

Infrastructure Productivity Scale-up Programme

Application Guidance



Purpose

This guide is here to help businesses prepare a strong application for The Infrastructure Productivity Scale-Up Programme, delivered by Connected Places Catapult and funded by Innovate UK.

Connected Places Catapult can support you by providing objective feedback and advice on your application. Make sure you contact us in plenty of time before the deadline to maximise the support available to you.

The application questions are designed to help assessors understand your solution, your business and your readiness to take part in the programme. Make sure you answer the question being asked, cover all parts of the guidance and use clear, accessible language. The easier it is for assessors to understand your proposal and the evidence behind it, the stronger your application is likely to be.

Eligibility

The Infrastructure Productivity Scale-Up Programme is open to small and medium-sized enterprises with proven productivity solutions that have the potential to be adopted more widely across the infrastructure sector.

Applicants must have the following:

- Be a UK registered small or medium-sized enterprise
- An innovative technology or solution at TRL 8 or above
- Have a proven solution that has moved beyond research and development, and has been proven in real world conditions
- Have a solution which addresses at least one of the four published challenge areas
- Have tested, demonstrated or deployed the solution in a relevant environment
- Be able to provide evidence from at least one real project
- Be able to demonstrate commercial potential
- Already operate within construction or infrastructure, or be seeking to transfer a proven solution from another sector

- Be willing to work collaboratively with Connected Places Catapult and programme partners (Infrastructure Industry Innovation Partnership (i3P))
- Be able to commit appropriate time and resource to the programme
- Be willing to travel occasionally for face-to-face meetings, including a Welcome Day, programme workshops and showcase events
- Be available to participate actively in programme activities between **November 2026 and March 2027**

* Please note that the scoring criteria will provide further information on how applications will be assessed.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

The Programme celebrates Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) not just because it is the right thing to do but because it leads to better decisions, better innovation and makes our working life more rewarding and more productive. All partners are committed to fostering EDI in our workforce, our partners, suppliers, and innovators.

We hold EDI to include the characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 {Age; Sex (and Gender); Race (and Ethnicity); Disability; Religion or belief; Sexual orientation; Gender reassignment; Marriage or civil partnerships; Pregnancy and maternity}, but also other historic barriers to opportunity, such as “class”, nationality, dialect, education, and other forms of socio-economic exclusion.

The Programme is committed to the following EDI principles:

- Provide a level playing field for all innovators seeking to apply to participate in the Programme.
- Drive a human-centred approach when tackling real world challenges.
- Foster an open and inclusive environment for businesses joining the Programme.
- Offer advocacy and collaboration opportunities to reduce barriers to innovation.
- Encourage a range of perspective in our shortlisting and due diligence process by selecting diverse assessment panels.

The innovation challenges

Overview

The UK is committing to infrastructure on a scale rarely seen before. The national pipeline sets out at least £725 billion of planned public investment over the next decade, spanning energy, transport, water, health and the networks that connect them. For the businesses that design, build and improve infrastructure, the demand is clear and the direction is set. The same delivery challenges recur across programmes of this scale, and recurring challenges create repeatable markets for the businesses that can solve them.

Behind the scale of planned investment lies a problem the government has named clearly. The UK does not deliver infrastructure as productively as it should. Productivity per hour worked in construction lags around 13.5 per cent behind the wider economy and on-site productivity has, in the government's own words, flatlined.

For the first time, the sector has a shared way to address this. PAS 4010, the new specification for improving productivity in infrastructure delivery, sets clear, auditable requirements for how productivity is planned, measured and improved across a project. Developed by the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Department for Transport, it is backed by client commitment to require it on projects.

The barrier is no longer whether good productivity solutions exist. Many are already proven on major programmes. The barrier is adoption: getting proven solutions through procurement, across contractual data-sharing blocks, and into routine use on the next project rather than stalling after a single trial.

Challenges

We are looking for **proven productivity solutions** that address one or more of the following focus areas. These have been shaped and validated through the programme's stakeholder interviews and the multi-client workshops.

Challenge A – How might we create integrated productivity visibility across the supply chain?

Focus Areas:

- Data integration and interoperability that connects existing client, design and site systems without replacing incumbent platforms
- End-to-end measurement frameworks that track schedule, resource, cost and productivity from design through delivery
- Schedule and resource optimisation that uses integrated data to surface constraints and shared opportunities for improvement
- Collaborative platforms that enable client and supply chain to make shared decisions about how work is delivered

On major projects, systems operate in isolation: the client's scheduling tool doesn't talk to the designer's model, which doesn't connect to the contractor's site systems. Post-award contracts hide data behind confidentiality clauses. Design-to-build divergence is persistent and invisible. Clients cannot measure supply chain productivity because they lack real-time visibility of site progress, resource utilisation and constraint data. Designers cannot validate assumptions against build performance. Contractors cannot optimise delivery because they lack integrated access to client priorities and schedule interdependencies. PAS 4010 requires productivity data to flow across the supply chain.

We are inviting businesses to propose solutions that create a single, end-to-end productivity data stream connecting planning, measurement and improvement across the full delivery chain. Your solution should work within existing client systems and workflows, not require replacement or wholesale change.

Example innovation areas may include (but are not limited to):

- APIs, middleware and integration layers: connecting existing client systems, design tools and site management platforms without requiring vendors to rebuild infrastructure; enabling data to flow securely across procurement boundaries
- Real-time dashboards and predictive analytics: aggregating schedule, cost, resource and productivity data from multiple sources into a single view; flagging schedule or cost variance before critical milestones
- Tools, digital models and twin representations: tracking design assumptions through to delivery and surfacing divergence between plan and actual performance; incorporating real-time site data and sharing visibility across stakeholders
- Systems and analytics: sharing constraint and risk data across client, designer and contractor functions; identifying resource bottlenecks, material logistics delays or scheduling conflicts in real time

Challenge B – How might we prove and scale methods for reducing site inefficiency?**Focus areas:**

- Tools and methods that surface invisible rework, waste and delay so it can be measured and managed
- Digital or modern methods of construction that improve site coordination, reduce material waste or accelerate delivery
- Standardised frameworks for measuring and comparing efficiency gains in language that procurement teams can adopt
- Evidence packs and case studies from comparable projects that help clients justify and specify the method on new work

Proven digital methods for reducing site inefficiency are held back by specifications and standards written for conventional practice. Digital slump testing has been validated across major programmes and evidenced 10-15% cost and schedule savings, yet manual methods remain the default. Modern methods of construction reduce both cost and environmental impact but are adopted slowly because clients lack a common framework for assessing evidence and specifications preclude their use. Rework and waste are endemic. Much of it is

invisible: delays from unplanned constraints, material arrivals held up by upstream processes, and inefficient resource utilisation are buried in schedule variance, not surfaced as distinct problems that can be tracked or managed.

We are inviting businesses to propose solutions that reduce rework, waste and inefficiency on site, measurably evidence the saving, and help clients specify the better method as standard practice. Your solution should be proven on at least one real project with clear cost or schedule baseline data.

Example innovation areas may include (but are not limited to):

- Real-time constraint tracking, logistics optimisation, remote site monitoring and sensor technology: timestamped visual records of progress; tracking material deliveries, equipment utilisation and resource presence on site
- Digital or modern methods of construction and measurement frameworks: clear cost and carbon baselines compared to conventional approaches; site safety improvements, emissions reduction and energy efficiency in delivery
- Tools and digitalised site processes: standardising how efficiency gains are measured and reported across projects; eliminating paperwork and creating repeatable workflows
- Workforce management and site coordination systems: standardised approaches that drive repeatable efficiency improvements across multiple projects and teams

Challenge C – How might we improve cost and schedule certainty across project delivery?

Focus areas:

- Schedule optimisation tools that use early project performance data to improve baseline reliability
- Cost modelling systems that track actual costs against baseline and identify variance drivers early
- Approaches that improve supply chain coordination through shared visibility and early warning systems
- Tools that connect design assumptions to delivery performance so teams can learn early where estimates are wrong

Major infrastructure projects routinely overrun budget and schedule. Uncertainty about cost and timeline is endemic to how projects are procured and managed. Most projects use stage-gate reviews with points of commitment, but few have integrated visibility of the actual drivers of variance: unplanned constraints, supplier delays, design uncertainty, or productivity assumptions that prove wrong on site. Cost and schedule forecasts at design are often disconnected from delivery reality. When projects begin, early performance data that could improve forecasts is not systematically captured or used to adjust baselines. The result is repeated slippage, cost escalation and friction between client and supply chain.

We are inviting businesses to propose solutions that give clients and supply chains greater confidence in cost and programme from design through delivery, in line with PAS 4010's requirement to plan and manage productivity across the project lifecycle. Your solution should be integrated with how clients currently manage projects, not require new procurement or contracting models.

Example innovation areas may include (but are not limited to):

- Schedule forecasting, predictive analytics and learning tools: using machine learning and early performance data to predict project outcomes; learning from schedule variance to improve the accuracy of future estimates
- Cost tracking, variance analysis and financial management systems: automated cost estimating tools that improve accuracy at design stage; platforms for construction contractors that track and report project finances in real time
- Supply chain coordination platforms and automated scheduling tools: shared visibility into constraints and risks; operations management that reduces coordination delays
- Digital project management systems: tracking design assumptions through to delivery; flagging when actual performance diverges from forecast to enable updates and corrective action

Challenge D – How might we integrate solutions with existing infrastructure systems?**Focus areas:**

- Real-time monitoring of plant and people integrated with existing site management and scheduling tools
- Design and planning tools that export to conventional design packages used by clients and contractors
- APIs and data-sharing frameworks that enable information flow between systems without requiring clients to change procurement strategy
- Solutions that demonstrate ROI and payback within the constraints of the client's existing contracting model

UK infrastructure is conservative. Major clients have entrenched procurement frameworks, long-standing supply chain relationships and systems validated through multiple projects. A solution that requires clients to replace their design tool, scheduling software or site management platform will not be adopted, regardless of technical merit. Integration risk rises sharply when solutions require wholesale change. Solutions that complement existing workflows are adopted. Solutions that require replacement are not. This creates a constraint: the most ambitious innovations often require replacing legacy systems and therefore struggle to find adoption pathways. The pragmatic solutions that work within existing constraints are more likely to scale.

We are inviting businesses to propose solutions that work with the systems clients already have. Your solution should integrate with incumbent client systems, not require procurement or strategic change. Demonstrate how your approach fits existing workflows and contracting models.

Example innovation areas may include (but are not limited to):

- APIs, middleware and vendor-neutral approaches: connecting to widely used project management, design and site management platforms; allowing data integration without forcing the choice of a single platform
- Plugins, lightweight add-ons and BIM tools: enhancing existing design tools rather than replacing them; improving conventional design workflows without requiring workflow redesign

- Real-time monitoring systems: integrating with existing site infrastructure; exporting data in standard formats that clients can consume into their own dashboards and systems
- Solutions that deliver measurable ROI: achieving this within 12-18 months; working within standard client contracting and procurement models without requiring changes to how clients source or pay for services

We are looking for solutions that demonstrate the process of PAS 4010 in action, and how it will drive wider adoption across the sector.

Application Guidance

General Guidance

- Applications must be submitted by 12pm on 28th of September 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted or considered
- Please review the assessment scoring criteria section in this guidance document as this will provide clarity of what evidence to provide in your responses to maximise your score
- Assessors with a broad technical knowledge will mark your application. You should therefore write clearly in plain language, avoiding acronyms and obscure jargon
- Only the information included within your application form is subject to assessment
- Your application will automatically save so you can return to edit later
- Please keep within the maximum word counts noted in each of the sections of the application form. Any content that exceeds the word count limit will be excluded from your submission

In addition to the business and adoption support available through the programme, successful participants will have the opportunity to apply for a share of a total £80,000 (including VAT) funding pot to support a demonstration of their solution with a programme partner.

We currently expect individual demonstration proposals to request a maximum of £8,000 (including VAT), with funding available for up to 10 proposals, depending on the number and quality of the applications received.

Applicants will be asked to provide a high-level demonstration proposal outlining:

- what they would like to demonstrate
- the evidence and outcomes they expect the demonstration to generate
- a broad breakdown of how the funding would be used

Final funding allocations will be agreed following selection onto the programme and will be subject to the suitability of the proposed demonstration and the overall funding available.

Application process

Stage 1: After the competition deadline, only applications that meet the eligibility criteria and scope of the competition will be formally assessed. Connected Places Catapult reserves the right to declare applications as out of scope of the programme. You will only be notified at this stage if your application does not meet the eligibility criteria. Otherwise, your application will progress to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Applications that progress to stage 2 will be scored in line with the scoring criteria below by at least two expert assessors from the Connected Places Catapult. Applications will be shortlisted for Stage 3 – an interview. Shortlisted applicants will be contacted by the 26th of October 2026.

Stage 3: On-line interviews will take place between the 2-5 November 2026. You will be provided with a virtual Teams meeting link and interview guidance ahead of the interview if you are successfully shortlisted. The interviews will comprise a 10-minute presentation and then a Q&A session for us to clarify any points from your application from a commercial or a technical perspective. Regretfully, we may not be able to accommodate specific requests for interview slots, therefore it is imperative that you keep your diary as open and flexible as possible on these dates.

Feedback: Where possible, and depending on application numbers, feedback to unsuccessful applicants from Stage 2 may be provided. However, only applicants that progress to Stage 3 (interview) will be guaranteed a breakdown of the scores achieved for each section of the application form.

Assessment Scoring Criteria

This section details the criteria our assessors will use when scoring your application. Under each criterion there is a maximum score of 5 available.

Programme Fit (30%)

Is there a high likelihood that the programme could generate strong impact for the business?

- **Industry application**
 - Strong alignment with programme challenges, with clear demand from infrastructure clients - Infrastructure Industry Innovation Partnership (i3P)
 - Proven in real-world environments (TRL 8+) and ready for near-term deployment
- **Large market potential**
 - Serviceable addressable market in infrastructure/construction exceeding £10m
 - Scalability Across Infrastructure Systems (Ability to scale across: Multiple projects, Multiple clients)
 - Clarity and feasibility of the proposed demonstration, including the amount requested from the shared £80,000 funding pot (up to a maximum of £8,000 including VAT per applicant), how the funding would be used, and the expected outcomes
- **Compliant** – Evidence the product/service is strongly aligned with current regulation and policy and can integrate into relevant existing systems
- **Commitment**
 - Strong awareness of barriers to commercialisation and enthusiasm to commit leadership time to the programme
 - Clear articulation of how the programme will support their growth

Growth (20%)

Can we consider the business a high growth SME?

- **High employee growth** – 20%+ annual employee growth
- **High revenue generation** – FY 2025/26 annual revenue above £500k and forecasted 2026/27 annual revenue includes at least 20% growth target
- **Consistent growth** – Demonstratable year-on-year growth
- **Traction** – Active, paid contracts with details of key customers
- **Export** – The business is already exporting or has a clear export strategy

Team (25%)

Has the team demonstrated the needed experience and capability?

- **Domain Experience** – It is demonstrated that the leadership team has a high level of domain experience
- **Entrepreneurial Experience** – It is demonstrated that the leadership team has a high level of entrepreneurial/scale-up experience
- **Employees** – Self-reported confident and active recruitment and retaining of talent
- **Size of the team** – the business has at least 3 FTEs
- **Additional Governance & Expertise** – Self-reported strong support structure

Financials (25%)

Can we consider the SME financially stable?

- **Profitability** – The company is profitable
- **Runway** – If not profitable, the company has 18+ months of financial runway
- **Repeat customers** – revenue comes from repeatable deals
- **Sustainability** – Self-reported clear view of financial potential and sustainability of business.
- **Investment** – The business has raised investment before and/or has clear investment strategy

Payment Schedule

Successful applicants will have the opportunity to apply for funding to contribute towards the costs of demonstrating their solution to industry. Applicants should anticipate awards of around £8,000 including VAT each, although the final amount awarded will depend on the number of successful applicants and the proposed scope of the demonstration. The funding is intended as a contribution towards demonstration costs and is not expected to cover the full cost of delivering a demonstration. This funding will be provided as pre-commercial funding, subject to approval and the terms of the funding agreement. An offer of a place on the programme does not automatically guarantee funding, and all awards will remain subject to due diligence and approval of the proposed demonstration plan.

- CPC will be procuring the services for the programme under a pre-commercial Pilot & Trial contract
- Once the contract has been signed, the Catapult will provide you with a Purchase Order number which must be clearly noted on all invoices
- If you are VAT registered, please include the appropriate VAT on the face of the invoice
- To enable your fees to be paid, you will need to raise an invoice and send this to us

Payments are staged. An up-front payment of **60%** will be made to enable the start of the demonstration, and the remaining **40%** will be paid upon completion and approval. Invoices will have to be provided for the payment to be released.

Your invoices will need to be accompanied by a Statement of Expenditure (template will be provided) which should include a clear breakdown of all costs incurred.

Only fees incurred between project start and end dates will be paid.

Your invoices will need to be accompanied by a Statement of Expenditure (template will be provided) which should include a clear breakdown of all costs incurred.

Please note the following:

- All funding is **inclusive** of VAT
- Invoices are paid within 30 days of receipt and approval. These payment terms cannot be altered

All direct project costs can be included in your financial breakdown, including staff resource, equipment, consumables, travel, and subsistence. Please note that sub-contractor and material costs should be justified within your project plan; all projects should demonstrate value for money. All cost information provided should be clearly explained and all rates must reflect fair market value.

Match Funding

If your project will be receiving any match funding from your consortium partners, including in-kind match funding such as working days, access to data or assets, please explain how this contribution will support your proposed project.

Only fees incurred between project start and end dates will be paid.

Dates and Deadlines

Please see below a summary of the dates and deadlines for the competition. These are indicative timings, and we will adhere to this schedule as best we can. The closing date for applications is fixed and will be **12pm on 28th of September 2026**.

5 August 2026	Applications Open
10 September 2026 (11:00-12:00)	Application Support Webinar
28 September (12:00 deadline)	Applications Close
2-5 November 2026	Shortlist Interviews
10 November 2026	Successful candidates notified
17 November 2026	Welcome Day

*Please note, on occasions there may be small delays in notifying of the outcome at each stage of the application process.

If you have any questions about the programme, please contact:
Hannah Fortune, Senior Consultant – Regional Delivery
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We wish you luck with your application.

Get involved

Transforming infrastructure challenges into opportunities for innovative businesses

Connect with us:

 info@cp.catapult.org.uk

 cp.catapult.org.uk

 [@cpcatapult](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cpcatapult)

We use our networks, technical expertise, and government and industry partnerships to strengthen routes to market and unlock trade and investment opportunities in transport, construction and data infrastructure allowing businesses to start, scale and stay in the UK.