FAQs and responses arising from shaping sessions and recent conversations

Usually, when one person asks us a question other people are often wondering the same thing so we've jotted down some of the things we have been asked recently and our responses so that everyone is on the same page.

If you do have any questions about the application process or any aspect of the programme then please get in touch with cdc.info@liverpool.ac.uk - we are here to help!

1. **Am I eligible?**

We will give priority to SMEs based, or looking to relocate to the LCR. We're looking for digital/data led solutions linked to the following areas:

- Help us build our data commons by j**oining up the data** – collect store or link data between organisations and across sectors.

- Help us explore **novel data capture** through a Community led data project

- Create **a novel digital idea** -Apps to facilitate response to upcoming trends – capturing emerging trends from personal data, communities and organisations working across sectors to allow workforces to respond.

2. **Is there a specific organisational type that is eligible?**

We can fund SMEs (including CICs and CIOs and other socially trading organisational types). If you do not think you meet this criteria get in touch.

3. **Can my company make more than 1 application?**

No, an organisation can only lead 1 application but could be a collaborator in other projects.

4. **Who will own the IP?**

You will retain ownership of the IP of anything you produce using this funding. Please see the T&Cs of this funding for more details

5. **What costs are not covered by the funding?**

This fund is not to be used as working capital for 'business as usual' operations.

6. **If I am successful, what monitoring and evaluation process will I be subject to?**

Monitoring and evaluation is important to help ensure that we track the impact and effectiveness of the investments that we make. All grant recipients will be required to report on project progress 6 and 12 months after the grant award.

7. **What do you mean by 'innovative'?**

We appreciate that "innovation" can mean different things to different people. Innovation activities within the region range from R&D- intensive fundamental science carried out through our leading universities, to agile SME product, process & service innovation. We are open to projects from any sector, speciality or technology (except those specifically excluded in the eligibility criteria).

We do not hold any pre-conceived ideas as to what proposed innovations look like, but we are clear that all proposals must look to:

• Develop a new product, process, service or application which responds to one of the challenge areas;

• Deliver clear transformational benefits for the applicant SMEs and LCR economy;

• Improve the health and wellbeing of the LCR

8. Does the idea have to be a completely new product/ service or can it be something re purposed, applied to a new market or expanded?

It doesn't have to be completely new. We are open to ideas which may have been proven to work in one area or customer group which, with some development, could be useful in a new market or scale up to respond to greater need. The key thing is to be able to demonstrate this in your application. We can't fund 'business as usual' so be clear in your application why you need the seed money to grow your idea, apply an existing idea in a new way or pivot to a new market.

9. How do I apply?

You will need to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) to the CDC before **12 noon on the 27th June**. The template for the form is available here.

You may complete an EoI but decide this programme isn't for you during the sprint. Please let us know and provide any reason for your decision to help us with future programs.

You will only be able to submit a full application IF you have been through the EoI process.

The CDC team will be in touch after submitting your EoI to discuss your project. **You will need to submit a full business case by 12noon on the 18th July**. The template for the business case is available here.

10. How will my idea be assessed?

An expert panel will review applications. Please ensure you answer the questions we've asked. Your application will only be assessed on these questions.

Shortlisted projects to **pitch live in the week of the 28th July.**

11. What kind of money is the seed fund?

It is grant funding (so is not required to be repaid or exchanged for any stake in the business)

12. What are the T&Cs if we were to be successful?

Successful projects will receive the funding as a grant (ie. it is not repayable investment). As is usual, recipients will be asked to agree to grant funding T&Cs. Here is a copy of those T&Cs for your information.

13. What due diligence will you do?

We will undertake standard checks which may involve a review of your financial information/ accounts and any legal considerations. We may ask you to provide references.

14. Does my project have to involve data to be eligible?

Yes. We want to create a vibrant, internationally visible, civic data environment which will enable residents' data to work harder for them to shape better care and fuel globally important innovations from the LCR.

We believe this is a virtuous cycle so it's important to us that any funded innovation either draws from, or contributes to, the data and intelligence landscape. For example, you might be contributing to the data intelligence of the system through sharing your insights and engagement data which will inform future interventions, you might be targeting your solution based on live data that you are using to ensure best use of resources or you might be building valuable data that could be used to inform decision makers about what is working on the ground. We want to understand how you will use data and intelligence to make the best solution, operate effectively or contribute to the knowledge we hold collectively in the future.

15. I'm thinking of a partnership proposal – what's the responsibility of a lead applicant, how will that work?

We'd expect the lead applicant to be the person who is delivering most of the work or who has the main responsibility; this is the organization to whom the gran twill be paid. We are keen to understand respective roles in partnership bids. Make sure you, and all partners understand each other's strengths and weaknesses. You'll need to work out an agreement that is clear between all parties involved on delivery responsibilities and any sharing of costs/ grant funding. It's best to get this in place at the application stage to avoid confusion at a later date.

16. Did I have to attend the Hackathon to submit an EOI?

No, the hackthon was a stand alone programme, however those who took part will have the benefit of 2 days working on a product/solution and will have heard from other innovative projects in the region. If you did attend the hackathon you do not need to submit this idea as the EOI, but it would help to explain your journey and why you have pivoted.

17. Can you give a sense of how much money you think each successful bid will be able to secure?

The total pot is £180,000 and we expect a number of applications for that funding to be made. We didn't want to be overly prescriptive as we are keen to be able to respond to the ideas that come forwards. **However we will award a minimum of 3 projects and projects need to be completed within the timeframe of the programme (31 December 2025)**.

18. Can you confirm that its ok to spend money on salaries, costs for workshops, customer research/ engagements, marketing, business development, overheads?

Yes costs associated with developing the new project are eligible. You cannot fund business as usual. If you are not sure please drop us an email and we can review any cost categories you hope to propose.

19. How much detail do you want on the financial support that we are seeking in the pitch?

We need to know what you will spend the money on at a headline level – so if you are asking for a salary for example tell us the job title, what they will do and how much it will cost or if you need funding for equipment tell us what it is. Give us a good feel for the need at headline level and we'll ask for more details if we need them.

20. Are there procurement restrictions that will apply if we are successful?

In terms of procurement, recipients will be free to procure the necessary items they need to undertake the agreed work following their own procedures for fair procurement – there are no specific prescriptions with the funding. However, we'd expect all partners to take due care in securing good value for money.

21. What are the monitoring requirements for successful applicants?

We are keen that our work together adds value rather than feeling overly burdensome. When awarded we will want to see a project plan and have monthly touchpoints with you to hear how it's going and if there is any way we can further support the project. We will also want an output at the end of project – an update, meeting and summary of how you spent the money and how well the project went.

22. I think my idea is good, and I'd like to develop it further but I'm not sure it fits in well with the themes – where else could I go to get seed funding and support to take it forwards?

There is a broad range of support available to support new business ideas, growth and expansion in the Liverpool City Region. Where you go for help will depend in part on what you need the funding for, what the focus of your idea is, what kind of funding you need and at what stage your idea is at so its difficult for us to give a definitive list. Some good starting points might be: Growth Hub, Kindred, Lyva Labs.

23. Can you help me think a bit deeper about the relationship between my idea and data?

We've heard in the conversations about a very varied spectrum of data in the emerging projects - if you think it would be useful to talk more about data before submitting your application get in touch with the CDC to think it though further.

24. I've got lots of good ideas – can you help me work out which one to go with?

We are happy to chat and we can ask some questions that might help you to ensure you have fully thought through the applicability of your concept to this programme and how best to make it work – this should help you establish what is most viable but ultimately it is your decision what to go with!