunity is 1200 (GMT) on 20 December 2018. After this date, no further questions will be considered.

Q16. What does the Agency mean by measurable benefits?

A benefit is the effect the project has on its completion. Deliverables on their own, such as facilities and vehicles, deliver no benefits in themselves; the benefits come from the application of those products and services in the wider environment and the extent to which those contribute to achievement of strategic goals. We anticipate that the outputs of the Spaceflight Programme will enable benefits through the development of commercial services and the wider supply chain through the delivery of a flexible and low-cost range services to support civil spaceflight as well as fostering the growth of new skills and capabilities in the UK's space sector. The successful delivery of the capability should ultimately underpin an increase in the economic performance of the UK through the creation of employment and business opportunities.

We request that proposals describe how their range service operations will utilise the wider expertise available in the UK and benefit the UK economy, although at this early stage it may be difficult to quantitatively estimate economic benefits. In particular we request applicants consider:

- i) How you intend the development and operation of your range services to generate wider employment and business opportunities.

- ii) Any UK suppliers that will be involved in any aspect of your activity.
- iii) How you will intend to estimate the value of the UK supply chain, jobs and other benefits that will could be created by your service, including your underlying assumptions.

Q17. When do you expect to see the benefits delivered?

We anticipate that benefits will build over time, initially perhaps associated with the development of a new commercial service and the procurement or development of range technology; later through more steady-state launch operations and growth.

Q18. I want to talk to the press about our proposal?

Once proposals are submitted we ask that all information on the UK Government's Spaceflight Programme which you may wish to publish is first discussed and cleared with our communications department.

Q19. Can you offer resource to help me to develop my proposal?

We are not able to offer financial resource to aid the development of proposals. However, we are happy to answer questions raised to help you to develop your proposal. We will publish a consolidated list of these Q&A to all those participating so that every participant has the benefit of whatever clarifications we make.

Q20. Are there restrictions on when the funding would be made available?

As per para 26 of the Announcement of Opportunity, payments would be made following successful completion of appropriate milestones. Criteria will be set, linked to each milestone that shows appropriate progress has been made, and we will require evidence to demonstrate this. We therefore expect to provide funding in stages. All grant funding must complete by 31 March 2019, however for exceptional projects we may consider funding beyond this date. We will not release the full amount in one payment.

Q21. I will need a sum of money right at the start of any project to progress the work. Is this ok?

No. In line with government financial policy UKSA cannot and will not pay in advance of need. Invoices can only be paid on proof of work done following a formal milestone review. Our finance department would be happy to provide more clarity on this for those who require it.

Q22. How will projects be managed by UKSA?

Although the Spaceflight Programme is using a grant funding format, projects will be managed the same way as all other UKSA projects: payment of UKSA funds to you will be based around achieving key milestones. You will be expected to attend regular meetings with us to report progress and review the project, and also to keep us updated on the project using an established reporting format. This will be a mandatory process for all grants awarded.

Q23. If my project fails without showing any benefits, do I have to pay the money back?

No, but all proposals will be assessed for viability and likelihood of success before we decide whether to award grant funding.

Q24. I want to know if my proposal is compliant with state aid legislation. Can you help me?

In line with other UK government and European guidance, the emphasis is on the grant recipient to ensure they are compliant with relevant state aid laws. We cannot provide legal advice relating to whether or not your proposal fits within state aid legislation. If state aid is of particular concern you should seek your own independent legal advice before submitting a proposal.

Q25. The formatting and page limits stipulated in the Application Guidance means I cannot include all of the information I wish to in my proposal. Will supplementary information, such as Annexes, be considered?

No. As per the Application Guidance (Annex A), only the information contained within the page limits will be considered by the independent panel when scoring proposals. This is to ensure a common standard of proposals across all bids, and that our independent panel can evaluate all relevant information in a consistent manner. Any additional information included will not be used to evaluate any proposal against any criteria.

Q26. Could a company registered outside of the UK receive funding?

A company registered outside of the UK may receive funding. However, the business plans developed during the projects are expected to be developed in collaboration with UK spaceports, operators and launch vehicle operators.

Q27. Is the grant repayable?

Our intention is that funds will be paid to the Grant Recipient in full and not require repayment. However, there are exceptional circumstances where we reserve the right to withhold future payment, stop future payment and reclaim part or all of the grant, for example if a condition of grant offer is not met. Section 11 of our draft Grant Funding Agreement provides detail on these circumstances.

Q28. Will you consider paying grants to separate parties or companies as part of one proposal?

No. As per para 30 of the Announcement of Opportunity document, for all projects, whether the application is being submitted as part of a consortium, or an individual organisation, there must be a single lead organisation. Grant funding will only be awarded to one lead organisation. That organisation will be responsible for disseminating any funding to other parties and will be solely accountable to the UK Space Agency for the use of grant funds.

Q29. Must the bidding party be the recipient of grant funding?

Yes. As per para 30 of the Announcement of Opportunity document, there must be a single lead organisation. Grant funding will only be awarded to this lead organisation and they will be responsible for disseminating any funding to other parties.

All parties that will receive funding must be clearly identified in your proposal. In the event of a successful bid, we anticipate working closely with all named participants of the project, as stated in the application form, when agreeing the grant funding agreement and throughout the project.

Q30. If the UK Space Agency provides a grant award, how will the payment milestones be set?

Your proposal should include a clear, achievable milestones plan with the tangible deliverables and outputs clearly defined and the cost against each milestone. The milestone plan will then be agreed when with the UK Space Agency and the grant recipient upon signing the final grant agreement.

Payments will be released upon evidenced, successful delivery of each of the milestones. Payment cannot be provided in advance of need.

Q31. What format will the grant agreement take for any funded proposals, and can I adapt this to suit my proposal?

We have provided a copy of our proposed grant funding agreement. This is the document that will be used as the formal mechanism for any successful bidders to receive grant funding. Whilst we will not accept material changes, any small variations submitted will be considered. Applicants are required to accept the main terms of this grant funding agreement when submitting their application.

Q32. Will additional funding be made available to grant recipients later in the project if they discover they need more money?

The grant agreement will specify the total grant award to be paid, the terms and conditions around the grant that is offered, and the payment milestones to be delivered. We do not anticipate increasing any grant awards during the project.

Q33. When will you provide more information on your regulatory requirements?

The Space Industry Act 2018 received Royal Assent on 15 March 2018. The Department for Transport, Civil Aviation Authority and UK Space Agency are engaging with industry to inform the development of the secondary legislation.

Q34. What is your view on one party being involved in multiple bids?

There is no limit on the number of proposals a party may be involved in. If you are involved in more than one proposal, it would assist our consideration if you identify any funding requirement that is duplicated in other proposals.

Q35. Please can you confirm the size of the paper to be used in any submissions?

All proposals must be submitted electronically on the A4 size template provided, in line with the Application Form, Annex C. Should applications not adhere to page limitations or other mandatory criteria, the UK Space Agency may refuse your application.

Q36. Is a smaller font size acceptable in graphics (e.g. schedules, tabular data in tables, and diagram callouts) in order to maximize readability?

No. The font size limit of Arial size 11 must apply throughout. Should applications not adhere to font sizes or other mandatory criteria, the UK Space Agency may refuse your application.

Q38. Should Project Costs include VAT?

Grant funding will be provided VAT exempt, however this does not mean that VAT cannot be included in the costings. It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to ascertain its VAT position and ensure compliance.

Q38. Will there be another funding opportunity after this one?

Depending on the outcome of this call, the government will evaluate if any future support for range service providers is necessary. Firms that do not participate in this call will still be eligible to apply for any potential future initiatives.