LCR Future Innovation Fund Pilot Round 2

Application Guidance

Welcome to the detailed applicant guidance for the second round of the £3M Liverpool City Region (LCR) Future Innovation Fund (FIF) pilot. We received significant interest in our first round (which was nearly 16x oversubscribed) and are now looking to award the next £1M of funding to support innovative SMEs in the LCR.

The fund is delivered as a pilot scheme with an emphasis on improving our processes for each round based on evidence and feedback. This agile approach has resulted in changes being made to the application process and guidance from the first round of funding. So, whilst this guidance may look similar to that provided in the first round, there are some key differences. It is therefore imperative that all applicants read this guidance in full before drafting and submitting proposals. Before you read on you may be first interested to view our online briefing video on the FIF webpage.

Applicants should also note that despite the significant interest shown in the first round, this pilot fund continues to be limited by the amount of local funding available. Whilst we continue to pitch for more funding from central government, we are currently limited to two more £1m rounds (round 2 and 3).

> If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact us directly to discuss your specific needs either through email (futureinnovationfund@growthplatform.org) or by phone 0151 227 2727 (**for accessibility requests only**)
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> Please note that only questions relating to accessibility will be dealt with over the phone. All other questions **MUST** be sent directly to the email listed above.

Contents

In addition our comprehensive FAQ page can be found on the FIF webpage -> growthplatform.org/future-innovation-fund/faq

Introduction

What is the Future Innovation Fund pilot?

The £3M Future Innovation Fund pilot programme (the pilot) has been established by the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram, to help support the LCR's small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The Pilot aims to incentivise SMEs to innovate, adapt and diversify in response to, or in spite of, the challenges and opportunities presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated impacts on the economy and society

This Pilot will be delivered through a minimum of three rounds of funding, with each round or "call" having c.£1M of funding available (subject to ongoing review). The first call ran from 12 June to 6 July 2020, with funding awards made in August 2020. This document provides guidance for the second call that runs from 28 September to 19 October 2020.

The Pilot continues to be designed and delivered at speed to maximise its impact. We have listened carefully to feedback and made a number of changes from the first round, and will continue this agile approach for future rounds in the spirit of the Pilot. We have published a blog which summarises our learnings and approach.

What funding is available?

Eligible organisations can apply for a minimum of £25k up to a maximum of **£75k** in grant funding for eligible project costs. The upper range has been decreased from £100k in the first round. This decision has been taken to support a greater number of applicants with the limited funds the Combined Authority has at its disposal.

Whilst match funding is not a strict requirement for proposals, projects demonstrating match funding contributions will be scored positively in the assessment process as this provides better value for public/ taxpayer funds.

We welcome projects that have secured (or equally, unsuccessfully explored) funding from other investment/grant

sources, so long as the FIF grant could be feasibly provided within state aid limits. Details of previous public support for your organisation or innovation project must be clearly outlined within your application. No funding will be provided for the duplication of work or for work already carried out.

Who can apply?

To apply you must:

- be a small or medium sized business (*fewer than 250 employees*) based in the Liverpool City Region (*or with a significant proportion of your operations in the City Region*);
- satisfy the full eligibility criteria (*set out later in this guidance pack and on our webpage*); and
- be able to demonstrate a viable project plan, capability to deliver and a clear need for grant funding to innovate, adapt and prosper.

What do we mean by Innovation?

We appreciate that "innovation" can mean different things to different people. Innovation activities within the region range from R&D-intensive fundamental science carried out through our leading universities, to agile SME product, process & service innovation.

For this Pilot we have restricted our scope to target innovation where impact can be realised by applicant SMEs within 6 months from the date of the award of grant funding.

We are open to projects from any sector, speciality or technology (*except those specifically excluded in the eligibility criteria*). We do not hold any pre-conceived ideas as to what proposed innovations look like, but we are clear that all proposals must look to:

- develop a new product, process or service which help the applicant organisation adapt and grow despite a challenging economic landscape;
- deliver clear transformational benefits for the applicant SMEs and LCR economy;
- align to at least one of the City Region's six strategic priority areas (as outlined in the draft Local Industrial Strategy):

  o   Open Health Innovation

  o   Sustainable Industrial Future

  o   Global Cultural Capital

o   Zero Carbon Economy

o   Tech for Good

o   Digitalisation

(further info on the City Region's six strategic priority areas are outlined in the scope section within the appendix of this guidance document)

How will the Pilot be delivered?

In line with the first round, the Pilot will continue to be delivered in partnership between the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Growth Platform. We have already received a great deal of industry stakeholder support in the design of this Pilot and will continue to ensure that industry plays a key part in the Pilot's delivery and future evolution.

Why has the Future Innovation Fund Pilot been created?

Our long-term vision is to develop a globally competitive, environmentally responsible and socially inclusive City Region, building on transformational opportunities that exist here. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented changes to our economy, which has increased the need to deliver on this vision at pace.

This Pilot will not look to duplicate the great innovation funding support work already carried out by partner organisations such as UKRI (including Innovate UK) and the European Commission. Instead, we have designed the Pilot in a way which is tailored to the local needs, capabilities and strengths of the City Region's business/innovation ecosystem.

We realise that the Pilot focusses heavily on commercial based innovation, and that commercial gain isn't the only driver or outcome that should be targeted in the context of innovation. Rest assured that the Combined Authority and Growth Platform recognise the significant contribution of the entire innovation ecosystem and are working together with stakeholders and national government to strengthen regional access to innovation funding. The Combined Authority is also looking to further support the City Region's social economy through the mobilisation of Kindred, the region's forthcoming social investment vehicle.

Considering an application?

Should I apply?

There is significant demand for innovation funding in the City Region and a limited amount of funding available until access to more resources is made available by central government. We continue to influence central government in this regard. **The Pilot is highly competitive, with success rates in the first round around 4-6%. Similar success rates are anticipated for future rounds,** although we cannot predict what future demand will be.

We do not harbour pre-disposed ideas of what innovation looks like nor who will be funded in any one round of the Pilot. We welcome applications from all backgrounds and would be delighted to see applications from the full spectrum of diverse businesses and people within the City Region. We are fully committed to the principles of equality and diversity.

We have provided full details of how your application will be assessed, details of which can be found on our website through the assessor scoring matrix.

Eligible Organisations

Before applying, you must satisfy the following eligibility criteria - confirmation of which will be asked for within the application form. You will not be able to progress the application form until you agree to these criteria.

For your organisation to be eligible **you must**:

- be an active SME (including community interest companies);
- have your establishment and/or significant operations in the Liverpool City Region (i.e. in the Local Authorities of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens or Wirral);
- be registered at Companies House, on or before **31 March 2020**; and
- be carrying out trading or pre-trading activities on or before 31 March 2020.

If you do not meet the above criteria you can still receive funding from the Future Innovation Fund but only as part of a collaboration with a lead applicant (who must meet the above criteria).

Additional Eligibility Criteria

To meet requirements from our funding and administrative partners we must also ask for you to confirm (by submitting the application form) the following if you wish to apply to the Future Innovation Fund Pilot:

- You have paid all relevant taxes your company is liable for as at the date of application submission (unless deferred/delayed in line with HMRC's pandemic support measures);
- Any grant funding awarded to you will be used to fund activities with demonstrable impact within 6 months from date of the grant award;
- You shall not use any grant funding for:

  - working capital and other ordinary course business purposes;
  - operating directly or indirectly in the tobacco industry;
  - production of products/services used solely in the defence industry; operating in the gambling or adult entertainment industries;
  - any activities with impact on religious movements;
  - any illegal activity; and
  - any activities with an adverse impact on human or animal rights.

- You agree to participate in:

  - webinars or similar events to showcase the innovation activity funded by the grant and promote future calls under the fund;
  - peer to peer engagement and mentoring activity to other businesses where appropriate; and
  - promotional marketing and communications activity.

- Prior to funding being awarded, you will not have received more than £180,000 of public funds in the three years preceding the date of application;

  (NB if **you have received more than this amount then please refer to the** State Aid guidance on the FIF webpage to check whether your organisation is still eligible to apply)

  If you have followed this guidance and are still unsure as to whether you are eligible to apply to the Pilot, please contact us at least 72 hours before the call deadline.

Eligible Costs

We will endeavour to be as flexible as possible with project costs which are eligible to be covered under this Pilot. Our funding is subject to a number of restrictions and guidelines in line with regional, UK and EU innovation funding of this type. As part of your application you will be asked to provide sufficient evidence, and rationale, towards the costs that you intend to include as part of your project plan.

We have included a table (found later in this document) to outline the type of costs which we believe most applicants will be seeking funding to cover.

We expect the core of project costs to include

- Materials (including software);
- Subcontractors;
- Professional fees;
- Capital equipment;
- Salaries;
- Other

Please note that we **cannot fund**:

- associated overheads;
- indirect costs;
- VAT (unless irrecoverable); or
- travel / subsistence costs.

The eligible costs list is thorough but not exhaustive. Further information can also be found within our FAQs.

If you have read both the guidance table below and the FAQs and are still unsure as to whether your intended costs will be eligible under the scheme then please check with us directly, leaving 72 hours before the deadline to provide sufficient time for the team to answer your query.

Application Process

Helpful tips before you start your application

1. Review the eligibility criteria carefully. Double check that your project qualifies as an eligible project before beginning your application. This is important as we received a number of applications in the first round which fell short of the eligibility criteria and were excluded at the first assessment stage. If you are unsure, contact the programme team by email at futureinnovationfund@growthplatform.org at least 72 hours before the call closes.

2. Remember that whilst our independent assessors are experienced industry professionals, they may not have specific expertise in your field of innovation or industry. We will endeavour to match assessor expertise to your application as closely as possible but please note it is highly advisable that you write your answers clearly and concisely and at a level where an experienced industry professional, with no prior knowledge of your sector and technology, may understand.

3. Ensure that you have your organisation's administrative details to hand. The application will require applicants to provide details such as registered company address, contact details, Companies House number (if applicable), and financial information.

4. In relation to the online application form, we are currently limited to using a software which is known to have bugs when saving answers. Accordingly, **we strongly recommend that you prepare your answers offline or in a separate document/worksheet and save your work regularly**. You should then use this central document to copy and paste answers over into the online application form.

Guidance on completing your application form

We have compiled the following guidance to help you understand what is being asked of applicants. The list is thorough but not exhaustive.

Whilst each of the seven sections of the application form are divided up into individual questions, **scoring will be attributed to a section as a whole** as laid out in the assessment matrix which can be viewed on the [FIF webpage](#).

If you have any additional questions that are not clarified by the guidance, then please refer to the [FAQs](#) in the first instance.

If you still have any queries, contact the programme team at futureinnovationfund@growthplatform.org at least 72 hours before application deadline. Please note that whilst the team will endeavour to respond asap by updating the FAQs on the website, the volume of applications may make this difficult in practice.

Section 1: Eligibility

The questions in this section are simply intended to aid our 'gatekeeper sift' process – that is to ensure that only those applications which meet our strict eligibility criteria are able to progress to the full assessment stage. This section should help us confirm that you have read the scheme guidance and that you are aware of the terms and conditions set out within the grant funding agreement. Please utilise this section to clearly outline how your project and organisation meet the scope of the Pilot.

The grant funding agreement can be found on the [FIF webpage](#).

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Section 2: Company information

Your company details will be used to help us understand what organisation is applying, and who is the best person to contact in regard to your application.

The named person in this section should be the key project contact point. They will receive all relevant correspondence regarding the outcome of the application and administrative tasks. There will be an opportunity to reallocate this role at a later date but the Combined Authority will continue to communicate with the original Contact Point until you inform us about the change and you receive written confirmation of us updating the details in our records.

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Section 3: Your project, Opportunity and Idea

In this section we want to get to grips with the detail of your innovation project, and how it addresses the market/operational need you've identified. We've also asked some key questions on your market including whether you are

already active in it to better understand the size and nature of the opportunity.

We recognise that there will be a lot of background to your project, but we ask that you keep your answers succinct and to the point. We also re-iterate that answers must be written in such a way that an industry professional, with only a limited knowledge of your market, may understand.

You must articulate how your project has strong strategic alignment with one of the six priority areas of the pilot and be clear about how the project will deliver product, service or process innovation with a commercial market impact within 6 months, to help your organisation adapt and grow despite a challenging economic landscape.

We appreciate that sometimes it is easier to explain your project visually through photos or diagrams, so we have provided an option to upload an additional 2 x A4 PDF attachment as part of this section. Attachments must be uploaded as PDFs and content must be readable at 100% magnification. Alternative file formats will not be accepted. Attachments should include no more than 500 characters (c.100 words) of text per page.

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Section 4: Delivering your Vision

In this section, you should detail your delivery plan to implement the project. We are looking for projects that can start quickly once funding has been received and which can begin delivering outcomes within 6 months. If your project is not ready to spend grant funding yet, or will not be able to deliver impact in 6 months, you should consider applying for the next call.

When setting out your delivery plan, we are looking for a clear identification of delivery milestones. There is an option to upload a Gantt chart to support this. We strongly recommend you provide a Gantt chart (or similar) but it is not compulsory. We are not expecting to see a detailed risk register in this section, but we would like to understand they key delivery risks and how you will monitor and manage these risks. We also want to understand the suitability and experience of the team who will be delivering the project. We do not require individual CVs, however we would like to understand how your team's experience and capabilities will enable you to deliver the project.

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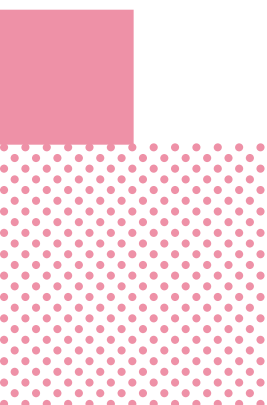
Section 5: Your Project Costs & Organisation Financials

For this section, you will need to have completed the Financial Breakdown Form, available in the "links" section of the [FIF webpage](#).

We will not fund VAT unless it is irrecoverable, so any item/service you intend to purchase should have it excluded, and it should also be excluded from total project costs.

The table below sets out the vast majority of eligible costs. If you've got a cost category in mind that's not listed please do get in touch (at least 72 hours before the deadline) and we'd be more than happy to clarify.

We know these are extraordinary times, and so we do not necessarily expect any grant to be match funded. However, where match funding is available, it should be used. We welcome projects that have secured funding from other sources to contribute to the project – evidence of which may be reflected positively in the scoring. The grant can, and indeed should, be used to secure match funding from other sources. If match funding has not been secured but is likely to be on award of the grant then it is acceptable to be included within your application.

We expect significant demand for funding and we will do our best to provide the required grant funding for approved projects, however there may be instances where we are able to award your project with a lower grant amount than requested. Therefore, you should provide us with the minimum amount that is needed for your project to go ahead.

Cost Item	Details
Materials inc. Software	
Materials	This should cover the costs of materials that will be used directly in your project. Materials must be purchased from third parties and be evidenced. Materials should hold no residual value at the end of your project. You must first check with us directly if you wish to claim for any materials supplied by associated companies. Please leave 72 hours before the deadline to provide sufficient time for the team to answer your query.

Software	Must be directly relevant to the purpose and expected timeline of the project. Whilst we expect projects to consider the 6 month to commercial impact timeline we do acknowledge that some software will be subject to a 12 month minimum license. We will consider funding software up to a maximum of 12 months but only in instances where it can be shown that month-by-month licenses are ineffective or offer poor value for money and where applicants have fully shown that they have exhausted all other viable purchasing facilities and options. We expect grant recipients to take advantage of any purchase facilities a supplier may have in place to increase the impact of the grant. (e.g. down payment for a software package covered by grant, remaining instalment-based purchase covered by the grant recipient.) If you or someone you are collaborating with already own software that will be used in the project then you may only claim the additional cost incurred which is directly attributable to the project. Examples of costs that may be eligible are those related to the preparation of disks, manuals, installation, training or customisation. Costs should be split between their component parts and allocated to the appropriate cost category. Work to carry out specific improvements/development to software is in scope but should be included under payroll (if in-house) or subcontractor costs. We will try to be as flexible as possible with covering software costs if they are a requirement to deliver your project however please note that we will not fund software which is already in use to serve 'business as usual' activities.
Capital Equipment	
Capital Equipment	Capital equipment costs shall only cover equipment purchased which is capable and critical in delivering a substantial and qualitative change in the delivery of the product, process or services which you are providing. Funding will not be provided for like-for-like updating or replacement of existing equipment We are open for funding to be used to purchase either new or second-hand machinery There are no caps on the percentage of your grant which can be spent on capital equipment however it should be noted that this project aims to deliver transformative innovation-led change and should not be seen as a facility to achieve linear increase in

existing output or practises. Subsequently high level of costs assigned to capital spending may be inversely scored within the

assessment process- unless a strong case is made for technology which is critical to diversity into a new product line or step-change process. It is acceptable for equipment down payments to be covered by the grant with remaining instalment-based purchase covered by the grant recipient.

We also expect that there may be a number of instances where you may wish to purchase capital beyond the funding range of this programme and wish to use the Future Innovation Fund to help fund a proportion of capital equipment purchase. We welcome applications that take this approach however we would again highlight that the spirit and scope of this project necessitates that applicants must show (i) how the capital will deliver transformative benefit, (ii) why the capital cannot be realistically funded through other means (e.g. existing reserves, investors, loans, purchase finance facilities etc)

Salaries & Subcontracting	
Salaries / Payroll	Salaries **must relate to staff working directly on the project** Total costs will be capped at **80% of individual gross employee costs capped at 80% up to a maximum of £2.5K per person per month.** Employees supported by the project must be remunerated in line with national living wage. We will not fund discretionary bonuses or performance related payment of any kind, nor time spent not working directly on the project. We also cannot fund dividend payments, however we will be operating a flexible policy to help those not currently on PAYE schemes in line with European Commission policy and subject to a maximum day rate of £192 per day (max 5 day a week).

	Applicants are responsible for ensuring that any funding received meets all UK regulatory & tax requirements. All claims will be submitted through a standard timesheet form and must be in a position to be firmly evidenced (e.g. through previous PAYE records).
Subcontrac-tors (including Freelancers)	You can claim costs relating to work carried out by third-party organisations that are not part of your project team. The work must: •be essential to the success of your project •involve expertise that does not exist within the project team •involve skills which are not practical (in the timeline) to develop in-house for your project You should name the subcontractor (where known) and describe what the subcontractor will be doing and where the work will be undertaken. We are open to a wide range of potential subcontracting costs however we again reflect upon our position that all costs included as part of your project must reflect transformative ambition and delivery and must not be used to fund a 'business as usual' approach
Other	
Other	You may wish to include potential costs which are not already covered by the above. Whilst not exhaustive such costs might include: - Workshop/laboratory usage charge outs (if not own facilities) - Training costs - Market assessment - Licensing in new technologies - Patent filing costs for new intellectual property (IP) up to a limit of £2,000 per SME

	We will accept costs relating to the preparation of technical reports but such costs will be capped at a maximum of 5% of the total grant you have requested. If you believe there are other costs which are in the spirit of the fund but are not reflected within this list then please check with us directly, leaving 72 hours before the deadline to provide sufficient time for the team to answer your query.
Professional Fees	
Marketing Activities	We recognise that effective marketing is key to achieve full commercialisation for new products and services. Marketing costs are subsequently in scope for this fund, however they should not be the core focus of your project nor should funding be used to advertise your existing portfolio of product or services (unless your project is expected to deliver transformative enhancement from current business as usual state)
Business Intelligence ("BI")	This disruptive economic impact of Covid-19 has led to wholesale changes in a new of key markets. We subsequently understand that some applicants may wish to use a portion of their funding in securing targeted business intelligence support to help them adjust their strategy for their new product/service or improve access to a new market. Subsequently targeted BI costs may be used to support improved access to a new market or a new product/service.
General professional fees	You may wish to include potential costs which relate to more general professional fees aimed at helping you deliver your intended transformational activities. We open to supporting costs which are aimed at embedding new knowledge or best practise in areas such as increasing efficiencies, increasing sales through new channels or markets, and/or increasing productivity Please note that we again refer to our policy that this scheme is not in place to support business as usual activities or regulatory required business activities.

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Section 6: Additionality and Value for Money

This section is about demonstrating **why you need grant funding**. Grants provided by this pilot fund are up to 100% funded by the taxpayer and are sourced from very limited locally devolved funding pots. Therefore, it is absolutely critical all applications approved for funding are able to demonstrate that, not only is grant funding absolutely essential, but that the grant provided offers strong value for money for the taxpayer.

Questions asked in this section will help draw out your case for funding and will help us understand why alternative sources of funding, including loans, venture capital, angel investment, commercial contracts, company reserves etc, cannot be used to fund your project. If these funding routes are available, it is critical that your application explains what conversations are ongoing with existing and potential funders.

Finally, this section also asks for expected growth in the underlying financials of your organisation once your innovation vision is realised. This information will be used, alongside your existing underlying financials, to help us understand the potential impact of grant funding on your organisation. We encourage ambition however these forecasts must be grounded in realism.

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Section 7: Social Value

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has an ambition for the City Region to become the most progressive and inclusive economy in Europe. We expect all our investments to demonstrate how they can contribute towards developing this economy. We will not fund a project that has no ambition to deliver social value in the City Region and we advise you to consider fully how your organisation and/or innovation project aligns with our ambition of a fairer, more inclusive economy.

You should consider how your organisation currently, or plans to, improve the City Region economically, socially and environmentally. Note this is a _scored_ section of the application form and will require a well thought out, convincing response.

Timings, Contact Details & FAQs

Timings

We continue to expect the scheme to run across 3 rounds of funding, separated by several week intervals. This format has been chosen to:

- aid in the effective delivery of funding to successful applicants; and
- ensure that iterative feedback can be integrated in an 'agile' manner to improve the process for each round.

The indicative timings for the second round are as follows (subject to change):

Milestone	Date
Applications open for second call	28 September 2020
Applications close for second call	23:59 19 October 2020
Assessment period	20 October 2020 to 7 December 2020
Successful applicants notified	w/c 7 December 2020

How to apply

If you are interested in applying to the Future Innovation Fund Pilot, please complete the application form and submit by 11.59pm on the 19 October 2020. We will not consider any applications submitted after this time.

Applications must be made online by submitting all relevant information through the online form accessible through the FIF webpage.

We will not accept applications submitted through email (except in instance where applications have secured permission from ourselves as a result of specific needs arising from accessibility considerations). The application form below is subsequently included for reference purposes only.

All details contained within the application are kept confidential and will be used solely in connection with your application. They will used by officers and employees of the Combined Authority, Growth Platform and external assessors only for the purposes of assessing your application. Your details will not be shared with partner organisations other than with your agreement. As part of your application, you will be asked if you consent to us sharing your application details with relevant funders such as angel investors and venture capital firms.

Contact details

Please direct all questions not answered by this guidance or supplementary FAQ document through the following email

futureinnovationfund@growthplatform.org

All questions MUST be sent to the FIF team at least 72 hours before applications close. This is to ensure that all queries can be responded to within a timely manner.

FAQs

We realise that you may have a question or other points that need clarifying. We have set up a dedicated FAQ page available here and ask that you review all information provided within the form before contacting the team directly.

Appendix

Strategic Priorities: Transformative Opportunities for the City Region

Opportunity	Details
Building a sustainable industrial future. Liverpool City Region created many of the processes and infrastructure for the first Industrial Revolution. Through the fourth Industrial Revolution, the LCR's manufacturers, engineers and innovators will again place themselves at the forefront of innovation and develop cleaner and greener ways of working.	The pandemic will open many new opportunities for manufacturing, engineering and other businesses to diversify and scale up. Social distancing will increase the need for the adoption and development of digital technologies, and product and process innovation. We want to support our manufacturing and engineering businesses to adapt their businesses and processes to respond when they have been unable to access finance to do so elsewhere.
Open health innovation.	The demand for health and wellbeing products and services has accelerated rapidly. There are opportunities for

Health and social innovation are important to the LCR. The health and wellbeing challenges the region face are persistent, stark and complex, and require innovative responses to overcome them effectively.	businesses operating in the health and wellbeing innovation space to pivot or scale their business models to respond to new areas of market need and long-term growth opportunities, while improving people's health and wellbeing. We want to support these businesses to adapt and grow.
Global cultural capital. LCR is known for its cultural vibrancy. Cultural opportunities bring people together, enrich lives, and are central to our identities and sense of place. Culture binds communities together while supporting people's health, wellbeing and quality of life.	The pandemic has closed our cultural sector overnight, and it will look very different when it reopens. It may also be a long time before we start welcoming visitors back in LCR. But we still have our cultural identity and have identified new ways of delivering cultural activities digitally. We want to support businesses as they grow their e-cultural offer or adapt their business models to protect the City Region's cultural vibrancy and visitor economy.
Zero carbon economy. As one of the world's first industrial cities, and with LCR communities and ecosystems now on the frontline against climate change, it is imperative that action is taken to address the climate emergency and pioneer sustainable approaches to living, travel and doing business.	LCR's ambition to become net zero-carbon by 2040 remains. We will support innovations which pioneer sustainable approaches to living, travel and doing business in a post-pandemic world. We are particularly interested in bids that link to the circular economy and those that explore the problem of single-use plastics, particularly in relation to non-reusable PPE.
Tech for good. New technologies are changing industry and society and disrupting longstanding business models, transforming products and services. The technology, data and artificial intelligence ("AI") revolution can solve some of the biggest economic, social and environmental challenges. Technological innovation will be fundamental to creating a healthier, greener, more inclusive economy	LCR will embrace all opportunities that use technology and/or big data to improve society and grow the economy. This includes, but is not limited to smart city applications, pan-sector digitalisation, and our competitive strength in high-performance computing and/or cognitive computing and AI.

Digitalisation.	We will support digitalisation relating to any other demonstrable area of distinctive competitive advantage and/or increased productivity and business resilience.
Digitalisation as an operational process is recognised as important for improving business processes and productivity. Covid19 has paved the way for accelerated digital transformation.	