

UK Space Agency

Space Surveillance and Tracking

Active Debris Removal Phase 0-A Feasibility Study

Call Guidance

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1. Background and context

One of the biggest global challenges facing the space sector is orbital congestion and space debris. We are committed to the safe and sustainable use of space to support humanity’s ambitions now and in the future. We recognise the growing hazard of space debris and increasing congestion in earth’s orbit. As the UK’s critical national infrastructure and much of our everyday life relies upon services derived from satellites we are supporting international and national projects to reduce the risk of debris.

Active Debris Removal (ADR) and In Orbit Servicing (IOS) are likely to be crucial, in future, to ensure orbital debris do not overwhelm orbits. Whilst the commercial market for ADR and IOS services is still maturing, the market for IOS services could be worth up to \$1bn to the UK by 2030¹. The potential economic gain from conducting IOS missions could, for the UK, be matched by longer term strategic benefits by being among the first movers in this new market. For example, developing the national skills, expertise and robotics capability needed to conduct IOS will enable UK industry to support other ambitious space projects like orbital assembly or space-based power generation.

To support our aims we are now requesting proposals for feasibility studies of a future Active Debris Removal mission. The studies we are requesting now could pave the way to a UK-led mission launching in 2025 to de-orbit of two or more targets from Low Earth Orbit. Crucially we also intend this ADR mission to enable, pending future decisions, further steps in a sequential suite of missions to conduct in-orbit servicing or assembly operations.

We are requesting proposals for Phase 0-A feasibility studies, and expect to choose 2 proposals to receive a Phase 0-A grant. Results will be assessed, and a future decision will be taken on which (if any) proposal will be selected to proceed to the next phase. The UK Space Agency will make a decision on whether to proceed to the next phase only after the projects have been completed and after future budget decisions have been made. The mission phases and lifecycle we will be following is shown below.

Mission lifetime cycle	
Phase 0	Mission analysis and identification
Phase A	Feasibility
Phase B	Preliminary Definition
Phase C	Detailed Definition
Phase D	Qualification and Production
Phase E	Utilisation
Phase F	Disposal

The Phase 0-A studies requested may enable a UK Active Debris Removal mission launching as soon as 2025 to remove two or more targets from Low Earth Orbit. Phase B-F of this potential mission are not within scope of this call for proposals.

¹ <https://sa.catapult.org.uk/news/in-orbit-servicing-capability/>

2. Invitation to submit grant proposals

The UK Space Agency (UKSA) is now inviting applications for industry to conduct Phase 0-A Feasibility Studies of a multi-target ADR mission. We expect to award two grants for separate studies to be concluded by March 2022. If budget is available in future financial years and the results of the Phase 0-A Feasibility Study are acceptable, one organisation will be selected to undertake the next stage of the mission lifecycle.

2.1 General Mission Objectives

The challenge to be addressed by the successful team is to propose and define the requirements for a mission capable of removing from orbit at least two non-cooperative targets (i.e., spacecraft not already prepared for de-orbiting or docking) from Low Earth Orbit (LEO). Targets must be UK licenced assets (i.e. listed in the UK registry of outer space objects).

Once the nominal removal mission has been successfully performed, with both non-cooperative targets removed from orbit, the chaser spacecraft shall be designed to allow for refurbishment by a future mission in order to perform future orbital activity. Refurbishment refers to a range of potential operations from refuelling the chaser spacecraft to replacement of mission critical elements. The chaser spacecraft shall remain in orbit until it is refurbished by a future mission. In this way the mission will demonstrate a step towards increased adoption of modularity and standardisation techniques in future space infrastructure.

It should be noted that the follow-on refurbishment mission is beyond the scope of this Phase 0-A study. It is expected that the grant recipient will identify the elements to be refurbished, the approach (including the parking orbit for the chaser) and the maturity of the activities-technologies involved.

The full list of mission requirements is detailed in section 4. Within these requirements the main spacecraft responsible for the removal of the UK-licensed objects is referred to as the chaser spacecraft.

2.2 Study Logic

This activity is expected to produce a mission design and associated system architecture for the removal mission described in Section 2.1.

The Phase 0-A study is organised into two parts:

- Part 1: Phase 0 - Mission Concepts Assessment and Definition
- Part 2: Phase A - Mission and System Design Consolidation

Deliverables generated by the successful team will be delivered to the UK Space Agency in accordance with agreed milestones. An indicative list of the project milestones and associated deliverables is shown in section 2.4. Deliverables will then be reviewed by a panel assembled by the Agency.

Phase 0 should take no more than 8 weeks.

2.2.1 Part 1: Phase 0 Mission Concepts Assessment and Definition

The objective of this part of the activity is to provide a number of candidate mission architecture concepts which can be down-selected ahead of part 2. The concepts shall be derived from the output of the requirements analysis, technology review and major trade-off's (mission, system, payload and sub-system). The analysis and concept definition activities should be sufficiently developed to provide early confidence in the technical feasibility of the selected mission architecture. The selected, baseline mission shall be further detailed in Part 2 of this activity to Phase A level.

The following activities are envisaged at a high-level during Part 1 of this study:

- Critical analysis of the mission assumptions and requirements, including identification of key system drivers. On the back of the mission concept assessment and definition a consolidated set of mission, ground and space segment requirements should be defined;
- Perform high-level trade-offs to identify a number of candidate mission architecture concepts. The assessment should consider the impact of target choice on removal and the impacts on mission and system design;
- Review the regulatory and legal challenges for Active Debris Removal and the targets considered;
- Characterise a number of promising mission architecture concepts by key aspects such as: platform to be used, operations approach, ground segment and communication architecture, launch vehicle selection, supported by functional, performance, orbit and operation analysis;
- Justify the mission architecture concepts retained in terms of compliance to the applicable requirements, technical feasibility, complexity, cost and development of critical technologies;
- Development of a communication and dissemination plan for the work undertaken during the whole feasibility study to promote visibility and understanding of the work.

2.2.2 Part 2: Phase A Mission and System Concept Consolidation

Part 2 of the study should seek to consolidate the system architecture of the baseline mission selected within Part 1 of the study. The mission design should be developed and the system architecture shall be further elaborated. The technology status of critical subsystems should be explored and recommendations made on future development activities. The spacecraft development approach and planning, ROM cost estimates, and compliance analysis to the technical requirements shall be provided. At the end of the activity the Final Assessment (FA) shall take place to conclude the Phase A mission study.

The following activities are envisaged at a high-level during Part 2 of this study:

- Definition of the mission and system design requirements including compliance of the selected concept;
- Evaluation of critical areas and recommendations on technology development. Including a review of the UK supply chain and potential gaps;
- Detailed mission design including all necessary mission elements, such as concept of operation, system architecture, configuration, subsystem design, operational modes, ground segment and system budgets;
- Establish the implementation plan from Phase B to end of the mission. This should include elements such as TRL assessment, identification of critical and long-lead

items, model philosophy and satellite integration and verification approach including definition of key test facilities, risk assessment, UK industrial assessment;

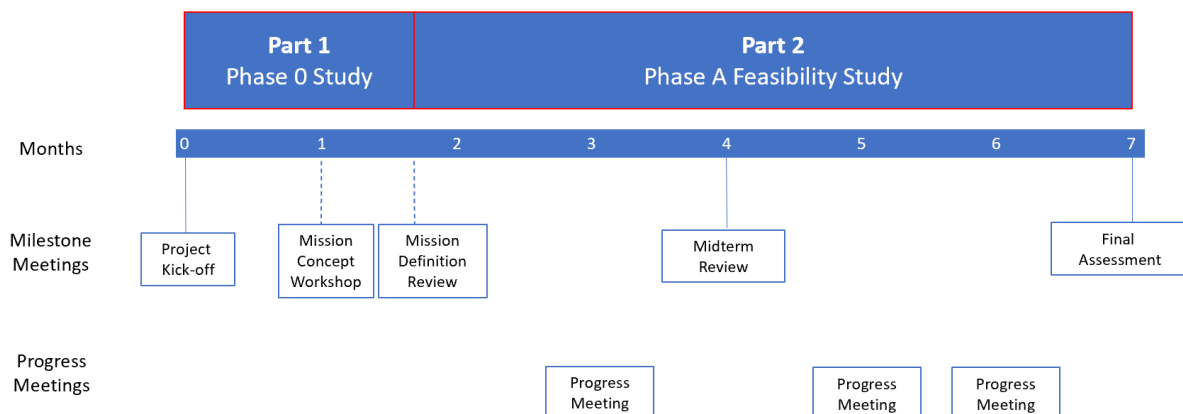
- Estimate ROM cost from Phase B to the end of the mission including operations.

2.3 Workflow and timeline

The project will be completed within seven-eight months or by the end of March 2022, whichever is sooner. The project will be punctuated by a series of progress meetings and project milestone meetings. At these meetings the teams will be required to present the relevant outputs and deliverables to the UKSA panel for review. The main milestones for the project will be set by the grant recipient but are expected to include the following:

- Kick-off: Opportunity to share key assumptions and requirements ahead of starting the mission concept assessment;
- Mission Concepts Workshop (PM1): A workshop between the study consortium and the UKSA to review the high-level set of mission and system concepts a subset of which will be subject to further analysis towards the Mission Definition Review (MDR);
- Mission Definition Review (MDR): A review on the more detailed definition of the selected system concept(s). At the end of this review one concept should be baselined for further definition in Part 2 of the study;
- Midterm Review (MTR): The Midterm Review will allow for a review on the progress of the study highlighting key drivers and an opportunity to challenge/refine open trades or design decisions;
- Final Assessment (FA): Final review of the study presenting the baselined mission and system architecture

The indicative timeline for the project is as follows:



The Mission Concept Workshop is expected to occur approximately half-way through Phase 0 (approximately 4 weeks after kick-off). The Mission Definition Review will take place at the end of Phase 0, no later than 8 weeks after kick-off. These dates should be proposed in the Application Form and discussed during the Project Kick-Off.

2.4 Deliverables

Applicants are invited to consider the deliverables and milestones needed to progress their project, though UKSA recommends following the approach taken by ESA and others when considering the outputs needed for Phase 0 and Phase A studies. An indicative list of the deliverables required in each part of the study are:

#	Title	Delivery at end of		Notes
		Part 1	Part 2	
1	Critical review of global ADR missions and associated technology developments	Final		
2	Analysis of Mission Assumptions and Requirements	Final		To include a critical review of the prospective removal targets
3	Regulatory review of removal targets	Final		
4	Synthesis of Mission Architecture Concepts	Final		
5	System Design Report	Draft	Final	To include analysis and definition of capture technologies, spacecraft, mission, operations concept, ground segment, performance budgets.
6	Mission and System Requirements Document	Draft	Final	
7	Critical Areas and Recommendations on Technology Development		Final	
8	System Development Plan		Final	
9	Programmatic and Cost Estimates		Final	
10	Final Report and Executive Summary		Final	
11	System Performance Mathematical Model		Final	
12	Capture Performance Mathematical Model		Final	
13	Review presentations	As required		Presentation slides associated with review or progress meetings

3 Funding

It is expected that the UKSA grant amount per project will lie between £300,000 and £400,000. The total cost per project, including the industry match-funding contribution, is expected to be approximately £500,000 in accordance with the subsidy control guidance provided within the call documentation. The funding amounts above are provided to guide applicants when considering the scope of their proposal. UKSA reserves the right to also consider proposals that may be above or below the amounts stated.

Grant payments will be made following successful completion of agreed milestones and will be made to the Prime organisation only. Milestone completion criteria will be agreed, linked to

each milestone deliverable, with evidence required to demonstrate that each milestone has been completed successfully and costs have been expended in accordance with the principles set out in this document.

All projects must include match-funding from the applicant and project partners. The size of match-funding will differ depending on the activity completed and the size or type of organisation involved in the proposal. Please note that as the UK has left the European Union, the information concerning match-funding requirements have been updated. The UK is now under a Subsidy Control regime, but in certain circumstances, European Commission State aid rules may apply. Further detail on the level of match-funding required and the maximum UKSA contribution can be found in Section 5 of this call document and Annex A. It is the responsibility of both the UKSA and all applicants to ensure that grant projects are complying with the relevant requirements and you may need to seek your own independent legal advice.

Financial checks will be undertaken, and all grant recipients are expected to demonstrate sound financial and programme management procedures.

Grant payments will be made following successful completion of agreed milestones and will be made to the Prime organisation only. Milestone completion criteria will be agreed, linked to each milestone deliverable, with evidence required to demonstrate that each milestone has been completed successfully and costs have been expended in accordance with the principles set out in this document.

Each project selected for grant funding will be required to provide monthly updates on the project progress using a template provided by the UK Space Agency and milestone reports at each milestone. Reviews linked to these milestones will be conducted in person.

4 Requirements

4.1 General Requirements

All successful proposals will address the following mandatory requirements:

- R1. The proposal must be for a Phase 0-A Feasibility Study, which addresses the mission concept and meets the requirements of the call.
- R2. The proposal must be led by a UK organisation who will receive a grant from the UK Space Agency.
- R3. As part of the application for funding, applicants must review and accept the terms of the UK Space Agency's published Grant Funding Agreement.
- R4. The proposal must detail the applicant's suggested milestones for payment. All milestones must be completed by 31st March 2022.
- R5. Proposals must include consideration of the commercial or scientific viability of the proposed innovation. This should demonstrate that the innovation would support development of a realistic and sustainable market.
- R6. Proposals must demonstrate that the investment sought from the UK Government represents clear value for the UK public, through measurable benefits for the UK economy.

- R7. All projects will need to demonstrate that they have an effective structure in place for managing the administration of the grant requested and demonstrate that they have a sound approach to planning to achieve their programme aims on time and within budget.

4.2 Mission Requirements

Within these requirements the main spacecraft responsible for the removal of the UK-licensed objects is referred to as the chaser spacecraft.

The main mission requirements are:

- R8. The mission should be capable of being launched by 2025.

- R9. The budget for the mission should be in the range of £40-60M.

Note: This indicative budget should not be perceived as any commitment or agreement from the UK Space Agency or other UK government organisation to provide further funding.

- R10. The chaser spacecraft shall be designed for an on-orbit mission lifetime of 10 years.

- R11. The chaser spacecraft must have the capability to either dock, berth, or otherwise capture the target spacecraft.

- R12. The nominal mission shall remove at least two UK-licensed objects from the Low Earth Orbit (LEO) protected region.

Note: UK-licensed objects defined as those objects listed in the UK registry of Outer Space Objects as of May 2021 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-registry-outer-space-objects>). The LEO protected region is defined as spherical region that extends from the Earth's surface up to an altitude of 2,000km.

- R13. Removal is considered as either direct re-entry of the target object or significantly accelerated natural decay of the object (considered to be at least 50% reduction in their orbital lifetime at end-of-life).

- R14. Each target to be removed must be uncooperative (it has not been designed, manufactured and prepared for capture and/or de-orbiting).

- R15. The target objects should be non-operational at the point of launch of the chaser spacecraft.

- R16. The chaser shall be designed to allow for refurbishment at the end of the nominal mission.

Note: Refurbishment refers to a range of potential operations performed by future missions on the chaser spacecraft, from refuelling the chaser spacecraft to replacement of mission critical elements. This study will identify proposed techniques and the maturity of the refurbishment technology, but the refurbishment mission is beyond the scope of this phase 0-A study

- R17. All stages of the mission must demonstrate compliance with the space debris mitigation requirements stated in IADC Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines.

Note: The potential refurbishment of the chaser must also comply with these space debris mitigation requirements.

5 Organisation eligibility

There are a series of requirements for eligibility to receive grant funding:

- The Prime organisation is the Grant Recipient.
- Grant Recipients must demonstrate the ability to effectively manage a project
- Grant Recipients must have a UK bank account and all grant payments will be made in UK sterling (as per grant funding agreement)
- All partners must have in place and provide evidence of appropriate anti-bribery and anti-corruption policies
- All study partners must provide evidence of a process for declaring and managing conflicts of interest
- All study partners must be able to provide evidence that they are GDPR compliant
- Grant Recipients must pass due diligence checks on company viability (financial standing assessment, governance, conflicts of interest, technical expertise)
- Formal teaming, or equivalent agreements between project partners must be in place within 60 days of grant signature
- Grant Recipients must comply with the rules stated in this guidance document and in the Grant Applicant Checklist (Annex H)

6 Subsidy Control

The UK Space Agency (UKSA) supports organisations to invest in research, development and innovation. The support we provide is consistent with the UK's international obligations and commitments to Subsidy Control (see further information at Annex A).

Before awarding subsidies, the UK Space Agency must ensure that the subsidy scheme meets the terms of the principles as determined in the [UK-EU Trade & Cooperation Agreement](#) (TCA):

The principles are that:

- subsidies should pursue a specific public policy objective to remedy an identified market failure or to address an equity rationale such as social difficulties or distributional concerns (“the objective”)
- subsidies should be proportionate and limited to what is necessary to achieve the objective
- subsidies should be designed to bring about a change of economic behaviour of the beneficiary that is conducive to achieving the objective and that would not be achieved in the absence of subsidies being provided
- subsidies should not normally compensate for the costs the beneficiary would have funded in the absence of any subsidy

- subsidies should be an appropriate policy instrument to achieve a public policy objective and that objective cannot be achieved through other less distortive means
- subsidies' positive contributions to achieving the objective should outweigh any negative effects, in particular the negative effects on trade or investment between the Parties

To ensure this competition provides funding in line with the UK's obligations and commitments to Subsidy Control:

- 1) The intervention rates detailed in Annex A shall apply unless the bidder seeks to claim exemption from having to make a contribution under the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance (previously known as de-minimis under State Aid) rules.
- 2) Bidders must identify the work proposed, and this must be consistent with the work programme described in the technical case. Note that the company size defines the maximum 'Intervention' rate (and hence the minimum required PV level) that is permitted (see Annex A). Bidders will be expected to justify the category of work selected.
- 3) Bidders must ensure that they supply the correct information that allows UK Space Agency to award grants within the scheme. It is the responsibility of the grant funder to ensure compliance with the relevant Subsidy Controls rules and the bidder to assist the funder in doing this by acting within the terms and conditions of the scheme. Further guidance about subsidy control is available on the gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complying-with-the-uks-international-obligations-on-subsidy-control-guidance-for-public-authorities>

7 Application process

Apply using the provided application form in Annex D and Budget Template in Annex E and associated guidance in Annex B. Submissions should be emailed to SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk before midnight **19th July**. The subject heading for submitted proposals must clearly state – SST ADR Phase 0-A Proposal – [title of proposal & lead organisation].

Whilst the funding call is open, we will maintain an online FAQs document. For additional information about this call, and industry webinar will be held on 16th June 10.00-12.00. Contact SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk to register your attendance.

After the deadline for application submission, valid applications will be sent for assessment using the defined evaluation criteria.

The UK Space Agency reserves the right to declare a project proposal as out of scope or incomplete.

7.1 Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed by an advisory panel made up of government, industry or academia. This panel will assess the proposals according to a scoring system on a set number of criteria.

Proposals will be assessed against a range of criteria, with criteria weighted to reflect their relative importance to the final score. A detailed copy of the scoring system and weighting can be found in Annex C. The criteria to be assessed are:

- Technical feasibility
- Commercial sustainability
- Benefit to the UK
- Sound management and planning
- Value for Money

Assessors will provide scores for each question in the application. All applications are assessed on individual merit. The UK Space Agency will make the final decision regarding funding, using the panel’s recommendations and wider relevant legal, policy and financial considerations.

To aid our consideration, Annex B provides guidance for a proposal and sets out the minimum information that all submissions must include.

7.2 Application schedule

The below table outlines the expected timetable for this call for grant funding.

Funding call opens	3 June 2020
Industry Webinar	16 June 10.00-12.00
Deadline for FAQs	30 June
Deadline for submission of proposals	19 July at midnight BST (Note we have extended the deadline from 13 July at midnight BST)
Notification of outcomes	End of July
Due diligence on down-selected proposals	End of July
Grants to be signed by	Mid August

All projects must complete their Phase 0-A Feasibility Study before 31 March 2022. Projects that do not complete the Phase A may not be eligible to participate in next stages of the mission concept.

A dedicated Industry Webinar will take place at 10am on 16th June 2021. During this Webinar, UKSA will provide an overview of the Phase 0-A Feasibility Study Statement of Work, the mission overview and answer any queries regarding this call. Please register for this event by emailing SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk

Any questions about this funding opportunity should be submitted to the following email address SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk, questions relevant to other organisations will be anonymised and recorded on the FAQs document. Questions submitted to any other UKSA

email address will not be considered. The final deadline for any questions is 30 June to enable all potential applicants to consider answers provided. A Q&A log will be maintained and hosted on the UK Space Agency web page alongside the call documentation.

8 Confidentiality

The procedure for handling and assessing the bids and notifications will be as follows:

- Final proposals must be submitted to the SST team, using the SST email SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk. Applications submitted to any other UK Space Agency email address will not be considered.
- All proposals, budgets and notifications will be held in confidence by the UK Space Agency, except to be shared with evaluation panellists.
- Information relating to the proposals may also be shared with other UK government departments, agencies and arm's length bodies.
- Summary information on all successful proposals who receive grant funding will be made public, including the summary of the proposal and the identities of organisations involved.
- For those bids not recommended by the panel for funding, documentation will be retained by the UK Space Agency for reference. The proposals will not be visible to any others, and the names of any unsuccessful bidders will not be published.
- Following completion of the down-selection of projects, UK Space Agency may contact applicants as part of its review of the call.
- All other documentation relating to bids selected for funding will remain confidential within the UK government.

Information submitted as part of a proposal, or subsequent commercially sensitive information submitted as part of the grant agreement, will not be disclosed by us save for in so far as we consider necessary, in our absolute discretion, to comply with our legal obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 or any other legal act, requirement or obligation. Where permitted by law we will attempt to notify you of any such disclosure.

9 Finance policy

All partners must use a separate, project-specific, bank account or project accounting code for project funds to enable a clear audit trail.

Cost recovery - the funds from Grant funding are on a **cost recovery basis only**. Grants are solely intended to cover the cost of delivering the agreed activity or goal. Any surplus funds not spent will be lost to the project unless there are alternative arrangements agreed by both parties.

Grantees cannot receive any funding from other grants/contracts to undertake the same activities.

Grant funding cannot be rolled over between financial years without explicit consent from UK Space Agency.

Invoices – UKSA will only pay on actuals therefore we expect invoices may differ from forecasts. Should actual costs incurred be greater than the value of the milestone value, these costs will be borne by the Grant Recipient, unless the additional expenditure has been agreed with the UK Space Agency ahead of the costs being incurred and a Grant Change Notice (GCN) executed. Funds will be released upon successful completion of milestones.

Staff costs must be calculated on a cost recovery basis only and be broken down by pay costs and overheads separately.

Pay costs are calculated based on your PAYE records. They should include gross salary, employer National Insurance (NI) contributions and employer pension contributions. Pay costs must **not** include:

- Any profit margins
- Commercial charge-out rates
- Allowances for bonuses and benefits in kind
- Business development
- Travel & Subsistence

These pay rates will be subject to checks during the negotiation stage by internal or external teams to ensure that day rates reflect actual costs. High payroll costs will be challenged and evidence (such as pay slips, etc.) must be provided to justify that the rate is on a cost recovery basis only.

When making grant claims against labour costs, actual costs claimed must be supported with timesheets of those individuals who have worked on the project.

In the budget breakdown, you are asked to provide a pay cost per day. Using actual gross monthly payroll costs, please assume 260 working days in the year, less annual leave and public holiday entitlements.

Overheads for the project are costs incurred that are additional to normal functions and incurred as a result of the project. The overheads should be stated separately from the pay costs and in this funding call, bidders are to note that:

- (1) A 20% overhead rate option is available which includes both direct and indirect costs and should be recorded in the appropriate overhead section of the budget breakdown. The overheads relating to contingent workforce / consultants should be included within their daily rate, and not included in either the calculation of the 20% overhead allowance or charged to it.

Selecting this 20% overhead option allows UKSA to review and process a grant application much faster as no further documentation is needed from you.

- (2) By exception, if you consider that your overheads cannot be accommodated within the 20% rate and would like UKSA to consider an alternative level, you may submit a

detailed breakdown of your proposed direct and indirect costs using the 'Overheads breakdown' tab in the budget template (Annex E). Please note the following:

- Overheads should be stated separately from the pay costs and their constituent elements identified and recorded by work package in the budget breakdown spreadsheet.
- All costs need to be compliant with conditions set out within the to your proposal.
- In considering the value for money of your proposal, UKSA will take into account the full costs of the activity including overheads.
- Once the overhead recovery rate has been approved, it cannot be exceeded unless agreed as part of a grant change notice.

The principles set out above also apply to project partners (not sub-contractors) and grant recipients will be required to provide assurance that their project partners are compliant with the funding principles.

Contingent workforce is a labour pool whose members are hired by an organisation on an on-demand basis. A contingent workforce consists of freelancers, independent contractors and consultants who are not on the company's payroll because they are not full-time employees of the organisation.

The budget should be structured showing consultant day rates and number of days worked. This information will be accessible to assessors and the day rate will be assessed on value for money.

Software/licences - If you or a partner already own software or licences that will be used in the project, you may not charge the cost of this software or licence within your budget.

Where you require new licences to someone else's software, for the specific purposes of this project, you may charge this to the project.

You should include any support costs and maintenance costs included under licence cost heading in the assumptions section of the budget breakdown.

Data (e.g. satellite imagery) - If you already own or have free access to the data, this is not viewed as eligible expenditure. If you are purchasing data from a third party for the specific purposes of the project, this can be charged to the project.

Server costs - As above, only costs which are additional and directly related to the project can be budgeted for.

VAT Rules - Grant funding is outside the scope of VAT so you cannot charge output VAT on top of your submitted costs. If you incur non-recoverable **input** VAT costs, you cannot pass this on to the UK Space Agency.

All applicants are required to complete the budget template (Annex E) for their proposed milestones and work packages for FY 21/22.

9.1 Ineligible Expenditure

The following costs are ineligible:

- Payment that supports for lobbying or activity intended to influence or attempt to influence Parliament, Government or political parties, or attempting to influence the awarding or renewal of contracts and grants, or attempting to influence legislative or regulatory action;
- Using grant funding to petition for additional funding;
- Input VAT reclaimable by the Grant Recipient from HMRC;
- Payments for activities of a political or exclusively religious nature;
- Goods or services that the Grant Recipient has a statutory duty to provide;
- Payments reimbursed or to be reimbursed by other public or private sector grants;
- Contributions in kind (i.e. a contribution in goods or services, as opposed to money);
- Depreciation, amortisation or impairment of fixed assets owned by the Grant Recipient;
- The acquisition or improvement of fixed assets by the Grant Recipient (unless the grant is explicitly for capital use – this will be stipulated in the Grant Offer Letter);
- Interest payments (including service charge payments for finance leases);
- Gifts to individuals;
- Entertaining (entertaining for this purpose means anything that would be a taxable benefit to the person being entertained, according to current UK tax regulations);
- Statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties; or liabilities incurred before the issue of this funding agreement unless agreed in writing by UK Space Agency;
- Employee paid benefits and bonuses;
- Alcohol.

9.2 Travel and Subsistence

The following outlines the guidelines for travel and subsistence costs. Value for money must always be considered. If for any reason the set limits cannot be adhered to (e.g. to accommodate a reasonable adjustment), you must seek prior written approval from UK Space Agency. No claims for alcohol will be accepted.

UK Space Agency reserves the right to not settle claims which have breached these guidelines. All expenditure must be supported by actual, itemised receipts.

Limits:

- Accommodation: £140 per night
- Breakfast: £5
- Lunch: £5
- Dinner: £15

Travel:

- All travel claimed must be using Economy rates.
- Tolls, Ferry Costs, Parking and congestion charge: Receipted costs for ferries, and tolls bridges and roads unavoidably incurred during your business journey may be claimed. Reasonable parking charges may be claimed. Receipted congestion charges unavoidably incurred on your business journey may be claimed.

10 The Grant Funding Agreement

The grant funding agreement and Grant Offer Letter template is included as a separate document (Annex F). Applicants must sign up to the terms as set out in the grant funding agreement.

No material changes to the terms will be considered. Minor changes may be considered if an applicant can demonstrate that agreeing to the provision within the Grant Funding Agreement would result in the applicant breaching its statutory or regulatory obligations.

Grants agreements must be signed by a Chief Finance Officer or someone with appropriate delegated authority.

All organisations in receipt of grant funding must abide by the UK government Code of Conduct for Grant Recipients:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/754555/2018-11-06_Code_of_Conduct_for_Grant_Recipients.pdf

Annual Audit of Project Costs

For Grant awards of £250,000 and over, projects will be subject to an external annual audit to ensure that costs claimed from the grant funding have been expensed on agreed project related expenditure and comply to UK Space Agency grant funding policies (e.g. match funding). The auditor will be appointed by UK Space Agency. All subcontractors and partners must provide access to project relevant expenditure. Therefore, Grant Recipients must maintain, and be able to provide upon request, any supporting evidenced as deemed necessary, such as:

- Timesheets (prime and, where applicable, partners)
- Staff costs (contractors)
- All receipts (including T&S)
- All partner and subcontractor invoices
- Breakdown of overhead costs
- Breakdown of capital usage (e.g. licence, data costs etc)

The UK Space Agency reserves the right to conduct ad-hoc audits throughout the life of the project.

11 Due Diligence

UKSA will carry out due diligence on grant applications as required using internal and, where necessary, external subject matter experts. The scope and degree of due diligence will be determined by the value, nature and complexity of the grant scheme. All applications will be subject to basic checks such as credit reports and Companies House checks.

Additional pre-award due diligence may include, but is not limited to:

- Technical assessment of the proposed project: including technical viability and sustainability;
- Financial assessment: organisation financial standing/health, assessment of project costs, aid intensity values and match funding contributions;
- Economic impact / value for money assessment
- Commercial: viability and / or commercial sustainability of the proposed solution, market position, demand and / or interest in technology, terms of the grant funding agreement; and / or
- Programmatic: alignment to aims and objectives of the programme, programme plan which demonstrates the project can be delivered within the funding period and the critical path, risks and issues, details on project partners and / or subcontractors.

Post-award due diligence may include, but if not limited to:

- Technical assessment of milestone deliverables against acceptance criteria to allow milestone payments to be released;
- Financial: assessment of expenditure for each milestone payment and reporting on planned costs, follow up review of financial standing/health if it is a multi-year project
- Commercial: change management including any variations to time, cost, scope, or Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) terms; review of milestone deliverables as required;
- Programmatic: project progress and impacts of any delays, risk assessment and mitigation activity; and
- End of project review: Has the technical and economic objectives been realised? Lessons learned and continuous improvement.
- For Grants of £250,000 and over, UKSA commissioned and funded financial audit of Grant Recipient, and if applicable project partner, costs.

Grant Applicants who opt to work with project partners will assume all responsibility for partner due diligence. Applicants will need to demonstrate they have carried out a sufficient level of due diligence with regard to their proposed project partners and subcontractors. Applicants will need to demonstrate they have carried out minimum checks at proposal stage, which may require further scrutiny if the proposal is to be funded.

To meet this requirement, applicants can provide evidence of due diligence carried out supported by the resulting information or submit a partner reasonable assurance statement. The evidence should be consistent with the checks that we would conduct on our Grant Recipients and must include checks on partners resources and partner finances (all costs are eligible and will be invoiced on a cost-recovery basis only, relevant credit checks). Applicants must provide evidence that they, and project partners have in place the appropriate anti-bribery and anti-corruption internal policies, GDPR policies and a process for declaring and managing conflicts of interest.

Any costs associated with project partner due diligence is considered a bidding cost and is to be borne by the applicant.

12 Other

For the avoidance of doubt, the issue of this Announcement of Opportunity is not a commitment by the UK Space Agency to take forward or support any application. Any expenditure, work or effort undertaken prior to an offer of support and acceptance thereof is a matter solely for the commercial judgement of your company, and the Government will not be held liable for any costs incurred by participants in connection with the application process.

The UKSA will be under no obligation to continue to provide funding beyond the terms of any resulting grant award, nor purchase or promote use of any resulting IP or product developed using grant funding.

The UK Space Agency will monitor any funded projects through regular project reports (usually monthly) and updates, with payment milestones accompanied by a series of formal reviews. A reporting format will be provided to successful applicants. As UK Space Agency will use the meetings and reports to monitor project progress, in certain circumstances more meetings than stated may be required.

The UK Space Agency reserves the right in its absolute discretion to:

- waive or change the requirements of this Announcement of Opportunity from time to time through a formal amendment, initiated by the Agency;
- seek clarification in respect of a participant's proposal;
- disqualify any participant that does not submit a compliant proposal in accordance with the instructions in this Announcement of Opportunity.
- disqualify any applicant that is guilty of misrepresentation in relation to its proposal or the proposal process;
- withdraw this Announcement of Opportunity at any time, or to re-invite proposals on the same or any alternative basis;
- disqualify applicants where support may conflict with the government's foreign policy and international commitments or may pose a threat to national security;
- choose not to support any proposal as a result of the proposal review process;
- choose not to proceed any further than a Phase 0-A Feasibility Study.

It is the responsibility of the lead organisation (the Prime) to ensure that all of the required information is provided in the correct format before the submission deadline.

Incomplete and/or late applications will not be eligible for review

This funding call closes at midnight 19th July (extended from 13th July)

Annex A – Subsidy Control

Subsidy Control (and State aid where relevant)

UKSA supports UK based businesses to invest in research, development and innovation. The support we provide is consistent with the UK’s international obligations and commitments to Subsidy Control. These include:

- [WTO rules](#)
- the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), (see EU-UK TCA summary and [BEIS \(Dept. for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy\)](#) guidance)
- in certain circumstances (e.g. under the [Northern Ireland Protocol](#)) EU State aid regulations may also be applied
- other bilateral [UK FTAs](#) (Free Trade Agreements) where relevant

What is a subsidy?

For the purposes of UK international commitments, a subsidy is a measure which:

1. Is given by a public authority. This can be at any level; central, devolved, regional or local government or a public body.
2. Makes a contribution (this could be a financial or an in-kind contribution) to an enterprise, conferring an economic advantage that is not available on market terms. Examples of a contribution are grants, loans at below market rate, or a loan guarantee at below market rate or allowing a company to use publicly owned office space rent free. An enterprise is anyone who puts goods or services on a market. An enterprise could be a government department or a charity if they are acting commercially.
3. Affects international trade. This can be trade with any World Trade Organisation member or, more specifically, between the UK and a country with whom it has a [Free Trade Agreement](#). For example, if the subsidy is going towards a good which is traded between the UK and the EU this could affect trade between the EU and the UK. It is not necessary to consider whether the subsidy could harm trade, just whether there could be some sort of effect. Subsidies to very local companies or a small tourist attraction are unlikely to be a problem as this is unlikely to affect international trade.

The BEIS Subsidy Control regime (or where relevant EU State aid regulations) are designed to prevent unfair advantages and distortion of trade: [Complying with the UK’s international obligations on subsidy control](#)

More information on the principles of awarding subsidies can be found in the [BEIS guidance](#).

Subsidy Control Categories and Intervention Thresholds

The following table summarises the maximum intervention thresholds allowable level of support under this UKSA grant call:

Subsidy category	Level of support available		
	Micro/SE	ME	LE
Feasibility study	70%	60%	50%

The following table summarises the UK definition of what constitutes an SME:

Company category	Staff headcount	Turnover	or	Balance sheet total
Medium sized	< 250	≤ £36m		≤ £18m
Small	< 50	≤ £10.2m		≤ £5.1m
Micro	< 10	≤ £632,000		≤ £316,000

To qualify for any category, the company must meet at least two of the above conditions (staff headcount, Turnover or Balance sheet total) within both the current financial year and the year previous.

Anything above the limits for a medium sized company is designated as a large company. For more information on company sizes, please refer to the [company accounts guidance](#). This is a change from the [EU definition](#) unless you are applying under State aid.

Other sources of public funding are not eligible as a Private Venture (PV) / match funding contribution.

Academic partners will be funded in all cases at 80% of Full Economic Cost (FEC).

Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) and EU de minimis awards

The [UK-EU Trade & Cooperation Agreement](#) (TCA) has provision relating to Small Amounts of Financial Assistance (SAFA).

For organisations applying under SAFA, the total subsidy which can be given to each organisation is up to a maximum of £340,000 or 325,000 SDR over a rolling 3 fiscal year period. This threshold is subject to change and grant recipients should consult the subsidy control guidance for regular updates.

When calculating eligibility for the application of the SAFA provision bidders must include cumulation of EU State aid de minimis grants under the EC's de minimis regulation for the same 3 fiscal year period. The maximum total under the EC regulation is €200,000. This is for all project types and for most purposes, including operating aid.

This guidance is not a substitute for taking independent legal advice on your eligibility status, before applying for funding. Every applicant is responsible for securing their own independent legal advice to ensure they are lawfully eligible.

Please note the UKSA is unable to award organisations that are considered to be ailing and insolvent companies. We will conduct financial viability and eligibility tests to confirm this is not the case following the application stage.

Annex B – Application Form guidance

B1 Introduction

These Guidance Notes complement the Announcement of Opportunity and are designed to assist your completion of the Phase 0-A Feasibility Study Application Form. Please note:

1. The application template has been provided by UKSA. No adjustments to the formatting, size, or other parameters are permitted;
2. All sections of the application form are mandatory;
3. Should any part of the application overrun the specified page or word limit, we will only consider material up to the designated page limit that is in the correct format;
4. All applications forms must be completed in Arial font, size 11, and submitted electronically as an A4 single document, in line with the template.

B2 The application process

Please note the following information regarding this Announcement of Opportunity:

1. All applications will be treated in confidence in accordance with the confidentiality section of the Call Document;
2. The application process for this competition requires completion of the Application Form (Annex D) and the Budget Template (Annex E);
3. Documents must be submitted by the respective deadlines, via email to SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk – applications submitted to any other UK Space Agency email address will not be considered;
4. If you are proposing minor amendments to the GFA, a marked-up copy of the GFA/GOL (Annex F) should also be included with your submission;
5. Applications must not exceed 10MB and all documents must be attached electronically and submitted on the templates provided. For avoidance of doubt we expect each email to contain 2 attachments – a completed application form, and a completed Budget Template, together with a marked-up GFA if applicable. Additional information provided beyond that requested will not be evaluated;
6. We strongly advise that the Application Guidance notes below are read prior to submission;
7. Upon receipt of an application, you will be issued with a receipt note within 24 hours of the application deadline. If you do not receive this, please contact the SST team on: SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk;
8. If you wish to submit several applications, each of these must be emailed separately;
9. Only use acronyms where a term is mentioned frequently throughout the proposal. If you do choose to use an acronym, do not assume that the reader knows what it means, and be sure to define it, bearing in mind that individual sections of the application may be read separately during the selection process;
10. Annexes A, B and C, F, G, H are provided as supporting documentation and are not to be submitted with the application (Annex D) and budget template (Annex E).

B3 Guidelines for completing the Application Form

Section 1: Main details

This section should be completed as per the template provided, with the following details:

- a. Generate a project title. This should be an easy to remember, snappy, representation of the project.
- b. The full registered name of the single lead organisation making this proposal, to which any funding will be paid.
- c. The exact grant requested from the UK Space Agency. Costs should be to the nearest one pound and should be in GBP currency. This should match the budget template. This should **not** include match funding.
- d. Total project cost to the nearest one pound. This **should** include match funding.
- e. Please specify the total percentage of grant funding being requested compared to match funding: $\text{Grant funding} / \text{Total project cost} * 100$

Section 2: Summary

Please provide a summary of your proposal that can be used in publications, for example on the UK Space Agency website or in a press release if the project is funded.

Section 3: Company and organisation

3a: Please confirm the organisations name, activity of the organisation, a description of the expertise relevant to the project, address, country where the organisation is registered, year of establishment, employee headcount.

3b: Please nominate a project lead who will be the primary contact for the duration of the project. Provide the name, position, email and phone number.

3c: Please identify any other individuals and organisations who are significantly involved in the application. Include a description of their expertise and role within the project should be provided. This should include:

- a list of key individuals e.g. PM and technical experts. (Note if the key individuals are replaced during the project, we will need to agree this via a grant change notice)
- Any individuals and organisations who are already committed to this project and will form part of the project delivery team
- All other individuals and organisations who are involved in the project, either forming part of the project delivery team or otherwise supporting the project

Section 4: Subsidy Control

Please complete in accordance with the guidance in Annex A.

It is anticipated that all applications will fall under the Feasibility Study section of the World Trade Organisation Subsidy Control.

Section 5: Technical description

It is expected that this section of the proposal will include:

- A short review of global prior art in Active Debris Removal and/or on-orbit servicing that would be relevant to this study and the heritage of the organisation/consortium in delivering technical solutions in this area.
- Initial review of the requirements in Section 3) of the call guidance identifying mission/system drivers and key considerations.
- Initial elaboration of mission concept architectures that would be considered in Part 1 of the study, highlighting key elements of the mission and system concept.
- Identification of critical areas and key areas of technology development. To include an initial review of key areas of UK strengths and gaps in the supply chain.
- Description of the proposed approach and study logic in completing the required trades and detailed definition (including access to or development of cost models, mathematical models, development plans etc).

Section 6: Benefit to the UK

Please describe how your proposal will bring benefits to the UK space sector or grow the expertise available in the UK and benefit the UK economy. In particular, please specify:

1. How your proposal will benefit the UK economy.
2. How the investment sought from UKSA represents value for the UK public.
3. Consideration of the UK-based employment and contract opportunities that will arise from your proposal.
4. The geographic location in the UK where any proposed work will be completed.

Section 7: Value for Money

Please provide a summary of the main project costs, and a narrative of why this proposal provides value for money to the taxpayer. The detailed financial information is provided in the budget template which reviewers will consider as part of the value for money evaluation. You should explain how the use of resources has been optimised whilst still achieving the intended quality outcomes.

Section 8: Sound management and planning

Please describe your approach to managing the project, and any relevant financial information relating to delivery of the project. In particular, you should:

- a. Describe the project management, governance and oversight arrangements you will use to assure your time, cost and quality specifications. Include a project timeline.
- b. Identify and explain any key risks, constraints or uncertainties that you anticipate, alongside any processes or measures in place to manage or mitigate these risks. This should make particular reference to delivery risks arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

- c. Complete the milestone table, clearly showing the milestone title, the deliverables which will have been completed by the date of submission, the associated acceptance/success criteria, date of milestone completion, associated grant value requested (invoice value), The milestone table should match the milestone table in the Budget Template.
- d. Additional information on each milestone should be included in the Milestone Details section which highlights any risks, impacts and dependencies associated with the milestone.

Section 9: Declaration

Please complete all of the check boxes and sign the declaration (electronically). Proposals will only be accepted if all the check boxes have been completed.

NOTE: Ensure you submit the Budget Template alongside your proposal. You must complete **ALL** worksheets in the Budget Template using the instructions shown in the first worksheet.

Annex C - Evaluation Criteria and marking of applications

Proposals will be assessed using the criteria and scoring scale shown below, designed to identify those proposals which offer the best Value for Money (VFM) overall. Assessors should complete the scoring sheet and provide a supporting narrative to justify their assessments against the following criteria:

Criteria	Scoring criteria	Percentage Weighting %
1. Technical feasibility	<p>Proposals must be assessed as technically feasible within the budget, range and timeframe offered. Proposals should demonstrate a realistic scope and achieve the aim of the opportunity, described in section 2 of the Call Document.</p> <p>High scoring applicants will provide a comprehensive proposal with a high probability of success, relying on involvement or deployment of existing and working technologies. Proposals will not contain weaknesses in the techniques and/or measurements to be employed but provide excellent commercial and/or scientific opportunities. Proposals will contain realistic project deliverables against the proposed timescales with strong consideration given to technical risks of the project. Proposals will include robust plans to demonstrate the performance of the technology/system.</p>	30
2. Commercial sustainability	<p>Proposals must be assessed against commercial understanding, knowledge and viability. The scoring should reflect your assessment of whether the proposed activity would generate a realistic and sustainable product for the UK market.</p> <p>High scoring applicants will provide reliable evidence that their proposal meets the requirements of UK and global ADR markets. Proposals will demonstrate strong understanding of the current market as well as how their research will be both commercially sustainable and beneficial.</p>	15
3. Benefit to the UK	<p>All projects will need to demonstrate that the investment sought from the UK Government represents clear value for the UK public, through measurable benefits for the UK economy.</p> <p>High scoring applicants will provide excellent, detailed evidence of the benefits that the government funding would enable them to provide to the UK economy, including UK-based employment and contract opportunities. The costs of any activities proposed for grant funding will be very well justified and strongly linked to outcomes and benefits.</p>	20

<p>4. Management and planning</p>	<p>All projects will need to demonstrate that they have an effective structure in place for managing the administration of the grant requested and demonstrate that they have a sound approach to planning to achieve their programme aims on time and within budget.</p> <p>High scoring applicants demonstrate an approach to risk and programme management that is aligned with industry best practice. A strong team will be identified and resourced to enable the grant funding to be administered correctly. Risks to the project management will be clearly identified alongside costed and detailed mitigations, providing a clear picture of the practicality and viability of the proposal. Risks will consider the impact of COVID-19 on the ability to meet delivery milestones as planned. Value for money will be considered as well as good time management and clear and focused documentation of progress.</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>5. Value for Money</p>	<p>All projects will need to demonstrate that they represent value for money for the taxpayer. This is demonstrated by providing appropriate budgets allocated to appropriate tasks providing significant outputs with excellent value for money.</p> <p>High scoring applicants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a cost-effective proposal. • Demonstrate the added value that the investment will bring. • Clearly identify the financial contributions from the project partners. • Show that the proposed resource is sufficient to deliver in the proposed timelines. • Show that the proposed work, level of proposed effort and overall expense is fair, reasonable and will deliver a cost-effective outcome. • Present an appropriate amount of resource allocated to work packages. • Make good use of existing project technology /outputs /partners to maximise value for money and speed of delivery. • Not demonstrate any financial red flags. • Use freely available data / platforms where possible. 	<p>15</p>

Scoring Guidance

The proposals will be scored on the scale of 1 to 10 for each criteria using the table below as a guide to the scale. The scores for each criteria will then be weighted using the percentages shown below.

Score	Assessment
0	No response is offered in respect of the criteria.
1	An incomplete or <u>very poor</u> response, which fails to address the criteria; and/or the response is not credible, with <u>no evidence</u> to support the claims made meaning there is <u>no confidence</u> of success; and/or the response is assessed as ' <u>low scoring</u> ' against the scoring criteria shown in the table above.
2	A <u>poor</u> response which only partially addresses the criteria and would require significant revision to become acceptable; and/or <u>very limited, and inadequate</u> , evidence to support the claims made meaning <u>low confidence</u> of success; and/or the response is assessed as ' <u>low scoring</u> ' against the scoring criteria shown in the table above.
4	A <u>limited</u> response with deficiencies apparent against the criteria, requiring some revision to become acceptable; and/or <u>limited</u> evidence provided supporting the claims made meaning <u>limited</u> confidence of success; and/or the response is assessed as ' <u>low scoring</u> ' against the scoring criteria.
5	An <u>acceptable</u> response which could have been expanded upon, with identified weaknesses correctable; and/or <u>just sufficient</u> evidence provided in support of the claims made meaning a <u>reasonable</u> confidence of success; and/or the response is assessed as ' <u>moderate scoring</u> ' against the scoring criteria.
7	A <u>good</u> response which addresses the criteria well, with identified weaknesses readily correctable; and/or <u>solid</u> evidence provided in support of the claims made meaning a <u>solid</u> level of confidence of success; and/or the response is assessed as ' <u>moderate scoring</u> ' against the scoring criteria.
9	A <u>very good</u> response which addresses the criteria very well with very few weaknesses; and/or <u>good evidence</u> provided in support of the claims made meaning a <u>high</u> level of confidence of success; and/or the response is assessed as ' <u>highest scoring</u> ' against the scoring criteria.
10	An <u>excellent</u> response which is considered to absolutely address the criteria without weakness; and/or <u>compelling</u> evidence provided in support of the claims made meaning success is considered to be <u>virtually assured</u> ; and/or the response is assessed as ' <u>highest scoring</u> ' against the scoring criteria.

Annex D – Application Form

The Application Form is found as a separate Annex online, alongside this Call Guidance.

Annex E – Budget Template

The Budget Template is found as a separate Annex online, alongside this Call Guidance. All sheets of the Budget Template must be completed.

Annex F – Grant Funding Agreement and Grant Offer Letter

The Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) and associated Grant Offer Letter (GOL) is included as a separate Annex online, alongside this Call Guidance. Only minor amendments to the Grant Funding Agreement will be accepted. Please contact SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk as soon as possible with any queries about the Grant Funding Agreement.

Annex G – FAQs

FAQs are included as a separate document alongside this Call Guidance. FAQs will be updated online as and when we receive questions from potential applicants. Any questions should be submitted to SST@ukspaceagency.gov.uk. Questions will be anonymised. The deadline for FAQs is 30 June.

Annex H – Applicant Checklist

This checklist has been provided at this stage to aid you with the requirements of the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). It is included here as a guidance document and does not need to be submitted alongside the application. However, if you are selected to receive a grant, you will be required to complete this checklist before signing the GFA.