DCMS DCIA Pilot Competition
Question and Answer Log

The following questions and answers are in relation to the DCMS grant funding competition "Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator (DCIA) Pilot Competition". Please send further questions to dcia-info@dcms.gov.uk The answer to your question will be added to this document if not already addressed.

We will issue further guidance and sample documents on the Grant Fund Agreement (GFA) process to all applicants, prior to announcing competition winners.

Number	Subject	Question	Final Response	Date Published
1	Process	Will you be able to share the presentation and chat afterwards please?	Yes, we will share a pdf copy of the presentation slides and a copy of the chat in a text file, which will be emailed to all participants w/c 20th September 2021	17/09/2021
2	Process	Is there a favoured or prescribed way of making contact with MNO's for this pilot project?	Mobile UK are happy to be facilitate introductions to MNO's by lead local authorities	17/09/2021
3	Clarification	Is the DCIA Pilot competition only for 5G Cellular or can we use WiFi too?	DCIA project is agnostic of wireless communications technology choices. The focus is on enabling the use of Local Authorities' property assets (land, buildings, street furtniture) for deployment of any advanced wireless networks infrastructure. While it is expected that 5G network rollouts will drive most of the interest, 4G, LPWAN, WiFi, etc. are all relevant for consideration.	17/09/2021
4	Clarification	Please confirm scope is whole of UK and benefiting 5G but also wider telco infrastructure as well?	Yes it is the whole of the UK. We are focussed on publicly owned assets. Please refer to Competition Application Guidance material for more information about this.	17/09/2021
5	Clarification	Were there any Street Lighting solution providers involved in the Tech Spec build?	No Street Lighting solution providers were involved in Digital Platform Technical Specification, but we would welcome their invovement in another DCIA prgramme stream (Smart Infrastructure Standards) which is due to commence soon. If you require any further elaboration on reasons why, please contact dcia-info@dcms.gov.uk	17/09/2021
6	Clarification	Who will 'own' the final platform ? Is this going to be hosted by .gov. uk ?	There is no intention for Central Government to develop or host a platform. We expect multiple platforms to be used in pilots, provided by a range of platform providers. Following the pilots we will draw upon learnings and further stakeholder engagement to understand whether further interventions are needed to ensure long term sustainablity of solutions (ref. section 2.2.7. in the Application Guidance).	17/09/2021
7	Clarification	Can an area such as Dorset bid for DCIA without a "Regional" partner. Some of the language being used seems to be suggestinga bid must be led by a regional authority? We are planning on leading a bid as Dorset Council working with a number of partners but without any "regional authority" participation. Would that be OK?	Please refer to the application guidance document :- 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.

In summary, applications from groups comprising only one participating Local Authority will not be considered as this will not allow the pilot to fulfill its objectives (ref. sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2 in the Application Guidance) . To be considered, applications should include participation of at least two and preferably several Local Authorities within a regional authority or a representative body (ref. Eligibility section on page 6 of the Application Guidance). | 17/09/2021 |
8	Clarification	Will the opportunity to look at Public Assets include state aided funded infrastructure i.e. Masts built as part of the DCMS Superfast programme.	We welcome the addition of other asset data sets into the platform, as long as it is an addition to Local Authority asset data. This is covered in section 3.2 of the DCIA Competition Application Guidance - "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. "	17/09/2021
9	Clarification	Is this competition focussed entirely upon asset management or is there any scope for innovative passive equipment to improve physical infrastucture?	The aim of the pilots is to accelerate access to public sector assets as candidate sites for wireless connectivity. There is no scope to assess or recommend changes to passive or active equipment.	17/09/2021
10	Clarification	Could an asset owning organisation,someone like Highways England, act as the lead?	We are looking for a regional authority, a group of local authorities, with one to be the lead applicant. Highways England can be involved with a local authority, but as a lead no.	17/09/2021
11	Clarification	Is it capital and revenue funding support?	All our Grant funding is capital expenditure in regards to DCMS. For the grant recipient organisation, costs might be capitalised under accounting principles as long as they are within UK regulations and provide calculations to DCMS. More information can be found in the Template Grant Funding Agreement on the DCIA Gov.uk webpage however, if you require further clarification please do contact the DCMS at dcia-info@dcms.gov.uk	17/09/2021
12	Clarification	Is the Technical Specification available to LAs?	Yes. Draft Technical Specification is publicly available to access within the collection of DCIA competition supporting documents. The final version of the Technical Specification will also be publicly available in the autumn of 2021 subject to any additional stakeholder input. Further announcements on this will follow in due course.	17/09/2021
13	Clarification	Is it possible to be a supplier to multiple responses?	Yes. There is no limit on how many applications each supplier can support.	17/09/2021

14	Clarification	What are seen as the biggest barriers to communicating with Citizens?	The aim of the pilots is to accelerate access to public sector assets as candidate sites for wireless connectivity. Working with DCMS, DfT and other organisations, successful pilots 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.	17/09/2021	
15	Clarification	How does subsidy control work with Northern Ireland?	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 includes a section specifically on Northern Ireland and this 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	17/09/2021	
16	Clarification	Has there been consideration of the potential role of the three devolved Gvts in the project?	Yes, representatives from the three devolved nations have been engaged so far.	17/09/2021	
17	Clarification	Are SME's to be encouraged, included and/or required in the DCIA Pilot competition?	Yes, in the competition guidance we have made special mention to using local SME's.	17/09/2021	
18	Clarification	Is there any more detail regarding MNO requirements?	In terms of MNO requirements for a platform solution? These have been set out, through the co-development groups, in the technical specification. This can be found in supporting document 3 on the competition web page.	17/09/2021	
19	Clarification	Is DCMS looking for County wide applications, or are smaller colloborations of LA's and partners welcomed?	The guidance for this question can be found in the competition application guidance document, and reads as follows: 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.	17/09/2021	
20	Clarification	How will you help avoid all bids basically looking the same and encourage diversity?	Please refer to question 82 to see amended answer	17/09/2021	
21	Clarification	Specifically what is meant by Review Sites and Specific Attributes beyond height, power and fibre	Please refer to Draft Technical Specification, section 3.3., for a detailed list of recommended asset attributes.	17/09/2021	
22	Clarification	How are you working with other Gov challenges e.g. aviation ?	We are actively engaging with other government departments to drive efficiences. We are looking to collaborate as much as possible, to take advantage of progress that's been made in other areas. Through this dialogue we expect to cover a wide range of challenges in an open manner.	17/09/2021	
23	Clarification	Will towers built for ESN also be included ?	We welcome the addition of other asset data sets into the platform, as long as it is an addition to Local Authority asset data. This is covered in section 3.2 of the DCIA Competition Application Guidance - "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.	17/09/2021	
24	Clarification	Could this include both public and private assets if these can be brokered via co-op for example which has both public and private members?	Yes. We welcome the addition of other asset data sets into the platform, as long as it is an addition to Local Authority asset data. This is covered in section 3.2 of the DCIA Competition Application Guidance - "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."	17/09/2021	
25	Clarification	Does this competition apply to the whole of the UK?	Yes, we've had good engagement from all devolved nations so far.	17/09/2021	
26	Clarification	What is the role for Universities?	We recommend a conversation with the local authority, that the University is within, to explore the role that can be played.	17/09/2021	
27	Clarification	What percentage of project costs are covered by the grant?	DCMS will fund 100% of costs bourne by Lead Regional/Local Authorities. Where there is onward granting, Authorities will have to ensure that this is undertaken in a subsidy control compliant manner as outlined in the competition guidance. (some onward granting may need to be made at lower aid intensities).	17/09/2021	
28	Clarification	Can "assets" include mobile assets ?	We are not 100% sure what is meant by "mobile assets", but we welcome the addition of other asset data sets into the platform, as long as it is an addition to Local Authority asset data. This is covered in section 3.2 DCIA Competition Application Guidance - "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. "	17/09/2021	
29	Clarification	If we are already in the process of doing this kind of engagement, how would that work?	We encourage applications from regions and local authorities at different levels of maturity in their application of a solution. In circumstances where a Local Authority has already made progress in digital asset management, we see an opportunity to test further scaling up and wider regional adoption of the approach.	17/09/2021	
30	Clarification	Are cross border applications, e.g. acoss England and Scotland, possible?	Yes, as long as a collaboration agreement is in place according to the competition guidance. Also taking into account the special consideration for the funding routes. If further input from finance is required on such an approach we can follow-up with finance team.	17/09/2021	
31	Clarification	Are there plans to merge/synergise any government strategies on facilitating/mapping fibre connectivity with this Pilot Competition?	Yes, DCMS have enaged with other government programmes, such as BDUK and NUAR, to ensure cross programme alignment. Section 3.4 of the Digital Platform Technical Specification also covers this point.	17/09/2021	
32	Clarification	Is there guidance on identifying technology partners as a Local Authority?	To a degree yes, through information provided within the Draft Technical Specification and by identifying required capabilities in the Application Guidance (ref. section 3.2). We also hope that the networking tools we have made available will help Local Authorities identify technology partners of interest.	17/09/2021	
33	Clarification	Given there is not currently mass small cell roll out in all parts of the UK, how will this factor in to the evaluation? Will certain areas of high commercial interest be rated higher than others?	The underlying process to access a local authority asset is the same in high or low demand areas, so the problem being addressed is the same in both areas. Section 2.2.1 and 3.2 of the Competition Application Guidance explain the geographical criteria for a successful bid. The programme aim is to cover a broad range of diverse geospatial and socio-economic characteristics within the pilots.	17/09/2021	

34	Clarification	What is the weightage on use of AI and Machine Learning to predictive and prescriptive analytics solutions ?	Not in scope for this project	17/09/2021	
35	Clarification	What is the thinking beyond the pilot. Is there likely to be funding made available for local authorities to catch up with the successful areas in order that they can also have these digital platforms.	Following the pilots we will draw upon learnings and further stakeholder engagement to understand whether further interventions are needed to ensure long term sustainablity of solutions (ref. section 2.2.7. in the Application Guidance).	17/09/2021	
36	Clarification	Can multiple applications be made by a lead applicant to include various contigiuos local authorities?	Yes	17/09/2021	
37	Clarification	What is the max grant amount for research organiations as partners?	The competition guidance document outlines the eligibility criteria for proposals led by any local or Regional Authority. These lead authorities will need to ensure that any onward granting (including to any research organisations) is undertaken in a subsidy control compliant manner.	17/09/2021	
38	Clarification	Do you see a role for neutral hosts in partnering with local authorities?	Yes, we are open to receiving bids that address this approach	17/09/2021	
39	Clarification	The guidance highlights role of a 'neutral convener' - could you describe this role?	A role of a 'neutral convener' is an option whereby an independent party could be introduced to act as a platform operator and a provider of neutral brokerage service to asset owners and asset users.	17/09/2021	
40	Clarification	What is the timeline for questions to be answered via the DCMS email address?	The deadline to submit questions is the 5th November 2021. We aim to answer these questions within two working days of receipt.	17/09/2021	
41	Clarification	Do you see asset contextual data as being "public" i.e. available to all, or can the data sharing requirements be more complex? E.g. An asset's details may only be available to some.	We expect that access to asset data will be controlled and managed in accordance to user agreements and security standards. Please refer to Draft Technical Specification for details.	17/09/2021	
42	Clarification	Could an asset management expert from the Republic or Ireland partner with a UK LA ?	Yes, as the Local Authority will be UK-based. It is down to the Local Authority to make the right arrangements if they are sub-contracting out as they are the fund receiver of the grant.	17/09/2021	
43	Clarification	We have an estate of digital street furniture that can integrate 5G infrastructure. Would we need one or more local authorities to partner with if we wanted to be included in the DCIA pilot.	We welcome the addition of other asset data sets into the platform, as long as it is an addition to Local Authority asset data. This is covered in section 3.2 of the DCIA Competition Application Guidance - "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. "	17/09/2021	
44	Clarification	What are the key metrics that will be evaluated to consider a pilot as successful?	Applications will be assessed on how they demonstrate they can meet the pilot objectives and how they can deliver against the Test Cases both of which are outlined in the Competition Guidance document.	17/09/2021	
45	Clarification	Will the 3 minute pitch presentations be shared?	A full recording of the presentation and 3min pitches will be made available.	17/09/2021	
46	Clarification	Is this funding available to the internet providers	No, the funding is made available to Local Authorities or Regional Authorities	17/09/2021	
47	Clarification	We have our own assets and we are provider, do we have to callobrate with the councils across the country?	We welcome the addition of other asset data sets into the platform, as long as it is an addition to Local Authority asset data. This is covered in section 3.2 of the DCIA Competition Application Guidance - "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. "	17/09/2021	
48	Clarification	The grant conditions state that, "no single Project Partner (including the Lead Partner) may incur more than 70% of the total Eligible Expenditure". Is more than one local authority required?	Applications from groups comprising only one participating Local Authority will not be considered as this will not allow the pilot to fulfill its objectives (ref. sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2 in the Application Guidance) . To be considered, applications should include participation of at least two and preferably several Local Authorities within a regional authority or a representative body (ref. Eligibility section on page 6 of the Application Guidance).

We have identified an error within the Grant Funding Agreement Template document Annex 4. The 70% limit in terms of project partners eligible expenses does not apply for this competition. We will be uploading a corrected version of the document shortly. | 17/09/2021 | |
| 49 | Clarification | The grant conditions state that "the total sub-contracting cost for the Project must be limited to 30% of the Total Project Costs". Please can you confirm that the costs of providing the platform itself is not included within this 30%. | We have identified an error within the Grant Funding Agreement Template document Annex 4. The 30% limit of total project costs for subcontracting does not apply for this competition. We will be uploading a corrected version of the document shortly. | 17/09/2021 | |

50	Clarification	If successful, do you envisage DCMS signing a grant agreement with the lead LA and then the LA procuring the digital platform and other private sector inputs required?	The most appropriate approach to securing the use of a platform will depend on specific circumstances and supporting processes of each lead authority. In general, we envisage a couple of likely approaches. First one of these is that given the nature of the pilot, and subject to an internal review and approval, a lead authority may be able to onward grant funding for fundamental research and development work. This would require some investment from the platform provider, and might be competed or awarded in line with internal policies. The other possible approach, given the relatively low value of funding allocated to a platform provider (possibly below internal procurement thresholds), is to use a light-touch evaluation or direct award to a preferred supplier. The key consideration for any chosen approach is that it should be relatively fast so as not to jeopardise overall ability of the applicant to deliver the pilot within timelines specified in the competition guidance. Preferably the selection of a platform provider should take place as part of the competition bid preparations, with the supplier funding conditional on the bid itself being successful. Finally, we would also encourage all applicants to consult with their industry partners in the pilot, Mobile Network Operators and other telecommunication infrastructure providers, with regards to selection of a suitable platform.	24/09/2021	
51	Clarification	Will bidders need a single, confirmed, platform provider on-board at the time the application is made (18 November)?	Yes, preferably we would expect the bid response to include a single confirmed platform provider. We recognise the challenge of securing a participation of a platform provider before the deadline for submission of applications, but believe there are suitable approaches to do so relatively quickly. Please refer to our Q&A response to previous related questions for further details.	24/09/2021	
52	Clarification	Could a pilot area trial more than one potential platform / provider as part of the same project?	No. We'd discourage a pilot area from using more than one platform as this would introduce significant complexities to the delivery of the project, specifically the ability of each pilot to manage complex data sets and execute test cases across multiple Local Authorities within given timelines.	24/09/2021	
53	Clarification	Are potential technology partners required to have headquarters in the UK to be acceptable within the terms of the competition?	The competition guidance does not preclude organisations whose headquarters are outside the UK so long as the work that partner is delivering on the project is within the UK and that any additional Lead Bidder requirements are met.	24/09/2021	
54	Clarification	Have all the questions that were asked in the briefing event been captured in this question and answer log?	Yes, all questions that were asked in the live event have been captured in this log, including the ones where answer was given on the day of the event. The live briefing is also available to review here.	01/10/2021	
55	Clarification	Would a local authority which has an active exclusive concession contract for access to lamp columns in place be eligible for applying for funding?	Yes. Pilots can and should include data on multiple asset types (land, buildings and street furtniture) notwitstanding any current contractual arrangements.	01/10/2021	
56	Clarification	Can you please clarify the expected role of Industry is in the pilot?	The expected role of Industry is to be an active part of the consortium in the testing phase, to test the platform(s) as part of their operational processes and tools, and then report back on the findings against the test cases.	01/10/2021	
57	Clarification	Can the competition funding be used for a group of authorities to map their assets so that these are ready for the next stage of deployment?	Yes. Please refer to the Competition Guidance sections: 2.2.1 (Competition Objectives), 2.2.5 (High Level Test Cases) and 2.3 (Funding), all of which reflect the management of asset data by Local Authorities as central to delivery of the pilots, and the funding assistance provided towards it.	01/10/2021	
58	Clarification	Should an individual bid ideally cover a mix of geographies (urban sub-urban and rural), or is it preferable for an individual bid to focus specifically on either urban or rural (i.e. one or the other)?	If an applicant's region includes diverse geographies within its boundaries (urban, suburban and rural) than we would expect these to be included in the scope of the pilot test case execution. In those cases where a region has limited geographic diversity (e.g. a predominantly metropolitan or rural region) we will consider a more limited range of geographies as long as an effort has been made to include some degree of variety.	08/10/2021	
59	Clarification	Is securing a service or product from a partner for the purposes of the pilot project in any way affected by Subsidy Control? Does the method of procurement impact on this at all?	Assuming that the organisation has a grant agreement with the local/regional authority in question, generally purchasing of any service as a subcontract should be undertaken at cost and consistent with subsidy control.	15/10/2021	
60	Clarification	Would the element of a Digital Asset Management Platform that illustrates current mobile coverage be an eligible cost for funding if the intention was that this data could inform the discussion with MNOs over where assets might be deployed for use?	While we expect that the platforms selected for use in the pilots should meet Technical Specification guidance as a minimum requirement, a selected platform may and is likely to contain richer set of features and functions. Decision on which features to include for use in the pilot should be based on the agreement between the lead authority, its telecom industry partners (including participating MNOs), and the platform provider. Assuming this agreement between partners is in place, overall funding amount for use of the platform will be acceptable as long as it is reasonable and proportional to other elements of the pilot and subject to the overall funding limit for each pilot.	15/10/2021	
61	Clarification	Technical Specification document advises caution with respect to including mobile coverage data and fibre availability maps within a platform on grounds of security and commercial confidentiality. Would these be acceptable features of a selected platform if it was possible to control their visibility by logon credentials?	With respect to mobile coverage data, we would advise that the lead authority discusses this with its telecom industry partners and particularly with participating MNOs. MNO and industry partners should agree to inclusion of coverage data prior to it being added to the scope of platform functionality. With respect to fibre availability maps, it is evident that majority of stakeholders recognise the value in including these in the scope of the pilots. However, there are some clear risks to critical infrastructure security associated with the inclusion of this data. We welcome proposals from applicants to include fibre availability data in their approach, subject to further guidance from government's security agencies on the use of this information. Please refer to the test case 7 in Section 2.2.5 of the Pilot Application Guidance document.	15/10/2021	
62	Clarification	Would the provision of asset survey services to bring the quality of all asset data up to an agreed quality, description and standard of metadata entries be an eligible cost for funding?	Yes. In general, project management costs are eligible for funding. Efforts which are clearly aimed at ensuring that accurate asset data is available within the pilot will be considered as acceptable, as long as costs are reasonable and proportional to other elements of the pilot and subject to the overall funding limit.	15/10/2021	

63	Clarification	Would the project management costs of consortium partners to deliver their element of the solution be eligible for funding? Would these be 100% fundable rather than subject to Subsidy Control percentages?	Project management costs are eligible. Given that the local or regional authority will be managing any onward granting/contracting they will have to make the determination. All costs across one grant partner should be at the same subsidy rate.	15/10/2021	
64	Clarification	Can you please confirm that where small businesses can claim back 60% of the costs incurred, 50% for medium businesses, etc, for public/3rd sector organisations 100% of costs incurred can be claimed?	This is for the local/regional authority to designate as DCMS are only funding Local/Regional Authorities directly. By and large the subsidy rates listed here are correct when it comes to experimental development.	22/10/2021	
65	Clarification	Can the funding be used to fund an existing post, either in part or in full, if the time paid for is fully allocated to delivery of the DCIA project? Can the funding be used to also cover the on-costs for any post, whether newly recruited or existing as above?	Yes. With regards to on costs, LAs can claim for overheads in the finance form.	22/10/2021	
66	Clarification	What happens if there is underspend by the consortium at the end of the project?	Spend is paid in arrears, if spend isn't incurred, grant payments will not be made for the associated under spend.	22/10/2021	
67	Clarification	If a lead LA has a track record in securing agreement from their two-tier authorities in working through a central funding allocation with the lead LA as the Accountable Body. Then, for the purposes of the pilot could they draw up their own collaboration agreement to sign with the authorities or does DCMS envisage drafting one to send to us? Would this be separate to any Grant Agreement?	DCMS would review any collaboration agreement to ensure that it meets minimum standards. But it doesnt dictate a specific set of words (we can offer an example if required).	22/10/2021	
68	Clarification	We have already carried out significant data collection and categorisation across our local authorities and we already have learning to apply to several of the test cases. Can we apply this learning, or would we be expected to carry out additional intelligence gathering activity?	We certainly encourage all regions to apply relevant previous learnings to the delivery of the pilot as much as possible. Whether further sourcing and cleansing of asset data will be required will depend on specific circumstances of each region. This may be needed in order to bring in additional local authorities into the pilot, to extend the range of asset types included in the data, to address specific industry requirements, etc. Technical Specification document may reveal some of these additional requirements but again, much will depend on the context of the region and needs of its supporting partners.	22/10/2021	
69	Clarification	Is there any advice that can be provided on the basis on which a local authority is able to spend money with a pre-selected companies?	DCMS is funding the Local or Regional Authority, they can propose spend in different ways consistent with their own grant and procurment policies.	22/10/2021	
70	Clarification	Guidance states "All Pilot Leads, Participants and Partners in selected projects must sign up to the 5G Testbeds and Trials" - Can we obtain a copy of the Programme Participation Agreement	The Programme Participation Agreement is available on the DCIA website here	22/10/2021	
71	Clarification	Public perception of 5G can sometimes be negative and prompt the community to contact their Local Authority. Are there any resources available such as proactive communications been drafted by DCMS to assist in such enquiries?	We recognise the importance of providing clear and accurate information about 5G to communities. UK5G will shortly be running five regional workshops for local authorities and LEPs across the UK, which you may find helpful to attend. More details are available on the UK5G website.	22/10/2021	
72	Clarification	Will MNOs or their representatives share information on their network rollout plans to support engagement with regions and local authorities?	We expect that all MNOs and their delivery partners will engage with regions and provide their support to deliver successful pilots, notwithstanding commercial sensitivities as referenced in Section 3.4 of Technical Specification. All telecommunication industry stakeholders have been strongly supportive of the DCIA programme, providing extensive contributions to Technical Specification co-development workshops during which the need for alignment of MNOs' and Local Authorities' priorities has been recognised. We'd recommend that the lead authority discusses this need and explores suitable approaches with their partner MNOs and telecom infrastructure providers during preparation of an application.	22/10/2021	
73	Clarification	In the DCIA Competition Application Guidance page 14, it states "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". Can you explain what this means?	In addition to capabilities and resources required to deliver a pilot and eligible for DCMS funding, see Section 2.3 of Application Guidance, it is envisaged that other partners and participants in the pilot will need to provide additional resources and materials as part of their involvement. Exact details will be unique to each proposal but are likely to involve in-kind contributions in form of expert resources (time and effort) and specific materials (such as trial licences for the use of software tools, data sets, etc.). In some circumstances partners may agree to provide additional funding to the consortium to enable a broader scope of outcomes to be delivered. These additional contributions can be wide ranging in their nature and will demonstrate a strength of commitment from each partner and the consortium as a whole.	22/10/2021	
74	Clarification	Contained within your response to question 50, you state 'a lead authority may be able to onward grant funding for fundamental research and development work'. Please could you clarify what this means. Our interpretation is that the LA can give the money to a third party as a grant rather than as a payment?	This is for the Local or Regional Authority to determine. DCMS has given money for similar to organisations under experimental development grant payments in the past (with sub-100% subsidy intensity).	22/10/2021	
75	Clarification	What format do you expect to see the agreement between Project Partners to be in? Is it anticipated that a legal agreement, contract or MOU be in place between the core consortium members or are letters of intent or support from partners acceptable?	Specific form of the agreement is at discretion of the lead authority depending on its specific policies or preferences. Any of the forms suggested by the question will be acceptable for the purposes of application assessment. (Also please refer to question 67)	22/10/2021	
76	Clarification	What format do you expect to see the agreement between Project Participants to be in? Will a letter or a statement of support or intent be sufficient confirmation of project participant status?	Specific form of the agreement is at discretion of the lead authority depending on its specific policies or preferences. Whilst welcome, such documented confirmations are not required for the purposes of application assessment. A named reference to Project Participant organisations within Section A of the Application Form will be sufficient. (Also please refer to question 67)	22/10/2021	

77	Clarification	Will letters of endorsement or support from other stakeholders who are not involved in the project now, or in future, but are of strategic significance to regional working be accepted?	Such documented confirmations from non-participating organisations are not required for the purposes of application assessment.	22/10/2021	
78	Clarification	With reference to Section 2.2.4 of the Application Guidance, and in respect of "intent to permanently adopt and use the platform"; Will this be considered on a regional or individual authority basis? i.e.: Has the regional consortia permanently adopted OR how many of the authorities involved in the consortia have permanently adopted? In addition, does DCMS recognise that permanent adoption of any platform by any individual or collective entity would be subject to open procurement rules and therefore commitment to permanently adopt a specific platform would not be possible until such a process had taken place after the pilot phase? Would a commitment to permanently adopt "a platform solution for digital asset management" be sufficient at this stage?	Section 2.2.4 in the Application Guidance refers to the success criteria by which all pilots and an overall programme will be measured at the end. While several possible options for a suitable operating model and related commercial and procurement considerations are understood in principle, the purpose of the pilots is to establish which of these may constitute best practice and how such can be replicated at the national level. High level test cases described in Section 2.2.5, specifically test cases 3, 4 and 5 explain this in more detail.

DCMS will consult and work together with successful applicants to define an appropriate method by which to ascertain intent to permanently adopt and use the platform following the completion of the pilots. It is not necessary to provide indications of such intent for the purposes of the application assessment. | 22/10/2021 | |
79	Clarification	With reference to Section 2.2.4 of the Application Guidance and in respect of "effectiveness of interaction", how does DCMS suggest this be measured as part of the pilots?	DCMS will consult and work together with successful applicants and their partners to define an appropriate method by which to measure effectiveness of interactions between local authorities and the industry.	22/10/2021	
80	Clarification	Does DCMS envisage that Platform providers participate as 'Project Partners' within any successful Pilot (rather than as 'Project Participants' or 'Key Project Suppliers'), and if so, could DCMS please clarify its requirements in relation to the submission of 'Copies of 2 years of the latest accounts for each partner' if such partners have been in existence for fewer than 2 years?	For the purpose of this grant payment, DCMS will only be funding Local or Regional Authorities. Authorities may choose to contract or onward grant, subject to their own rules. The only organisations that we're assessing in this competition are grant recipients.	22/10/2021	
81	Clarification	Can assets that were deployed/supported by public subsidy be in scope of the DCIA pilot? The most obvious example would be a mast site built using public subsidy for fixed wireless access broadband, and if it would be appropriate from a State Aid / Subsidy Control perspective for these to be offered to the market to improve connectivity coverage. Grateful for any guidance you can give?	As long as assets are publicly owned, e.g. by the Local or Regional Authority, then they are eligible for use within the pilot. The source of funding or subsidy for these assets is not relevant for the DCIA programme. In fact, reference to the use of subsidised assets could add a layer of interest which you might want to consider in additional test cases. (Also please refer to question 23).	22/10/2021	
82	Clarification	How will you help avoid all bids basically looking the same and encourage diversity?	Amended answer (22/10):
We expect to receive applications from a wide variety of regions with diverse geographies, socio-economic profiles, and local industrial strategies reflecting different approaches in development of digital connectivity. In addition, each region and its local authorities are likely to have a different level of capability in asset and data management, with different supporting MNOs, telecoms infrastructure providers, and platform and professional services providers. It is this specificity of regional context and pilot delivery ecosystem that should reveal both shared and unique challenges in adoption of digital asset management across all pilots. This in turn will help generate learnings and best practice that can be replicated across the UK.	22/10/2021	
83	Clarification	If a project based in Scotland was to win, would DCMS consider the collaboration agreement being governed by Scots Law. It would be more practical that Scots Law applies rather than English law.	Unfortunately, DCMS cannot change the governing law of it's Grant Funding Agreement. So it must adhere to English law.	29/10/2021	
84	Clarification	"On page 12 - 13 of the guidance note you state that:
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 13 consortium partner management, administration of the GFA, benefits realisation, etc.

As the funding will be transferred as capital, please can you provide confirmation that you are comfortable with the Lead Partner authority applying the capital grant to cover the cost of these activities." | Yes, DCMS is comfortable - these activities are core requirements of the R,D&I activities that the funding is linked to, so will be reasonably be treated as capital | 29/10/2021 | |
| 85 | Clarification | I have a question for the DCIA application process. It states that it requires copies of 2 years of the latest accounts for each partner; does this apply to local authority and government body partners? | A similar question has been previously answered by us. Please refer to ref 80. | 29/10/2021 | |

86	Clarification	In the application form on the last page in the section titled "supporting information" it asks for the "address of location" please clarify if this is the address of the lead organisation or something else?	This is the address for the location that the feasibility study and pilot project will be carried out, which could be the address of the lead organisation.	29/10/2021	
87	Clarification	As outlined in the guidance there are four role categories "project lead"; "project partner"; "project participants" and "key project suppliers". The guidance states that "project partners" will not receive grant funding. Does that mean that there can be more than one project lead? Or is the intention of DCMS that the project lead is the sole grant recipient and required to act as banker on behalf of the consortium i.e. making payments to other project partners?	A consortia of Local Authorities can all receive money from DCMS (it will tend to be distributed by the lead partner). Beyond Local Authorities - the lead will be responsible for procuring or onward granting for all other participants.	29/10/2021	
88	Clarification	In the application form each "project partner" is asked to provide a signed project finance form and copies of 2 years of the latest accounts – is this only required for "project partners" who will receive funding? Or do "project partners" who will not receive any funding also be required to provide this information?	A similar question has been previously answered by us. Please refer to ref 80.	29/10/2021	
89	Clarification	On the project finance form, summary tab, the maximum amount that can be claimed from DCMS funding is capped at 50% - is this correct as there is no corresponding information in the guidance.	Local Authorities can claim 100% of costs.	29/10/2021	
90	Clarification	Question re DCMS DCIA Competition: The 'Digital_Connectivity_Infrastructure_Accelerator_Pilot_General_Guid ance_for_Grant_Applicants.pdf' refers, on page 3, to "If your project is a collaboration you will be asked to provide a collaboration agreement. This is included in the competition materials." Is this the 'DCIA Programme Participation Agreement'? If it is, does each consortium partner sign a separate PPA or are all partners to be added to single document? If it not this document, can you please provide a direct link to download a copy of the collaboration agreement?	Please refer to supporting document 2: Template Grant Funding Agreement (Version 2: updated 20 Sept 2021). Annex 3 contains the minimum requirements for the collaboration agreement. The collaboration agreement is different to the project participation agreement. If your bid is successful and your project is a collaboration, you will be required to complete the agreement as part of the GFA finalisation process.	05/11/2021	
91	Clarification	Is it possible to have a list of parties (authorities / delivery partners) and the contacts who have expressed interest, so that I can get in touch to see if they have already selected a Digital Asset Management software partner, and explore the ability to be part of a consortium.	JAG are happy to be facilitate introductions to local authorities	05/11/2021	
92	Clarification	The draft technical specification provided for the digital asset management platform is very detailed. Are these core functionality requirements considered as minimum requirements or is there a discretion where platform providers are currently unable to meet every requirement?	The draft technical specification should be considered as a minimum set of platform features necessary to execute high-level test cases and to deliver a successful pilot. Therefore, we recommend that applicants use a platform which by and large meets the specification.

If this is not the case, and an applicant prefers to use a platform with gaps in its available features, our main concern is that delivery of the pilot will be delayed by the time needed for the platform provider to perform further software development to meet necessary requirements. This is a particular risk considering relatively short timeframes available for overall project delivery.

Therefore, if an applicant has assessed that its selected platform is lacking some of the features specified in the Technical Specification, it should present a clear and credible plan of how it will mitigate against risks of delay or of not being able to execute required test cases. | 05/11/2021 | |
| 93 | Clarification | We have a clarification question on the Technical Spec for the platform on the DCIA.

Please could you expand on the below requirement and explain what it means:

"Ability to swap 'all active references' to a particular User with a reference to another User if required, e.g., where a User is listed as the contact point for a particular Asset or the enquirer for leasing an Asset." | The requirement in question envisages a scenario where an organisation actively using the platform has a nominated representative (i.e. a User). Such representative will have a certain information linked to it within the platform (i.e. active references). At some point, an organisation may decide to re-assign its representatives due to change in individual responsibilities. When this happens, it should be possible to transfer all information linked to the previous representative onto the new representative with a simple instruction within the platform, rather than having to do so one-by-one for each asset or information instance.

As an illustrative example, say John Smith has been responsible for asset management at A Council. For this reason, all A Council's individual assets presented on the platform (perhaps tens or hundreds of assets) had John Smith as the main contact for any enquires about the use of A Council's asset by telecom companies. John then decided to retire and Jane Anon was recruited as his replacement. Upon setting herself up as a user on the platform, Jane asked the organisation's Administrator to change all the contact references to herself for enquires on any of the A Council's assets on the platform. The Administrator did so with one simple instruction on the platform.

This is just one of many possible examples, but hopefully it helps explain the requirement. | 05/11/2021 | |

94	Clarification	Based upon previous experience of DCMS funding calls, are there any finance ratio expectations between the public sector and private sector that we need to be aware of? For example, of a £500k pilot bid where a local authority is requesting £400k of the grant funding and the private sector platform provider is requesting £100k, would this be ok for the purposes of the DCMS?	There are not. From a DCMS perspective, all funding is going to the Local Or Regional Authority. Onward granting or contracting will be at the discretion of the Local or Regional Authority.	05/11/2021	
95	Clarification	Can foreign-registered companies participate in the pilot as a digital platform provider? Are such companies able to receive DCIA funding via the Local / Regional Authorities?	Yes foreign registered companies can participate, as the Local/Regional Authority will be UK-based. Yes, foreign companies can receive funding via local/regional authorities. It is down to the Local/ Regional Authority to make the right arrangements if they are sub-contracting out as they are the fund receiver of the grant. Please also refer to ref 53 in the log.	05/11/2021	
96	Clarification	As I understand it, all project partners should provide accounts for the last 2 years. What if they don't have accounts for the last 2 years given they are so new?	If the participant is not receiving DCMS grant funding - but rather is receiving onward funding from the Local or Regional Authrotiy, DCMS will not require evidence of accounts, you will need to satisfy internal controls within the Authority.	12/11/2021	
97	Clarification	Is the company delivering the asset database a Supplier or a Partner? This could also apply to anyone carrying out asset survey work for the project. If the company is to be classed as a Supplier then procurement rules state that a tendering and procurement exercise may be required depending on the value of the contract. We are concerned that this would cause a delay in the delivery of the project and not the preferred solution partner would be able to be part of the bid.	"In addition to the response provided here we would advise referring to previous answers on the Q&A log, some of which are related to the definitions of project roles while several others relate to possible approaches to sourcing of supporting platform and services. Please note that the assignment of roles has implications broader than receipt of funding, specifically on the governance structure of the project as well as the requirement for the organisations involved to sign the participation agreement. Ultimately it is the lead authority's decision how best to assign the roles based on these considerations. Specifically related to funding, DCMS is granting money to local or regional authorities at 100% of costs incurred. Lead authority can choose to onboard a platform provider or another type of service provider in whatever way suits them, procurement of services and goods is one manner of doing so, but the authorities can utilise onward granting in order to deliver the trial and development work in a manner which is consistent with subsidy control rules."	12/11/2021	
98	Clarification	Is it possible/acceptable for a Project Partner in the bid to also be marked on a finance form as a supplier?	Yes, this is acceptable	12/11/2021	
99	Clarification	The final sentence of fifth paragraph on page 4 (background) of the Application Guidance document reads "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." Doesn't make sense since there is an "or" included but no second option in terms of the action that should be taken?	This is a typographical error. Please ignore the word "either" in the referred to sentenced, which should read as "Successful bidders are expected to source platforms in line with functionality as described in the specification."	12/11/2021	
100	Clarification	On page 17 of the application guidance document under section 3.3 the table defines a Project Partner as "These are any other organisations not receiving grant funding form 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." Is this a drafting error? Our understanding from the other documentation reviewed is that a Project Partner can receive onward granting from the Project Lead? Please clarify.	Please refer to answer given to a previous question on the Q&A log - reference #97	12/11/2021	
101	Clarification	Regarding the commitment from a platform provider to work on the project, what exactly is required to submit a compliant bid in terms of agreements between the lead authority and the platform provider? Is a letter of support and evidence of a de-risked procurement route meaning the authority can appoint subject to funding enough?	This would constitute a compliant bid.	12/11/2021	
102	Clarification	Please can you give more guidance regarding ownership of IP created through this project? For example, if some funded projects provide grant funding for the development costs to platform providers and other funded projects seek joint venture models then how will that be managed? There is no incentive for platform providers to work with projects seeking joint venture type models if some projects are grant funding development costs. Are local authorities allowed to use the grant funding to procure/create and own IP?	Generation and use of IP needs to be consistent with the use of subsidies - DCMS would expect wide sharing of IP generated to support the wider LA/RA community.	12/11/2021	
103	Clarification	Is there a role for SBRI models to be used in the funded project to co-develop a platform and seek an R+D contract from the market?	It could be an appropriate route for LA/RAs to take.	12/11/2021	

104	Clarification	Given the range of development costs for different providers, how will DCMS ensure a range of platform providers work on projects and we don't end up with a single market leader which is offering the lowest cost to bidders which ends up on all the projects?	As advised in Section 7.3 of the Application Guidance, point 4, preferred applicants will be selected based on individual scores while also considering 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. Competition and policy objectives are set out in detail in Section 2.2 of the Application Guidance. Sub-sections describe a significant range of considerations which include the diversity of regions, capabilities, industry participation, market competitiveness, etc. Note that Section 2.2.2 specifically refers to "evidence of sustainable supplier diversity and fair competition for provision of Digital Asset Management Platform solutions". Therefore, we expect to see several different platform providers represented across successful applications.	12/11/2021	
105	Clarification	There is an argument the platform providers should not be funded at all in this programme because funding gap is with local authorities' data inputs and not the private sector which will invest to meet a market need. Will a bid still be complaint if we zero out any funding for a platform provider?	Yes. If you're able to deliver at nil cost, that is fine.	12/11/2021	
106	Clarification	What are acceptable calculations for local authority costs? How much detail is required?	Utilise the appropriate tabs on the finance form to break down those costs.	12/11/2021	
107	Clarification	Does each local authority in the bid have to deliver all the test cases in their authority area to deliver a compliant project?	Not specifically. We expect individual pilots to conduct their activities across the represented region rather than delegating tasks to individual authorities in a fragmented approach. Therefore, the region as a whole should deliver all the test cases in a coherent way and at scale appropriate to its participating local authorities.	12/11/2021	
108	Clarification	As part of our mobilisation plan we are planning on running a new procurement process for external consultants to provide inputs to work packages and for the platform provider. Is this acceptable?	We will assess the merits of the plan based on specific details once the application is submitted.	12/11/2021	
109	Clarification	Question about the financial forms. On the application and uploads tabs there are questions about annual turnover, balance sheets and full accounts. Do DCMS actually require this for local authorities? If not, should I just be writing N/A?	N/A is fine for local authorities.	12/11/2021	
110	Clarification	Regarding Supplementary Information section of the application form please clarify what is meant by "Please confirm whether partners have provided a letter of support or commitment to the project? Please submit a copy of the letter(s) as a PDF(s)." since we understood from your response to other questions that letters of support weren't required?	As advised in previous answers (reference 75 and 76) , letters of support or commitment are optional and at the discretion of the lead authority. If available they should be referenced as the supplementary information with copies provided with the application.	12/11/2021	
111	Clarification	Which of the following Roles does DCMS envisage or not envisage for Platform Providers in relation to the competition: (a) 'Project Partners'; (b) 'Project Participants'; or (c) 'Key Project Suppliers'?	It is the lead authority's choice how best to assign the roles based on the considerations for each role as outlined in the Application Guidance.	12/11/2021	
112	Clarification	DCMS' response to question number 80 states: "For the purpose of this grant payment, DCMS will only be funding Local or Regional Authorities. […] The only organisations that we're assessing in this competition are grant recipients". Could DCMA please confirm whether or not each of the following are deemed 'grant recipients': (a) a non-public 'Project Partner' or 'Project Participant' or 'key supplier' that receives grant money through an onward grant; and (b) a non-public 'Project Partner' or 'Project Participant' or 'key supplier' that provides goods or services on a commercial basis to the consortium, where payment for such goods or services are claimed by the Project Lead as Eligible Costs under the grant scheme?	Neither of these are project participants in the sense that they need to provide evidence to DCMS. Local Authorities and Regional Authorities will have their own processes in place and will need to provide evidence of due process in grant claims, but finance forms etc. won't need to provided as part of the bid.	12/11/2021	
113	Clarification	The Application Guidance mentions that "every organisation in the project" needs to complete a Project Finance Form (section 5.3 in the Guidance). Could DCMS please clarify which of the following entities are deemed "organisations in the project" for this purpose: (a) non-public 'Project Partners' that are not 'grant recipients'; (b) non-public 'Project Participants' that are not 'grant recipients'; (c) non-public 'key suppliers' that are not 'grant recipients'; and (d) non-public entities (such as MNOs) that lend their support to a consortium (either as 'Project Partner' or 'Project Participant') but receive no funds whatsoever from the consortium?	Only grant recipients need to provide finance forms to DCMS.	12/11/2021	
114	Clarification	Should the DCMS require a 'Project Finance Form' from any non-public entity that does not have 2 years of accounts (or has as yet no accounts whatsoever), could DCMS please provide additional guidance on what it requires within the Project Finance Form?	DCMS will only require finance forms from those entities that it is directly funding - reviewing spend profiles of organisations that Regional/Local Authorities are funding is down to the RA/LA	12/11/2021	

115	Clarification	Should there be any conflict between the Application Guidance or the General Guidance on one hand and DCMS' responses in the DCIA Competition Q&A log on the other, could DCMS please confirm which of these documents takes precedence?	If we identify any areas of misunderstanding following submission of the competition application, there is scope for dialogue to resolve any potential lack of clarity.	12/11/2021	
116	Clarification	"In the finance form the summary tab prevents you putting in a figure higher than 50%. Can you please confirm that a figure higher than 50% can be submitted and that the form can be adjusted?"	We have checked, and it does bring up a warning if the figure is over 50%: =IF(E8>0.5,""Funding percent is higher than DCMS standard funding of 50% - please review"","""") But this does not lock cell E8. We think that this warning message is referring to an out-of-date standard. The Application Guidance confirms that there is no cap. The cell is not locked, therefore you can insert higher than 50% and should disregard the warning message.	12/11/2021	
117	Clarification	Regarding Supplementary Information section of the application form please clarify what is meant by "Please state the regulatory clearances or licenses you require to carry out your project. To what extent have these been secured?" We believe this is not applicable for this bid but would appreciate your guidance/confirmation.	The principle behind the regulatory clearances point is that it is the responsibility of the consortium to acquire necessary permissions to deploy services required to meet their objectives, not DCMS. What this entails will depend on the detail of the proposed project, but could include wayleaves and spectrum licenses as examples, but this is by no means an exhaustive list.	12/11/2021	
118	Clarification	Regarding Supplementary Information section of the application form please clarify what is meant by "Please confirm whether partners have provided a letter of support or commitment to the project? Please submit a copy of the letter(s) as a PDF(s)." since we understood from your response to other questions that letters of support weren't required?	Provide confirmation if a partner has provided a letter of support. If letters are provided, please attach as a pdf.	12/11/2021	