



Maritime Accelerator 2024
Application Guidance



Introduction

Connected Places Catapult has launched its search for six to eight businesses to join the Maritime Accelerator 2024.

Six to eight successful SMEs will be accelerated through a bespoke programme, including:

- Business coaching from a consortium of mentors and technical experts with specialisms in areas including Marketing & PR; Product Development & Strategy, Procurement and Bid Writing.
- Investment readiness support including best practice advice for raising investment and refining investment strategies and plans and opportunities to meet investors.
- Trial scoping and delivery with Connected Places Catapult domain experts and programme partners.

About this Document

This application guide will provide supporting information to help applicants to complete and submit a high-quality application.

Eligibility

Eligibility Criteria

- you must be a micro, small or medium-sized enterprise (SME).
- you must be UK-registered.
- you must have a solution which is technical readiness level (TRL) 5 – 8. This means that the solution has, at least, been tested or demonstrated in its intended environment and, at most, has been deployed as a first-of-a-kind commercial system.
- your solution must address one or more of the identified challenges.
- you already operate in the maritime sector, or you are looking to bring your solution into maritime space from another sector.
- you must be willing to travel on occasion for face-to-face meetings (but most of the programme will be conducted virtually).

Application Guidance

General Guidance

1. Carefully read this guidance document whilst preparing your application.



2. Your responses to questions in the Programme-specific and Trial-specific sections should not disclose your name, your company name, or name of any person(s) working at your company. Complete anonymity reduces the potential for bias and discrimination during the application assessment process and ensures that evaluations are based only on the credibility and suitability of your responses for this programme.
3. Only the information included within your application form is subject to assessment.
4. Your application will automatically save so you can return to edit later. You can access this on your [Profile Page](#).
5. Applications must be submitted before midday on 20th June. Late submissions will not be accepted or considered.
6. Applications will be assessed from 24th June – 2nd July. Shortlisted applicants will be contacted by 4th July 2024 and provided with a 45-minute interview invitation between 10th – 15th July.
7. Please keep within the maximum word counts noted in each of the sections of the application form. Any content that exceeds the word count limit will be excluded from your submission.
8. Please review the assessment scoring criteria section in this guidance document as this will provide clarity of what evidence to provide in your responses to maximise your score.
9. Please ensure you have read and understood the Terms & Conditions set out on the website before submitting.

Assessment Scoring Criteria

After the competition deadline, only applications that meet the eligibility criteria and scope of the competition will be formally assessed. Connected Places Catapult reserves the right to declare applications as out of scope of the programme.

Applications that progress to the assessment stage will be reviewed by at least two expert assessors from the Connected Places Catapult. Assessors with a broad technical knowledge across different areas of transport and technology will mark your application. You should therefore write clearly in plain language, avoiding acronyms and obscure jargon.

Scoring Criteria

This section details the criteria our assessors will use when scoring your application. Under each criterion there is a maximum score of 5 available.



Solution (20%)

Question: Is the solution effective at solving the problem? Is the product innovative with clear unique selling points?

To achieve the highest score under this criterion, your application should demonstrate the following to our assessment panel:

- The proposed solution has the potential to deliver a high level of impact for the identified target customers.
- The proposed solution demonstrates a high level of innovation with clearly defined Unique Selling Points.
- The applicant has provided a high level of detail around how their innovation compares with existing solutions.
- The applicant provides a high level of detail around how the Intellectual Property within their innovation is/ will be protected.

Traction (20%)

Question: Does the SME have evidence of the market need for their solution? Has the SME demonstrated their competitive advantage vs. existing solutions in the market?

To achieve the highest score under this criterion, your application should demonstrate the following to our assessment panel:

- A high level of detail around existing and future customers (including early adopters) is provided by the applicant.
- A highly credible approach to identifying and quantifying the addressable market is provided by the applicant.
- Strong evidence is provided around commercial traction such as private investment raised, Collaborative Research & Development grants and letters of support/ intent secured.
- A high level of experience and supporting evidence of delivering trials and Proof of Concepts (PoCs) is provide by the applicant.

Team (20%)

Question: Has the team demonstrated the needed experience and capability?

To achieve the highest score under this criterion, your application should demonstrate the following to our assessment panel:

- The project team, experiences and capabilities provide a high level of confidence that the project can be delivered successfully.



- Outstanding team with a great level of multidisciplinary (technical, business, sales, etc.) experience to execute.
- More than one key member with extensive sector knowledge and previous entrepreneurial success (e.g., founders with 10 + years industry experience, successful exits, and unique skill sets).

Programme Fit (20%)

Question: Does the SME offer a solution that can help solve one or more of the challenges of the programme? Is the SME at the right stage in their growth to benefit from the programme?

To achieve the highest score under this criterion, your application should demonstrate the following to our assessment panel:

- Very strong fit to challenge statements and corporate long-term strategies.
- The proposed use-case presents a great opportunity to accelerate and add value.
- TRL within scope (TRL 5 – 8).
- Great evidence for how the programme could add value, including skills development, working with client and partners, support with investment and funding etc.

Trial Proposal (not scored)

Question: Is the trial feasible in the programme timeframe? Is the trial feasible within the budget? Has the SME considered the requirements in terms of data, equipment, facilities they will need to run the trial?

To achieve the highest score under this criterion, your application should demonstrate the following to our assessment panel:

- A highly credible approach to the design and delivery of their trial has been provided by the applicant.
- An acknowledgement of key external trial constraints (operations, infrastructure, certification etc.) has been provided by the applicant.

ED&I

This programme celebrates Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I), not just because it is the right thing to do but because it leads to better decisions, better innovation and makes our working life more rewarding and more productive. All partners are committed to fostering ED&I in our workforce, our partners, suppliers, and innovators.



We hold ED&I to include the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 including Age, Sex & Gender Identity, Race & Ethnic Identity, Disability, Religion & Belief, Sexual Identity, Transgender & Non-Cisgender Identity, Marriage & Civil Partnerships, Pregnancy & Maternity, as well as other historic barriers to opportunity, such as nationality, dialect, education, and other forms of socio-economic exclusion.

The Maritime Accelerator programme is committed to upholding ED&I principles and does so through the following approaches:

- Provide equal opportunities for all innovators seeking to apply to participate in the programme by requiring anonymity on application forms.
- Implementing a standardised scoring criteria and assessment process.
- Cultivate diversity of thought throughout the programme by assembling diverse assessment panels during selection and selecting diverse mentors & specialists during programme delivery.
- Foster an open and inclusive environment for participants and alumni.
- Offer advocacy and collaboration opportunities to reduce barriers to innovation.

Dates and Deadlines

Please note the dates and deadlines for the competition below. These are indicative timings, and we will adhere to this schedule as best we can. The closing date for applications is fixed and will be midday on 20th June 2024.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Extensions will not be granted under any circumstances.

Following the initial assessment, up to 16 applicants will be shortlisted for an interview. Interviews will take place between 10th and 16th July. You will be provided with a virtual joining link and interview guidance ahead of the interview if you are successfully shortlisted. Regrettably, we will be unable to accommodate specific requests for interview slots, therefore it is imperative that you try to keep your diary as open and flexible as possible on these dates.

Only applicants that progress to the assessment stage will be given a breakdown of the scores achieved for each section of the application form. Connected Places Catapult reserves the right to declare applications unsuccessful and out of scope. Once the selection decisions have been made, we regret that we are unable to offer follow up meetings or further feedback for unsuccessful applicants.



Competition Opens	13 May 2024
Application Support Webinar	5 June 2024
Competition Closes	20 June 2024
Notification to Applicants	4 July 2024
Assessment Interviews	10 – 15 July 2024
Notification to Selected Finalists	19 July
Onboarding & Needs Assessments	31 July – 22 August 2024
Welcome Day	11 September 2024

Contact Details

If you have any questions about the programme, please contact:

Iwona Wilk, Programme Manager – Maritime Accelerator [here](#).

We wish you luck with your application!