

## Frequently Asked Questions - Stage 1

### 1. What is the Local Authority Transport Decarbonisation Accelerator?

Connected Places Catapult (CPC) is launching a Department for Transport funded accelerator programme that aims to address the challenges faced by Local Authorities (LAs) and Subnational Transport Bodies (STBs) in embedding new transport innovations and support innovators to bring their solutions to market.

This accelerator aims to find new and innovative solutions or suppliers that have the potential to reduce carbon and other harmful emissions from local transport networks. Applicants should demonstrate the consideration of a place-based approach and how the solution proposed best meets the needs and attributes of the selected area.

The accelerator will run in two stages. In the first stage, CPC will work with selected LAs and STBs to define the challenges they want to address, in addition to the commercial and business cases. In the second stage, CPC will select up to eight small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to partner with the LAs.

### 2. Who is eligible to apply at stage 1?

For stage 1 applications, LAs and STBs located within the UK are eligible to apply.

The term 'LA' includes, county councils, district councils, unitary authorities, metropolitan districts, and London boroughs. Regional collaborations coordinated through bodies such as combined authorities are also eligible.

### 3. What kind of projects are you looking for at stage 1?

In stage 1, we are looking for LAs and STBs to apply with a challenge or idea which could be addressed through the accelerator programme. Examples of challenges faced by LAs and STBs are wide ranging, but might include:

- Understanding and assessing the most appropriate innovations for their decarbonisation needs,
- Developing awareness of how to procure suitable technologies and innovations,
- Embedding the learning and benefits from demonstrator activity into full-scale adoption.

The application should demonstrate how the challenge aligns with local strategies or plans and reflect the needs and attributes of the local area. The application should provide an explanation of why traditional procurement routes would not be suitable for achieving the desired decarbonisation objective.

If you're unsure whether your challenge is suitable for this programme, please contact CPC directly through [agathe.parois@cp.catapult.org.uk](mailto:agathe.parois@cp.catapult.org.uk) who will be able to advise on a case-by-case basis.

In stage 2, we will be taking these challenges to the market through an open call published on the CPC website. At this stage, we will be seeking proposals from SMEs who have an innovative solution to the challenges who will then join in partnership with the LA and STB to trial their solution. Further information will be available in due course.

### 4. Will funding be available for successful LAs and STBs?

Funding of up to £20,000 per LA and STB is available to support the successful applicants' internal costs.

5. Will funding be available for successful SMEs?

In stage 1, funding is only available to LAs and STBs to cover internal costs.

In stage 2, when the LA challenges are published via an open call on the CPC website, additional funding will be made available to provide support to SMEs during the programme. Further details will be available in due course.

6. Why are you working only with SMEs in this accelerator?

SMEs play a vital role in supplying goods, services and innovation as well as contributing to job creation and regional economic development. CPC's goal through the Accelerator Programmes is to support both public and private organisations to identify key challenges, with which we can then go to market to source innovative SME solutions. These solutions will be generally ready to test and trial, and work with key companies and organisations in the transport supply chain. The funding for this programme is relatively low and would not potentially be suitable for large companies in this instance, but for an SME, the opportunity to work with a successful LA/STB on a small project could have a greater impact, and provide them with the opportunity to start building relationships that will help their solution to scale over time.

SMEs are also likely to have less resources dedicated to procurement and tendering and may struggle or be deterred to compete against larger companies. Whilst our Accelerator Team focuses on SMEs, CPC supports both large and small organisations, and facilitates a number of initiatives to support procurement for different sized companies, such as our ['Smarter Spending'](#) and ['Innovation Procurement Empowerment Centre'](#) (IPEC) initiatives that may be more suitable for established companies.

7. Can the funding for LAs be used to procure contractors or consultants to manage the project or assist officers with resourcing?

The funding is available to support LA internal costs across the 12-month programme. This may include contractors or consultants provided their time is directly attributed to the programme. Applications will be assessed on their capability and resource planning, so applicants should consider this when drafting their application.

8. When will LAs and STBs receive the funding?

The funding will be awarded in two tranches, 50% up front when we select the successful LAs and STBs and sign the contracts at the end of March, and the remaining 50% when the SMEs are selected (between July and Sept). Payment milestones for the remaining spend and passthrough funds for the SMEs will be agreed in advance.

**For SMEs interested in the opportunity**

9. As an innovative SME in this sector, how do we get involved in the SME selection process?

Currently, only stage 1 applications for LAs or STBs are open.

The call for SMEs will be going live later this year. You can subscribe to the CPC [newsletter](#) to stay informed about our current and future initiatives. You can also express your interest by emailing [agathe.parois@cp.catapult.org.uk](mailto:agathe.parois@cp.catapult.org.uk) who will be able to provide further details in due course.

10. Will there be a focus on local SMEs?

Any SME across the UK who believes they have an innovative solution to one of the challenges posed in the open call will be eligible to apply to work with any participating LA or STB. Where LAs and STBs have existing relationships with or awareness of local SMEs who they believe can provide a solution to the challenge, they may wish to encourage them to apply. Whilst we would welcome the further development of relationships between local SMEs and LAs as good practice for future potential work, SMEs will ultimately be selected on the basis of whether they are the best fit for the relevant challenge.

11. Can this include charity / not for profit sector?

In the context of this accelerator, the term 'SME' can also cover charities and not for profit organisations, as long as they are UK registered businesses with a relevant solution for the challenge.