

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How does an SBRI Competition work?

SBRI provides innovative solutions to challenges faced by the public sector, leading to better public services and improved efficiency and effectiveness. It supports economic growth and enables the development of innovative products and services through the public procurement of R&D. It generates new business opportunities for companies, provides businesses with a route to market for their ideas and bridges the seed funding gap experienced by many early stage companies. SBRI is a simple structured process. Typically competitions are structured in two phases.

Phase 1 proposals concentrate on that research and development which will significantly contribute to proving the scientific, technical and commercial feasibility of the proposed project. The results of Phase 1 determine whether the solution should go further to Phase 2, not all projects will progress to Phase 2. The principal research and development effort takes place in Phase 2, which aims to produce a well defined prototype. At the end of Phase 2 it is intended that what has been developed will be manufactured and marketed as a way of fulfilling requirements.

2. Is my business eligible to submit an application to an SBRI competition?

Any organisation based in the UK or European Union (EU) that can demonstrate a credible and practical route to market can submit an application.

3. Can I work in collaboration with other companies?

Contracts will be awarded only to individual organisations. However, applicants may identify components of the work which they wish to subcontract and may also employ specialist consultants or advisers if they believe this will increase the chances of the project being successful. Any work may be subcontracted but this is the responsibility of the main contractor.

4. I am a Pre-Startup Company may I apply?

Yes, but contracts must be awarded to legal entities.

5. I am based at a University, may I apply?

Universities and other non-commercial organisations may apply, however they must demonstrate a credible and practical route to market, i.e., the application must include a plan to commercialise the results.

6. As a University should I use Full Economic Cost (FEC)?

Full Economic Cost calculations are not relevant in this context. SBRI is a competitive procurement mechanism and tenders will be submitted by a variety of organisations. Whatever calculation you use to arrive at your tender price your application will be assessed against bids from other organisations. You should calculate your tender price bearing this in mind and that your proposal will be assessed as to whether it reflects a fair market value. You are entitled to include overheads but remember that this is a competitive tender.

7. Should Project Costs include VAT?

Yes, VAT is the responsibility of the invoicing business, and it is required that applications will list total costs inclusive of VAT. Should you consider you are VAT exempt then you may quote without VAT but you will not at a later date be able to increase invoice values to cover VAT.

8. Can Overheads be Included in Project Costs?

An element of overheads may be included in project costs, however such an element must be realistic. Assessors will consider financial costs in terms of 'value for money' at the assessment stage. Projects showing costs that are considered unreasonable will be rejected on these grounds.

9. My company is a Registered Charity, can I apply?

Registered Charities may apply via their trading company, just as for other non-commercial organisations they must demonstrate a credible and practical route to market, i.e., the application must include a plan to commercialise the results.

10. Is my idea for a solution in scope?

Applicants should address questions on scope to the Public Sector Body funding the competition. Questions should be sent to the email address provided on the competition registration webpage.

11. How do I submit my application?

Each competition may have a slightly different application process, depending on the Public Sector Body running the competition. Information on how to register your interest, obtain the documentation and submit your application is available on the individual competition pages on Innovate UK's website.

Details of the challenge and expected outcome of the projects can be found in the Competition Documents. You are strongly advised to read all published competition documents before completing the application form.

12. Can I submit multiple applications for a single competition?

Yes you can, however each application that you wish to submit will require a separate registration.

13. What is the deadline for applications?

This information will be available on the competition website and within the published competition documents.

14. How will the successful applications be chosen?

Proposals will be selected by an expert group of selected assessors and a final assessment panel.

15. When will I find out if my application has been successful?

All applicants will be informed shortly after the assessments have been concluded.

16. Who owns the Intellectual Property generated by the Project?

Ownership of and rights to intellectual property are covered by clauses in the contract. Typically intellectual property rights are retained by the applicant although certain rights of usage may be applied by the funding authority including royalty-free, non-exclusive licence rights and the right to require licenses to third parties, at a fair market price.

17. Do SBRI Contracts Constitute State Aid?

No. Where Public Authorities buy R&D from organisations at a fair market price, not for their exclusive use and where the competition is advertised in an open market, there is no advantage and consequently no element of State Aid.

18. Who should I contact if I have any further questions?

Questions on the overall SBRI programme should be addressed to support@innovateuk.gov.uk
Questions on the specifics of this competition should be sent to the email address provided on the competition registration webpage.