Engineering Biology Sandbox Fund

Competition Brief

Logo - Open Government Licence

© Crown copyright 2024

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at: [alt.formats@dsit.gov.uk](mailto:alt.formats@dsit.gov.uk)

Contents

[Competition Overview 5](#_Toc156912023)

[Description of project requirements 5](#_Toc156912024)

[Project size 6](#_Toc156912025)

[Eligibility 6](#_Toc156912026)

[Eligibility Criteria 6](#_Toc156912027)

[Multiple applications 7](#_Toc156912028)

[Resubmissions 7](#_Toc156912029)

[Funding 7](#_Toc156912030)

[Funding type 7](#_Toc156912031)

[Funding details 8](#_Toc156912032)

[Subsidy control 8](#_Toc156912033)

[Sandboxes we will not fund 9](#_Toc156912034)

[Your proposal 9](#_Toc156912035)

[Sandbox project types 11](#_Toc156912036)

[How to apply 12](#_Toc156912037)

[Application details 12](#_Toc156912038)

[Application questions 13](#_Toc156912039)

[Question 1: Rationale or demand (30 marks) 14](#_Toc156912040)

[Question 2: Added value (30 marks)  14](#_Toc156912041)

[Question 3: Team and resources (10 marks)  15](#_Toc156912042)

[Question 4: Governance and delivery (20 marks) 15](#_Toc156912043)

[Question 5: Value for money (10 marks) 16](#_Toc156912044)

[Project financial information 16](#_Toc156912045)

[Process after application 17](#_Toc156912046)

[Timeline 18](#_Toc156912047)

**DO NOT delete the current contents list. To update the list right click on it and select ‘Update field’ / ‘Update entire table’.**

**Delete the instructions and the example formatting below before adding your text.**

# Competition Overview

UK regulators can apply to the Engineering Biology Sandbox Fund (EBSF) with sandbox projects that accelerate regulatory reforms for engineering biology-derived products and improve the quality of decision-making when assessing these products. The Fund will grant up to £5 million which will be delivered across two rounds.

In the first round we expect to grant up to £1.8 million and we expect the second round will grant up to £3 million. Up to £200,000 has been reserved to cover programme costs across both rounds. A third smaller round may be run if sufficient funding remains available after the second round. Please note that funding is not guaranteed and it may be that funding is not provided.

The first round of the competition opens on 1 February 2024.

The first round of the competition closes on 19 April 2024 at 12:00 GMT.

The second round of the competition is expected to open at the end of 2024 or early 2025. An updated competition brief will be published when the second round opens.

All activities associated with the EBSF will need to be completed by 31 March 2027.

# Description of project requirements

The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) will invest up to £5 million for 3-5 regulator-led sandbox projects of varying lengths. Projects should run for a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 24 months.

The Fund’s aim is to support the design and implementation of pro-innovation regulation for engineering biology-derived products and services. This fund will sponsor sandboxes led by regulators which aim to accelerate regulatory reform and encourage business innovation and investment.

Delivering a regulatory system that is pro-innovation, easy to navigate and facilitates widespread commercialisation of science and technology applications is a key commitment within the Science and Technology Framework. Additionally, the government recognised the value of sandboxes in aiding regulatory reform that both preserves safety and promotes innovation in its response to the Pro-Innovation Regulation of Technologies Review, Life Sciences.

# Project size

* All activities associated with your sandbox project and the EBSF must be completed by 31 March 2027. Therefore, if you wish to run a 24-month sandbox this must be started by 1 April 2025.
* The maximum funding grant for individual projects is £1.6 million.

# Eligibility

## Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for funding you (the lead applicant) must be a body which meets the following criteria:

* exercises a ‘regulatory function’, as defined in section 32(2)-(4) of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006;
* performs that regulatory function in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, England or across the UK;
* is subject to and follows the guidance in HM Treasury’s Managing Public Money handbook, or, if not subject to that guidance, is able to demonstrate compliance with Managing Public Money principles with respect to any funding received from DSIT; and
* is compliant with due diligence checks.

Only the regulator leading and sponsoring a project may submit an application and claim funding. They are the lead applicant.

Subject to subsidy control requirements, the lead applicant may involve domestic and/or international partners (such as businesses, industry bodies, civil society groups, other regulators, local authorities or academic institutions) in their proposed project where such participation is relevant to the purpose of their project and would be expected to improve or enhance the outcomes sought.

Regulators must meet public sector procurement rules[[1]](#footnote-2) in relation to any subcontractors they use in their EBSF projects, or if not subject to those requirements, must be able to demonstrate compliance with public sector procurement principles with respect to any funding received from the EBSF.

The lead applicant will have overall accountability for the use of all project funding (including for sub-contracted goods and services) in line with [Managing Public Money](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-public-money) principles.

## Multiple applications

Regulators are limited to being the lead applicant on one application per funding round, but there is no limit to the number of applications in which a regulator can be a partner.

## Resubmissions

If your bid was successful in any round of the EBSF you cannot submit the same proposal in subsequent rounds. You will also not be able to apply for more funding for your sandbox. If you wish to submit a bid in a subsequent round it must be materially different from any previous bids.

If your bid was unsuccessful because it did not meet the required standard, in any round of the EBSF, you will be able to submit another bid in subsequent rounds. This should be a materially different bid that implements the feedback received on the unsuccessful bid.

If your bid was of sufficient quality but you were not awarded a grant due to all funding for that round being allocated to higher scoring bids, you can submit the same (or an enhanced/amended) bid again in subsequent rounds.

If you have any queries about your organisation’s eligibility or your proposal, please email [engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk](mailto:engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk).

Additionally, potential applicants will be able to submit questions about the application process to engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk during the first application window. These will be added anonymously to an FAQ document on the [gov.uk](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdraft-origin.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fengineering-biology-sandbox-fund%3Ftoken%3DeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJzdWIiOiJkNWU1MWMyOS1iYjNkLTQzNDEtYTA0Ni1lNDczNjRhM2IyY2YiLCJjb250ZW50X2lkIjoiZWMwNGU3ZWUtYWU3NS00OGU2LTk3MTktZGQ0Y2Y1NDU1NTNlIiwiaWF0IjoxNzA2MTkzNTk2LCJleHAiOjE3MDg4NzE5OTZ9.qj7WwK32Aljt1JZycJgW6DqU-aAhvPIDtphYkP2NGi0%26utm_campaign%3Dgovuk_publishing%26utm_medium%3Dpreview%26utm_source%3Dshare&data=05%7C02%7Cindia.higgins%40dsit.gov.uk%7C8fe361326ed243eceb4808dc1db3cfcb%7Ccbac700502c143ebb497e6492d1b2dd8%7C0%7C0%7C638417905468591588%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2ahbZz3Ue0s10Cfjh%2FGhqzXGLDnY5nf6LqbXLSUs3Tc%3D&reserved=0) page. The final date for questions will be 8 March 2024. A final version of the FAQ will be published by 15 March 2024.

# Funding

## Funding type

Grant.

## Funding details

We have allocated up to £5 million to fund sandboxes in this competition.

Individual sandbox bids can apply for up to £1.6 million in grant funding.

* Funding will be available from 1 April 2024 until 31 March 2027. All activities associated with the EBSF must be completed by 31 March 2027. Any activities after this will not be covered by the EBSF.
* You should state your preferred start date and the duration of your project clearly in your application. This will also be agreed within the grant agreement so may be subject to change.

If your sandbox is selected for funding, you will be able to claim for any sandbox funding from the start date of your sandbox (which will be set out in the grant agreement) until the end date of your sandbox. We encourage you to include time for sandbox set up and recruitment activities within your sandbox duration when bidding. Any activities/expenditure undertaken/incurred before the start date in the grant agreement cannot be claimed. Additionally, grant agreements cannot be backdated.

EBSF funding will be allocated in fiscal years and must be spent in its allocated fiscal year. Future year funding will be allocated on a provisional basis and subject to review points. The transfer of funding between different fiscal years will not be possible.

The sandbox funding limit includes funds that would be paid or passed on to your collaborators or partners by you. Funding can only be used for non-commercial activities (see the subsidy control section below for further detail). You can usually recover the VAT paid on goods and services purchased for use in your business by submitting a VAT return. VAT that can be recovered is not an eligible cost.[[2]](#footnote-3)

You should commit your own resources to the sandbox wherever possible and describe this in your application. This could include matched funding – funding provided by your organisation or another organisation – to finance some of the activities or spend needed for your sandbox as well as staffing resource and equipment. However, please note that matched funding (including the use of organisational resource) is not an eligible cost under the EBSF and will not be re-imbursed.

You must outline plans to ensure that your sandbox has lasting benefits and/or impacts beyond the lifetime of the EBSF-funded activity.

## Subsidy control

Applicants will need to consider possible subsidy implications. Any organisation claiming EBSF funding must be eligible to receive a subsidy at the time we confirm you will be awarded funding and must provide us with confirmation of eligibility. It is your responsibility to make sure that your organisation is eligible to receive subsidies – if you are unsure, please take legal advice.

Some activities carried out by or on behalf of the regulator in relation to its statutory obligations or functions as a regulator may be considered an economic activity, and therefore may fall within subsidy control requirements. Any aid granted for non-economic activities should not be used to cross-subsidise commercial activities.

Government guidance is available for public authorities in the Subsidy Control Act 2022[[3]](#footnote-4).

## Sandboxes we will not fund

We will not fund sandboxes that:

* are solely to analyse or research a challenge;
* are designed to enhance a regulator’s own performance without demonstrating significant positive benefits to businesses, innovators or other users;
* would be reliant on ongoing government funding commitments beyond the duration of the project to deliver economic benefits;
* do not have (i) senior sponsorship at the applicant’s organisation and (ii) agreement that the findings, learnings and/or conclusions from the project will be shared with DSIT to facilitate the evaluation of the Engineering Biology Sandbox Fund policy measure as required by HM Treasury.

# Your proposal

We want to help keep the UK at the forefront of regulatory thinking and experimentation. The EBSF will sponsor sandbox projects led by regulators which aim to accelerate regulatory reform and encourage business innovation and investment.

Definition of sandbox

A sandbox is typically considered an environment where firms can test new innovations under the supervision of a regulator. Regulations are often relaxed, or rules are adapted within the sandbox to allow for more innovative or creative working.

The concept of a ‘sandbox’ is defined by regulators in different ways, but all sandboxes facilitate extensive dialogue between industry and a regulator to inform regulatory actions that strike the right balance between facilitating innovation and mitigating risk. A sandbox does not necessarily require legislative change or ‘relaxing’ regulations. Additionally, the outcome of a sandbox project should be uncertain as it is a research and development project.

The EBSF will assess bids for all/any sandbox projects, providing the eligibility criteria is met.

We are looking for sandbox proposals that:

Are targeted

* sandboxes should address known challenges in your current assessment process of engineering biology-derived products and services, such as improving understanding of certain applications or developing an evidence base to support decision making.

Are ambitious

* sandboxes which enable major improvements in a particular sector, for example, changes in approach to decision making by a single regulator to enable innovative new products and services to come to market faster, such as through the use of live-testing environments and/or the development of dedicated support measures for innovators;
* demonstrate value for money; and
* show potential for lasting benefits beyond the duration of the sandbox with plans to scale up and spread best practice.

Are collaborative

* bring multiple regulators together to explore ‘cross-cutting’ issues of mutual interest and/or provide a more joined-up, efficient and effective service to business and other users. For example, multi-regulator sandboxes that can support industries, or emerging/growing business activities which cross regulatory boundaries, such as the development of forums or a multi-agency advice service; and
* sandboxes with partnerships that include businesses, industry bodies, civil society groups, regulators and academia – as well as regulators in other jurisdictions and/or international standard-setting organisations.

We are looking for proposals which address the regulatory challenges associated with market innovation, emerging technology or new business models – projects which embody “innovation friendly regulation” thereby encouraging investor conditions within the UK. We particularly welcome bold, ambitious projects. We will accept projects where the outcome is less certain due to ambitious project objectives or deliverables. However, these projects will still need clear, feasible delivery plans. Additionally, we will need to see clear plans for learning and building upon the outcome of the sandbox no matter the outcome.

Your sandbox must be innovative, reflect a greater appetite for risk and reflect a research, learning and experimentation approach to regulation.

Be novel

* the sandbox must be aimed at finding, acquiring and disseminating new knowledge towards a specific aim or objective.
* the outcome of a sandbox should be uncertain as it is a research and development project.

Be specific

* sandboxes can focus on products or services at any stage of technological development providing they are addressing challenges in the regulation of those products or services.

Be systematic

* the sandbox should be systematically performed and conducted, with the process and outcomes documented.
* a report summarising the sandbox and the lessons learned must be published with key insights communicated to relevant stakeholders.

You must:

* adopt a systematic approach to delivery with clear plans for the monitoring and evaluation of progress and results, with adequate data capture and documentation of the process and outcomes. You should strongly consider identifying and using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to evaluate your work;
* provide DSIT (and those acting for or on behalf of the Secretary of State for DSIT as appropriate) with full access to data on the impact of your EBSF-funded work to enable the capture of learning and best practice;
* have approval from DSIT to publicise, carry out promotional activities or disseminate information in relation to your EBSF-funded work;
* publish a report summarising your project and the lessons learned with key insights communicated to relevant stakeholders; and
* have (i) senior sponsorship at the applicant’s organisation and (ii) agreement that the findings and learnings/conclusions from the project will be shared with DSIT to facilitate the evaluation of the EBSF policy measure.

## Sandbox project types

The types of proposals we would encourage are those for:

* sandboxes that utilise new thinking, new methods and/or generate new evidence to improve the speed of regulatory decision making and performance, benefitting businesses, innovators, investors and others in the engineering biology community;
* research and development sandboxes that generate new learning by experimenting, taking risks and exploring:
  + solutions for a regulatory issue faced by businesses, innovators or others; or
  + proactive measure to better support businesses, innovators or others;
* a short trial or pilot study of a new initiative to change a regulatory approach that can enhance support for businesses, innovators or other users.

# How to apply

Please download the application form for the EBSF competition, which is available on [gov.uk](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdraft-origin.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fengineering-biology-sandbox-fund%3Ftoken%3DeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJzdWIiOiJkNWU1MWMyOS1iYjNkLTQzNDEtYTA0Ni1lNDczNjRhM2IyY2YiLCJjb250ZW50X2lkIjoiZWMwNGU3ZWUtYWU3NS00OGU2LTk3MTktZGQ0Y2Y1NDU1NTNlIiwiaWF0IjoxNzA2MTkzNTk2LCJleHAiOjE3MDg4NzE5OTZ9.qj7WwK32Aljt1JZycJgW6DqU-aAhvPIDtphYkP2NGi0%26utm_campaign%3Dgovuk_publishing%26utm_medium%3Dpreview%26utm_source%3Dshare&data=05%7C02%7Cindia.higgins%40dsit.gov.uk%7C8fe361326ed243eceb4808dc1db3cfcb%7Ccbac700502c143ebb497e6492d1b2dd8%7C0%7C0%7C638417905468591588%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2ahbZz3Ue0s10Cfjh%2FGhqzXGLDnY5nf6LqbXLSUs3Tc%3D&reserved=0). Please send your completed application form, along with supporting documents, to [engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk](mailto:engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk).

The application is split into three sections:

* applicant details;
* application questions; and
* project financial information

## Application details

The lead applicant must complete this section. The details required are:

* The lead applicant’s name (full organisation name)
* the regulatory functions the lead applicant undertakes that makes them eligible for funding. Please include details of the legislation that creates this function.
* DUNs number and companies house number
* Email address for the lead applicant
* the sandbox project’s title
* start date and duration
* any partners involved in the sandbox (full organisation/company title, companies house number where applicable)
* confirmation that the lead applicant is eligible to receive subsidies for their project

Confirmation of eligibility

Specific questions to address eligibility:

* exercise a ‘regulatory function’, as defined in section 32(2)-(4) of the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006; Yes/No
* perform that regulatory function in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, England or across the UK; yes/no
* Is your organisation subject to and follow the guidance in HM Treasury’s Managing Public Money handbook, or, if not subject to that guidance, able to demonstrate compliance with Managing Public Money principles with respect to any funding received from DSIT; Yes/No

If your proposal does not reflect the eligibility criteria of the EBSF programme, it will be rejected and not be sent for assessment. We will provide feedback.

Sandbox summary

Describe your sandbox briefly and be clear about what makes it an innovative and an innovation-supporting venture. Set out the challenge you wish to tackle and what the intended gains and learnings from your sandbox will be and for whom. Explain how your proposed sandbox reflects the purpose of the EBSF programme. Your summary should be accessible and clear to a person who is not a specialist in your sector or field. List any organisations you have identified as partners or subcontractors. Your answer may be up to 400 words long.

Summary statement

Describe your project in a maximum of 50 words in a way that you would be prepared for a minister or senior civil servant to see. If your sandbox proposal is put forward to a minister, we will use this description.

Public description

Describe your project in detail, and in a way that you would be prepared to see published. Do not include information that is commercially sensitive or confidential to your organisation. If your proposal is awarded funding, we will publish this description. This could happen before the start of your project. Your answer may be up to 250 words long.

## Application questions

Your answers to these questions will be scored by assessors. Marks are indicated in (). You will receive feedback on your application.

Applications must score 60 marks or more, this is the pass mark. Applications that pass the mark will be ranked according to their overall score. Grants will be awarded to the highest scoring applicant, then the second highest scoring and so on until there is insufficient funding.

In the event of tie-break and when there is not sufficient funding to grant all tied applicants Q1 will be a tie-break question. If scores for Q1 are tied, Q2 will be a tie-break question.

Your answer to each question may be up to 400 words long. The assessing panel will stop reading at 400 words. Do not include any URLs in your answers. Please provide clear, jargon-free, well-structured and well-reasoned answers.

### Question 1: Rationale or demand (30 marks)

What is the problem or challenge for your sector that your proposal addresses? What evidence is there of demand for the change in regulatory approach?

Describe or explain:

* the main motivation for the sandbox, including the problem or challenge faced by your sector, the economic context, technological challenge and/or market opportunity (10)
* the evidence, whether from the UK or overseas, that there is a demand for a change in regulatory approach (for example, this may be driven by the sector, by resource constraints or other managerial considerations within the regulator, or by central government policy steers) (8)
* any work you have already done to understand the issue, respond to this need, explaining whether your project will develop an existing capability or build a new one (6)
* explanation of how the focus of your sandbox (i.e the sector or product being investigated) draws on the tools of engineering biology (6)

### Question 2: Added value (30 marks)

How will an injection of public funding by the EBSF enable you to foster responsible growth in the engineering biology sector, over and above your BAU activity?

Describe or explain:

* how a sandbox will address regulatory challenges relative to other methods (6)
* the potential for your sandbox to create positive cultural, systemic or institutional change in your organisation and to help businesses, innovators and other users to bring innovative products to market more quickly or efficiently (6)
* why you are not able to wholly fund the sandbox from your own organisation’s resources or other sources of funding, and what would happen if the application is unsuccessful (6)
* what would constitute success for your sandbox, including what metrics and indicators you would use to measure the sandbox’s impact (6)
* the potential to scale up and spread best practice from your sandbox to your BAU processes, other regulators, including, where appropriate, internationally, beyond the duration of the project (6)

### Question 3: Team and resources (10 marks)

What are the resources, equipment and facilities needed for your sandbox and how will you provide or access them? Please include details of the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for this sandbox.

For this question you may also submit an organogram of the team/group that will run your sandbox. This will not count towards the 400 words. You can submit this as a separate document.

### Question 4: Governance and delivery (20 marks)

How will you manage the sandbox effectively, ensuring timely progress, transparent reporting (including financial) and robust governance? For this question you may also submit a project plan, no more than one side of A4, alongside your application form. You can submit this a separate document.

Describe or explain:

* the main work packages of the sandbox and the nature of the outputs you expect from the sandbox (4)
* your approach to project management, identifying any tools and mechanisms you will use to get a successful and innovative project outcome and the main risks and uncertainties of the sandbox, including the technical, commercial, managerial, legal, privacy/data protection and environmental risks (4)
  + how you will mitigate these risks
* your project plan in enough detail to identify any links or dependencies between work packages or milestones (4)
* describe how you will monitor and evaluate your sandbox including any key performance indicators you plan to implement (4)
* how your organisation’s internal governance will support your sandbox (4)

### Question 5: Value for money (10 marks)

How does your proposal offer society and the economy value for money (using public resources in a way that creates and maximises public value)[[4]](#footnote-5)?

Describe or explain:

* how this sandbox represents value for money and how the sandbox will deliver the greatest possible benefit for the money (6)
* what costs, if any, that you anticipate your sandbox’s outcomes will remove from business and other users (4)

## Project financial information

Please provide a monthly breakdown of your anticipated project costs for the length of the sandbox. You should set out clearly administrative costs, costs associated with training, patent filing, subcontracting, labour and/or materials as applicable. Each organisation/partner/subcontractor in your sandbox should have their costs listed separately in the cost breakdown sheet. Please include information on the matched funding your organisation will provide for your sandbox. Contingency costings to cover the monetary impacts of project risks, uncertainties, unforeseen costs or situations should not be included in your sandbox costs. Additionally, please include a breakdown of project overheads in your cost summary. Project overheads should be appropriately costed and cover only sandbox activities. Any overheads being claimed for should include sufficient evidence that the percentage claimed for is appropriate but should not be expected to exceed 20%.

Please set out your anticipated project costs using the Table template below. You may submit this separately, alongside your application form.

You can usually recover the VAT paid on goods and services purchased for use in your business by submitting a VAT return. VAT that can be recovered is not an eligible cost. If you are unable to recover VAT, please provide evidence and ensure your project costs include VAT, clearly indicating the amount and ensuring your anticipated project costs are within the limit of the grant.

Table template for anticipated project costs:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total anticipated cost of project | | | | | | |  | | | |
| Does your project include VAT: (please note that if you do intend to recover VAT you need to state this here. If it is not included and your project is selected we will not be able to provide additional funding to cover this) | | | | | | |  | | | |
| If VAT is included, please provide evidence that you are unable to recover this: | | | | | | |  | | | |
| Type of costs. | Breakdown of project costs in first month your project starts (January/September (as applicable)) | Second month… | Third month … | FY1\* total… | | | FY2 total… | Total project spend | | Additional detail about the cost claimed |
| Staff costs… |  |  |  |  | | |  |  | |  |
| Consultancy costs… |  |  |  |  | | |  |  | |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | | |  |  | |  |
| Matched funding amount\*\* |  |  |  |  | | |  |  | |  |
|  | | | | | | | | | |  |
| Total anticipated cost of project |  | | | |  |  | | |  |  |

\*The financial year (FY) runs from 1 April to 31 March the following calendar year. In this case FY1 is from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, FY2 is from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 and FY3 is from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

\*\*In the additional detail column please provide confirm the source of the matched funding. We will ask for proof of any listed matched funding if your sandbox is successful.

## Process after application

Only applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be sent for assessment. You will be notified if your application is out of scope with feedback.

Following an assessment of proposals with respect to the criteria set out, an awarding panel will make the final decision on funding. We aim to notify applicants in the first round about the awarding panel’s decision by end of May 2024.

Successful projects will be required to work with DSIT’s independent evaluation partner to participate in the evaluation of the programme. This could include being contacted at intervals throughout the project, providing project data and participating in interviews and/or surveys. Further information on the evaluation of the programme will be provided if your application for funding is successful.

You will be expected to report on your progress and financial spend to DSIT monthly. You will need to supply a detailed invoice which sets out what activities you are claiming for and evidence you have delivered on the agreed activities. DSIT will reimburse you quarterly. Alternative payment arrangements can be agreed on a project-by-project basis prior to the start of delivery if necessary.

If you require further information, please email [engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk](mailto:engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk).

# Timeline

1 February 2024 – application window for round one opens

8 March 2024 – final date to submit questions to [engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk](mailto:engineeringbiology@dsit.gov.uk).

15 March 2024 – all questions will be answered and published on the [gov.uk](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdraft-origin.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fengineering-biology-sandbox-fund%3Ftoken%3DeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJzdWIiOiJkNWU1MWMyOS1iYjNkLTQzNDEtYTA0Ni1lNDczNjRhM2IyY2YiLCJjb250ZW50X2lkIjoiZWMwNGU3ZWUtYWU3NS00OGU2LTk3MTktZGQ0Y2Y1NDU1NTNlIiwiaWF0IjoxNzA2MTkzNTk2LCJleHAiOjE3MDg4NzE5OTZ9.qj7WwK32Aljt1JZycJgW6DqU-aAhvPIDtphYkP2NGi0%26utm_campaign%3Dgovuk_publishing%26utm_medium%3Dpreview%26utm_source%3Dshare&data=05%7C02%7Cindia.higgins%40dsit.gov.uk%7C8fe361326ed243eceb4808dc1db3cfcb%7Ccbac700502c143ebb497e6492d1b2dd8%7C0%7C0%7C638417905468591588%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2ahbZz3Ue0s10Cfjh%2FGhqzXGLDnY5nf6LqbXLSUs3Tc%3D&reserved=0) page

19 April 2024 – application window for round one closes

20 April – 30 May 2024 – assessment of applications and due diligence

31 May 2024 – applicants will be notified about the awarding panel’s decision by letter via email

28 June 2024 – grant funding agreements issued to successful applicants

This publication is available from: [www.gov.uk/dsit](http://www.gov.uk/dsit)

If you need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email [alt.formats@dsit.gov.uk](mailto:alt.formats@dsit.gov.uk). Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

1. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-sector-procurement-policy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.gov.uk/reclaim-vat> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/918479/value-for-money-framework.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-5)