



# Horizon Scanning – Funding

February 2021

For further information, including advice, guidance and support on bidding into competitions, please contact us:

[enquiries@black-kite.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@black-kite.co.uk)

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3. **Innovate UK : Smart January 2021:** Opens: 21 Jan 2021, closing 26 May 2021 (11:00).
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  - Always a highly competitive call.
4. **NIHR (National Institute for Health Research) i4i Product Development Awards:** opening 14 April 2021.
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### Scope of Call:

Any technological area.  
Game changing, innovative, ambitious, ready for commercialisation soon after project end. Strong business and delivery plan.

**Aim:** Any innovation with significant potential for growth or scale-up, taking customer and user needs into account.

### Available funding: total £25 m

For project durations between 6 & 18 months, total costs between £25k - £500k; project duration 19 to 36 months, total costs £25k - £2m. For costs up to £3 m, seek approval ten days before deadline.

### Eligibility:

UK registered business or RTO.  
RTOs can partner, academics cannot lead.

### Dates:

Open: 21/01/2021; closes: 26/05/2021 (11:00)  
Briefing: 11:30 05/02/2021  
<https://ukri.zoom.us/j/97429875434>  
Project start: by 1 Nov. 2021 (latest)

### Key Considerations:

- Must be led by UK business, of any size.
- Project must include at least one micro or SME.
- Shorter (6-18 month) projects may be single SME, but more likely a collaboration led by business (large or SME).
- Larger projects must be collaborative. Non-grant claiming partners' costs are included in total eligible project costs.
- Subcontractors permitted, no specified limit but must be justified and appropriate.
- Must demonstrate intention to commercially exploit project result(s).
- Funding level is function of project type (feasibility, industrial research, etc.) and organisation size.
- One resubmission allowed.
- Research partners max. 30% total costs.
- **Highly competitive call.**
- Standard application form + EDI, additional financial considerations (e.g. for UID).

### General Recommendations:

- A commercial exploitation path must be evident for all business partners.
- Preference is given to projects with potential for growth in global markets.
- There is a focus on identified customers and users to show value & potential of solution.
- Time to market is important.
- Clear project management approach, availability of necessary skills and appreciation of risks and their management is needed, i.e., **strong project management** should be evident in application.
- Need to identify if the project is feasibility (shorter, but higher funding levels), industrial research, or experimental development (larger, but lower funding %).

- This is **always** a highly competitive call.
- The last round required a score upwards of **84% plus** to be in with a chance of funding.
- Contact us to help you bid successfully into this competition: [enquiries@black-kite.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@black-kite.co.uk)

**NIHR (National Institute for Health Research) i4i Product Development Awards**  
<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/funding-programmes/invention-for-innovation.htm>

## Scope of Call:

Medical devices and in vitro diagnostics.

**Aim:** Translational R&D of medical devices for NHS use, addressing any disease or health area where there is a clear unmet clinical need.

## Available funding: total £unspecified

Project costs: £unspecified; 3 – 5 years.  
Grant: 100%; 80% (HEI.)

## Eligibility:

Lead: SME, NHS Trust, HEI.  
Must include NHS Trust or NHS service provider  
At least two organisations involved.

## Dates:

**PDA22:** open: 14 April 2021, closes 09 June 2021

**Challenge Awards Call 12** open: 14 April 2021, closes 10 June 2021

## Key Considerations

- Projects can be led by an SME, an HEI or NHS provider.
- Minimum of two organisations must be involved.
- At least one collaborator from NHS.
- Research proposals may address any disease or healthcare area.
- Technologies must already have demonstrated safety & efficacy.
- Proof of concept must exist already.
- Two-stage application process.
- Lead applicants must be based in England
- Project durations: 24 months (min.) and 36 months (max.)

## General Recommendations:

- This competition is for projects that have already demonstrated proof of concept. Early stage research is not fundable.
- Any existing medical device for which further prototyping and development is needed can be funded
- Of particular interest is **techniques or technologies from a different industry sector** applied to the healthcare setting.
- A **plan for adoption into the NHS** is necessary, therefore partnering with an NHS trust or provider is essential.
- A **commercial strategy** showing how the product or technique will be taken to market is **needed**, that shows appreciation of the regulatory pathways for healthcare products.

## Innovate UK : ISCF Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging: Demonstrators (EoI)

<https://www.ukcpn.co.uk/funding/iscf-smart-sustainable-plastic-packaging-overview-future-funding-competitions/>

### Scope of Call:

Part of the SSPP, Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging Programme:

([https://www.ukri.org/innovation/industrial-strategy-challenge-fund/smart-sustainable-plastic-packaging/?&\\_ga=2.96468380.1674860661.1575378010-1664125102.1564659481#pagecontentid-0](https://www.ukri.org/innovation/industrial-strategy-challenge-fund/smart-sustainable-plastic-packaging/?&_ga=2.96468380.1674860661.1575378010-1664125102.1564659481#pagecontentid-0))

Smart & sustainable plastic packaging for consumer products.

Deliver cleaner growth across supply chains.

**Aim:** To establish the UK as a leading innovator and deliver dramatic reduction in plastic waste entering the environment by 2025

### Available funding: total £16 m

Project costs: £1 m to £12 m.

Grant: 25% (large); 35% (med.); 45% (small).

### Eligibility:

Lead: Business, collaborative.

### Dates:

Open: **Feb 2021**

Briefing: 10:00 – 12:00 9 Feb. 2021; see:

<https://web-eur.cvent.com/event/702c93cf-daa6-42be-a07f-cfec3dcc370f/summary>

### Key Considerations:

- SSPP Challenge aims to establish the UK as a leading innovator.
- Projects must make plastics packaging supply chain more circular; deliver the targets of the UK Plastics Pact; embed life cycle thinking and end of life in packaging design and decisions.
- Show reduced environmental impact, e.g., reduced emissions, increased / improved recyclability.
- Particular interest in:
  - Minimised plastic packaging
  - Refill at scale
  - Sustainable solutions for film
  - Food grade recycled PP/PE
  - Behavioural change for less waste
  - Address Plastics Pact target for unnecessary or single use plastic packaging

### General Recommendations:

- Projects must demonstrate how objectives of the plastics pact are supported, and delivers systemic change.
- Clearly explain reductions in UK plastic packaging system's overall environmental impact.
- Demonstrate contributing to meeting the SSPP Challenge objectives.
- Utilise innovation in design, technology, processes, business models, supply chains or data for plastic packaging.
- This is large scale demonstrations of capability, which must be demonstrably ambitious.

## Innovate UK : ISCF Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging: Business-Led R&D (BLR&D)

<https://www.ukcpn.co.uk/funding/iscf-smart-sustainable-plastic-packaging-overview-future-funding-competitions/>

### Scope of Call:

Part of the SSPP, Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging Programme:

([https://www.ukri.org/innovation/industrial-strategy-challenge-fund/smart-sustainable-plastic-packaging/?\\_ga=2.96468380.1674860661.1575378010-1664125102.1564659481#pagecontentid-0](https://www.ukri.org/innovation/industrial-strategy-challenge-fund/smart-sustainable-plastic-packaging/?_ga=2.96468380.1674860661.1575378010-1664125102.1564659481#pagecontentid-0))

Smart & sustainable plastic packaging for consumer products.  
Deliver cleaner growth across supply chains.

**Aim:** To establish the UK as a leading innovator and deliver dramatic reduction in plastic waste entering the environment by 2025

### Available funding: total £8 m

Project costs: £200 k to £4 m.

Grant: 50% (large); 60% (med.); 70% (small).

### Eligibility:

Lead: Business, collaboration allowed, research organisations max of 50% total eligible costs

### Dates:

Open: **March 2021**

### Key Considerations:

- SSPP Challenge aims to establish the UK as a leading innovator.
- Projects must make plastics packaging supply chain more circular; deliver the targets of the UK Plastics Pact; embed life cycle thinking and end of life in packaging design and decisions.
- Must explain how the UK's plastic packaging system's overall environmental impact is reduced.
- Particular interest in:
  - Minimised plastic packaging
  - Refill at scale
  - Sustainable solutions for film
  - Food grade recycled PP/PE
  - Behavioural change for less waste
  - Address Plastics Pact target for unnecessary or single use plastic packaging

### General Recommendations:

- These are business-led research projects, but must show clear target of their research in respect of the considerations.
- Clearly explain reductions in UK plastic packaging system's overall environmental impact.
- Demonstrate contributing to meeting one or more of the UK Plastic Pact targets.
- The project can be a mix of industrial research and experimental development. The scale of the project would reflect this mix.
- Note that experimental development components of a bid carry lower recovery rates.

## MedTech Navigator Innovation Grants

<https://www.medtechnavigator.co.uk/funding/>

### Scope of Call:

- Innovation grants to facilitate interactions between Med Tech SMEs and Knowledge Providers during product development. For example, help to develop or test new or improved products, processes and services.
- Applications assessed on novelty of innovation, clinical need, value for money, strength of team.

### Available Funding:

- Up to £7,500 grant (50% of total project cost).

### Dates:

Open call, next deadline: **09 April 2021**.

### Key Considerations:

- SME applies for and justifies knowledge collaboration.
- Simple application process with regular awards committee reviews.
- Typical projects include:
  - Help to develop or test new or improved products, processes and services.
  - Access to information and expertise on care pathways and workflows.
  - Tapping into clinical and scientific expertise.

### General Recommendations:

- Health stakeholders should be involved in any bid, such as patient groups, clinicians or NHS organisations.
- Teaming with an NHS Trust or medical device manufacturer would be beneficial.
- University medical departments are also regarded as a knowledge provider.

## Merck 2020 Research Grants

<https://www.merckgroup.com/en/research/open-innovation/2020-research-grants/research-grant-pandemic-preparedness.html>

### Scope of Call:

- Within the health sector, the pandemic preparedness topic looks for innovative research into technological means of preparing for and fighting new emerging viral infectious diseases.

### Funding:

- Grants of €100k – 500k per year for up to three years, with the option of an extension.
- Collaborations between institutions allowed.

### Dates:

- Next call was expected to be published in Jan 2021, **but delayed**.

### Key Considerations:

- Collaboration is not mandated, although teaming with a healthcare provider would add credibility.
- Bringing existing technology from a different sector into this domain e.g. for biocides or on-chip (in-vitro) diagnostics would be of interest.
- Bio-electronics are also mentioned as being of interest.

### General Recommendations:

- Knowledge, competence, access to facilities and innovative ideas will support a bid.
- Connection to, or collaboration with, a clinical or healthcare provider will add credibility and knowledge of the user.
- Innovative thinking, bringing technologies applied to non-health sectors into the health domain will be of interest.
- Time to an outcome seems important, especially during the current situation, therefore existing approaches that can be repurposed to the health domain will be of interest here.



**Innovate UK : COVID-19 Funding – this competition is now closed, and is retained for information, as further rounds or extensions may arise.**

<https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/get-funding-for-ideas-that-address-covid-19/?elqTrackId=960F05CC3EAE6BE1EA6DE59D3C9C7845&elq=6d95fc391aed4af2886f82c9f440c84d&elqaid=1638&elqat=1&elqCampaignId=960>

## Scope of Call:

- Supports the manufacture and/or wide scale adoption of an intervention with significant potential.
- Gathers critical data and resources quickly for future research use.

**Aim:** New research or innovation with potential to deliver significant contribution to understanding of and response to C-19 pandemic and its impacts

**Relevance:** could address biocides, infection prevention and detection.

## Available funding: not given

Project costs: not given – ‘appropriate’  
Grant: via Research Council or Innovate UK

## Eligibility:

Lead: UK business or RTO if partnered with at least 2 businesses.

## Dates:

close: **09 Dec 2020 (Innovate) 15 Dec (RC)**

## Key Considerations

- Project of up to 18 months duration.
- Shouldn't duplicate a project already underway.
- Resubmissions or previous bids not allowed.
- Some exclusions: specific mitigations for existing institutions and long term research.
- Business lead applies through IFS, academic lead or collaborator through JeS.
- Can be used to switch funding from existing project to COVID-relevant activity – applies to business, RTO or academic.
- Can be led by business or RTO, not academic
- International Co-Investigators allowed.
- Closing date may be extended.
- More information from [CV19researchinnovation@ukri.org](mailto:CV19researchinnovation@ukri.org)

## General Recommendations:

- Prospective bidders should check the list of existing projects to ensure originality at: <https://www.ukri.org/find-covid-19-research-and-innovation-supported-by-ukri/>
- A list of current priority areas is at: <https://www.ukri.org/find-covid-19-research-and-innovation-supported-by-ukri/>
- Should consider first whether it is appropriate to repurpose an existing funded project before submitting something new.
- Focus on addressing an urgent need that can be met within the timescale of the project.
- Proposals relevant to COVID-19 submitted post-deadline should add “CV-19” at start of grant title.
- Urgent proposals after 15<sup>th</sup> December can still submit by emailing [CV19researchinnovation@ukri.org](mailto:CV19researchinnovation@ukri.org)

## UKRI: Research England (RE) [<https://www.ukri.org/>]

### General Background: <https://re.ukri.org/funding/our-funds-overview/global-challenges-research-fund/>

- New UKRI council funding HEIs for research and KE.
- UK Research Partnership Investment Fund, and HEIF (Higher Education Innovation Fund).
- New Funding Finder website <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/>

### Funding changes:

- Recurrent grant finding for the academic year 2020 – 2021 (£ m):
 

• Accelerated QR	0
• National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF, allocated as QR)	107
• Recurrent knowledge exchange (HEIF)	230
• National facilities and initiatives	40
- Others are unchanged from 2019 – 2020.

### Fund review:

- **UK Research Partnership Initiative Fund (UKRPIF):**
  - Capital funding to research centres and universities; only half the projects allocated.
  - Fund not currently open; open dates will be published on the UKRI website.
- **Research England Development (RED) Fund (see opposite):**
  - £27 m p.a. for projects that aid development & interaction of the UK's HE and KE activities in line with Government and UKRI priorities.
- **Research Capital Investment Fund:**
  - For research groups to maintain or improve physical premises or infrastructure.
  - Is allocated annually to HEIs – awards normally announced July
- **International Investment Initiative (I3) Fund:**
  - Supports existing international collaborations.
  - Closed for submissions in 2019; no future rounds are in place as yet.
- **Connecting Capability Fund (CCF):**
  - Supports partnerships between HE, businesses and investors & some Catapults.
  - Only open for follow-on funding for existing CCF wave 1 projects at present.
- **Museum, Galleries and Collections Fund:**
  - University museums, galleries and collections; Ongoing for existing recipients.
- **Global Challenges Research Fund:**
  - Research that addresses challenges faced by developing countries.
  - Accessible to HEIs that submitted QR GCRF (ODA compliant) strategies.

### Expanding Excellence in England (E3) Fund:

- Strategic expansion of research units already deemed excellent.
- Specifically about supporting improvements in UK research capability in line with the Industrial Strategy and Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).
- Thirteen current projects across diverse areas, from linguistics to space, from plastics to music, from fine print to diabetes, etc..
  - Total funds allocated ~£76.1 m
  - Average project size ~£5.8 m
  - see: <https://re.ukri.org/funding/our-funds-overview/expanding-excellence-in-england-e3-fund/>

### Research England Development (RED) Fund:

- **Ongoing** application & approval process.
  - **Next Panel date: tbc**
- Expectation that applications are prepared in collaboration with RE.
- Possible for industry to partner with an HEI to apply an advanced research technology.
- Eight current projects: ~£22.7 m; avg ~£3 m (excluding low value outlier).
- Straight-forward application process; alignment to the fund's key priorities should be evident.
- **Non-competitive fund**; apply any time.
- <https://re.ukri.org/funding/our-funds-overview/research-england-development-red-fund/>

- **Knowledge transfer partnerships (KTP): 2020 to 2021, round 6**

- Standard KTP scheme. Comprehensive application process.
- 12 – 36 month projects.
- Technology and Management KTPs possible.
- Opens: 8 Feb 2021; closes: 04 April 2021.
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/knowledge-transfer-partnerships-what-they-are-and-how-to-apply>

- **African agriculture knowledge transfer partnerships (KTP): 2020 to 2021, round 5: £2 m.**

- Similar to above KTP, except another knowledge base and a business partner registered in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya or S. Africa to be included.
- Enhanced application form/process – more questions.
- Registration closes 14 April 2021
- <https://ktn-uk.org/opportunities/african-agriculture-knowledge-transfer-partnerships-ktp-2020-to-2021-round-5/>

- **SBRI – Improving Hip Fracture Outcomes using Data, Phase 1 : SBRI are contracts, not grants. Innovate UK contracts with one contractor.**

- Phase 1 of 2 phase competition (typical for SBRI competitions).
- Single applicant, but subcontracting allowed.
- At least 50% of project must be R&D.
- Target is improved outcomes for hip fracture patients.
- Feasibility study up to £15 k (inc. VAT) in first phase. Success in phase 1 allows for invitation to future phase(s).
- Phase 2 up to £57 k (inc. VAT), 9-month projects.
- Phase 1 – up to 3 month projects.
- Opens 1<sup>st</sup> February, closes 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (11:00); expected project start date: 2 June 2021.
- <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/776/overview>

- **SBRI – Improving Multimorbidity Acute Care Using Data Analytics, Phase 1 : SBRI are contracts, not grants. Innovate UK contracts with one contractor.**

- Phase 1 of 2 phase competition (typical for SBRI competitions).
- Single applicant, but subcontracting allowed.
- At least 50% of project must be R&D.
- Target is improved decision making for multi-morbidity patients.
- Feasibility study up to £10 k (inc. VAT) in first phase. Success in phase 1 allows for invitation to future phase(s).
- Phase 2 up to £55k (inc. VAT), 9-month projects.
- Phase 1 – up to 3 month projects.
- Opened 18<sup>th</sup> January, closes 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 (11:00).
- <https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/782/overview>

## Research Councils : Other competitions

<https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/>

- **NERC Highlight:**
  - Research addressing environmental challenges.
  - Funding up to £4 m over / up to 4 years.
  - Competition opened 30 November 2020, closes 25 March 2021 <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/nerc-highlight-topics/>
- **EPSRC: Asthma health technology**
  - For development of technologies for diagnosis, monitoring and management tools for asthma.
  - Potential for detectors of asthma inducing pollutants etc.
  - Up to £750 k grant funding.
  - Opened 20 October 2020, closes 11 February 2021 <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/asthma-health-technology/>
- **EPSRC: Manufacturing the future**
  - Support for engineering and physical sciences research looking at key challenges facing manufacturing in the UK.
  - Includes chemistry and materials.
  - Up to £2 m.
  - Open now, no closing date <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/manufacturing-the-future/>
- **MRC: Infections and immunity programme**
  - Typically grants of £1M or more for up to 5 years.
  - Grants within an academic institution.
  - Next round opens 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021 <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/mrc-infections-and-immunity-programme-grant/>
- **UKRI-SBE lead agency opportunity**
  - Collaborations between UK and US researchers in any discipline including biotech.
  - Submission of EoI to NSF and UKRI for consideration.
  - Maximum award £1 m, currently open, no closing date <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/ukri-sbe-lead-agency-opportunity/>
- **EPSRC: Discipline-hopping in ICT**
  - Relevant for researchers with non-ICT expertise looking to learn ICT research skills and apply them in their home discipline.
  - 3-4 month support of salary and T&S at 80% FEC.
  - Now open, no closing date <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/epsrc-discipline-hopping-in-ict/>
- **EPSRC: Healthcare technologies new challenges, Network Plus [now closed, no date published for next round]**
  - Aimed at researchers addressing technologies to improve healthcare treatment, environments and healthcare systems.
  - Covers salaries, T&S, workshops and admin.
  - Opened 02 November 2020, closes 13 Jan 2021 <https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/healthcare-technologies-new-challenges-networkplus/>

## Other competitions

- **SBRI: Greenhouse Gas removal technology: Global Health Innovative Technology Fund**
- Closes 05 February 2021.
- Design study into development of innovative greenhouse gas removals or technologies [https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/84d44904-0800-4190-89df-7e3e874fe577?\\_ga=2.13824439.1259114058.1607432282-1292109637.1581942760](https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/84d44904-0800-4190-89df-7e3e874fe577?_ga=2.13824439.1259114058.1607432282-1292109637.1581942760)
- **Horizon Europe**
- The UK has now signed up to become an associate country to the Horizon Europe Programme, allowing UK scientists, researchers and businesses to access funding on equivalent terms as organisation in other EU countries.
- Horizon Europe is a seven year programme (2021-2027) with €53.8 bn to spend on Global Challenges in health, culture, creativity, digital, climate and food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment.
- More information will be made available when the work programme is adopted by the European Commission in April 2021.
- [https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe_en)
- **KTN iX Challenge: other challenges and calls published periodically on their website:**
- <https://www.ktninnovationexchange.co.uk/Challenges>
- **Clean Growth Fund (for those seeking equity investment)**
- The Clean Growth Fund (CGF) invests in the most promising and ambitious companies to provide commercialisation expertise and access to markets.
- Looking for any company with a clear and significant contribution to reducing greenhouse gases.
- Provides business support to sectors: power, buildings, transport, industry and waste.
- First round investment £500 k - £3 m. <https://www.cleangrowthfund.com/key-info-for-entrepreneurs/>
- **NIHR (National Institute for Health Research) i4i Product Development Awards – Connect 5 Stage 1**
- Aimed at SMEs developing medical devices, in vitro diagnostics and Tier 3a digital health technologies.
- Connect is researcher-led and does not specify topics for research.
- Lead applicant must be SME based in England, 6-12 month project, £50 k - £150 k value, opens **17 August 2021**
- Projects must demonstrate evidence of proof-of-concept.
- <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/funding-programmes/invention-for-innovation.htm>
- <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/i4i-connect-expression-of-interest-guidance-for-applicants/21508>
- **Horticultural Quality and Food Loss network [this call has now closed]**
- A new network looking to tackle food waste and improve quality in horticulture and agriculture.
- Funding opportunities to members for feasibility studies etc..
- Links academia and industry.
- Registration closes 15 Jan 2021 <https://ktn-uk.org/opportunities/horticultural-quality-and-food-loss-network-2020-funding-calls/>



**As specialists in Innovation Management, Black Kite<sup>®</sup> Ltd. has been working with clients across the R&D and innovation landscape for over a decade. We are ideally placed to support all organisations (large, small and micro companies, universities, RTOs and charities) to access and manage grant funding.**

**For further information, including advice and guidance on bidding into competitions, please contact Black Kite<sup>®</sup> :  
email: [enquiries@black-kite.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@black-kite.co.uk)**