

SPRINT / UKSA Innovation Vouchers – General Guidance

SPRINT (the SPace Research and Innovation Network for Technology) seeks to enable collaborations between universities and innovative UK companies that lead to the economic growth of the UK Space Sector. SPRINT is delivered by a consortium (<https://www.sprint.ac.uk/partners>) including founder members - led by University of Leicester, University of Edinburgh, The Open University, University of Southampton and University of Surrey – and associate members including City, University of London, Durham University, Kingston University, University of Bristol, University of Exeter, University of Glasgow, University of Leeds and University of Strathclyde. It is supported by other key UK Space Sector stakeholders (<https://www.sprint.ac.uk/collaborating-partners>) from the public and private sectors and the SpaceTech investment community.

SPRINT has secured funding from the UK Space Agency (<https://www.sprint.ac.uk/news-stories/uk-space-agency-extends-funding-to-national-sprint-programme-to-support-collaborations-in-northern-ireland-scotland-and-wales/>) to support innovative UK companies to develop collaborations with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The funding is time-limited and outside the scope of the standard SPRINT Innovation Voucher scheme (<https://www.sprint.ac.uk/sprint-guide>). Should you wish to collaborate with a SPRINT University Partner within England then the SPRINT standard Innovation Voucher scheme should be used, **not** this route.

This document details general guidance for the SPRINT/UKSA Innovation Vouchers.

Additional web-based information relevant to this competition can be found via hyperlinks through the documentation.

General Guidance

SPRINT/UKSA Innovation Vouchers enable UK companies to accelerate product and service development through **the commercial exploitation of space technologies and/or data** through collaboration with devolved nation universities. SPRINT will provide Innovation Vouchers to successful applicants to help fund collaborative projects between innovative UK companies and university partners from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. These projects can enable businesses to exploit space technologies and data in a wide range of commercial activities including (but not limited to):

- Space products / technologies in the space sector
- Space technologies and data deployed in non-space markets and applications
- Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) and non-space technologies deployed in space markets

Applications for these Innovation Vouchers will be launched on **Thursday 11th November 2021**, with a closing date of **Friday 17th December 2021 at 12 noon**.

A total fund size of £200k will be available, with additional funds expected from the industrial collaborators. SPRINT will provide Innovation Vouchers up to £50,000 and it is expected that a minimum of 4 Innovation Vouchers will be awarded to SME/university collaborations, with SPRINT allocating one innovation voucher per devolved nation¹. Proposals requiring funding above £50k may be considered but strong justification will be required.

¹ Should any one nation fail to submit an application of the requisite standard for funding then SPRINT reserves the right to allocate to a higher ranking application the innovation voucher funding reserved for that nation.

SPRINT will only award Innovation Vouchers for proposals judged to be of sufficient quality. SPRINT reserves the right to re-issue the call if all allocated funds are not utilised due to an insufficient number of applications of the requisite standard.

Who can apply

The lead organisation (Company) is the beneficiary of the outputs of the project and receives an Innovation Voucher from SPRINT to redeem at the Partner University. The Company must:

- be a UK-registered business
- be carrying out staffed R&D activity in the UK
- be a small to medium-sized enterprise (SME) as defined here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/life-of-a-company-annual-requirements/life-of-a-company-part-1-accounts#contents>
- intend to commercially exploit the project results from or in the UK

The Partner University is the provider of the expertise required by the Company. The Partner University must:

- be a university registered in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and eligible to receive funding from the UK Space Agency (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-space-agency>)

Your project

Space-link

The SPRINT Innovation Voucher enables companies to accelerate product and service development through **the commercial exploitation of space technologies and/or data**. A SPRINT project therefore must be able to determine clearly a space-link to one or more of these elements. The space-link can be attributed to **the Company, the university or both** (apart from know-how, which can only be attributed to the HEI).

- **Space technologies** - Space technologies are typically associated with the upstream element of the space sector. They can incorporate both space-based technologies and ground-based technologies designed to support space-based technologies (i.e. ground segment). When referencing 'generic' technologies that are both used in the space sector and in other sectors there must be clear distinctions as to the space link for that technology.
For example, many sectors use Field Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGAs) to control electronic sub-systems. Some FPGAs have been developed specifically for spaceflight; these would be considered a space technology. FPGAs generally however would not be a space technology. Therefore, if a project wanted to claim its space-link via its use of FPGAs then it would need to be using the spaceflight version of the FPGA technology and justify why the spaceflight version (as opposed to a non-spaceflight version) is the enabling factor for the project.
- **Space data** - This is the use of satellite data such as Earth Observation, Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) and space-based telecommunications. Many different applications and services apply space data across many different sectors. For SPRINT projects, the focus should be on the innovative use of space data for new applications and services, in new sectors or if new to the company. It can also include the innovative future use of space data where the project is assessing the feasibility of using space data using analogous ground/airborne-based datasets. For example, fitness trackers use GPS data to determine the location of the wearer and therefore are using space data. When fitness trackers first incorporated GPS data this would have been a potential SPRINT project as it was an innovative use of the technology. However, if a company wanted to develop a new fitness tracker, then by virtue of its incorporation of GPS data alone would not qualify it for SPRINT, as this would not be an innovative use of the technology. For SPRINT projects the focus should be on **the innovative use of space data** for new applications and services and/or in new sectors and/or if new to the Company.

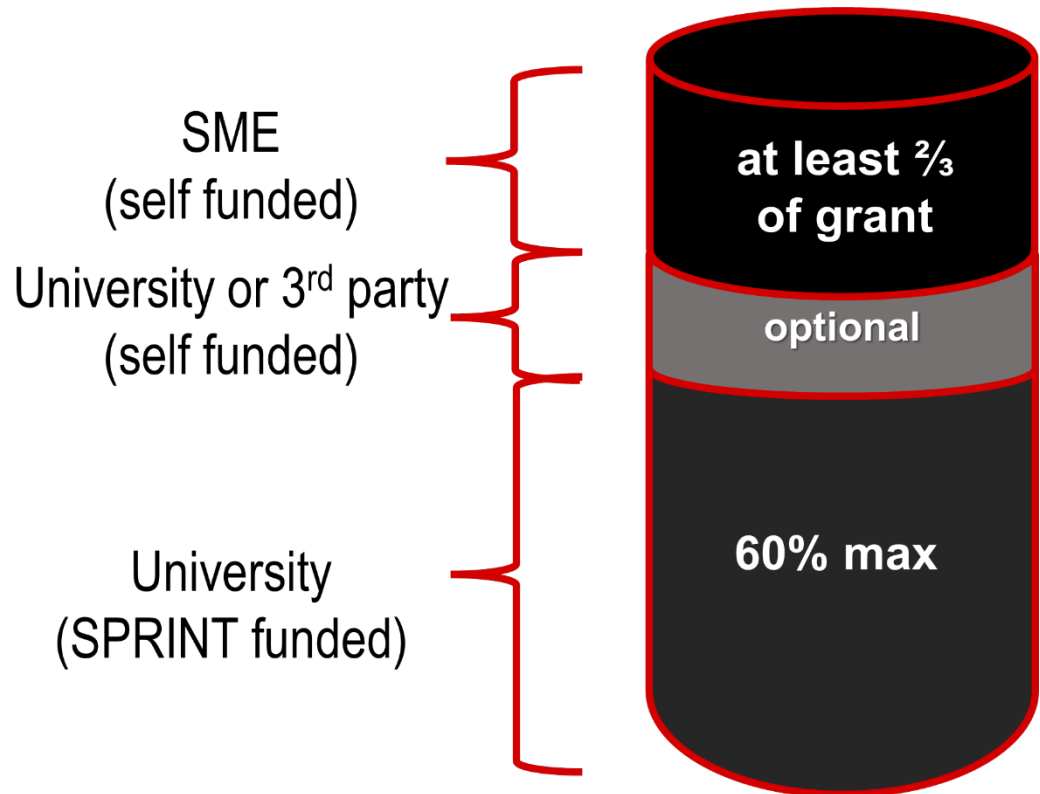
- **Space know-how** - This is the knowledge and expertise of the academic community within the university where that knowledge and know-how has been:
 - Developed and applied specifically within a space-related research discipline
 - Developed outside of a space-related discipline but the academic has applied this know-how in a space-related discipline

The application should evidence the space link to the know-how with links to relevant refereed publications.

Duration Your project activities must end **no later than 30th June 2022**

Project costs **SPRINT Innovation Vouchers**

- You may apply for an Innovation Voucher up to a value of £50,000
- The Innovation Voucher can reimburse some or all of the Partner University's eligible costs in delivering the project
- The Company funds its own eligible costs
- **The Innovation Voucher can fund up to 60% of the total cost of the project**, with the remainder of the total project costs being covered by the Company, Partner University and/or 3rd party collaborators.
- **The Company contributions to the project must fund activities to a value at least ⅓ the value of the Innovation Voucher being requested.** These contributions can be in the form of **new resources** purchased for the purposes of the project, costs associated to assigning **existing resources** i.e. staff/facilities/equipment etc... for the purposes of the project or a combination of both.
- The Partner University or another 3rd party may also contribute to the project. These contributions can be in the form of **new resources** purchased for the purposes of the project, costs associated to assigning **existing resources** i.e. staff/facilities/equipment etc... for the purposes of the project or a combination of both.
- For example; if the Partner University's costs were £30k and fully reimbursed by SPRINT then the Company would be expected to contribute activities to a value of at least £20k (or ⅔ the SPRINT grant value of £30k). This means the total project value would be £50k with a 60%/40% Partner University/Company split. Other variabilities are feasible and examples of these are provided in the Application Finance Spreadsheet.



Partner University project costs (up to 60% of total project costs)

- The Innovation Voucher funds the Partner University's eligible project costs at **up to 100% FEC**.
- **At least 50%** of the university's costs reimbursed through the Innovation Voucher must be attributed to the university's **existing expertise** (i.e. staff, existing facilities, equipment etc...)
- **Up to 50%** of the university's costs may be for new non-staff costs (including input VAT where applicable). (N.B. for clarity equipment or services purchased from the SME partner are not eligible for reimbursement from the SPRINT grant).
- The university cannot charge output VAT to its costings as the SPRINT grant is considered outside of the scope of VAT
- SPRINT will reimburse up to £50k of the Partner University project costs. Any costs incurred above this £50k threshold will be recorded as Partner University in-kind contribution to the project.

Company project costs (at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the SPRINT grant requested)

- Of the Company contribution, **at least 50%** should be in the form of **new resources** purchased for the purposes of the project or because of the project and can include:
 - the purchase of equipment, consumables, software and/or data for the purposes of the project
 - the hiring of **new** staff to work on the project
 - sub-contracting/consultancy costs in support of the project
 - travel and subsistence incurred for the purposes of the project
 - a cash contribution to the Partner University to part-fund some of the Partner University costs
- Of the Company contribution, **up to 50%** may be in the form of costs associated to assigning **existing resources** i.e. staff/facilities/equipment etc... for the purposes of the project and can include:
 - direct costs of staff assigned to the project

- staffing overhead of new and existing staff assigned to the project (calculated at a fixed 20% of the direct staff costs)
- pro rata cost to use existing Company equipment, data, software and facilities (cost calculated based on existing Company depreciation policy for each item used)
- Applications will be accepted where the Company **new and existing resource** contribution proportions do not meet the requirements above, **provided the combined contribution is at least ⅓ of the SPRINT grant**. In these cases the application should include a strong justification for why the Company cannot meet the proportion requirements.

Recoverable input VAT costs are ineligible for inclusion as part of the Company contribution. Output VAT is ineligible for inclusion as part of the Company contribution.

Cost Recovery - SPRINT Innovation Voucher funding is on a cost recovery basis. Funding is solely intended to cover the cost of delivering the agreed activity or goal. Any surplus funds not spent will not be reimbursed.

Pay and Overheads - Pay costs are calculated based on PAYE records. They should include gross salary, employer National Insurance (NI) contributions and employer pension contributions. Pay costs must not include:

- Any profit margins
- Commercial charge-out rates
- Allowances for bonuses and benefits in kind
- Business development
- Travel and Subsistence

Company overheads should be stated separately from the pay costs, charged at no more than 20%.

It is recognised that invoices may differ from project forecasts at application. Nonetheless, should actual costs incurred be greater than the value of the project proposal, the excess cost shall be borne by the funding recipient.

Applicants should note that SPRINT will not refund any of the costs associated with preparing the application to this competition. Applicant preparation costs and (for successful applicants) non-project costs incurred in delivering the project should also be captured and estimated.

All project costs should be accurately captured in the ‘SPRINT / UKSA Innovation Vouchers Application Finance Spreadsheet’.

Subsidy Control

SPRINT supports UK businesses to invest in research, development and innovation through collaboration with university partners. Some of the support we provide operates under the UK’s subsidy control regulations.

SPRINT collaborative projects are awarded under the de minimis subsidy control regulations of the EU-UK Trade Cooperation Agreement. Under these regulations, companies cannot accept subsidies totalling more than 325,000 SDR (the current value is £333,000) in any rolling 3 yr. period.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to accurately declare all relevant previous funding received under de minimis regulations as part of the application process

Confidentiality	<p>If you submit an application to SPRINT for an Innovation Voucher then the details held within that application are considered 'confidential information'. Your application paperwork may be shared amongst individuals from the SPRINT university partners and selected 3rd party experts who may form the application review panel. All participants of the application review panel will be subject to fully executed confidentiality agreements with the SPRINT lead organisation, the University of Leicester, as a condition of being a member of the review panel.</p>
Intellectual Property	<p>SPRINT seeks to support collaborative activities that lead to business growth in the UK. Intellectual Property, its development and its commercial exploitation is an important factor in achieving this. Due to the breadth and diversity of scope of potential projects and Company business need, the consideration of Intellectual Property rights arising from collaborative projects funded by SPRINT Innovation Vouchers should be agreed between the Lead Organisation and the Partner University prior to submission of application. The general principle of SPRINT is to ensure the Company is well placed to commercially exploit the outputs of any SPRINT-funded project.</p> <p>The agreed IP position between the Company and the Partner University must be included in the application form in a form that can be incorporated, as written, into the Project Collaboration Agreement. <i>Suggested clauses</i> of such wording are provided in the Project Collaboration Agreement and in the Application Form in the application pack.</p>
Project Collaboration Agreement	<p>Should an award be made the applicants will be required to enter into a Project Collaboration Agreement with the University of Leicester (who will contractually administer this competition on behalf of SPRINT).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A copy of the Project Collaboration Agreement is included for reference in the application pack• The terms and conditions of the Project Collaboration Agreement are not subject to negotiation (apart from Clause relating to Intellectual Property – see above)• In submitting an application, applicants agree that they are accepting the terms and conditions of the Project Collaboration Agreement on behalf of their organisation. Please ensure that authorisation is obtained from your organisation.
Submission Information	<p>The lead organisation should notify SPRINT of their intention to apply for a SPRINT/UKSA Innovation Voucher by e-mail to info@sprint.ac.uk by 12 noon on Friday 3rd December 2021 using the pro-forma found on the website. This is to gauge the size of the response and to inform the selection of reviewers. A SPRINT Innovation Adviser (https://www.sprint.ac.uk/innovation-advisers) will then be assigned to support you through the application process. Failure to submit an intention to apply will not exclude you from being able to submit a full application, but applicants are requested to email info@sprint.ac.uk to be provided with an application reference number.</p> <p>The Innovation Advisor will provide you with more detailed information about Innovation Vouchers, and how to refine your proposal. They will answer any questions you may have about the process and, when ready, assist you in completing the application paperwork. It is strongly recommended that all Innovation Voucher applications are submitted by a SPRINT Innovation Advisor.</p> <p>All applications for a SPRINT/UKSA Innovation Voucher are strongly encouraged to be made through your assigned Innovation Adviser and are to be received by 12 noon on Friday 17th December 2021. Any entries received after this date/time will not be considered.</p>

Only the lead applicants should submit an application via an Innovation Adviser. **The application should preferably be contained in a single PDF file (apart from the separate Excel format Application Finance Spreadsheet).**

The full entry should include the following documents:

1. completed APPLICATION FORM in PDF format signed by both Lead Organisation and Partner University (mandatory)
2. all supporting application documentation (if applicable) as referenced in the APPLICATION FORM in PDF format
3. completed FINANCE SPREADSHEET in XLS format (mandatory)

Proposals which do not include completion of all the mandated sections may be rejected.

All queries should be directed to your assigned Innovation Adviser or emailed to info@sprint.ac.uk.

Assessment of Proposals

The Review Panel will consist of the SPRINT Head of Programme, a representative from the UK Space Agency and a minimum of two further independent reviewers from the UK Space Sector. Applications shall be assessed according to the criteria listed below (in order of importance/weighting):

- **R1. Product/service Development Strategy and Justification for SPRINT Funding** –What is the strategy and how does the project support the product development strategy?
- **R2. Project Impact and Follow-on Plans** - Is there a clear understanding of the types of outcomes anticipated during and after the project, and how they lead to company growth? Are the steps required to progress the product/service development following the project clearly stated?
- **R3. Product and Market** – How well is the product or service defined and is the market and commercial potential of the idea explained?
- **R4. Project Management** – Quality of the project plan; definition of activities, resources and milestones. Does it provide a high level of confidence in effective project execution? To what extent is the risk management approach presented appropriate for the project scope? Is the preliminary risk register sufficiently elaborated?
- **R5. Project Quality** – project description, its space-link and outputs
- **R6. Project Budget and value for money** – is the project budget and contributions in scope, appropriate and represent good value for money?
- **R7. Quality of Partnership** – Is the applicant business clearly explained. Is the partnership with the HEI clear and appropriate?

The panel shall rank the applications on the basis of the review criteria above. The highest ranking projects within the fund budget shall be awarded Innovation Vouchers.

Successful applicants

Successful applicants will be notified **during January 2022**.

Applicants will be expected to enter into a Project Collaboration Agreement between the applicants (lead organisation and Partner University) and the University of Leicester (who administer SPRINT). A copy of the Project Collaboration Agreement is included in the application documentation for information. The Project Collaboration Agreement must be fully executed by all Parties **by Friday 28th January 2022 at the latest**, with projects starting

week commencing Monday 31st January 2022 at the latest. SPRINT reserves the right to withdraw the award should these dates not be achieved.

Contractual Information

- Innovation Vouchers will take the form of a **Project Collaboration Agreement** between the applicants and the University of Leicester.
- Full payment of the award will be made to the Partner University upon completion of the project and the project completion declaration.
- The award will be made on a firm fixed price basis.

Publicity

Successful applicants will be expected to participate with SPRINT communications activity related to the awarded project. Typically this will be in the form of a press release announcing the successful award of the Innovation Voucher at the beginning of the project and the development of a case study following the completion of the project. Examples of such activities for previous projects can be found on the SPRINT website (<https://www.sprint.ac.uk/news-stories> and <https://www.sprint.ac.uk/case-studies>). Development of all publicity material is managed by SPRINT with the applicants expected to provide supplementary information via short telephone interviews.

As a minimum, the public summary information provided on the application form will be published for successful projects along with the names of the organisations involved. Individuals must not be identified in the public summary description.

Project monitoring and reporting

Successful applicants will be expected to co-operate with SPRINT reporting activities related to the awarded project.

The lead organisation and partner university are responsible for the delivery of the project within the scope, timescales and budget detailed in the project application. The University will be expected to submit brief monthly project monitoring reports to SPRINT. These reports are based on a one-page A4 template.

Following completion of the project the lead organisation and partner university shall be required to participate with SPRINT impact monitoring and reporting activity related to the awarded project. This is in the form of the completion of an online survey and (potentially) the development of a case study following the completion of the project. Examples of such activities for previous projects can be found on the SPRINT website (www.sprint.ac.uk/case-studies) and (www.sprint.ac.uk/statistics). Online surveys relating to the impact and outputs of the project must be completed by each project partner before final payments can be received.

Development of any publicity material is managed by SPRINT with the expectation for the Company and PI to provide supplementary information via short telephone interviews and through completion of an online survey.

Upon request, the lead organisation and partner university is also expected to re-engage with the online survey and any case study work (at no more than 6 monthly intervals) to capture follow-up actions and outcomes resulting from the project.