

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR GRANT APPLICANTS

Your files and their formats

File names and formats must follow these rules:

- appendices should be named Appendix and include the question number and application number as stated in the specific competition guidance. For example: Appendix Q7(application number)
 - If application numbers are not indicated as a requirement in the specific Application Guidance, then the proposed project title should be used in place of the application number.
- file names should only include letters or numbers and no special characters
- application or finance forms should not be converted, encrypted or zipped
- applications should be saved as word documents only
- finance forms should be saved as excel documents only
- appendices should be saved as pdf documents only

Please note: if your submitted appendices do not follow the specific competition guidance, your application will be ineligible and not sent for assessment.

What happens after you have submitted your application

Applications must be submitted before midday on the day of the submission deadline. Late submissions will not be considered.

How your application is assessed

After the deadline, valid applications will be sent for assessment. Only applications that meet the eligibility criteria and scope of the competition will be sent for assessment. You will be notified if your application is out of scope with full reasons as to why. DCMS reserves the right to declare applications as out of scope.

Applications are assessed against the same set of scoring criteria. Assessors will provide written feedback for each scored question in the application. All applications are assessed on individual merit. DCMS makes the final decision regarding funding.

DCMS reserves the right to apply a 'portfolio' approach in certain competitions. The portfolio will be spread across a range of:

- scope areas
- categories of research and development
- project durations
- project costs, including demonstrating value for money

This is to fit the spend profile of the competition. It will make sure that funds are allocated across the strategic areas identified in the scope of the competition. Successful applications are all required to meet a quality threshold.

You will be notified of the decision

Once all applications have been assessed, you will be informed of the final decision by email. If you are the lead applicant you need to let the other collaborators and partners know the decision.

Assessor feedback will be provided on applications. This is usually 4 weeks after you have been notified of the decision. You will receive an email which will let you know when feedback will be ready to view.

What happens if you are successful

Finance contact

You must provide a finance contact. This contact is responsible for supplying any additional information we may require to complete our finance checks on your organisation. This is also the person who will submit the grant claims once your project is live.

Bank details

You must supply your organisation's bank details so that we can validate them.

Finance checks

We will perform viability checks on your organisation and check the eligibility of your project costs. If we have any queries around your finances we can use this section to contact you.

Spend profile

Once we have confirmed your project is eligible, we will ask you to profile your costs across the duration of the project.

Conditional grant offer letter

You will be sent a conditional grant offer letter that you must sign and return before the project can start.

Any additional documentation that you are asked for will need to be completed and returned within stated timelines.

Once you've submitted all documentation

We will review your project costs to check that they meet our funding rules. You may be asked to provide further information on the details in your finance forms.

Financial viability checks will be made on all industry partner organisations.

If your project is a collaboration you will be asked to provide a collaboration agreement. This is included in the competition materials.

We may choose to promote your project as part of our competition communications. If you have any queries about public relations or media coverage email

ONP.enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

Claims and auditing

Costs are only eligible if they are incurred and paid between the project start and end dates. Claims may be subject to an independent audit.

Grants should be claimed quarterly in arrears. Once audits and reports are complete, the grants will be paid to each participant.

If you require further information please contact ONP.enquiries@dcms.gov.uk.

Subsidy Control

Following the end of the transition period on the 31 December 2020, and as of 1 January 2021 the UK must follow its international obligations on subsidy control. This includes commitments arising from the UK's continued membership of the World Trade Organisation's Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, and obligations set out in Chapter 3 of Title XI of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) between the European Union and the United Kingdom.¹ Applicants are also advised to be aware of the potential relevance of the various non-binding (Joint) Declarations, made by the UK and the EU, which were published on 24th December 2020.²

Subsidy Control eligibility

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

¹[EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement](#)

²[EU-UK Declarations](#)

DCMS will not award grant funding to organisations that are an 'ailing or insolvent economic actor' (as defined in Article 3.5 of Part 2, Title XI of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement). DCMS therefore requires all organisations to undergo financial viability and eligibility checks and DCMS, as part of its assessment of applications, will request evidence that organisations are not 'ailing or insolvent'.

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

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

Further information on Subsidy Control

The Subsidy Control team at the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has lead responsibility within the UK for coordination and development of policy on subsidy control.

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Funding rules

DCMS will provide a quarterly grant based on delivery of milestones and for costs incurred for work that has been undertaken, to the lead partner for the selected consortium of organisations until 31 March 2025 who are successful in this competition, subject to timely, satisfactory set up and DCMS due diligence, and once a Grant Funding Agreement is agreed. DCMS has clarified, however, that funds must be used in accordance with the no-subsidy approach, as described above.

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

Additional information

See Competition Guidance for Applicants for further information on FONRC.

Assessor confidentiality and potential conflicts of interest

Assessors must accept confidentiality agreements and declare any potential conflicts of interest. All applications must be treated in the strictest of confidence. Independent assessors must assess all applications themselves and should not allow any other person to assess the application on their behalf. Assessor identities are kept confidential including under any Freedom of Information request.

We try to ensure that the information published in this guidance is up-to-date and accurate. However, the information given is not a substitute for taking legal or professional advice, which is the responsibility of the applicant. We cannot accept any liability for actions arising from the use of our guidance. DCMS cannot be held responsible for the contents of any pages referenced by an external link.