

SBRI Healthcare: NHS England and NHS Improvement competition for development contracts

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does an SBRI competition work?

SBRI enables government departments to connect with technology organisations, finding innovative solutions to specific public sector challenges and needs. It aims to use the power of government procurement to accelerate technology development, supporting projects through the stages of feasibility and prototyping which are typically hard to fund. SBRI offers an excellent opportunity for businesses, especially early stage companies, to develop and demonstrate technology, supported by an intelligent lead customer.

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, however 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.

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

Any organisation can submit an application, although it is expected that opportunities presented by SBRI will be particularly attractive for SMEs. SBRI is aimed at organisations working on the development of an innovative process, material, device, product or service. Successful applications will be those whose technology best addresses the specific needs identified, with the potential to make a measurable improvement to currently available products, processes materials, devices or services. Development contracts will be awarded only to individual organisations. However, organisations may also wish to demonstrate that successful collaboration will enhance their overall development. Work may be subcontracted but this is the responsibility of the main contractor.

I am a pre-startup company may I apply?

Yes, but contracts must be awarded to legal entities.

I am based at a university, may I apply?

Universities may apply, however they must demonstrate a route to market, *ie* the application must include a plan to commercialise the results. It is unlikely that a university will be able to demonstrate the appropriate level of commercialisation to be successful beyond Phase 1, therefore the application should explain how the product will be developed by a commercial organisation.

As a university should I use Full Economic Cost (FEC)?

No. Costs should be calculated to reflect fair market value.

My company is a registered charity, can I apply?

Yes, registered charities are equally eligible to enter SBRI competitions via their trading company limited by guarantee. All organisations must demonstrate a route to market.

Do I need to have a clinical partner?

It is strongly advised that you do. The most successful applicants demonstrate an existing relationship with a named clinician or similar expert at the time of application. Ideally this will be a named NHS member of staff with whom you have had at least initial discussions about the feasibility of your project.

How do I submit my application?

All bids should be made using the SBRI Healthcare portal which can be accessed by registering your interest via the competition pages of the SBRI Healthcare website www.sbrihealthcare.co.uk.

You must create a login using your email address and a password, via the 'Apply Now' link on the competition page.

Please note: SBRI Healthcare now uses the Programme Management Office Research Management System (RMS).

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

A briefing event for businesses interested in finding out more about the competition will be held on 15th July 2020. Please check www.sbrihealthcare.co.uk for confirmation of dates.

What is the deadline for applications?

13:00, 27 August 2020.

How will the successful applications be chosen?

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

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

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

Who owns the Intellectual Property generated by the project?

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.

Can I work in collaboration with other companies?

Contracts will only be awarded 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.

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.

Should project costs include VAT?

Yes. The SBRI is a pre-commercial procurement process and the resulting development contract is subject to VAT. Therefore the maximum allowable budget also includes VAT. 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.

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.

I am based outside of England, can I apply?

We accept applications from any country in the European Union, including associated countries for EU Research and Innovation. However, please be aware that projects must show a clear health benefit to the UK.

Can I sub-contract work outside of England or the UK?

In principle this is possible, as long as the applicants demonstrate how this will benefit UK healthcare and economy.

If my application fits more than one sub-theme, can I apply to more than one?

Applications may fit multiple sub-themes however, you may only select 1 category on the application portal so please select the most appropriate. The funding envelope is for the entire competition rather than specifically split between challenges or themes, so there is no advantage or disadvantage to selecting a specific sub-theme.

I am part of a large company (i.e. not an SME). Is there a disadvantage applying as a big company or would we require an SME partner?

There is no disadvantage in applying as a big company. The key issue is to demonstrate that the right expertise are available for the support of the project (e.g. if a trial is included the involvement of a healthcare provider would be expected.)

Can we apply to Phase 1 funding for longer than 6 months duration?

No, the maximum project duration is not negotiable and cannot be extended for funded projects.

Who should I contact if I have any further questions?

Questions on the specifics of this competition should be sent to sbri@lgcgroup.com.

Questions on the overall SBRI programme should be addressed to support@innovateuk.gov.uk.