

Local Authority Transport Decarbonisation Accelerator Programme

Application Guidance



1. Introduction

About this Document

This application guide will provide supporting information to help applicants to this Accelerator complete and submit a high-quality application. This programme is subject to the terms and conditions set out on the website. If you require any reasonable adjustments to support the completion of your application, please contact kirsty.murphy@cp.catapult.org.uk directly.

2. Eligibility

Eligibility Criteria

Successful applicants to the programme will meet the following eligibility criteria:

- A micro or small to medium sized enterprise (< 250 employees)
- A UK-registered office
- The solution must be able to address one or more challenge statements
- The solution must be at least TRL 7 or above. This equates to a minimum requirement of the solution having completed a technology prototype demonstration in an operational environment and/or having qualified the actual technology through successful mission operations.
- Willing to travel on occasion to face-to-face meetings and events in the UK

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

This programme celebrates Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), 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 productive.

We hold EDI to include the characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 {Age; Sex (and Gender); Race (and Ethnicity); Disability; Religion or belief; Sexual orientation; Gender reassignment; Marriage or civil partnerships; Pregnancy and maternity}, as well as other historic barriers to opportunity, such as “class”, nationality, dialect, education and other forms of socio-economic exclusion.

The Programme is committed to carrying the following initiatives to uphold EDI principles:

- Provide a level playing field for all innovators seeking to apply to participate in the programme by anonymising application forms and implementing a fair, standardised scoring process.
- Drive a human-centred approach when tackling real world challenges.
- Foster an open and inclusive environment for businesses joining the Programme.
- Offer advocacy and collaboration opportunities to reduce barriers to innovation.
- Encourage a range of perspective in our shortlisting and due diligence process by selecting diverse assessment panels.

3. Application Guidance

General Guidance

- Carefully read this guidance document before preparing your application.
- We will be holding an application support webinar on 21st August 2024. You can register for this here: [REGISTER FOR APPLICATION SUPPORT WEBINAR](#)
- You can access the application form on our [Programme Page](#).
- Section 2 of your application must be anonymous. This is to reduce the potential for bias and discrimination in the selection process and to ensure that you are evaluated based on your skills, qualifications and suitability for the programme.
- Only the information in your application form and supporting documents will be assessed.
- Your application will automatically save so you can return and make edits.
- Applications must be submitted by midnight on **15 September 2024**. Late submissions will not be considered.
- We will begin scoring applications from **17th September 2024**.
- Please keep within the maximum word counts permitted in each of the sections of the application form. Any content that exceeds the word count limit will be disregarded.
- Please ensure you have read and understood the terms and conditions set out on the website.

Application Questions

The questions are outlined in more detail below and each question contributes to one of the following evaluation criteria:

- Solution & Innovation
- Market and Traction

- Impact
- Team
- Programme Fit

Assessors with a broad technical knowledge across different areas of transport and technology will mark your application. **You should therefore write clearly in layman's terms, avoiding acronyms and obscure jargon.** You should read this section alongside the assessment scoring criteria section as that will help to maximise your score.

Q1-26: Company information – this section will help assessors understand the size of your business, your business model, previous/current funding and includes some compliance checks. Your answers to these questions contribute to the 'Programme Fit' score by helping the assessors to determine the level of support your business may need and whether it is at the right stage of growth to benefit from the programme.

Q17: Diversity and Inclusion – EDI is a priority to us and your current/future approach will be assessed as part of the 'Team' evaluation score.

Q18: Diversity and Inclusion Survey – Your willingness to participate in the survey and your survey answers are not evaluated. However, responses help us understand our baseline position and will identify how we could be more inclusive in the design of our programmes.

Q28: Technology Readiness Levels – This question contributes to the 'Programme Fit' assessment score. Your answer will allow us to determine the level of support you may need to bring your solution to market and whether it may solve one or more of this programme's challenges. Please note that this programme is designed around solutions which are TRL 7-9. For more information on technology readiness levels, see the list below:

- TRL 1: Idea stage. Basic principles observed.
- TRL 2: Basic research; technology concept formulated.
- TRL 3: Experimental proof of concept achieved.
- TRL 4: Small scale prototype; technology validated in a lab or testing environment.
- TRL 5: Large scale prototype; technology validated in an operational environment.
- TRL 6: Technology demonstrated in operational environment.
- TRL 7: Prototype demonstration in operational environment.
- TRL 8: First of a kind commercial system; all technical process to support commercial activity are in a ready state.
- TRL 9: Full commercial application; technology is readily available on the market.

Q30: Solution – Clearly tell us about your solution in this section, in layman's terms. What is it, what does it do and how does it work? It must be clear that your solution is needed, is feasible and that it has real potential to address one or more of the programme's challenges. Make sure you explain how or why your solution is likely to work. Your answer to this question contributes to the 'Solution and Innovation' score.

Q31: Innovation – For this question you need to provide a strong case for why and how your solution is innovative. For example, does your solution apply existing technologies in new areas, is it about developing new technologies for existing areas or is it a completely novel approach? You should tell us whether you have protected your IP through patents, copyright, or trademarks. Your answer to this question contributes to the 'Solution and Innovation' score.

Q32: Market understanding. Tell us what you understand the market potential for your solution to be. What is your competitive edge over other existing solutions in the market? What commercialisation risks exist in that marketplace and how do you plan to mitigate them? Your answer to this question contributes to the 'Market and Traction' score.

Q33: Market traction – We would like to see whether your solution has already gained interest from the market. Traction here could be in the form of actual sales, grants, potential collaborations, interested parties and/or evidence of intent and investment raised. If you can, please provide us with details of:

- Your existing customer base, including early adopters.
- Who your collaborators are, both past and present.
- Market commendation, such as grant funding paid, investment raised and/or letters of support.
- Successful proof of concepts and/or trials already undertaken.

Your answer to this question contributes to the 'Market and Traction' score.

Q34: Team – For this question we are keen to understand the roles, skills, and relevant experience of the project team, including any sub-contractors. Explain how you will create capacity for the programme if you have other projects underway. Your answer to this question contributes to the 'Team' score, alongside your answer to the EDI question. **Please ensure you keep this section anonymised by using initials for key team members for example or by using role titles only.**

Q35: Programme objectives – We would like to understand your motivation for applying to the accelerator and what you hope to achieve with the relevant challenge partner by taking part in this programme. You should include details of what input you might need from the partner local authority. Your answer to this question contributes to the 'Impact' score and the 'Programme Fit' score.

Q36: Expected Impact and Evaluation – Please describe the impact(s) you believe your solution will have by addressing the challenge(s) identified, and please specify how you might evaluate that impact. You should consider impact from the perspective of the challenge partner, wider industry and your own business.

4. 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 three expert assessors from the Connected Places Catapult and the relevant Local Authority. Assessors with a broad technical knowledge across different areas of transport and technology will mark your application.

Applications will be evaluated using the criteria set out below.

<p>1. Solution & Innovation – 25% (Questions 30 & 31)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Has the applicant clearly explained the solution?</i> <i>b. Is the solution effective at addressing the challenge?</i> <i>c. Is the product innovative with clear Unique Selling Points?</i> <i>d. Is the solution feasible?</i> <i>e. Is IP protected by through patents, copyright, or trademarks?</i>
<p>2. Market & Traction – 20% (Questions 32 & 33)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Does the applicant have evidence of the market need for their solution?</i> <i>b. Has the applicant demonstrated their competitive advantage vs. existing solutions in the market?</i> <i>c. Has the applicant identified any commercial risks, and do they have a robust mitigation plan?</i> <i>d. What traction has the applicant already made in the market (i.e., actual sales, grants, potential collaborations, interested parties, evidence of intent and investment raised)?</i> <i>e. Has revenue been generated using this solution or have any related contracts been signed?</i>
<p>3. Team - 15% (Questions 17 & 34)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Has the team demonstrated the required skills, experience and capability to scale the business?</i> <i>b. Has the team got the capacity and resources necessary to fully participate in the programme?</i> <i>c. Is the business committed to upholding equality and diversity practices in its team?</i>
<p>4. Impact – 20% (Questions 35 & 36)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. What is the applicant's objective for the programme?</i> <i>b. What does the applicant envisage are the main impacts that their solution will have for their challenge partner, the wider industry and their business?</i> <i>c. What approach would the applicant take to measure the impact of the solution?</i>
<p>5. Programme fit– 20% (Section 1 and Questions 28, 29 & 35)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Is the applicant at the right stage in their growth to benefit from the programme?</i> <i>b. Does the applicant offer a solution that can help solve one or more of the challenges of the programme?</i> <i>c. Is the solution at TRL 7 - 9?</i> <i>d. Are the applicants' expectations of the challenge partner viable?</i>

0-5 MARKING SCHEME	
0	Unacceptable Response – No information provided, or response does not address the requirements.
1	Poor Response - The response fails to address a significant proportion of the requirements, contains material omissions and/or is supported by limited evidence/examples. Major concerns that the applicant has the potential to deliver/that they have failed to meet a reasonable standard.
2	Unsatisfactory Response – The response contains omissions. The response meets the requirements in some respects but fails in the majority and/or is not well supported by evidence/examples. There are concerns about the applicant’s ability to deliver/that they have failed to meet a reasonable standard.
3	Reasonable / Satisfactory Response – There is adequate detail and some supporting examples giving a reasonable level of confidence in the applicant’s experience and ability. The applicant appears to have the potential to deliver as required/has met a reasonable standard and there are only minor concerns about the applicant’s response.
4	Good Response – The level of detail and supporting examples gives a high level of confidence in the applicant’s experience and ability with only minor omissions indicating that the delivery of works / services / supplies will be good. The applicant clearly has the potential to deliver and/or has clearly met an acceptable standard.
5	Excellent Response – A comprehensive well evidenced application, clearly demonstrating expertise and knowledge incorporating value added benefits/social value attributes and other points of innovation. The response fully captures the understanding of the steps involved to deliver the aspects of the question posed, giving a very high level of confidence in the applicant’s experience and ability.

Following the initial assessment, several applicants will be shortlisted for interview. Interviews will take place **w/c 30 September 2024 and are likely to be virtual**. The purpose of these interviews will be to explore the validity of the initial evaluation, to confirm our understanding of the proposed solution based on the evaluation criteria in the previous section and, where appropriate, to probe issues in greater depth.

Notification of Assessment Outcome

Our intention is to notify successful applications by 7 October 2024. If your project is successful, you will be sent a terms and conditions document that you must sign and return, along with any additional documentation that is requested within stated timelines.

Only applicants that progress to the interview stage will be given a breakdown of the scores achieved for each section of the application form however, it is our intention to provide feedback to all applicants.

Connected Places Catapult reserves the right to declare applications unsuccessful and out of scope.

5. Programme Reporting

Throughout the programme there will be a survey which will ask about your experience of participating in the programme.

6. Dates and Deadlines

Please note the dates and deadlines for the competition below. These are indicative timings; we will adhere to this schedule as best we can. The closing date for applications is fixed and will be midnight on **Sunday 15th September 2024**. We will begin assessing applications from **Tuesday 17th September 2024**.

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

Competition opens	31 st July
Application Support Webinar	21s August, 14:00 - 15:00
Competition closes (application deadline)	Midnight 15 th September
Notification to shortlisted applicants	No later than 27 th September
Interviews	w/c 30 th September
Notification to successful applicants	No later than 7 th October
Welcome Day (In person, likely to be London)	16 th October

7. Contact Details

If you have any questions about the programme, please contact Kirsty Murphy, the Accelerator Programme Manager, at kirsty.murphy@cp.catapult.org.uk.

We wish you luck with your application!