



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. Phase 1 projects are eligible to apply for Phase 2, however the number of proposals funded depends on merit and is subject to budget availability. 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. Organisations other than industry are expected to present a strong and robust plan for commercialisation. 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.

**ACCELERATED
ACCESS
COLLABORATIVE**

I am based at a university, may I apply?

Universities may apply, however they must demonstrate a route to market, i.e. 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 and do they need to be identified prior to Phase 1 submission?

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.

Do I need to partner with an AHSN to be eligible to apply?

It is not an eligibility criteria to partner with an AHSN, however, it is strongly encouraged that you do. The AHSNs are uniquely positioned to support the development of health innovation and, by partnering with them, you can tap into their knowledge, expertise and networks to support the spread and adoption of your technology. Any organisation based in the UK (including Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales) can access the AHSN.

To find out more information on the AHSNs and their contact details, you can visit their website [here](#).

What is the minimum entry point for a Phase 1 award and what activities are fundable under a Phase 1 award?

Phase 1 awards enable the establishment of the technical merit, feasibility and commercial potential of a proposed technology. Although, strictly speaking, a demonstrated proof of concept is not required, the most competitive proposals are those with some data to support the case for further development and illustrate technical feasibility.

Project costs can include:

- Labour
- Materials
- Capital equipment
- Subcontractor
- Travel & subsistence
- Indirect costs

At the end of Phase 1, projects are expected to have established the technical merit, feasibility, and commercial potential of the proposed technology. Example of exit points include:

- Feasibility technical study
- Market validation
- Business plan developed
- Clinical partners identified
- Evidence generation plan for adoption
- Development of PPIE strategy
- Health inequalities impact assessment

Do clinical trial studies need to take place in the UK?

Although this is not an eligibility criterion, it is strongly advised to carry out any clinical trial studies in the UK as the SBRI Healthcare programme acts a pre-procurement programme and the objective of this competition challenge is to address NHS needs. As such, it will be expected that any evidence generated can be translated to demonstrate the technology's applicability to be adopted into the NHS.

Our technology is agnostic and can be applied to different clinical questions, do we need to show experimental data specific to the competition clinical area/s to be eligible to apply?

Technologies that have been repurposed from use in other clinical areas are eligible to apply if there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate its applicability to the clinical areas of this competition. This is dependent on the evidence generated for your innovation and the proof-of-concept data available.

If you would like to discuss your project in more detail, please contact us at sbri@lgcgroup.com.

How do I submit my application?

All bids should be made using the SBRI Healthcare portal which can be accessed 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).

Please note that all project partners should be invited to the application through the system via email to participate as co-applicants after which they must both confirm and approve their participation; the application cannot be submitted without doing so.

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.

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

Applications may fit multiple sub-category 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-category theme.

What is the deadline for applications?

13:00, 06 July 2022.

How will the successful applications be chosen?

Proposals will be selected by an expert group of selected assessors and a final assessment panel. Phase 1 applications are reviewed by a pool of experts covering clinical, technical and commercial expertise. Up to 25 applications are shortlisted in the first round of assessments. Following shortlisting, applicants are invited to submit a video pitch to support their application which is reviewed by a Panel of experts and patient/public representatives. Applications are then selected to receive Phase 1 funding.

For more information on the application and assessment process, please refer to the [Invitation to Tender](#) and launch [webinar recording](#).

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

All applicants will be informed shortly after the assessments have been concluded. Applicants are expected to be notified on whether their proposals have been shortlisted in August 2022 and final outcome letters are expected to be released by the end of September 2022.

What are the requirements for the supporting video pitch to be submitted for the Panel meeting?

If your application has been shortlisted, you will be required to submit a video pitch to support your application assessment at the Panel meeting. The video should be no longer than 3 minutes and in MP4 format. Please upload the video on the file sharing platform of your choice and send the video link to SBRI@lgcgroup.com.

Will patients be expected to be consulted before applications are submitted and will they be part of the assessment Panel?

We encourage applicants to have an appropriate level of engagement with patients and the public prior to applying to the Programme in the development of their technology/intervention and, if appropriate, to collect some evidence that demonstrates user acceptability, usability and validity.

We expect applicants to develop an appropriate patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) plan as part of the Phase 1 proposal and we highly encourage to involve patients and members of the public in the development of their application to ensure that the proposed approach is suitable and acceptable for patients.

There will be patient and public representatives in the assessment Panel.

Where can we engage with patients, and do you offer any support with patient and public involvement and engagement activities?

The Autism and Learning Disabilities challenge of this competition call is being supported by Autistica and they can provide support with getting access to autistic people and people with learning disabilities and can provide advice on conducting patient and public involvement activities.

For more information on involving patients in your research and how Autistica can support you please visit their [website](#).

Do I need to have a Phase 1 award to be eligible for Phase 2 or can I apply directly to Phase 2?

Companies must first apply and be successful in securing Phase 1 funding in order to have access to Phase 2. Applicants cannot apply to Phase 2 directly. The aim is to de-risk projects and allow organisations to deliver feasibility work to make a stronger bid for Phase 2. The current open call is to apply for Phase 1 funding and an opportunity to apply for Phase 2 will follow after 6 months for those that were successful in securing Phase 1 funding, subject to budget availability.

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.

What is the best way to find project partners (commercial partners or clinical partners)?

We strongly advise that you get in touch with your AHSN to develop partnership and get advice. You can also contact your local University. Alternatively the [signposting service](#) can help you find the right partners.

Should project costs include VAT?

The maximum allowable budget of Phase 1 awards is £100,000 excluding VAT and it is required that applications list project costs exclusive of VAT. Please note that SBRI is a pre-commercial procurement process and the resulting development contract is subject to VAT and that VAT is the responsibility of the invoicing business.

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 the economy.

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 is 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.

The SBRI Healthcare development agreement is with Nottingham University Hospitals, does this suggest that public engagement should take place in or that solutions should be directed towards the Nottingham area?

No, solutions can be directed towards any region in the UK. Nottingham University Hospitals only acts as a legal entity for administrative purposes on behalf of the funder and their involvement does not affect the national ambition and benefits that the SBRI Healthcare programme aims to achieve.

If a product is already on market but in need of further R&D, would that be excluded from this call?

Although there is no specific entry point for a Phase 1 award, it is important to note that Phase 1 awards should focus on the establishment of the technical merit, feasibility and commercial potential of a proposed technology. Example of exit points include:

- Feasibility technical study
- Market validation
- Business plan developed
- Clinical partners identified
- Evidence generation plan for adoption
- Development of PPIE strategy
- Health inequalities impact assessment

Can sites involved in Phase 1 be different in Phase 2?

Yes, it is possible. We suggest clarifying this point in the application by providing justification for the addition/exclusion of sites.

Is there any flexibility on the project start date?

To reduce the gap between Phase 1 and 2 awards, we require that all Phase 1 projects start and end at the same time.

I am in touch with NHS Trusts and sites, would these count as clinical partners?

Yes, NHS sites can be clinical partners. Please list all clinical partners in the application by providing the name, details and role description in the appropriate section of the application – up to 10 clinical partners can be added. We do not expect a supporting letter from the organisation.

Theme specific Q&As:

Autism and Learning Disabilities

Does the competition remit apply to High Functioning Autism, or only to Autism and Learning Disability?

This competition is open to any disadvantage arising from autism and or learning disability. The scope is wide from an opportunity perspective and not all solutions will be applicable to everyone. We strongly encourage co-production in partnership with autistic people and people with learning disabilities and their families to ensure that the solution will address their needs and reduce health and care inequalities.

Autistica's partnership on this call can support research facilitation and the involvement of community stakeholders to shape solutions.

Does the bid need to include both learning disability and autism cohorts or can it just be autism specific, for example?

The proposal can focus on autism and/or learning disabilities and applicants should provide clear justification for the study rationale. Proposals focusing on only one of the two lifelong conditions will be considered in scope.

Health Inequalities in Maternity Care

Is there a preference for projects dealing with neonatal or does it include wider maternity and post-natal?

There is no preference across the challenge categories. Although there is a strong element of the neonatal journey, the competition call includes the entire perinatal journey, including pre- and post-pregnancy.

Can you apply for both perinatal and autism challenges using different focuses of the same technology?

Yes, you can apply to both challenges if your technology/solution is applicable to both challenge areas. However, applications under each challenge are considered separately and you can only be granted one award if successful.

We know what the issues surrounding health inequalities in maternity care are and have a range of ideas to tackle them but are not yet 100% sure on the best direction

to take our intervention. Would it be acceptable if Phase 1 could be exploratory work figuring out which niche to tackle?

Phase 1 awards fund research and development to prove the scientific, technical and commercial feasibility of the proposed project. Phase 1 awards cover feasibility studies, early stage research (i.e. prototype development), proof-of-concept, clinical evaluation and health economic analysis, for example. Whilst these activities can be exploratory to some extent, at the end of Phase 1 projects are expected to have established the technical merit, feasibility, and commercial potential of the proposed technology. Example of exit points include:

- Feasibility technical study
- Market validation
- Business plan developed
- Clinical partners identified
- Evidence generation plan for adoption
- Development of PPIE strategy
- Health inequalities impact assessment

Does the category for supporting women post discharge include pregnancy admission or is it post-delivery only?

The call mainly targets post-pregnancy through the identification of improvement of care and looking at how women can be support after birth. The focus is post-pregnancy and how women can work with families and community care to get better referral and support.

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.