

Technology Strategy Board

Driving Innovation



Feasibility Studies in Digital Services

**COMPETITION FOR FUNDING
JANUARY 2011**

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Summary

The Technology Strategy Board intends to stimulate innovation in digital services by helping small or micro companies harness emerging growth opportunities and overcome the initial hurdles to development. We have allocated up to £2m to invest in feasibility studies lasting up to three months, each costing no more than £33,000 in total. We will fund 75% of the project cost (up to £25,000). Projects may be collaborative or carried out by a single company.

This competition will focus on feasibility studies:

- that contain an element of innovation in technology or business practice closely aligned with the four areas in the scope section of this document
- that are both led and undertaken by small and micro companies – single-company applications are eligible to apply as well as partnerships between companies
- where the lead company would expect to be central to any research work and exploitation of the ideas in the study
- where the project spend by the single company / partners is mainly in-house.

Each project will culminate in a short report and, where relevant, a demonstrator. Projects will also present their achievements at a public 'Collaboration Nation' event to be held in autumn 2011.

After completion of these feasibility studies, applicants should be well positioned to seek support to develop their ideas, including through future Technology Strategy Board competitions.

This competition complements three other feasibility studies competitions being run concurrently in the areas of technology inspired innovation, space and nanoscale technologies.

The Challenge

The Technology Strategy Board has identified 'digital' as a core focus area for future programmes, and in October 2010 we published our *Digital Strategic Update* (see www.innovateuk.org under Publications).

Our mission is to help innovative businesses unlock the economic potential of digital technology by identifying and addressing digital challenges and resolving tensions between people, processes and technology. Of particular relevance are the emerging opportunities for digital services that could underpin future growth opportunities and competitive advantage.

In fact, the rapid reshaping of economies by technological, social and political changes creates opportunities to innovate,

and to create digital services that address new customer needs, or that address existing needs in new ways.

The trends driving these new opportunities include cloud-based computing, the policy agenda of delivering public services digitally and sustainably, increasing connectivity between devices, and the increasing availability of data.

However, many of these opportunities are not being exploited because they can be held back by systemic challenges such as misaligned incentives, conflicting interests, conservatism amongst incumbents, lack of – or outdated – regulations, lack of standards, incomplete or disjoint value chains and industry fragmentation. Others are waiting to be seeded with innovative ideas.





Scope

The Technology Strategy Board invites proposals that address emerging business opportunities for digital services in one of the following four areas:

- Using data sources in the public domain, and in particular, public data
- Complementing public sector provision of services to citizens
- Emergence of the ‘Internet of Things’ – a network of ‘things’ such as objects, environments, vehicles, and clothing that are embedded with sensors, processing or actuators and with the ability to communicate, network, and produce information
- Sectors and application areas presenting complex challenges to the adoption and use of cloud-based computing.

Submissions are particularly encouraged where the problem addressed has the potential for wider impact across sectors or across multiple application areas. For all areas, in particular for the ‘Internet of Things’, we encourage submissions addressing quality of life improvement and assisted living.

Proposals of the following nature are out of scope for this competition:

- Those that do not contain an element of innovation
- Those focusing on capital investments without a strong digital services rationale
- Those relating to marketing or customer acquisition.

For this competition, proposals relating to the following technologies are also out of scope:

- Data mashups for graphical and display purposes (eg, mashups on maps)
- Radio-frequency identification (RFID) for supply chain management or inventory management applications
- Enterprise or other software applications migrated to the cloud or to an ‘as-a-service’ model.

The four areas of this competition may be subject to further strategic investments from the Technology Strategy Board in 2011/12.

Applicants with a focus on developing radically new software-based technology are invited to explore eligibility under the ICT track of the concurrent ‘Technology-inspired feasibility studies’ competition. See www.innovateuk.org under Competitions. Other concurrent feasibility studies competitions are in the areas of space and nanoscale technologies.

If you have any specific queries about the scope of this competition please email your questions to: competitions@tsb.gov.uk

Looking for partners to work on your project? Go to **_connect** (www.innovateuk.org/digitalservices) to find collaborators and networks.

Funding allocation and application process

The Technology Strategy Board has allocated up to £2m to fund feasibility studies that align with its Digital strategy and seek to address the four areas described above. The

competition is open only to small or micro companies, whether as single companies or in collaboration with other small or micro companies. The total project costs can be no more than £33,000 and the Technology Strategy Board will award grants at 75% (up to around £25,000) to suitable projects.

The competition is a single-stage process that will open on **10 January 2011** and close at midday on **10 February 2011**. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application by **28 February 2011**. A competition briefing will be held in London on **19 January 2011** to explain the process and we strongly recommend that applicants attend. Applicants unable to attend will be able to watch a video of the event on our website.

On applying for the competition you will be asked to identify which of the four areas in the scope section your project addresses. If your application is cross-cutting, you should identify the dominant area. **Please note that selecting more than one area will result in your application being disqualified.**

Further information is available in the *Guidance for Applicants* (available from our website after you have registered for this competition).

Key dates

Competition opens	10 January 2011
Competition briefing	19 January 2011
Competition closes	10 February 2011
Successful candidates informed	28 February 2011
Deadline for delivery of reports	17 August 2011
Collaboration Nation event	Autumn 2011



Further information

To apply for funding through this competition and to get further details you will need to register your interest via the Competitions section of our website at www.innovateuk.org.

It is important to allow enough time to register, to read the *Guidance for Applicants* and prepare your application. Note that registration can take 48 hours.

Uploading your application form at least 24 hours before the deadline will give the Business Support Team time to resolve any problems. See the FAQs at www.innovateuk.org under Competitions for more information.

Competition helpline:
0300 321 4357

Email:
competitions@tsb.gov.uk

Publicity

The Technology Strategy Board frequently publicises the results of competitions and this includes engagement with the media. All applicants will be given a chance during the competition process to opt out of any publicity. Willing applicants will be asked to provide an agreed form of words for use in publicity material. E-mail pressoffice@tsb.gov.uk with any queries.

The Technology Strategy Board is a business-led executive non-departmental public body, established by the Government. Its role is to promote and support research into, and development and exploitation of, technology and innovation for the benefit of UK business, in order to increase economic growth and improve quality of life.

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