

Advanced Innovation Voucher Supporting Information

This guide is designed to give an overview of the Advanced Innovation Voucher scheme. We recommend that you read through this document before completing the application form.



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Interface's Role in the Scheme





- Interface will be responsible for reviewing and assessing all Innovation Voucher applications via the [Interface Partner Portal](#)
- Interface will liaise with Scottish Enterprise as the key funder and approver of the applications
- Interface will issue all approval / rejection emails
- Interface, via Edinburgh Innovations, will process payment of Innovation Vouchers.
- All funding correspondence should be sent to Interface via applications@interface-online.org.uk

[Apply here](#)

Advanced Innovation Voucher

- The Advanced Innovation Voucher award is aimed at building sustained relationships between small and medium sized companies (SMEs) and universities or colleges in Scotland. Sole traders, social enterprises and third sector organisations are also invited to apply. (Pre-submission may be required).
- These vouchers are designed to bridge the gap and make it more accessible for companies to work collaboratively with a university or college
- We welcome applications from all industry sectors and the proposed collaborative project should lead to new products, services and processes that will benefit the company, the university/college and the Scottish economy
- The funds for this award will be drawn from Scottish Enterprise. This partnership is committed to the [Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board's aim](#) for greater alignment of public agencies leading to efficiencies and simplification of business support

Need to Know

-  All SMEs are eligible to apply (fewer than 250 employees and turnover of less than £50 million)
-  Interface can help you find academic expertise if required
-  This voucher can be used to continue a previous collaboration or develop a new one
-  You can only apply for one voucher

- ✔ Projects must show high levels of innovation and impact
- ✔ Demonstrate a strong opportunity to continue the research and development for a novel market led product, service or process
- ✔ Propose a demonstratable route to market for the product, service or process
- ✔ Clearly show value for money
- ✔ Company cash contributions must not include any element of European or Public Funding.

- ✔ Provide compelling evidence that the project can be readily commercialised by the company or if necessary, that the project will attract the subsequent funding from other sources to develop market led products or processes
- ✔ The funders (SE) require supporting statements in relation to Net Zero and Fair Work policies to support your application – the template for completion is included within the template forms section, alongside the application.

If in doubt about the eligibility of the company, please check with Interface before preparing an application; applications@interface-online.org.uk

Projects cannot be funded if they are related to:

- ✘ Consultancy e.g. to study/evaluate current products, systems and practices
- ✘ Company and strategy planning
- ✘ Data gathering and literature reviews
- ✘ Sales and marketing activities such as development of mobile apps or literature for advertising
- ✘ Design and production of advertising materials including websites
- ✘ Skills development, continuous professional development and training courses
- ✘ Activities that would promote/subsidise the cost of exports
- ✘ Software purchases
- ✘ Internships for students - separate funding is available for this



Project Costs

The Advanced Innovation Voucher will work on a sliding scale basis as detailed below. The business and academic team should establish the project scope and milestones which then determine the overall costings for the project. The company cash contributions can then be determined from the overall project value. In kind contributions should be considered as part of the total project costs.

Project value [cash & in-kind]	Company in-kind contribution	Minimum company cash contribution	Grant award
£10,000 to £20,000	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%
£20,001 to £40,000	15.0%	35.0%	50.0%

There is no maximum cash contribution from the company, but the minimum (25% or 35%) must be secured before application is submitted. The match cash from the company must not include any element of European funding or public funding. Larger cash contributions from companies may be contributed with a corresponding reduction of the in-kind costs (e.g., less than 25% or 15%) as appropriate.

- For a project which is valued between £10,000 to £20,000, the minimum company cash contribution would be £2,500
- For a project which is valued between £20,001 and £40,000, the minimum company cash contribution would be £7,000
- Please remember to take in to account the total cash value of the project when determining the work to be undertaken.

All costs should be outlined within the application. They can include staff time, materials, or facilities. The daily rates allocated for staff costs – both academic and company – must be appropriate for the skill set and sector. Cost will be fully assessed by funders and must meet the conditions set.

In some cases, we may ask for proof of the cash match funding. All expenditure must be clearly accounted for in a final report. The match cash from the company must not include any element of European funding or public funding.

Additional Supporting Information

What is the policy on purchasing equipment?

The scheme exists to pay for academic time to work on the development of innovative new products/services/processes or innovative workforce development. It can only reimburse colleges or universities for costs incurred due to this project, based on the already extensive resource base within Scotland's universities and colleges. While small consumable budgets can be applied for, the scheme cannot be used to purchase equipment or anything that can be used by either partner following completion of a project. If the execution of the project requires the purchase of any equipment - Only the depreciation costs of equipment used during project would be eligible for inclusion, rather the cost of equipment that would then belong to university/college beyond the project.



Is VAT an Eligible Expense?

The Scottish Funding Council have advised In order to maximise use of public funding and support as many companies as possible through the Innovation Voucher programme, any VAT costs incurred as a result of the project are not eligible for inclusion in the grant claim within the Innovation Voucher application.

How are applications submitted?

Completed applications should be submitted via email to applications@interface-online.org.uk. The Interface team will check the application before sending it to the funding panel for review and to make a decision on whether it should be funded.

The assessors may ask for further information to support the application, request amendments to the application, decline it or accept it within 3 weeks of submission.

How will the award/no award decision be communicated?

All applications are reviewed by representatives from partner organisations. Applications are assessed, and a consensus reached by the panel before decisions are communicated.

This scheme is publicly funded therefore applications need to demonstrate some return for the Scottish economy. The funding bodies reserve the right to turn down

any application that does not meet the required criteria or overall purpose of the scheme and may in some cases ask applicants for further information to clarify applications.

Interface will issue an email confirming the panel's decision to the lead academic and commercial team contact. It is the responsibility of the university/college to notify the company of the decision.

How long will my project take?

The delivery of the outcomes and milestones depend on both partners' input, so it is important to choose a period when sufficient time can be committed to the project.

Projects should start within 8 weeks of the voucher being approved and should be completed within 6 months. However, this time period may be subject to change, whereby funding needs to be paid out by the end of the financial year.

The funders reserve the right to cancel the approved award for any projects that have not commenced within 8 weeks of the nominated start date therefore it is important to be realistic when submitting proposed dates.

Can changes be made to the project scope or timescales?

If a change to the project is required, please complete a change request form and submit to applications@interface-online.org.uk however as a condition of award, all projects and final reports must be submitted within the Fiscal Year that they were awarded.

What happens if a problem arises during the project?

There may be times when a problem or issue arises. We recommended that you initially raise any concerns with the commercial contact in the university/college as soon as possible.

If, however, you are still dissatisfied, please contact applications@interface-online.org.uk giving a brief outline of the reason for your dissatisfaction.

Should I expect a finished product as a deliverable?

No, a finished commercial product should not be expected as a deliverable. The Advanced innovation voucher covers up to £20,000 worth of work. The deliverables will be agreed at the outset with the relevant Academic Institution.

How will ownership of the intellectual assets be agreed?

Developing new ideas and partnerships creates Intellectual Property (IP) and other intellectual or intangible assets. Intellectual property is something unique that you physically create - an idea alone is not intellectual property. For example, an idea for a book is not an intellectual asset, but the words you've written are. Copyright, patents, designs and trademarks are all types of intellectual property protection.

Before any application is submitted, the company and university/college must agree on the ownership of intellectual assets and intellectual property - both existing (background IP) and what will be produced as a result of the project (foreground IP), as well as confidentiality and data sharing.

Standard legal templates for the Innovation Voucher schemes which clearly outline how the new IP can be commercialised by the company have been agreed by all Scottish Universities. The IP clauses set out in these legal templates should be used.

More information about IP can be found [here](#) or from the [Intellectual Property Office](#) (IPO).

What happens once the project is completed?

The company and academic team should hold a meeting at the end of the project to review the findings and recommendations from the project.

This meeting should review the work undertaken, consider the next steps and compile the information for the final report. The final report should then be submitted to applications@interface-online.org.uk for review and payment.

How is the grant paid?

Once the completed final report has been reviewed and approved by the funding body the award is paid directly to the university/college.

It is the university's/college's responsibility to directly invoice the company for their contribution during the lifetime of the project. The funding body are NOT liable for any costs incurred as a result of the company withholding payments. As a condition of the award the funders may ask the university/college to invoice the company at certain points during the project lifecycle.

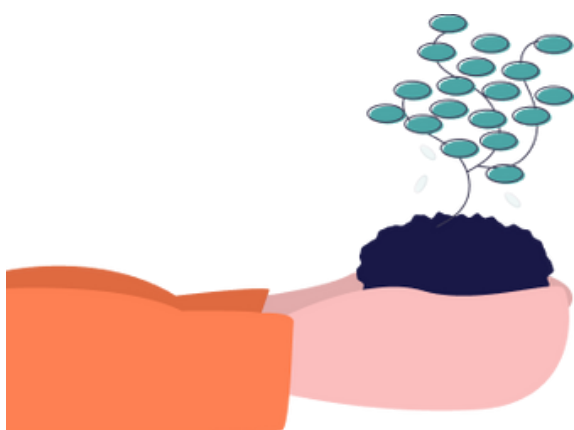
If for any reason the project is terminated before it is completed, a claim can still be made. Please contact applications@interface-online.org.uk for information if this occurs.

Will this outcome from the project be promoted?

All projects are followed up by Interface six months after completion with a survey, so we may evaluate the impact and outcomes of the scheme.

In addition, Interface occasionally includes case studies of successful projects funded by vouchers to promote the scheme on its website and other media. These can be extremely useful for promoting your company, but you can let us know if you do not want a case study produced.

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Environmental Sustainability



Partners, Interface and universities and colleges are committed to promoting [equality](#), diversity and [environmental sustainability](#) (also known as Responsible Business).

Further details about the Scottish Funding Council's equality, diversity and environmental sustainability policies can be found [here](#).

As vouchers are an award of public funds, there is a duty to ensure that these funds are reaching the widest possible pool of recipients. As such, there is an obligation to complete a survey 6 months post project completion. This will allow for evidence to be gathered and recommendations made to ensure these policies are being met. This survey will be sent separately.

We would also encourage all companies to promote the [Scottish Company Pledge](#), a partnership between the Scottish Government and companies to commit to shared ambitions of fairness, equality, diversity and sustainable economic growth through progressive policies.

Freedom of Information

The Scottish Funding Council may share information about projects with the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and other appropriate organisations in the interests of developing and promoting the Innovation Voucher Schemes.

The Scottish Funding Council is subject to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and may be requested to disclose information about the Innovation Voucher Scheme. Companies and universities will be consulted before any decision to disclose information is taken. However, refusal to disclose information may be appealed to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

Privacy Statement

Interface will share personal data collected for facilitating the application for Innovation Vouchers with the Scottish Funding Council, for more information; please see the respective privacy statements: [Interface](#), [SFC](#), [Scottish Enterprise](#)



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