Transport Research and Innovation Grants
Programme 2022

Application Guidance

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. The Department for Transport is offering funding of up to £30k to innovators for the development of technology, products and services that could make a real difference to the future of the UK's transport network. For the 2022 programme, as well as their traditional open call, DfT is particularly interested in solutions that address the following challenges:
- Local Transport Decarbonisation
- Maritime Decarbonisation
- The Future of Freight
- Transport Resilience to Severe Weather and Flooding
- Improving the Rail Passenger Experience

1.2. Under TRIG 2022, up to 60 companies will be awarded funding totalling £1.85m. The aim of the funding is to develop projects with a Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of 2-4 which would technology concept formulated (TRL 2) to the point of feasibility (TRL 4).

1.3. The TRIG 2022 provides 100% funding and is open to all businesses including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to support demonstrator projects which will increase accessibility. The competition also welcomes applications from universities and other academic institutions as well as consortiums comprised of both groups.

1.4. The TRIG 2022 call will be delivered by Connected Places Catapult (CPC). CPC will play an active role in various aspects of the call and will offer successful projects additional market exploitation support throughout the grant funding period.

1.5. In alignment with the Department for Transportation (DfT)'s Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2022-2025), this TRIG Programme seeks to drive accessible and inclusive opportunities in the urban, transportation and mobility sectors. The competition will ask applicants to consider their own Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) practices to help foster a future diverse innovation system that enables and inspires improvements in EDI across the United Kingdom.

2. Application Process

2.1. To apply to this TRIG scheme, you must be:
- A business of any size or a university/academic institution; and
- Based in the UK.

2.2. Projects will start in March 2023 and must be delivered by September 2023.

2.3. The maximum amount of funding available for each project is dependent on the challenge selected.

2.4. The DfT will consider proposals from consortia. However, a lead applicant, who will be the grant recipient should be identified.

2.5. Previous unsuccessful applicants are welcome to apply again with improved/ revised bids.

2.6. Applicants making more than one application will need to demonstrate an ability to deliver the projects concurrently.

How to Apply

2.7. Carefully read this guidance document and the grant specifications document.

2.8. Register and complete your application form on the CPC Community platform.

2.9. Only information in your application form will be assessed. No other documentation should be attached to your submission unless this is requested.

2.10. Applications must be submitted by Sunday 15th January at midnight (GMT). Late submissions will not be considered.

2.11. Keep within the maximum word counts noted in each of the sections of the grant application form. Any content that exceeds the word count limit will be disregarded.

2.12. Please note that by applying, you accept that any resulting Grant Offer shall be subject to the provisions of this Guidance Document, the terms outlined in the Grant Agreement and the clauses contained within the Grant Offer Letter template.

2.13. Applicants requiring assistance in completing the application or alternatives forms of accessing the application should contact the project team as early as possible during the open application process to allow for appropriate support and sufficient time for the completion of the application.

Application Questions

2.14. In addition to the information included in the application form, further guidance on what should be included in your response to the application form question is given below. You should also refer to the assessment scoring criteria section as that will help to maximise your score.

Question 30, 31 and 32 - Equality and Diversity

2.15. Promoting equality of access to the competitions and supporting a diverse portfolio of companies is integral to both the Department for Transport and the Connected Places Catapult. We seek to ensure that the organisations we work with are also committed to demonstrating EDI practices in both current and future projects and operations. We recommend all applicants demonstrate their commitment to EDI as best as possible through their own initiatives and alignment with wider DfT policies.

Question 39 - TRIG Challenge

2.16. You must identify which challenge you are applying for. Please refer to the Grant Specification document for more information on each of the challenge areas.

Question 41 - Project Summary

2.17. Use this question to give a succinct overview of exactly what your TRIG project will entail.

Question 44 - Challenge

2.18. This question seeks to understand the main motivation for your project. You should clearly describe the problem or challenge you are seeking to address. You must clearly articulate why you consider this to be a high priority challenge for the DfT and why it is a major barrier within the industry. Your response should include how the challenge may affects equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Question 45 - Solution

2.19. Please provide a strong case as to how your innovation meets the challenge set out in the previous question, along with solid supporting evidence.

2.20. Your response should explain the innovative aspect of the solution, i.e., are you applying existing technologies in new areas, is it about developing new technologies for existing areas or is it a totally novel approach? Innovative proposals could include either novel ideas, technology or processes or ideas, concepts or solutions from other sectors that could be applied to improve the transport industry.

2.21. It is very important that you have thought about how you will design and develop your technology in an inclusive way. In this question you should demonstrate how you have taken the needs of different groups into account in designing your solution and the evidence of consideration around how it could help more people use the transport system safely, easily, and confidently. Taking the needs of end users into account and tailoring your solution accordingly will be fundamental in achieving commercial success and long-term positive impacts.

Question 46 - Impact

2.22. Use this section to explain how the desired outcomes of the product, service or solution will create impact and how impact might be measured.

2.23. Please structure your response under the following headings, which are the DfT's Strategic Priorities:

- Grow and Level Up the Economy – How will this proposal lead to new jobs and economic growth, especially outside of the Southeast?
- Reduce Environmental Impacts – How will this proposal reduce carbon emissions or other adverse environmental impacts of the transport system?
- Improve Transport for the User – How will this make the transport system better and who will benefit?
- Increase our Global Impact – How will this help the UK to show other countries leadership in transport technology?

Question 47 - Exploitation

2.24. Your application must include an exploitation plan that summarises and provides clear steps on how you intend to commercialise your product or solution. Your application should demonstrate a clear understanding of your chosen market and be supported by data to support any assumptions about potential market value, size, and access. The project's market opportunity should be comprehensively understood, with a clear and achievable route to market identified.

2.25. Please note that TRIG projects should have a life beyond the end of the funding offered by this programme. You should be able to show that following successful demonstration of your technology, you have a thorough understanding of your approach to commercialisation and how this will be delivered.

Question 48 - Project Management and Team

2.26. You should submit a credible project plan with aims, objectives, deliverables, milestones, and associated timescales. Your project plan should provide confidence that your project will be delivered effectively. *Please note that your project should be completed by 30 September 2023.*

2.27. You should describe the roles, skills, and relevant experience of the project team, including any sub-contractors. Please demonstrate how your company is working to support and promote EDI initiatives in the selection of your project team. Should you not demonstrate a diverse and inclusive team, you should outline how you will implement EDI initiatives in the future.

2.28. Clearly describe relevant risks to this project and how you plan to mitigate them. In a wider sense, you should also demonstrate that you will implement the required health and safety procedures within your project.

2.29. For question 49, please upload a GANTT chart that clearly outlines your project plan.

Question 52 - Project Budget

2.30. You can claim up to £30k of your project costs from the TRIG programme. Where the total value of projects is higher than £30k, the additional funding required will need to be directly contributed by the applicants. In addition, all in-kind contributions (cash or otherwise) must be detailed.

2.31. You can claim for **direct** project costs, including staff resource, consumables, equipment, lab/testing costs and travel/subsistence. All rates and costs must be competitive and reflect fair market value.

2.32. Projects should demonstrate excellent value for money and all costs should be fully justified; the value add for DfT's investment must be clear.

2.33. We would reasonably expect day rates to be circa £200-£300. However, budgets are assessed on a case-by-case basis and if higher day rates are requested, applicants would need to demonstrate why the resource is critical to the delivery of the project.

2.34. Staffing resource must be inclusive of overheads and on-costs, including NI and pension contributions.

2.35. Before completing your project budget, please refer to Section 4 – Funding Rules for advice about VAT.

How your application is assessed

2.36. After the deadline, only applications that meet the eligibility criteria and scope of the competition will be assessed. The Department reserves the right to declare applications as out of scope.

2.37. Applications that progress to the assessment stage will be reviewed by at least two expert assessors from DfT, Connected Places Catapult and partner organisations.

2.38. This scheme will operate on an open and transparent basis and all proposals will be assessed against the same assessment scoring criteria, available to download from the CPC community platform.

2.39. 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.

2.40. Applications will be assessed to ensure you have all the appropriate skills and expertise to successfully carry out the project. Should there be several projects with the same scores, preference will be given to those projects receiving higher scores for challenge, solution, and impact.

2.41. A score from 0-10 will be given for each assessment area. In total there are six assessment areas, with different weightings (as listed below). As aforementioned, the full scoring criteria is available to download from CPC's community platform.
- Challenge – 25%
- Solution – 25%
- Impact – 25%
- Exploitation – 15%
- Project Management – 5%
- Project Budget – 5%

2.42. The assessment panel will be asked to review your commitment to wider EDI initiatives through your responses to questions 33. Although scored, these questions are not weighted and will not impact the final application score. Your responses will be considered as a long-term impact of any funding given to your proposal. Where applications are of a similar quality, a proposal which scores higher and does more to evidence a positive EDI approach will be funded over one where there is weak or negative evidence.

2.43. Following the assessment of all applications, approximately 100 projects will be shortlisted for interview. The final funding decisions will be made upon completion of all interviews. In certain circumstances, the final funding decisions are made following ministerial approval. We will inform applicants as soon as possible if this is to be the case.

Notification of application outcome

2.44. If your application progresses to the assessment stage but is not shortlisted for interview, you will be provided with a breakdown of the scores achieved for each section of the application form.

2.45. If your application progresses to the interview stage but is ultimately unsuccessful in achieving funding, you will be provided with written feedback and a breakdown of the scores achieved for each section of the application form.

2.46. It is expected the final funding decisions will be made in February 2023, upon completion of all interviews. In certain circumstances, the final funding decisions are made following ministerial approval. We will inform applicants as soon as possible if this is to be the case.

2.47. Once the final funding decisions have been made, we regret that we are unable to offer follow up meetings or give further feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

2.48. It is the lead applicant's responsibility to inform the other collaborators and partners about any funding decisions.

2.49. If you are successful in winning a TRIG grant, you will be sent a conditional grant offer letter and additional documentation that you must sign and return by the 10th March 2023.

3. Technology Readiness Level

3.1. TRIG is designed to support the development of initial prototypes, proof of concept or feasibility studies that demonstrate an innovative solution to transport challenges. In terms of TRL, we would expect projects entering TRIG to be at least TRL 2, with the aim of progressing to TRL 4. This means that basic research would

already have been completed prior to applying to TRIG. The aspiration is to arrive at a proof of concept, feasibility, or small-scale prototype by the end of TRIG.

3.2. For more information on technology readiness levels, click here: [Guide to Technology Readiness Levels for the NDA Estate and its Supply Chain.](#)

4. Funding Rules

Subsidy

4.1. The DfT supports investment in research, development, and innovation in transport accessibility. Subsidy rules apply to grant schemes like X-TRIG. In principle, subsidies are not allowed under the UK's various trade arrangements with other countries. However, some subsidies are beneficial to the economy and support growth and other policy objectives. Subsidies can be given to support a wide variety of activities including research and development, environmental protection, and aid for small to medium-sized businesses. The subsidy rules allow for aid to be granted which is necessary to deliver growth and other important objectives.

4.2. To minimise distortion of competition the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement sets limits on how much assistance can be given to organisations operating in a competitive market. This allows an organisation to receive up to 325,000 Special Drawing Rights (approximately £341,000) of state support over a rolling 3 fiscal year period without a subsidy being deemed to have been granted. You will be asked to declare any other public aid which your enterprise and any enterprises linked to it may have received during your current and previous two fiscal years so that we can ensure that any grant support given to you under this scheme does not constitute a subsidy. Public aid includes not only grants but also assistance such as free or subsidised consultancy services, marketing advice etc.

VAT

4.3. Grant payments fall outside the scope of VAT as this is deemed as income from non-business activities and you do not return anything for this funding therefore, VAT should not be added to any invoices for grant payments.

4.4. If you expect to pay VAT during the delivery of the research, (e.g. for consultancy/sub-contracting charges, material costs and other expenses), and you are unable to recover VAT from HMRC, you must ensure that the cost of these VAT payments is included in the finance section of your Grant Application Form.

4.5. Any VAT payment during delivery of research that is not recoverable from HMRC and not identified in the finance section of the Grant Application Form will not be paid by the Department.

Payment Schedule

4.6. Grant payment is staged. An up-front payment of 60% of the total budget will be awarded to enable the start of the project. The remaining 40% of the grant will be

awarded upon completion of the project once evidence of expenditure and successful demonstration of technology has been provided.

4.7. Your evidence of expenditure should be signed and authorised by the highest financial authority in the company. Please note that this payment structure is only a guide and may be altered according to the demands of your project.

Financial Reporting

4.8. Upon completion of your project (and to release the final 40% of the grant), you will be expected to complete a statement of grant usage form to explain the costs incurred. This should detail staff time utilised, cost of materials, sub-contracting charges, travel expenses and other costs. Please note that only economy-class travel claims will be accepted.

4.9. Only costs incurred between project start and end dates will be paid. All claims made in the statement of grant usage form will be closely scrutinised.

4.10. Throughout the project period, you will be responsible for maintaining detailed records and documentation of the costs incurred. Individual items costing £20 or less do not require a receipt. However, the total cost of non-receipted items should not exceed £100.

4.11. Your statement of grant usage should be signed and authorised by the highest financial authority in the company.

5. Dates and Deadlines

5.1. Please note the dates and deadlines for the competition below. These are indicative timings, but we will endeavour to adhere to this schedule as best as possible.

Competition opens	Monday 12th December 2022
Application support webinar	Monday 19th December 2022
Availability of webinar recording	Wednesday 21st December 2022
Application support webinar	Thursday 5th January 2023
Competition closes (application deadline)	Sunday 15th January 2023
Notification to successful applicants of Shortlist selections	Tuesday 7th February 2023
Interviews	Monday 13th February 2023 to Friday 3rd March 2023
Grant offer letters issued	Monday 13th March 2023
Acceptance of grant (returned signed Grant Offer Letter)	Friday 17th March 2023
Projects start	Monday 27th March 2023

6. FAQs

How much funding is available?
The TRIG 2022 programme will fund approximately 60 projects up to £30k per project.

When will payments be made?
Grant payment is staged. An up-front payment of 60% of the total budget will be awarded to enable the start of the project. The remaining 40% of the grant will be awarded upon completion of the project once evidence of expenditure and successful reporting of project completion has been provided.

Can we add some profit margin?
No. The grant is paid to research a concept or technology, not provide profit. These are early-stage grants to help to provide proof of concept. Therefore, the only claim that can be made is for costs incurred during the research process.

Is TRIG subject to state aid rules?
Yes. TRIG is publicly funded and therefore would count as a subsidy under the new rules. Please refer to section 4.1 of this guidance for more information.

What can I include in the project budget?
You can apply for up to £30k of direct costs associated with delivering your proposed project. Eligible costs would be for staffing (including consultancy and subcontracting), materials, equipment, consumables, travel, and subsistence.

Should overheads be included in the salary rates (within the project budget) or shown separately?
Salary rates should be inclusive of overheads and indirects. Please note that salary rates must be justified and appropriate, reflecting market values. Rates will be judged on the level of staff expertise, where they are located and how they compare to market rates. The panel will assess whether the number of staff days on offer will deliver the proposed solution and whether the number of total staff days offered signifies value for money.

What if my project will cost more than £30k?
If the total project costs more than £30k, you will need to contribute the outstanding amount yourselves. Please tell us how you plan to finance this in your budget section.

Do I need to keep receipts?
Yes, you will need to submit relevant receipts/invoices for expenses as evidence of project costs. Before final grant payment is made you will be required to supply receipts for individual items costing £20 or more. The total cost of non-receipted items should not exceed £100.

Grant beneficiaries will be required to explain costs incurred including staff time and supply receipts as outlined above.

How do I evidence staff time spent on the project?
Your statement of grant usage form (completed at the end of the TRIG programme) has a section for you to record staff members, days worked and associated costs. We do not require you to send us timesheets, but we may ask for a breakdown of staff resource and costs on headed paper to corroborate the records on your statement of grant usage.

Can I employ overseas contractors?
Yes, you can. You are also free to purchase materials from other countries.

What are the rules around VAT?
Grant payments fall outside the scope of VAT as this is deemed as income from non-business activities and you do not return anything for this funding. Therefore, VAT should not be added to your project budget.

However, if you expect to pay VAT during the delivery of your project, (e.g., for consultancy/sub-contracting charges, material costs and other expenses), and you are unable to recover VAT from HMRC, you must ensure that the cost of these VAT payments is included in your budget along with a reason why the costs cannot be recovered from HMRC.

Any VAT payment during delivery of research that is not recoverable from HMRC and not identified in the project budget will not be paid.

My organisation is based overseas. Am I still eligible for TRIG?
You are, as long as you have a UK registered office and the TRIG project will be undertaken in the UK. Furthermore, the resulting technology or solution must be deployed in the UK.

I am an academic. Can I lead a TRIG project?
Absolutely! We welcome lead applicants from universities and other academic institutions.

Do you welcome applications from consortiums?
Yes we do, however you must identify a project lead.

I have received a TRIG grant before. Can I apply again?
Yes, we welcome applications from our TRIG alumni. Please just tell us in the application form which programme you were part of and the year.