

Belfast

5G

INNOVATION REGION

5G Funding Competition Application guidance

August 2024



Belfast
City Council



Ards and
North Down
Borough Council



Funded by:



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Section 1: Belfast 5G Innovation Region Overview

Summary

Application Deadline	23.59pm, 22 September 2024
Grant Funding Period	Grant funded activity must be completed by 31 March 2025
Total Available Funding	£280,000 capital funding
Minimum and Maximum Grant Values	£50,000 - £100,000 capital funding
Match Funding	Applicants must provide 30% match funding. Belfast City Council will fund capital expenditure of up to 70% of project costs.
Eligibility	Applicants must be based in the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) area and the project must take place in the BRCD area. Awards will be made to individual businesses or organisations. Applicants may have partners, and they may have one or more suppliers, each of whom may have subcontractors.

The Belfast 5G Innovation Region (Belfast 5GIR), led by Belfast City Council, is one of ten 5G innovation regions across the UK funded by the Department of Science, Innovation Technology as part of its UK 5G Innovation Regions programme. It aims to unlock economic growth by driving innovative applications powered by 5G.

Advanced wireless networks, such as 5G, are key to driving innovation and economic growth across a range of industry sectors including public services, manufacturing, health, transport and logistics, and creative industries.

As part of the Belfast 5GIR programme, Belfast City Council is administering a 5G Funding Competition which aims to support businesses and organisations in the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) area to deliver projects and Use Cases that harness 5G and other advanced wireless connectivity and align with the broader goal of creating a more competitive and innovative digital economy in the Belfast region.

Competition details are available at <https://smartbelfast.city/2024/08/belfast-region-5g-innovation-funding/>. More information about the Belfast 5G Innovation Region is available at www.smartbelfast.city/belfast-5g-innovation-region

The 5G funding competition offers capital-only grants of between £50,000 and £100,000 to support projects that deliver operational Use Cases for 5G and advanced wireless connectivity. The competition will not fund testbeds or trials. It is for the implementation of live solutions in a real-world setting.

Applicants must match fund a minimum of 30% of funding for the project.

This document provides key information about the application process and the funding available under the competition.

Who Can Apply?

Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria set out in the section ‘**Eligibility Criteria**’.

This competition is open to applicants who have a business address and operations in the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) area, for projects that will be delivered in the BRCD area.

The BRCD area includes the following local council areas: Antrim and Newtownabbey, Ards and North Down, Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh, Mid and East Antrim, and Newry, Mourne and Down. Awards will be granted to individual businesses or organisations only. They may work with partners, but the Grant Agreement will be with a single lead applicant.

The competition is open to all industry sectors including advanced manufacturing, transport and logistics, creative industries, public services, health, and rural industries (including agri-tech and food production).

Timetable

Activity	Planned Date
Competition opens	20 August 2024
Online briefing event	11.00am, 28 August 2024
Deadline for clarification questions	17.00pm 13 September 2024
Application deadline	23.59pm, 22 September 2024
Applicants notified	w/c 30 September 2024
Project mobilisation	October 2024
Grant funding period (Subject to successful applicants’ satisfactory completion of any pre grant requirements and commercial agreements)	Mid-October 2024 to 31 March 2025

Section 2: Funding

Funding Source and Amount

Belfast City Council will make available capital grant funding up to the Total Available Funding of £280,000 to help businesses and organisations deliver 5G/advanced wireless projects and Use Cases. Individual grant awards will be in the range of £50,000 and £100,000.

Belfast City Council will fund a maximum of 70% of total project costs. Funding recipients are required to cover the remaining 30% of total project costs. In-kind contributions such as the cost of labour associated with the project may be used to meet the 30% match funding requirement.

Illustration of match funding requirements

	Belfast City Council capital grant value	Contribution required from applicant	Total Project value
Minimum Award	£50,000	£21,429	£71,429
Example Award	£70,000	£30,000	£100,000
Maximum Award	£100,000	£42,857	£142,857

All Belfast City Council grant-funded activities must be completed by 31 March 2025. Non-grant funded activities can continue beyond this date.

Eligible expenditure

To qualify as eligible expenditure that can be funded by the 5G Funding Competition, costs must:

- be classed as capital under UK GAAP;
- be incurred within the grant funding period;
- be net of VAT recoverable from HM Revenue and Customs and gross of irrecoverable VAT (see the grant Terms and Conditions, clause 6 for full details);
- be directly attributable to the delivery of the Project;
- be capable of being capitalised and/or treated as capital expenditure; and
- be categorised as one of the following:
 - Labour
 - Overheads
 - Materials
 - Contract
 - Travel and subsistence
 - Other direct project costs

Eligible expenditure may include the following types of cost (this list is not exhaustive):

- costs relating to the implementation of live solutions in a real-world setting;
- network equipment (capital purchase or indefeasible right of use);
- end-user devices (where the user may be a human or a machine);
- software (perpetual licences);
- facilities (offices, labs, venues);
- licences and permits (one-time licences);
- costs of promoting and sharing the project outcomes;
- capitalised staff costs directly associated with delivering the project outcomes within the permitted spending window; and
- contract costs where the work is essential to the success of the project, involve expertise that does not exist within the Project team, and involve skills that it is not practical to develop in-house for the Project.

The competition will not fund the following costs:

- testbeds or trials;
- costs classed as Revenue under UK GAAP, such as operational staff costs;
- input VAT reclaimable from HMRC;
- liabilities incurred before the issue of the Grant Agreement unless agreed in writing by BCC;
- products or services provided by High Risk Vendors, as defined by [NCSC advice on high risk vendors in UK telecoms - NCSC.GOV.UK](#);
- entertaining that would be a taxable benefit to the person being entertained, according to current UK tax regulations;
- payments reimbursed or to be reimbursed by other public or private sector grants, or any other source; and
- any procurement, commercial, business development or supply chain activity with any Russian or Belarusian entity in the project's supply chain, including any goods or services originating from a Russian or Belarusian source.

The published template grant agreement provides full details of eligible and ineligible expenditure.

Grant Funding Agreements

Belfast City Council will sign a grant agreement with successful applicants. Payments will be made by Belfast City Council to the lead applicant pursuant to Economic Development power – Art 8 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 and Article 79 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

To apply, applicants must confirm that they have read, understood and will accept the grant terms and conditions of the grant agreement if they are successful. We will respond to questions about the terms and conditions during the clarification window. We will not negotiate terms and conditions with successful applicants.

Section 3: Project Requirements

The competition aims to drive economic growth in the Belfast Region City Deal area, delivering direct economic, social and environmental benefits (e.g. productivity gains, cost savings, efficiencies, welfare improvements etc.) by using 5G and other advanced wireless technologies.

The competition will provide financial support to projects that demonstrate one or more Use Cases for 5G and/or other advanced wireless solutions to solve real-world issues such as delivering improvements to existing processes and operations.

Project Design Requirements

Applications should describe how they will deliver economic, social and environmental benefits by using 5G and other advanced wireless technologies to support Use Cases in the BRCD area.

The competition's preference is to fund projects that use 5G or support a roadmap to 5G, though other advanced wireless technologies are acceptable, including hybrid networks combining 5G and other wireless technologies.

Advanced wireless technologies may include:

- **5G Networks:** The fifth generation of mobile networks offering higher speeds, lower latency, and the ability to connect more devices simultaneously compared to previous generations. These may include private 5G and/or slices of public 5G networks, and hybrid networks that bring together 5G with satellite, Low-Power, Wi-Fi 6 and other technologies.
- **Wi-Fi 6 (802.11ax):** The latest standard in Wi-Fi technology, providing faster data rates, increased capacity, and improved performance in dense environments.
- **Low-Power Wide-Area Networks (LPWAN):** Wireless networks designed for long-range communication with low power consumption, ideal for IoT applications.
- **Millimetre Wave (mmWave) Technology:** Higher radio frequency bands that offer faster data rates and more bandwidth.
- **Massive MIMO (Multiple Input, Multiple Output):** Technology that increases the capacity of wireless networks by using multiple antennas at both the transmitter and receiver ends.
- **Edge Computing:** Processing data closer to where it is generated to reduce latency and improve performance in real-time applications.

Applications should clearly describe which technology is proposed. Belfast City Council cannot give guidance on the most appropriate technologies for an application.

Applications should clearly describe the proposed solution and the Use Case that it supports.

An advanced wireless Use Case describes a specific scenario, process, method or transaction that relies on the use of advanced wireless technologies. The key feature of a Use Case is the use of advanced wireless connectivity to support a business or organisation activity.

For example, a Use Case might be where a business or organisation automates a complex process using a 5G network together with sensors and intelligent devices, meeting requirements for high levels of security, reliability, flexibility, and control over network coverage while handling high volumes of data at low latency. This Use Case could deliver efficiency savings and productivity improvements for the business.

The competition funding is not intended for developing new products or solutions, or research activities. The focus is on the practical deployment of existing digital solutions and technologies, enabled by advanced wireless connectivity.

Deploying or extending wireless network coverage alone is not a Use Case. However, the competition may fund connectivity that is essential to deliver Use Cases.

Applicants should demonstrate how their project will generate positive economic, social or environmental benefits, for example the potential for jobs to be created, productivity improvements, efficiency savings, and turnover and profitability improvement.

Commercial Sustainability Requirements

Applications must demonstrate how the project will be commercially sustainable so that its ongoing costs can be met beyond the funding period.

Applications should clearly demonstrate how the project will continue to deliver sustained and/or increased use of the new wireless-enabled processes in the long term.

Applications should describe the business change activities that will embed the new solution in the organisation's processes.

Projects should be part of the applicant's longer-term roadmap for adopting 5G and other advanced wireless technologies to deliver business benefits. The project should accelerate the organisation's adoption of advanced wireless technologies.

Projects should aim to accelerate the wider adoption of 5G and other advanced wireless technologies by other organisations by disseminating project insights, lessons learned, impacts and benefits, and other activities.

Financial Requirements

Applications must demonstrate that they can meet 30% of the project's costs. They must describe how the organisation will meet the revenue costs of the solution in the longer term.

Applications should describe why grant funding is required for the project to proceed. The competition is intended to provide funding to support adoption of advanced wireless solutions where a financial barrier exists. Financial barriers could include high costs of new technologies over older generation solutions, or resource constraints that would otherwise delay implementation, or uncertainty affecting the expected return on investment.

Applications should use the grant funding to accelerate the organisation's take-up of 5G and advanced wireless technologies.

Project Delivery Requirements

Grant funding must be spent by **31 March 2025**. It is therefore important that applicants can demonstrate a robust and credible plan for delivery within that timescale.

Applications should describe how the project will be delivered and how it will complete the funded activity by 31 March 2025.

Project delivery should be managed according to good practice; for example, in accordance with Prince2 or a similar methodology. A project manager with appropriate executive support should manage the project using recognised management tools including a detailed project plan and risk management process.

Projects should have a clear understanding of the key delivery activities and their purpose. They should be clear about key decision points and the human resources and bought-in goods and services required for successful delivery.

Section 4: Eligibility Criteria

Applicant Eligibility

Awards will be granted to individual businesses or organisations.

The competition is open to businesses and organisations in the private sector, public sector, academia, RTO, non-profit and charitable sectors. It is open to all industry sectors.

Applicants must have a business address and operations in the BRCD area.

The BRCD area is the following council areas: Antrim and Newtownabbey, Ards and North Down, Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh, Mid and East Antrim, and Newry, Mourne and Down.

Grant funding may not be used to fund work carried out by non-UK organisations. However, any such costs may be included in total project costs and may count towards the 30% match funding requirement. Equipment and software may be sourced from non-UK suppliers.

Project Location Eligibility

Projects must be delivered in the BRCD area. This means that the project's implementation and execution activities should take place within the geographical boundaries of the BRCD area. Equipment that is purchased should be deployed and operated within the BRCD area.

Financial Viability

Applicants must be financially viable:

- the organisation's Current Ratio (Current Assets/Current Liabilities) is more than 0.5
- more than half of the organisation's capital has not disappeared because of accumulated losses
- the organisation is not subject to collective insolvency proceedings, and does not fulfil the criteria under UK law for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors
- the organisation has not received rescue aid where it has not yet reimbursed the loan or terminated the guarantee
- the organisation has not received restructuring aid where it is still subject to a restructuring plan

Belfast City Council may conduct financial due diligence to ensure successful applicants meet the financial viability requirements.

Section 5: Application Process

Application Process

Applications must only use the Application Form and templates provided. The Application Form contains specific guidance on information to be provided.

Applicants must complete an application form in Word document file format, comprised of seven pass/fail eligibility questions and four assessed questions, within the required word limit. Applicants must also complete:

- REQUIRED - A Finance Workbook Excel Spreadsheet that covers the cost model, expenditure forecast and requested grant value; and
- OPTIONAL – To support your response to question 1, you may attach a PDF containing a schematic illustration of the proposed solution or service. (PDF Project Description)
- REQUIRED - To support your response to question 2, you MUST provide a project plan as a PDF attachment. (PDF Project Plan)
- REQUIRED - To support your response to question 2, you MUST provide a risk register as a PDF attachment. (PDF Risk Register)
 - o Note that each individual PDF may be a maximum of 5MB and no more than three sides of A4 each, in a font size that is readable at 100% zoom.

The Application Form and templates must not be altered, converted or submitted as a different file type.

The Application form and additional documentation must use the following naming criteria:

Application Form Word document: [Organisation Name] 5G Funding Competition Application Form

Finance Workbook Excel Spreadsheet: [Organisation Name] 5G Funding Competition Finance Workbook

Additional Information PDFs: [Organisation Name] 5G Funding Competition [Project Description / Project Plan / Risk Register]

In evaluating responses, we value brevity. Do not exceed the maximum word limit, but please give sufficient evidence to support your application. Tables will not be included in this word limit but should only be used where necessary. Additional diagrams and annexes should not be provided unless requested. Hyperlinks referencing further information may be included to inform more detailed understanding post-selection but will be disregarded during the assessment of applications. Do not include commercial sales messages about products or services being proposed.

Your response should provide sufficient evidence to support any assertions made and state any underlying principles or assumptions.

Where you think that part of an answer to one question is already answered in your response to another question, then please cross reference your answers.

Applications must be submitted by the Application Deadline. Any bids submitted after that time will be discarded without assessment.

Public Description (200 word limit)

To comply with government practice on openness and transparency of public funded activities, we will publish information relating to funded projects. Applicants must provide a short description of their proposal in a way that will be understood by the general public. The public description should not include any commercially confidential information, e.g. intellectual property or patent details. The public description may be used in marketing and communication activity by Belfast City Council, UKTIN and DSIT. Belfast City Council may publish the details of any relevant suppliers involved in proposals and the public description of the project.

Application Submission

Applications should be sent to innovationfunding@belfastcity.gov.uk. You will receive an email acknowledgement of your submission. We strongly advise familiarising yourself with the submission process well in advance of the deadline to avoid the risk that IT issues prevent you submitting your final response by the Application Deadline. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Clarification Questions

Questions may be sent to innovationfunding@belfastcity.gov.uk, no later than the Clarifications Deadline set out in the Timetable. Responses to questions will be published on the competition page, with the removal of any sensitive or identifiable information.



Section 6: Assessment Process

Assessment Stages

The 5G Funding Competition is designed to be fair, transparent and objective. Applications to the competition will be assessed through the following stages:

1. **Eligibility:** The eligibility assessor will assess the initial eligibility check using pass/fail questions to ensure the organisation and project meet basic criteria. If an application passes the Eligibility Stage, it will progress to evaluation. If an application does not pass the Eligibility Stage, the application will not be assessed. We will notify the applicant with an explanation as to why.
2. **Triage:** The assessment panel members will each individually review and score the assessment triage questions for applications passing the Eligibility stage. The panel will meet in a moderation session to agree a single panel score for each triage question for each application. Any application scoring fewer than 3 marks against any of the triage questions will be eliminated from the competition and the rest of the application will not be assessed. The qualifying applications will proceed to Application Assessment.
3. **Application Assessment:** The assessment panel members will each individually review and score the remaining assessment questions for each application that passed the Triage stage. They will meet in a moderation session to agree a single panel score for each question for each application.

The score for each question will be multiplied by the question weighting and by 20 to provide the weighted score for each question. The sum of the weighted scores will be the Total Weighted Score out of 100.

4. **Outcome:** The qualifying applications will be ranked in descending order of Total Weighted Score. Grant funding will be offered to the qualifying applications with the highest Total Weighted Scores until the Available Funding is used up.

Where there is a dead heat in Total Weighted Score, the highest ranking will be determined in the following order: highest score for question 1, question 4, question 3, question 2, applicant contribution percentage, total project value, Current Ratio (Current Assets/Current Liabilities), Dun and Bradstreet Rating Classification or equivalent.

5. **Feedback for applicants:** The outcome of the competition will be shared with all applicants. Feedback showing the applicant's own evaluated scores and the rationale for each score will be provided to each applicant.

Belfast City Council reserves the right to request additional clarifications and corrections following the submission deadline. Additional information submitted at the request of Belfast City Council must meet any timing, format and length requirements we may specify at the time.

If the total funding requested by bids, that meet the required standard, exceeds the Total Available Funding, some bids may be placed on a reserve list. Should additional funding later become available to

increase the Total Available Funding, further grants will be offered to the applications with the next highest Total Weighted Scores in the same way.

Scoring Methodology

Responses will be assessed using the following scoring methodology:

Score	Description
5 Excellent	The bid meets all the requirements to an exceptional standard. It gives full confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives of the competition. The bid uses 5G technologies.
4 Good	The bid meets all or almost all the requirements and excels in some parts of its response. It gives a good level of confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives of the competition. The bid clearly describes a roadmap towards 5G adoption.
3 Satisfactory	The bid meets most of the requirements but with minor reservations in one or more areas. It gives a satisfactory level of confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives and conditions of the competition. The response lacks detail on some areas.
2 Poor	The bid fails to meet many of the requirements. It gives low confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives and conditions of the competition. It lacks substantial detail.
1 Inadequate	The bid fails to meet almost all of the requirements. It does not give confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives of the competition. It provides very limited detail.
0 Unacceptable/ No Response	The bid fails to address any of the requirements. The response does not provide sufficient detail to be marked.

Assessment Questions

Question	Type	Max word Count	% weighting
ELIGIBILITY			
<p>What is the address and postcode of the applicant organisation?</p> <p>To be eligible, the applicant organisation must have a business address and operations in the Belfast Region City Deal area.</p>	Pass/fail	n/a	Not scored

<p>What is the address and postcode of the location that the activity will primarily take place?</p> <p>To be eligible, the project’s implementation and execution activity must take place in the Belfast Region City Deal area.</p>	Pass/fail	n/a	Not scored
<p>Please confirm that your application conforms to the HMG High Risk Vendor (HRV) policy outlined in the guidance.</p> <p>To be eligible, applications must conform to the HRV policy.</p>	Pass/fail	n/a	Not scored
<p>Please confirm that the grant amount requested does not include recoverable VAT.</p> <p>To be eligible, the grant amount must not include VAT that is recoverable from HMRC.</p>	Pass/fail	n/a	Not scored
<p>Please confirm that you have read, understood and will accept the terms and conditions in the draft Grant funding agreement (GFA) provided.</p> <p>The terms and conditions set out in the GFA are non-negotiable. We recommend that you review this with your legal advisors and raise any queries you may have with Belfast City Council before submitting your application.</p> <p>To be eligible, the applicant organisation must accept the terms of the draft GFA.</p>	Pass/fail	n/a	Not scored
<p>Please confirm that your organisation meets all the financial viability criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the organisation’s Current Ratio (Current Assets/Current Liabilities) is more than 0.5 • more than half of the organisation’s capital has not disappeared because of accumulated losses • the organisation is not subject to insolvency proceedings, and does not fulfil the criteria under law for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors • the organisation has not received rescue aid where it has not yet reimbursed the loan or terminated the guarantee • the organisation has not received restructuring aid where it is still subject to a restructuring plan. <p>To be eligible, the applicant organisation must meet the financial viability criteria.</p>	Pass/fail	n/a	Not scored

ASSESSMENT			
<p>1. PROJECT DESIGN</p> <p>Describe how the project will meet the Project Design requirements.</p> <p>Describe the Use Case(s) that the project will deliver. Describe the specific scenario, process, method or transaction that relies on or is improved by the use of 5G and/or other advanced wireless technologies.</p> <p>Describe the proposed technical solution. Provide a clear description of the existing technology and demonstrate that the project is not a product development, trial or testbed activity.</p> <p>Describe the expected outcomes and explain how you will measure the impacts. Describe the economic, social and environmental benefits that the project will deliver.</p> <p>You MAY support your response with images in a single PDF attachment.</p> <p>Applications that score less than 3 marks for this response will be eliminated from the competition.</p>	Triage & Assessment	1000	35%
<p>2. COMMERCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</p> <p>Describe how the project will meet the Commercial Sustainability requirements.</p> <p>How will you ensure sustained and/or increased use of the new processes and/or technologies at the end of the grant funding period?</p> <p>Describe how this project will affect your longer-term roadmap for adoption of 5G and advanced wireless technologies. If your project will accelerate 5G adoption for other organisations, please explain how it will achieve this.</p> <p>Applications that score less than 3 marks for this response will be eliminated from the competition.</p>	Triage & Assessment	500	15%

<p>3. FINANCIAL</p> <p>Describe how the project will meet the Financial requirements.</p> <p>Applicants must complete the Finance Workbook spreadsheet and a written response in the Application Form.</p> <p>In the Finance Workbook you must provide details of all capital and revenue costs that make up the total project costs and enter the value of capital grant funding that you are requesting. Please refer to the Applicant Guidance section on Eligible Expenditure, and the grant Terms and Conditions, for details on costs that may be included.</p> <p>In the written response in the Application Form:</p> <p>Detail how you will meet the 30% match funding requirement.</p> <p>Explain how you will cover any project revenue costs during the project and after the grant funding period.</p> <p>Explain why grant funding is required for your project.</p> <p>Explain how grant funding will accelerate your organisation's adoption of 5G and/or other advanced wireless technologies.</p>	Assessment	800	20%
<p>4. PROJECT DELIVERY</p> <p>Describe how the project will meet the Project Delivery requirements.</p> <p>Describe how the project will be managed and how it will complete the funded activity by 31 March 2025.</p> <p>The response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describe how the project will be managed; - outline the key activities and their purpose ; - highlight key decision points; - identify milestones, including grant payment milestones (grant payments will be made quarterly in arrears); - detail your sourcing approach for key products and services; - set out what key human resources are required for the project and which of those resources are already in place; and 	Assessment	1000	30%

<p>- how you will acquire any required human resources in the time available</p> <p>You MUST support your response with a project plan in a PDF attachment.</p> <p>You MUST provide a Risk Log as a PDF attachment. The Risk Log must describe the risks and their impacts, a measure of the probability and impact, and mitigation steps that will be taken. It must address the risks related to delivery dependencies on other parties and to elements of the project such as legal agreements etc. that have not yet been put in place.</p>			
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Section 7: Project Monitoring

Delivery and Financial Monitoring

Our approach to project finance and delivery monitoring involves a quarterly claims process, ensuring regular financial oversight and accountability. We will check project delivery on a similar quarterly schedule, allowing us to track progress and ensure milestones are met. Additionally, we will conduct more frequent check-ins when necessary to address any challenges and support the project's success and adherence to the planned timeline.

Benefits Monitoring

Belfast City Council is required to provide a project status update and benefits realisation reporting on the Belfast 5GIR programme to DSIT on a quarterly basis.

The Grant recipient and Belfast City Council will agree project-specific benefit KPIs applicable to their project and Use Cases e.g. economic benefits (such as productivity gains, cost savings etc), welfare improvements (safety improvements etc), security benefits etc. and the schedule for reporting against the KPIs.

The Grant Recipient will also be expected to contribute to sharing knowledge, generated from their project, with the 5G ecosystem and provide Belfast City Council with any relevant data to support the quarterly reporting to DSIT including:

- number and type of Use Cases deployed
- number of new private networks deployed as part of the project and if they continue operation at the end of the project
- number and type of companies/organisations engaged in the project
- any alternative funding generated by the project
- any new jobs created through the project
- number of staff trained
- knowledge dissemination activities (such as workshops and events)
- any other communication activities e.g. PR

Lessons Learned tracker

The Grant Recipient will be expected to contribute to a 'Lessons Learned' log which will record the lessons that emerge from the Belfast 5G Innovation Region programme and projects.

This includes lessons specifically for your project, those that might be relevant to the broader ecosystem, Belfast City Council or DSIT specifically.

Lessons captured will help to inform future iterations of project work, share learnings across the industry and inform policy decisions within Belfast City Council or DSIT.

Case study

Grant recipients will be required to develop a project case study which can be published by Belfast City Council, DSIT and UKTIN to share learnings and insights on Use Cases with the wider industry. A template will be provided by Belfast City Council.

Section 8: Policy and Programme Context

Policy Context

The following is an edited version of DSIT's [5G Innovation Regions Competition Application Guidance](#).

DSIT's mission is to deliver stronger growth, better jobs and bold discoveries, including through innovation and investment in advanced technologies; these priorities can only be delivered with world-class digital infrastructure.

The UK's telecoms networks provide the infrastructure that underpins our economy, from the way we do business and access public services, to enjoying entertainment and staying in touch. By building world-class, secure digital infrastructure, we can create a competitive and innovative digital economy and boost investment in infrastructure, research and development. We want places and communities across the UK to share in the benefits of good connectivity, enriching lives and driving local growth.

Advanced wireless technologies will be key harness digital transformation to build a more inclusive, competitive and innovative digital economy. 5G in particular has the potential to unlock significant economic and social benefits for all of the UK. As a foundational technology for other technologies, including augmented and virtual reality, AI and machine learning, 5G will be key in helping sectors across the economy maintain their international competitiveness.

Future telecommunications is one of the five critical technologies identified in the [Science and Technology Framework](#). The advancement and development of 5G networks and technologies will be a crucial element of strengthening and achieving strategic advantage in this prioritised area of science and technology application.

DSIT published [the UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy](#) in April 2023, which sets out the strategic framework for the development, deployment and adoption of 5G and future networks. It articulates a clear vision for how advanced wireless infrastructure can become an integral part of the fabric of the UK's economy and society by 2030, and how we want people, business and public services across the UK to realise the full benefits of 5G and other advanced wireless connectivity. As part of this Strategy, DSIT announced £40 million of new funding to establish 5G Innovation Regions across the UK to encourage 5G adoption. [NOTE – this funding has now been awarded, further details [here](#)]

5G Innovation Regions will receive funding to lead on delivering the Government's vision for communities across the UK to take full advantage of the transformative effect that advanced wireless connectivity and digital technologies can provide.

5G Innovation Regions will:

- *Drive economic growth in places by supporting places in adopting wireless connectivity for services based around local opportunities for growth.*
- *Accelerate commercial investment in 5G and other advanced wireless technologies by aggregating and demonstrating demand.*
- *Foster the emergent 5G ecosystem by enabling "learning by doing".*

5G Innovation Regions are part of DSIT's work leading the Government's approach to driving telecoms innovation, ensuring more secure and resilient networks and a more diverse and competitive supply chain. (Further detail is given in Programme Context).

DSIT 5G Innovation Regions Programme Context

The following is reproduced from the DSIT's [5G Innovation Regions Competition Application Guidance](#).

The adoption of 'smart' 5G connectivity and services in places will provide huge economic benefits, with substantial productivity gains. Many of the economic and societal benefits of advanced wireless connectivity will be realised at the local level.

Local and regional authorities can play a crucial role in facilitating the deployment of 5G and leading adoption and innovation in public services, as well as creating the right conditions for new investment and growing local businesses.

Through the Wireless Infrastructure Strategy [DSIT] are investing £40 million to establish 5G Innovation Regions across the UK. Funding will enable communities and businesses throughout the UK to unlock opportunities across the digital economy utilising advanced wireless connectivity.

Tailoring their approach to local needs and existing strengths, 5G Innovation Regions will promote the use of services enabled by the development and scaled adoption of 5G and other advanced wireless technologies in businesses and in the delivery of public services, to generate value and growth at the local level.

5G Innovation Regions should target key sectors with high potential for local economic growth and productivity gains. These will vary by area but should include: public services (including "smart communities" applications); rural industries (including agri-tech and food production); transport and logistics; advanced manufacturing; and creative industries. 5G Innovation Regions are not designed to increase wireless coverage, but rather to bring together, at scale, multiple Use Cases within a 5G Innovation Region. The outcome of this is to demonstrate the benefits of accelerated 5G adoption.

Supported by the Wireless Infrastructure Strategy, 5G Innovation Regions will build on the learnings of the [5G Testbeds and Trials \(5GTT\) Programme](#) to drive innovative applications powered by 5G and other advanced wireless connectivity from proof of concept to widespread adoption. It is our ambition that projects will demonstrate the scalability, replicability, and sustainability of 5G Use Cases across key sectors of the economy, creating 5G Innovation Regions across the UK.

Belfast 5G Innovation Region Programme Context

Belfast City Council secured a £3.8 million funding grant from DSIT to establish a Belfast 5G Innovation Region (5GIR).

The Belfast 5GIR programme is working with businesses, academia, and the public sector to support the adoption of 5G and other advanced wireless networks across the Belfast Region.

The programme is delivering three key strands:

- Four 5G anchor projects with Queen's University, Ulster University, Belfast Harbour and Translink
- 5G funding competition to drive 5G adoption
- 5G Enablement Programme to foster NI's advanced wireless ecosystem.

5G anchor projects



Belfast City Council is working with partners to deliver a series of commercially focused Use Cases that leverage 5G's potential in the transport and logistics, creative industries, construction, and advanced manufacturing industry sectors.

- **5G Port**
Belfast Harbour is harnessing 5G-led innovations to accelerate the digitisation of port operations including automatic bulk freight handling and safety improvements which aligns with their strategic ambition to become the world's best regional Smart Port.
- **5G Film Anywhere**
Ulster University's Studio Ulster and Advanced Wireless Technologies Lab are unlocking '5G-in-a-box' technology to connect film, television, and screen production teams, filming in remote locations, to production studios in real-time, via a high-capacity 5G private network which will accelerate screen production processes in the industry.
- **5G Construction**
Queen's University is harnessing 5G, Building Information Modelling (BIM), Digital Twin technology and AR (Augmented Reality) to support the design and construction of a £100 million, state-of-the-art Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre at Global Point Business Park in Newtownabbey.
- **5G Transport**
NI's public transport provider, Translink is exploiting advanced wireless connectivity to enable enhanced operations and network planning along its Glider bus routes. This will further improve services, maximise and optimise resources and ensure continued development of high quality, sustainable and attractive Glider services.

The four anchor projects involve the deployment of new and use of existing 5G networks. Applicants may wish to consider opportunities to collaborate with these existing projects, or to propose entirely new projects.

For more information, visit www.smartbelfast.city/belfast-5g-innovation-region

Section 9: Additional Information

Security Guidance

Applicants should be aware of requirements of the Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021 which introduced duties on providers of public electronic communications networks and services to identify and reduce the risk of security compromises and prepare for the possibility of their occurrence.

The Act also places duties on providers to prevent, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects of security compromises. These overarching security duties are intended to provide an effective and enduring basis for protecting networks and services.

Applicants should consider the cyber security of any new assets deployed. Applicants are therefore encouraged to read and implement the relevant Secure Connected Places guidance at [Secure connected places playbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/secure-connected-places-playbook) which provides advice to set a strong cyber security foundation. The Playbook is complementary to existing NCSC cyber security guidance such as the Connected Places Cyber Security Principles at [Connected Places Cyber Security Principles - NCSC.GOV.UK](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/connected-places-cyber-security-principles), a further source of technical guidance which applicants are also encouraged to read and implement.

Notices

This document is issued in text format to organisations wishing to make an application to the competition. Should you require access to this document in another format (e.g. Braille, large font or audio) please contact us at innovationfunding@belfastcity.gov.uk or in writing to:

City Innovation Office
Belfast City Council
Belfast City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

We reserve the right to undertake a detailed financial and technical appraisal of each applicant and their proposal and for this process to continue up to the award of any grant funding. Any such appraisal will be conducted in line with government policy at the time of assessment. Further appraisal may continue if required through the duration of the grant funding period.

No representation, warranty or undertaking, express or implied, is or will be given by BCC or any of its agents or advisers with respect to the information contained in the competition material, including with respect to its accuracy or completeness.

Information provided in response to this document, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated confidentially, please be aware that, in accordance with FOIA, public sector organisations are required to comply with a statutory code of practice which deals, among other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be

helpful if you could explain to us why you wish that information to be treated confidentially. If we receive a request for disclosure of that information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. Any such requests should be sent to innovationfunding@belfastcity.gov.uk

BCC will process your personal data in accordance with DPA and GDPR and, in most circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

All applicants are solely responsible for all their costs and expenses incurred in connection with this selection process at all stages. Under no circumstances will BCC be liable for any costs or expenses borne by or on behalf of the applicant or any party associated with this selection process.

We reserve the right to cancel the competition at any point. We will accept no liability for any losses caused by any cancellation of this competition nor any decision not to award funding as a result of the competition.

At any time prior to the deadline for receipt of proposals, we reserve the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of the competition material at any time during the competition. Any such amendments, additions, or removals will be identified in the documentation on the competition web page.

Answers must be in English. Applicants should note that where any supplementary documents are not published in English, certified translations into English must be provided with the proposal (if applicable).

Proposals should remain valid for a period of 120 days from the competition closing date. A proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

We reserve the right to discuss, for the purpose of clarification, any aspect of a proposal with the relevant applicant prior to the award of grant funding.