

LCR High Growth Innovation Fund

Applicant Guidance

We received significant interest in our two rounds of Future Innovation Funding (FIF) (which was nearly 16x oversubscribed) and are now looking to award the last of the FIF money together with £1.5m of European Regional Development Fund grant we have managed to secure, to further support innovative SMEs in the LCR.

The High Growth Innovation Fund is delivered as an extension to the FIF pilot scheme with an emphasis on improving our processes and is based on evidence and feedback. The additional ERDF grant that has been secured has resulted in changes being made to the criteria, application process and guidance. So, whilst this guidance may look similar to that provided in the two rounds of FIF, there are some key differences. It is therefore **imperative that all applicants read this guidance in full** before drafting and submitting proposals.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact us directly by email at HighGrowth@growthplatform.org or by phone on +44 (0) 151 227 2727 (accessibility requests only).

Any other questions MUST be sent to HighGrowth@growthplatform.org

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- Introduction-

What is the High Growth Innovation Fund (HGIF)?

The FIF pilot programme (the pilot) was established by the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotherham, to help support LCR's small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The Pilot incentivised 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. The HGIF has also been designed and delivered at speed to maximise its impact as well as incorporating feedback from previous FIF rounds.

This document provides guidance for the latest call for HGIF that runs 6th May 2022 to June 2023.

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 so we can support a greater number of applicants with the limited funds available.

With this round there are a few criteria which have altered due to the fund being topped up with ERDF E.g., 50% match funding is now a requirement for proposals, projects will need to demonstrate match funding contributions to be scored positively in the assessment process as this provides better value for public / taxpayer funds.

We welcome projects that have secured funding from other investment / grant sources, so long as the HGIF grant could be feasibly provided within state aid limits. Details of previous public support your organisation or innovation project has received must be clearly outlined within your application. No funding will be provided for the duplication of work or work already carried out.

Who can apply?

To apply you must be a high growth SME (fewer than 250 employees) business **OR** a SME business estimated to have high growth potential based in the Liverpool City Region (*or with a significant proportion of your operations in the City Region*) and satisfy the full eligibility criteria (*set out later in this guidance pack and on our webpage* <https://growthplatform.org/programme/high-growth-innovation-fund/>)

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 Fund we are continuing to restrict 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):
 - Open Health Innovation
 - Sustainable Industrial Future
 - Global Cultural Capital
 - Zero Carbon Economy
 - Tech for Good
 - Digitalisation

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

How will the HGIF be delivered?

In line with the first two rounds of FIF, the fund 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 Fund and will continue to ensure that industry plays a key part in the Fund's delivery and future evolution.

Why has the High Growth Innovation Fund been created?

Our long-term vision is still 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.

The pilot did 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 designed the pilot in a way which was tailored to the local needs, capabilities and strengths of the City Region's business / innovation ecosystem.

We realise that the pilot focussed 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.

In order to make the most of the remaining FIF monies we have been successful in securing, an additional £1.5m of ERDF. This means that we can support many more businesses with this 3rd round of funding. The disadvantage is that the ERDF money comes with restrictions. E.g., Procurement rules, salary issues and timing.

- 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 are made available by central government. We continue to influence central government in this regard especially with ERDF coming to an end in 2023 **The Pilot FIF was highly competitive, with success rates in the first round around 4-6% and a similar success rate in the second round. We anticipate similar for this fund** 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 round. 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 [Assessment Process and Mark Scheme](#)

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)
- be a high growth SME (fewer than 250 employees) business **OR** a SME business estimated to have high growth potential
- 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 able to evidence a potential / show plans to grow turnover or headcount > 20% per year for 3 years)
- be at a Technology Readiness Level between stage 6 and 9

- be able to demonstrate a viable project plan, capability to deliver and a clear need for grant funding to innovate, adapt and prosper.

We are looking for 'established' businesses who can provide 3 years of Accounts, or 2 years of Accounts plus 12 months Management Figures. In reality this means that the business has to be incorporated at least 36 months ago. However, due to the pandemic, we are looking at as much flexibility as possible with the Innovation Fund and will look at all eligible businesses who submit an EOI.

If you do not meet the above criteria, you can still receive funding from the 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 High Growth Innovation Fund:

- 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
 - existing Staff Salaries
 - asset leases
- 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 Notice](#)** [State Aid Guidance](#) 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, 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 Fund. Our funding is subject to a number of restrictions and guidelines in line with regional, UK and EU (specifically ERDF) 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, from previous rounds, that most applicants will be looking to use funding to cover.

We expect the core of **procured project costs** to include:

- Materials (including software)
- Sub-contractors
- Professional fees
- Limited capital equipment
- Salaries for new project related staff
- Other

Please note that we **cannot fund**:

- associated overheads
- indirect costs
- VAT (unless irrecoverable)
- travel / subsistence costs
- salaries of existing staff
- asset leases

The eligible costs list is thorough but not exhaustive.

If you have read the guidance 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 and second round which fell short of the eligibility criteria and had to be excluded at the first assessment stage. If you are unsure, contact the programme team by email at highgrowth@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 EOI and the application form 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 expression of interest form, we are using Evolutive software which will have less bugs than software used in prior rounds.
5. The full application form is in a word format so we can pass on to our independent assessors and their comments be inserted into a master database. We still **recommend that you prepare your answers in a separate word document as there are strict word limits to some questions**. You should then use this central document to copy and paste answers over into the application form.

Guidance on completing your expression of interest form

We understand it is time consuming to fill in the full application form therefore we have included an expression of interest stage in this competition, so you do not have to complete a full application form unless we have confirmed your eligibility.

[Expression of Interest](#)

Questions are very straightforward e.g., name, address, contact, what you want to spend the grant on etc, but if there are any issues, please email highgrowth@growthplatform.org

Guidance on completing your application form

Whilst each section of the application form is divided up into individual questions, **scoring will be attributed to a section as a whole** as laid out in the assessment mark scheme which can be viewed on the HGIF webpage [Assessment Process and Mark Scheme](#)

If you have any additional questions that are not clarified by the guidance, then please contact the programme support team at highgrowth@growthplatform.org at least 72 hours before application deadline. Please note that while the team will endeavour to respond asap the volume of applications may make this difficult in practice.

Section 1: Eligibility

This section allows the assessors to confirm that you have read the scheme guidance and that you are aware of 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 programme.

The grant funding agreement can be found here: [Grant Funding Agreement](#)

Section 2: Company information

Your company details will be used to help assessors to understand which 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. They will receive all relevant correspondence regarding the outcome of the application and all administrative tasks.

There will be an opportunity to reallocate this role at a later date, but the Growth Platform will continue to communicate with the original contact until you inform us about the change, and you receive written confirmation of us updating the details in our records.

Section 3: Your project, Opportunity and Idea

In this section we want to get to grips with the detail of your 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 Fund 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 attach an additional 2 x A4 PDF attachment at the end of the application. Content must be readable at 100% magnification. Attachments should include no more than 500 characters (c.100 words) of text per page.

Section 4: Delivering your Vision

In this section, you should set 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 not apply.

When setting out your delivery plan, we are looking for a clear identification of delivery milestones. There is an option to attach a Gantt chart to support this at the end of the application. 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 the 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.

Section 5: Your Project Costs & Organisation Financials

For this section, you will need to have completed the Financial Breakdown Form, available here: [Sample Project Budget/Financial Table](#)

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 closing deadline) and we'd be more than happy to clarify.

Projects must have secured match funding from other sources to contribute 50% to the project - evidence of which will be required. The grant can be used to secure match funding from other sources if the timing does fit. 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 if the timeline fits with that of this fund.

We expect significant demand for funding. 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	<p>This should cover the costs of materials that will be used directly in your project. Materials must be purchased from third parties and procurement of such must be evidenced. Materials should hold no residual value at the end of your project.</p> <p>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.</p>
Software	<p>Must be directly relevant to the purpose and expected timeline of the project.</p> <p>Whilst we expect projects to consider the 6 months 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</p>

	<p>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.)</p> <p>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 or customisation. Costs should be split between their component parts and allocated to the appropriate cost category.</p> <p>Work to carry out specific improvements / development to software is in scope but should be included in subcontractor costs.</p> <p>We will try to be as flexible as possible with covering software costs if they are a requirement to deliver your project. Please note that we will not fund software which is already in use to serve 'business as usual' activities.</p>
<p>Capital Equipment</p>	
<p>Capital Equipment</p>	<p>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</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Capital only projects will be referred to the Small Capital Grants Scheme which is part of the High Growth Programme, delivered by St Helens Chamber.</p> <p>We also expect that there may be instances where you may wish to purchase capital beyond the funding range of this programme and wish to use the High Growth Innovation Fund to help fund a proportion of capital equipment purchase. We welcome applications that take this approach however we</p>

	<p>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)</p> <p>If you are requiring Capital Costs only to be funded then please look at the Small Capital Grants Scheme, also part of the High Growth Programme but delivered by St Helens Chamber.</p>
<p>Salaries & Subcontracting</p>	
<p>Salaries / Payroll</p>	<p>Salaries must relate to NEW staff working directly on the project</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Employees supported by the project must be remunerated in line with national living wage.</p> <p>We will not fund discretionary bonuses or performance related payment of any kind, nor time spent not working directly on the project.</p> <p>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 days a week). Applicants are responsible for ensuring that any funding received meets all UK regulatory & tax requirements.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>The preference would be for the SME to secure consultancy support.</p> <p>If that option is not viable (e.g., consultants are not available to undertake the activity due to the cost or availability [which needs to be auditable]), we may agree, on an exceptional basis, for ERDF to support SME staff salary on a fixed term basis but the SME would have to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) this was not for an existing staff member (if an SME already has the experienced staff in place, they would be already deploying them) (ii) they do not have the necessary experience/skills in-house (iii) that the targeted support they require is for a specific purpose/project (not typical business as usual activity for an SME) and list the expertise/skills they require (iv) the post was on a fixed term basis

	<p>(v) the job specification would have to include points (iii) and (iv); and</p> <p>(vi) they would need to ensure that they have recruited the post in an open, fair and transparent basis via the open market</p> <p>Please note - you would need to ensure that there is an audit trail to evidence the above points.</p>
<p>Subcontractors (inc. Freelancers)</p>	<p>You can claim costs relating to work carried out by third-party organisations that are not part of your project team. The work must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •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 <p>Be procured as per the ERDF Guidelines – brief details can be found here: Procurement Pack</p> <p>You should name the subcontractor after a procurement exercise and describe what the subcontractor will be doing and where the work will be undertaken.</p> <p>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</p>
<p>Other</p>	
<p>Other</p>	<p>You may wish to include potential costs which are not already covered by the above. Whilst not exhaustive such costs might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop / laboratory usage charge outs (if not own facilities) - Market assessment - Licensing in new technologies - Patent filing costs for new intellectual property (IP) up to a limit of £2,000 per SME <p>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.</p>
<p>Professional Fees</p>	
<p>Marketing Activities</p>	<p>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</p>

	<p>services (unless your project is expected to deliver transformative enhancement from current business as usual state)</p>
<p>Business Intelligence (“BI”)</p>	<p>This disruptive economic impact of Covid-19 has led to wholesale changes in new 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.</p>
<p>General professional fees</p>	<p>You may wish to include potential costs which relate to more general professional fees aimed at helping you deliver your intended transformational activities.</p> <p>We are 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</p> <p>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.</p>

Section 6: Additionality and Value for Money

This section is about demonstrating **why you need grant funding**. Grants provided by this fund are funded by the taxpayer and are sourced from very limited 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.

Section 7: Social Value

We, Growth Platform, share the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's 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-

We expect the scheme to aid in the effective delivery of funding to successful applicants and ensure that iterative feedback from FIF round 1 and 2 has been integrated in an 'agile' manner to improve the process for each round.

The indicative timings, for this round, are as follows (subject to change):

Milestone	Date
Applications open for EOI	6th May 2022
Applications close for EOI	20 th May 2022
First Assessment period	23 rd – 27 th May 2022
Successful applicants notified	30 th May 2022
Full application Form submitted	27 th June 2022
Assessment Period	4 th – 25 th July 2022
Approvals	1 st August to 23 rd September 2022
Applicants notified	Approx: 23rd September 2022
Procurement exercise undertaken	From 26 th September 2022
Grant Funding Agreement released	TBC 1 st October 2022
Payment Schedule submitted by SME	TBC 1 st October 2022
Initial instalment paid to SME	1 st October 2022
Project started	1st October 2022
Project completion	31st March 2023
Final Claim submitted	31 st March 2023

How to apply

If you are interested in applying to the High Growth Innovation Fund Pilot, please complete the EOI which can be found here: <https://formbuilder.evolutive.co.uk/formsite/form/7960ab75-b859-48f0-a953-bb63f416aeb4?v=true> and submit by 11.59pm on the 20th May 2022. We cannot consider any applications submitted after this time.

We cannot 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 full application form is on the webpage for reference purposes only. This will be sent to successful EOIs when required.

All details contained within the application are kept confidential and will be used solely in connection with your application. They will be used by officers and employees of the Growth Platform, Combined Authority 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 highgrowth@growthplatform.org

All questions MUST be sent to the Growth Platform team at least 72 hours before EOIs / application deadlines 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 link on the webpage [FAQs](#) and as we receive questions from applicants we will add to this page.

-Appendix-

Strategic Priorities: Transformative Opportunities for the City Region

Opportunity	Details
<p>Building a sustainable industrial future.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>The pandemic has opened many new opportunities for manufacturing, engineering and other businesses to diversify and scale up. Social distancing has increased 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.</p>
<p>Open health innovation.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>The demand for health and wellbeing products and services has accelerated rapidly. There are opportunities for 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.</p>
<p>Global cultural capital.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>The pandemic closed our cultural sector overnight, and it looks very different since it has reopened. 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.</p>
<p>Zero carbon economy.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>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.</p>

<p>sustainable approaches to living, travel and doing business.</p>	
<p>Tech for good.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Digitalisation.</p> <p>Digitalisation as an operational process is recognised as important for improving business processes and productivity. Covid19 has paved the way for accelerated digital transformation.</p>	<p>We will support digitalisation relating to any other demonstrable area of distinctive competitive advantage and/or increased productivity and business resilience.</p>

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