

# YLab

## Innovate to Save

Application Guidance -  
Research & Development Phase





Innovate to Save will find and fund innovative initiatives that can generate cashable savings for Welsh public services and improve the quality of service delivery. Through grant funding, non-financial support and repayable loans, Innovate to Save supports public and third sector organisations to prototype, trial, scale and evaluate innovative projects. It is open to all Welsh public and third sector organisations from 20 February 2018.

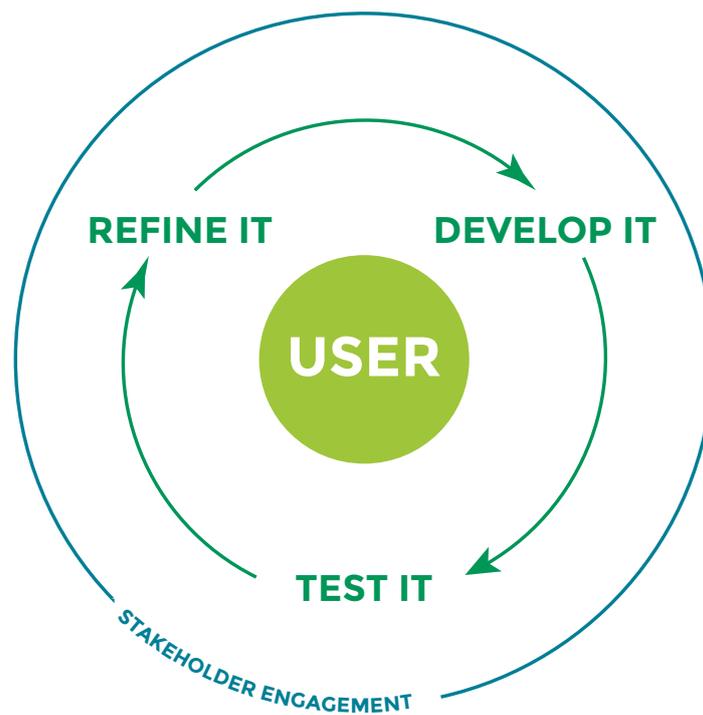
There are three phases to the Innovate to Save programme.

- 1. Pre-application support**, where we can support the development of new ideas into robust research and development (R&D) projects;
- 2. Research and Development (R&D)**, where new ideas can be prototyped and tested, and;
- 3. Implementation**, where ideas that show the capacity to improve services and generate savings can be rolled out.

The following guidance is provided to organisations looking to apply to the R&D phase. Separate guidance will be issued to those eligible to apply to the Implementation phase.

## About the R&D phase

The R&D phase is a key part of Innovate to Save and allows us to support organisations to prototype, test and iterate a novel, risky and ambitious idea before thinking about applying for loan finance to implement it.



Projects may start at different stages in this cycle, and may take their idea through this cycle multiple times, or only through part of one cycle, depending on their needs.

- **Develop it** - projects can use this time to take their plans from idea to prototype and put together a [logic model](#) to show how they think their project will work. Many projects will already have information relevant to the idea, such as feedback, statistics and real-world examples, that can be collated and analysed. This is likely to be supplemented by desk research to understand how the idea fits into the wider context of the service they're delivering. Projects will design experiment(s), develop a research plan and develop an initial business model for the new idea to identify improvements and cashable savings. Depending on the type of idea, projects might use some basic user-led research methods to develop and iterate a prototype to the point where they have a working version that can be trialled at a small scale.
- **Test it** - Projects will roll their idea out at a small scale, allowing people who use the service to experience it first hand. Projects will gather real-world data that shows whether service improvements are being made and if the project is likely to make any cashable savings.
- **Refine it** - projects will review information and data from the "test it" stage, refine the idea and logic model, and decide whether further developments need to be made.

Throughout the process, projects will also make sure they've understood who all the stakeholders in the project are, that the stakeholders support the project, and that any necessary permissions are in place before the Implementation phase. Projects will also be collecting information about the existing service - how it functions and what it costs.

Towards the ends of the R&D phase, projects will review their trial data and lessons learnt, write up their findings, and assess whether or not they're ready to progress to the next stage. If they are, they will develop a business case for taking on loan finance from Innovate to Save.

Throughout the R&D phase projects will be supported by the Y Lab team to ensure that they have the necessary skills, expertise and resources to deliver the project.



## Support available

We're offering the following support to projects during the R&D phase:

- **Between £5,000 and £15,000 in grant funding** to support staff time, expenses, prototyping, build costs and other R&D activity.
- **Access to research and R&D expertise and support from the Y Lab team.** This might include: advice on refining the logic models; data collection and analysis; user-centred design methods; training and advice on economic modelling to show cashable savings.
- **Three bootcamp events.** We run three events during this phase to support you in refining your ideas, managing an iterative R&D process, modelling savings and understanding research methods. These events will also give you the chance to network with other projects and provide and receive constructive feedback and support from your peers;
- **Support to share your project** and the lessons that emerge from it with interested stakeholders and the wider public and third sector communities.
- **Additional business support** – focusing on some of your core needs which may include modelling savings, managing culture and change in organisations, or specific research skills. We can also facilitate linking projects with other researchers at Cardiff University or elsewhere.

This package of financial and non-financial support is designed to give you the time necessary to undertake R&D, resources to develop, build and test your ideas and ensure that you're able to capture, understand and share how you're improving services and creating savings.



## The R&D Timetable

Launch Date	20 February 2018
Applications Open	23 April 2018
Pre-Application Support Phase	May - July 2018
Application Deadline	16 July 2018
Research and Development Phase	September 2018 - July 2019

The first bootcamp is scheduled for early September 2018. This is compulsory for all funded projects and should be attended by the project manager and at least one other member of the project team.

The other bootcamps will be scheduled later in the year.



## How to apply

### Eligibility Criteria

Before you submit your application, please make sure that you meet the following eligibility criteria:

- the lead applicant must be either a Welsh public or third sector organisation;
- the lead applicant must not be from Cardiff University or Nesta (although they are welcome to support applications led by someone else);
- the work you intend to do must be delivered in Wales and/or benefit public service users in Wales.

We also have a set of definitions and frequently asked questions which can be found on the [programme website](#) which you should read before continuing.

### Application form

The first step is to complete and submit an online application. The form, which can be submitted in either Welsh or English, can be found here:

#### English here:

<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4197045/Innovate-to-Save-Research-and-Development-Application-Form-v2>

#### Welsh here:

<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4197371/Arloesi-er-mwyn-Arbed-Ymchwil-a-Datblygu-Ffurflen-Gais-v2>

The deadline for submission of applications is 10am on Tuesday 16th July 2018.

We will then process, score and shortlist all the applications received before inviting a selection of applicants to take part in interviews. You can view the criteria we'll be using to [score applications here](#).



## Interviews

We believe strongly in the value of interviewing a shortlist of applicants to our programmes. It helps us understand who you are and why you want to be part of the programme. It allows us to test how well you're bought into the programme as an organisation, as well as the strength of your idea and the team that's going to be working on it.

## Selection Timetable

Application Deadline	16th July 2018 (10am)
Interview for shortlisted projects	August 2018
Notification of interview outcome	w/c 20th August 2018



## Your investment and commitment to the programme

While we're able to provide a broad package of support to help you take part in this programme, you will have to invest some of your organisation's time and resources to make the most of it. When thinking about your project plan and your budget, you should consider the following:

### Engagement with the programme and the programme team

You will need to ensure that enough time is allocated to engagement activities with the programme (such as workshops and meetings with the programme team) as well as delivering your project - a minimum of 9 days should be allocated to this between September 2018 and the end of July 2019, depending on your R&D plans.

### Parallel programme evaluation

We will be conducting an evaluation of Innovate to Save running alongside the programme. We will be asking all the projects to participate in this evaluation. Research methods may include baseline and endline surveys, questionnaires at events, research diaries and interviews with project staff.

### Project Management

You will need a strong, competent, experienced project manager, who has been allocated enough time to focus on the project and do it justice. Be aware that managing an R&D project is an intense process. You can use some of the grant funding to support this role, however, it is unlikely to cover all of their time. We would also expect that a significant amount of the budget is used to cover R&D activity.

### Support from Senior Staff

Working on this project should support the core business and strategy of your organisation, not be additional to it. To that end, you will need the support of senior staff to: ensure that any new ideas are aligned with the organisation's strategy; have the appropriate resources as they are being developed; and can be scaled and implemented accordingly.



## Match funding

While match funding isn't necessary for the project, you can supplement your project with additional funding if required. Please note that any match funding must be in place before applying to take part in the programme.

## Share your lessons with others

Time and resources will need to be allocated to sharing what you're doing as it's happening. Think about the communications skills you might need and make sure you've set aside some time to put together blog posts, take part in filming or other communications activities.

**If you have any questions about the programme, your eligibility or would like the application form in another format, please contact Angharad Dalton, Programme Manager by emailing [angharad.dalton@nesta.org.uk](mailto:angharad.dalton@nesta.org.uk) or by phone on 02922 510320.**

## Scoring Criteria

The following criteria should be used to score applications to the *Research and Development phase* of the Innovate to Save programme. We are looking for projects and organisations that:

- Have **identified a specific challenge** in an area of public service delivery that can be explained in detail with some evidence, including consultation with service users;
- Have **put forward a new idea or solution** that tackles this challenge or opportunity and that requires a period of research and development before being implemented;
- Have made a strategic commitment to tackle the challenge and **assembled a team** that has been tasked (subject to funding) with undertaking a research and development project;
- Have **drafted a clear and logical plan for researching and developing the idea**, with an associated R&D budget.

The application is broken down into four sections, each of which carries a maximum score of 4 marks, giving a total maximum score of 16. Scorers are asked to provide an overall score for the whole section and provide a brief explanation for each score. As well as allowing us to select the most appropriate projects, this mix of quantitative and qualitative data provides a useful dataset for our evaluation of the *Awareness Raising and Engagement phase* of the programme and for providing general feedback to applicants.

Scores will be used to inform conversation at the selection meeting - *they are not automatically binding* and will be part of the process used to decide which projects are invited for interview. Application scores will also be combined with interview scores and feedback to help us decide which projects to take into an R&D phase.

## The Challenge

In this section, the organisation should define the challenge that they are looking to overcome. In particular, we are looking for:

- A specific, well defined public service challenge, explained with clear evidence
- A well defined picture of who the service user is and the extent to which they are already engaged in the project (either through user research, staff experience or co-production methods);
- A clear explanation of the service area that the challenge applies to and a brief explanation of the organisation's current strategic responsibilities.

## The Idea

In this section the organisation should describe how it intends to go about tackling the challenge. In particular we are looking for:

- A clear description of the idea they will research and develop;
- A logical, evidence based explanation of how the idea will create improvements in service delivery and potential savings (cashable and/or other) for the organisation which can be tested and validated through an R&D process;
- An understanding of how the new idea responds to significant societal changes, including but not limited to the use of new technology;
- A clear description of how the idea was formulated and the extent to which it might be considered new or novel (in their service area, in Wales or in general)
- An explanation of how legislation and guidance might influence the direction that the project takes.

## The Team

In this section the organisation should describe the team that will undertake the R&D project. In particular we are looking for:

- A team with a clear leadership and reporting structure and the right skills, knowledge and experience to deliver the project;
- A defined executive sponsor that has allocated some time and resource to the project;
- A description of any partner organisations, their role and clear, logical, strategic reasons why they are included in the project;



## The R&D Plan

In this section, the organisation should set out how they intend to go about developing and testing the idea. In particular we are looking for:

- A clear research question or questions;
- an idea of the benchmarks against which performance (service improvement/savings) might be measured, research questions answered and a strategy for collecting data to be drafted;
- a clear project plan and timetable that allows for prototype development, testing, reflection and iteration;
- a budget that includes sufficient resources to deliver the R&D project and ensure enough resource is allocated to engage with programme activities.
- A description of how they intend to share any lessons, insights, best practice or tools developed as a result of the R&D phase.

## How to Score

4 - The challenge is clear, logical and well evidenced, with a good understanding of who the user is. Ideas are genuinely new or novel and likely to have some impact on the challenge and create savings. Teams have the right balance of skills, knowledge and expertise to effectively deliver the project. Budgets and plans are clear and allow enough time and resource for activity to be carried out effectively. **Very little additional work would be required to improve the answers;**

3 - The challenge is clear, logical and partially evidenced, with an understanding of who the user is. Ideas are new or novel in a Welsh Public Service Context, likely to have some impact on the challenge and create savings. Teams have most of the skills, knowledge and expertise to effectively deliver the project. Budgets and plans are clear and allow time and resource for activity to be carried out effectively with some minor amendments. **Some additional work is required to improve the answers but this is achievable in the short term (at the start of the R&D process);**

2 - The challenge is general and/or may lack logical connections to the strategy of the organisation. Limited evidence is provided and the understanding of who the user is is general. Ideas are new or novel in the service area, but not necessarily to Wales. Ideas are likely to have impact but the route to savings is less clear. Teams have some of the skills, knowledge and expertise to effectively deliver the project but there are significant gaps. Budgets and plans allow time and resource for activity to be carried out but may need some significant changes to ensure their effectiveness. **Additional work is required to improve the answers which may be achievable in the short term (at the start of the R&D process).**

1 - The challenge is overly general and/or lacks logical connections to the organisation's strategy. There is some anecdotal evidence and a very limited idea of who the user is. Ideas are not new or novel in a Welsh public service context but may show some impact and a route to savings. Teams lack most of the skills, knowledge and expertise to effectively deliver the project. Budgets and plans lack clarity and/or do not allow enough time and resource for activity to be carried out effectively. **Additional work is required to improve the answers which is unlikely to be achieved in the short term (at the start of the R&D process).**



0 - The challenge lacks significant detail or logical connections to the organisation's strategy. There is little or no evidence and their understanding of the user is wholly assumptive. Ideas are not new or novel - a continuation or basic improvement on existing practice. There is little evidence that the idea will have any impact or create savings. Teams lack most of the skills, knowledge and expertise to effectively deliver the project. Budgets and plans are unclear and do not allow enough time and resource for activity to be carried out effectively. **(Significant) Additional work is required to improve the answers which cannot be achieved in the short term (at the start of the R&D process).**