Strategic Innovation Fund - FAQs

Version 003

This frequently asked questions (FAQ) document is informal and has been produced by Innovate UK to respond to some of the more common questions that licensees and their project partners may have about applying for a project, to help those new to the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) and Ofgem innovation funding get up to speed. It is produced together with other Innovation Challenge documentation.

Ofgem's formal requirements for the SIF are set out within the SIF Governance Document. **This FAQs document does not replace the requirement for applicants to fully read and understand the requirements set out in the SIF Governance Document.**

This FAQ document and the information contained is correct at the time of publication and will be updated periodically as the SIF programme progresses. Please send any feedback, requests for clarification or any other questions to sif_ofgem@iuk.ukri.org.

1. General Approach

1.1. Who is UKRI?

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is a non-departmental public body that brings together nine research councils to support research, innovation, and knowledge exchange across the UK.

1.2. What is the role of UKRI in delivering the SIF?

UKRI is responsible for administering the SIF programme, which includes managing the SIF application process, monitoring the delivery of projects, measuring the impacts of the SIF programme, making recommendations to Ofgem on operational matters, supporting funding parties and helping ensure successful projects scale and become business as usual activities. UKRI has appointed one of its research councils, Innovate UK, to fulfil this role.

1.3. What is the role of Ofgem in delivering the SIF?

Ofgem is the decision-maker on the SIF, issues the Project Directions and manages the SIF funding mechanism. Ofgem stipulates the arrangements under which the SIF programme operates through network licence conditions and the SIF Governance Document.

1.4. What is the difference between Discovery, Alpha and Beta phase projects?

As per the SIF Governance document, the Discovery phase will define the problem and the value in solving the problem. It will also facilitate a common understanding of what energy consumers and network users need from the innovation and identify any constraints that may impact on solution of the problem and options for the management of those constraints.

The Alpha phase of a project will focus on small scale demonstration of the different solutions to the problem identified during the Discovery phase. It will also include testing of the riskiest assumptions.

The Beta phase of a project focuses on the deployment of the solution to the problem and the duration of the Beta phase will depend on the scale and complexity of the solution deployed.

1.5. What is funding level for each phase?

For this initial round of SIF, Discovery phase funding is capped at £150k, Alpha phase funding is capped at £500k, although more SIF funding could be provided if there is

evidence to support the need, and Beta phase funding will start at £500k, but might be capped in the Innovation Challenge Documentation.

1.6. Can projects skip phases?

From Round 2, it is possible to apply directly into the Alpha and Beta phases of the SIF competitions. In order to apply directly, applicants should email SIF_OFGEM@iuk.ukri.org for an Associated Network Innovation Project (ANIP) form as early as possible once the competition is open for applications. Innovate UK will log your request and provide an Associated Network Innovation Project (ANIP) form to be completed and returned. Your form must be submitted back to SIF_OFGEM@iuk.ukri.org 28 days prior to the submission date to request formal approval to submit a non-SIF application. Ofgem will review the ANIP and make a decision and Innovate UK will email to confirm whether or not an application meets the requirements for direct access. If approved, applicants will need to upload a copy of the completed ANIP form and any additional supporting documentation in their application.

1.7. Why is there a lag between the application closing date and project start date?

As per the SIF Governance Document, Ofgem will aim to issue its funding decision no later than 12 weeks after the final submission date for applications. During this time all evidence submitted in the application process will be assessed in detail.

1.8. How does the SIF interface with the NIA fund?

For this round of the SIF, project ideas that have been developed or evolved from a previously funded NIA project are allowed to apply to the SIF. It is also possible to apply directly into Alpha and Beta, but this is subject to completion of the ANIP form and approval from Ofgem.

1.9. When will you review the SIF application process?

Feedback will be collated by Innovate UK from applicants (successful and non-successful) on their experience and responsiveness to the SIF process at the end of each phase and on an ongoing basis to iterate and improve the programme to best achieve the objectives of the SIF.

1.10. How can I keep up to date on the SIF?

You can sign up to the SIF newsletter https://ukri.innovateuk.org/ofgem-sif-subscription-sign-up.

2. General Application

2.1. Who can lead an application?

The lead applicant detailed in the Discovery Phase Project Direction must be the lead applicant for the continuing Alpha & Beta Phase applications.

As of round 2, it is possible to apply into Alpha from another funded innovation project (applying via direct access into Alpha). Details on how to do this are outlined in the competition brief, question 13.

To do this, applicants should email SIF_OFGEM@iuk.ukri.org for an Associated Network Innovation Project (ANIP) form as early as possible. Innovate UK will log your request and provide an Associated Network Innovation Project (ANIP) form to be completed and returned. Your form must be submitted back to SIF_OFGEM@iuk.ukri.org by 2nd June 2023 for Alpha round 2 to request formal approval to submit a non-SIF application. Ofgem will review the ANIP and make a decision and Innovate UK will email to confirm whether or not an application meets the requirements for direct access. If approved, applicants will need to upload a copy of the completed ANIP form and any additional supporting documentation in question 13 of their application.

2.2. What is the role and responsibility of the lead applicant?

Licensees wishing to submit an application on the IFS portal for projects funded through the SIF must comply with the SIF Governance Document. It is your responsibility to make sure you have read it. As the lead applicant you will be responsible for collecting and submitting the information for your application on the IFS portal and representing your organisation in leading the project if your application is successful.

Third parties may take a prominent role in developing, planning and managing the project (if successful). You will be able to invite colleagues from your organisation and partner organisations to contribute to the application on the IFS portal.
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Licensees wishing to submit an application on the IFS portal for projects funded through the SIF must comply with the SIF Governance Document. It is your responsibility to make sure you have read it. As a lead applicant you are agreeing to the provisions of the Project Direction and consenting to your application and supporting information being shared with

public funders of innovation, including departments and agencies of Her Majesty's Government and the devolved administrations.

2.3. What are the requirements of a project partner?

All project partners will be listed in the Project Direction and the expectation will be that the lead applicant enters a contract with all project partners. All project partners must have their own work package and deliverables/ outputs for the Alpha Phase. The partnership consortia must meet the requirements of the Innovation Challenge brief.

2.4. Is there a limit to how much information can be provided in the application?

Details of word limits for questions and page limits for annexes are included within the competition information on the IFS portal. There are no word limits for the annexes, but there are page limits. All annexes provided should be kept concise and relevant to the request for information.

2.5. Will the application process change depending on the Innovation Challenge area?

Application questions are consistent across all four Innovation Challenges and will be assessed using the same methodology.

2.6. Why does the application ask for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) data?

Innovate UK collect and report on EDI data to address under-representation in business innovation and ensure equality, diversity and inclusion across all our activities. All organisations will need to complete an EDI survey as part of the application. The survey will ask questions on gender, age, ethnicity and disability status of those involved in the application process and project delivery. You will always have the option to 'prefer not to say' if you do not feel comfortable sharing this information.

UKRI believe that using approaches that champion good equality, diversity and inclusion practices will lead to better innovations. This will be considered in assessment across all relevant areas of your application, for instance in how you will select a diverse range of users to test your innovation.

2.7. What is the purpose of the Investment Executive Needs Summary?

The Investment Executive Needs Summary is an optional template which helps Innovate UK assess which non-licensee project partners require additional investment in the future to help

commercialise their innovation and to support business growth. Innovate UK will provide additional support to the project partners that present an investment need. A completed Investment Executive Needs Summary is not required from licensees.

2.8. Who are the Expert Assessors?

For the Alpha Phase Innovate UK have appointed the members of the SIF Challenge Expert Panels to assess the applications received and conduct the interviews. Collectively the Expert Assessors will have knowledge and expertise in energy network industries, environmental policy, technical and engineering, economics and financial and consumer interests.

2.9. What are the arrangements for interviews?

Panel interviews are expected for the Alpha & Beta phases. Up to 5 people from the project consortium can attend the interview. They must all be available on the allocated interview date. We are unable to reschedule slots once allocated. The Expert Assessors may (at their discretion) provide applicants with feedback on the submitted application or a list of questions that they intend to ask, and ask further questions during the interview. Interviews will be conducted virtually for this round of Alpha & Beta applications.

2.10. Who will be on the interview panel?

The interview panel will be made up of Expert Assessors, Ofgem, and Innovate UK. Names will be shared within the invite.

2.11. Can unsuccessful SIF applications be funded under NIA?

The NIA has different requirements to the SIF and therefore SIF project ideas may or may not meet the NIA eligibility criteria as set out in the RIIO-2 NIA Governance document.

2.12. When will applicants be notified of the funding decision?

As per the SIF Governance Document, Ofgem aims to issue its funding decision no later than 12 weeks after the final submission date for applications.

2.13. What are the rules for acronyms?

Any acronym should be spelled out in the first instance it is reference in the scored questions and then abbreviated thereafter. Acronyms should not be used in your public description.

2.14. Can I include a letter of support?

No, a letter of support should not be provided.

2.15. What happens if after providing the required evidence the assessor does not approve my labour day rates

A: It is the discretion of the assessor to approve or decline projects costs if deems suitable or not. If labour rates have been declined, your project application will be unable to progress. The SIF has a duty of care to energy network consumers and must ensure that funding represents good value for money.

2.16. Why during my project application assessment have I been asked to provide justification and or evidence on specific labour day rates?

As part of the assessment of project applications into the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF), Innovate UK assessors are required to review the finances submit though project applications to ensure costs incurred by SIF funded projects must represent good value for money to energy network consumers. If additional justification or evidence has been requested, the labour day rates you have included have raised questions on value for money which must be resolved before your application can progress.

2.17. Can I include hyperlinks in my answer or in my annexes?

No, any hyperlinks included will not be opened or considered as part of the application by the Expert Assessors.

3. Phase-specific Questions

3.1. How do I apply for the SIF Alpha phase?

Applications for the SIF Alpha phase will be made via Innovate UK's Innovation Funding Service (IFS) Portal. An invitation will be sent from the Project Manager from the lead applicants who have successfully completed a Discovery phase project.

As of round 2, it is possible to apply into Alpha from another funded innovation project (applying via direct access into Alpha)

To do this, applicants should email SIF_OFGEM@iuk.ukri.org for an Associated Network Innovation Project (ANIP) form as early as possible. Innovate UK will log your request and provide an Associated Network Innovation Project (ANIP) form to be completed and returned. Your form must be submitted back to SIF_OFGEM@iuk.ukri.org by 2nd June 2023 for Alpha round 2 to request formal approval to submit a non-SIF application. Ofgem

will review the ANIP and provide indicative feedback. Innovate UK will return any feedback from Ofgem on the suitability of the project to meet the requirements for direct access. The Network takes a decision on proceeding with an application and should upload a copy of the completed ANIP form and any additional supporting documentation in question 13 of their application.

When you start an application on the IFS portal you will be prompted to create an account as the lead applicant or sign in as a representative of your organisation. You will need an account to track the progress of your application.

3.2. How long will it take between the Discovery phase project ending and Alpha phase project starting?

A two-week application window will open for the Alpha phase. Ofgem will aim to issue its funding decision no later than 12 weeks after the final submission date for Alpha phase applications.

3.3. When can I submit an Alpha phase application?

Alpha phase applications can be submitted at any point after the funding call has opened on the 24 April 2023. If you are having any issues with the IFS portal please contact Innovate UK's Customer Support Service.

3.4. How will Alpha applications be scored and assessed?

Details of the project assessment process can be found in chapter 4 of the SIF Governance Document. To summarise, there will be 4 stages to the assessment of submitted applications:

1. Initial sift - does the application comply with the Innovation Challenge requirements? (Pass/ Fail)
2. Expert Assessor evaluation – Expert Assessors will evaluate each application against the eligibility criteria (as set out in chapter 2 of the SIF Governance Document). The Expert Assessors will also have the option to attend the Show & Tell webinars.
3. Clarification questions and interview – Projects that meet the SIF eligibility criteria and meet the requirements of the Innovation Challenge will be invited to an online interview.
4. Final decision - will be made by Ofgem based on the Expert Assessors' recommendation, interview and clarification responses (if applicable), and end of phase report.

3.5. Is the Discovery end of phase report considered as part of the assessment for Alpha?

The Discovery end of phase report will only be taken into consideration by Ofgem by exception when making the final decision on which projects to progress to the Alpha phase. The report will be made available to the Expert Assessors but all relevant content should be included within the responses to the Alpha application questions.

3.6. Is there a weighting to the questions in the Alpha phase application?

There is an equal weighting to each of the 10 assessed questions.

3.7. Will the results of the Alpha phase be published?

As per the SIF Governance Document, Ofgem will publish its decision alongside the Expert Assessors' recommendation of successful applications.

Innovate UK and Ofgem do not intend to name projects or organisations that were unsuccessful in the Alpha phase application, although some insights such as the overall number of unsuccessful applications or the technical focus area may be published.

3.8. How do projects move from the Discovery phase to the Alpha phase?

All projects wanting to proceed to the Alpha phase at the end of a successful Discovery phase will need to submit a new application. It is the same process from Alpha to Beta.

3.9. Is there a risk of not getting funded?

Projects that do not meet the phase eligibility criteria (outlined in chapter 2 of the SIF Governance Document) will not receive funding via the SIF. The final funding decision lies with Ofgem. In its decision, Ofgem may decide to fund all or part of a project proposal. Should a project be unsuccessful in the SIF, Innovate UK and/ or Ofgem may signpost licensees to alternative funding opportunities.

3.10. Are successful projects guaranteed funding for later stages?

Separate funding decisions will be made by Ofgem for each phase of the project following the full application assessment process. Funding awards for one phase do not guarantee funding for subsequent phases.

3.11. Are successful Discovery projects guaranteed funding for Alpha?

Separate funding decisions will be made by Ofgem for each phase of the project following the full application assessment process. Funding awards for one phase do not guarantee funding for subsequent phases.

3.12. Is there an overall budget for the first round of the SIF Discovery phase?

Ofgem has not set a budget for the first round of the SIF Alpha phase. Licensees will be able to apply for funding of up to £500,000 per project.

3.13. Is there a minimum budget for an Alpha phase project?

A minimum budget has not been set for Alpha phase projects, but Expert Assessors will review whether each Project Partner has included an appropriate amount of eligible costs (whether requesting SIF or not) to be able to deliver their specific work package and any other required contributions to the project.

3.14. Is there a maximum amount of SIF for the Alpha phase?

The total amount of SIF that can be applied for Alpha is £500k and there is a minimum compulsory contribution of 10%. There is no cap on the private contribution that can be made to the project and therefore eligible project costs can exceed £500k. The contribution can be in kind and capital.

3.15. How long will it take between the Alpha phase project ending and Beta phase project starting?

Applications for the Beta phase will open the week after the Alpha phase projects end. Ofgem will aim to issue its funding decision no later than 12 weeks after the final submission date for Beta phase applications. It is Innovate UK's aim to start Beta phase projects as quickly as possible.

3.16. Can you remove as well as add Project Partners to the project in Alpha?

Yes, the consortia going forward to Alpha does not need to involve all (or any) of the Project Partners from the Discovery phase, as long as all Project Partners included have a valid role within the project, any required expertise developed during the Discovery phase is maintained, and that the partnership requirements of the Innovation Challenge are met.

3.17. Does the requirements for specific types of Partner Partners still apply in the Alpha phase?

Yes, the requirements set out the in the Innovation Challenge documentation for types of project partners to be involved still applies. Each Partner must be responsible for one deliverable.

3.18. Can we use the same public description from the Discovery phase application?

Yes, along as its still relevant to the project being delivered and is within the word count.

3.19. Is there greater competition between applications to the Alpha phase, compared to the Discovery phase?

Each application is assessed on its own merit. However, attrition rates are expected to be higher in the Alpha phase than Discovery. Ofgem are keen for projects seeking to deliver similar outputs to work collaboratively together in a single Alpha application, rather than multiple projects looking to address the same problem with similar results.

3.20. Should the business case be focussed on customer or network benefits?

Both. The business case should focus on the most significant benefits from your project.

3.21. Can I apply to the Alpha phase with a Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) project?

No, at the moment the applications are only eligible if a successful Discovery phase project has been awarded and completed.

3.22. Do I need to submit a video for the Alpha phase application?

No, we expect an updated video to be requested as part of the Beta phase application.

3.23. Do I need to submit a project finance spreadsheet for the Alpha phase application?

No, as all finance information will need to be entered directly into the IFS portal by all Project Partners. We do however, recommend that you use the project finance spreadsheet used for monitoring your Discovery phase project as a way of calculating your finances for the application process.

3.24. How do projects move from the Alpha phase to the Beta phase?

All projects wanting to proceed to the Beta phase at the end of a successful Alpha phase will need to submit a new application. Beta applications will be open once a year.

Ofgem and Innovate UK understand the importance of continuity between the phases of the SIF to keep project partners and stakeholders engaged and momentum up. We will endeavour to keep the lag between the phases to the absolute minimum to ensure that successful projects that evidence the requirements of the SIF are able to proceed at a pace.

As of round 2, it will be possible to apply into Beta from another funded innovation project (applying via direct access into Beta)

To do this, applicants should email SIF_OFGEM@iuk.ukri.org for an Associated Network Innovation Project (ANIP) form as early as possible. Innovate UK will log your request and provide an Associated Network Innovation Project (ANIP) form to be completed and returned. Your form must be submitted back to SIF_OFGEM@iuk.ukri.org 28 days before the submission for Beta round 2 to request formal approval to submit a non-SIF application. Ofgem will review the ANIP and provide indicative feedback. Innovate UK will return any feedback from Ofgem on the suitability of the project to meet the requirements for direct access. The Network takes a decision on proceeding with an application and should upload a copy of the completed ANIP form and any additional supporting documentation in question 14.

4. Eligibility

4.1. What are the eligibility criteria for projects?

The eligibility criteria for projects are detailed in chapter 2 of the SIF Governance Document.

4.2. What is the scope of the Innovation Challenges?

The scope of the Innovation Challenges is detailed in the Innovation Challenge documentation published on the Ofgem website. It can also be found on the Innovation Funding Service (IFS) Portal as part of the funding call information.

4.3. What if my project spans both gas and electricity networks?

Projects of this type can apply to the relevant Innovation Challenge area if they meet the eligibility criteria. Projects led by an electricity network must deliver a net benefit to electricity consumers who pay for the project, and the same applies for gas networks and gas

consumers. Further detail on how projects can be split across gas and electricity consumers is specified in chapter 7 of the SIF Governance Document.

4.4. What if my project does no longer fits into any of the four Innovation Challenge areas or spans multiple Innovation Challenge areas?

If your project no longer meets the scope of any of the four Innovation Challenge areas or spans multiple Innovation Challenge areas please contact Innovate UK (sif_ofgem@iuk.ukri.org) to discuss the appropriate course of action.

4.5. Can I discuss the next stages of my project with Ofgem/ Innovate UK before starting an Alpha phase application?

We would encourage all lead applicants to discuss plans for the Alpha phase of projects with their allocated Innovation Lead. Ofgem and Innovate UK can only reiterate what is provided in the SIF Governance Document and Innovation Challenge documentation so as to not provide any unfair advantage to applicants. Partner brokerage can also be provided by Innovate UK.

4.6. Can SIF funds be combined with other funds from other innovation programmes?

Making use of opportunities to collaborate with other innovation programmes is actively encouraged to facilitate cross-network innovation. Applicants should leverage existing assets where possible. In future Beta phases a list of suitable innovation funding combinations may be provided.

4.7. Can a licensee have more partners than those required by the Innovation Challenge?

There is no maximum limit to the number of project partners involved. However, each named project partner must have a valid, defined, and specific role in the delivery of the project. Where multiple network partners are included, at least one of other networks should lead a work package.

4.8. Can international partners be included in a SIF project consortium?

Yes. There are no restrictions as to where project partners are based or operate from, provided projects deliver benefits to GB consumers. All SIF demonstration activities must take place in Great Britain.

4.9. Is there a limit to how much funding can be allocated to non-licensee project partners?

Although the lead licensee applicant will receive the funding, there is no limit on how much of this can be distributed to non-licensee project partners. Applicable procurement rules must be followed when contracting project partners.

4.10. Is there a limit on how many applications a non-licensee project partner can be involved in?

No. As long as the non-licensee project partner has a valid, defined, and specific role in the delivery of each of the projects they are included in and have the capability and capacity to fulfil this role in the timeframe of the project then this is allowed. However, Ofgem and Innovate UK encourage licensees to engage with a wide range of potential project partners to help increase the engagement of start-ups, consumer groups, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), energy generators and suppliers, and academics in the SIF programme.

4.11. Where can licensees find additional project partners?

Innovate UK will be supporting licensees to identify and engage with additional suitable project partners; please contact your Innovation Lead to discuss any partner requirements that you have.

4.12. Are there any restrictions to the types of project partners involved?

No. As long as the partnership requirements for the specific Innovation Challenge and the Governance Document have been met, there are no restrictions. Licensees are actively encouraged to develop new relationships with organisations that have not previously worked with the energy industry. Each named project partner must have a valid, defined, and specific role in the delivery of the project. Where multiple network partners are included, at least one of other networks should lead a work package.

5. Funding arrangements

5.1. What is a SIF Project Direction?

The SIF Project Direction is a direction issued by Ofgem, setting out the terms to be followed during project delivery as a condition of funding. A SIF Project Direction will be issued only to a single licensee - the lead applicant.

5.2. Are SIF Project Directions negotiable?

No. SIF Project Directions are issued further to Ofgem's power of Direction. Ofgem will consider feedback from licensees on the draft Project Direction prior to directing a final copy.

5.3. Can SIF Project Directions be amended after it has been signed?

Changes to the SIF Project Direction may only be made by Ofgem where there has been an approved material change in circumstances (see chapter 6 of the SIF Governance Document for more information). Innovate UK have developed a Project Direction Change Request process to facilitate these requests. See ENA Smarter Networks Portal here.

5.4. Where can I find information about the requirements for administering a SIF project?

The requirements in relation to project administration including compliance, halting a project, audits and details on bank accounts can be found in chapter 8 of the SIF Governance Document and will be detailed within the SIF Project Direction. A SIF Project Delivery Pack has been prepared for the Discovery phase and will be updated for Alpha phase. See ENA Smarter Networks Portal here.

5.5. What are the Intellectual Property (IP) arrangements?

Intellectual Property requirements are set out in chapter 9 of the SIF Governance Document.

5.6. Do payments flow through the lead applicant?

Yes, all funding goes through the lead applicant.

5.7. Is a collaboration agreement required to govern the consortium of Partners?

A contract needs to be in place between the lead applicant and the other Project Partners named in the application before the project starts. This is a condition of the Project Direction.

6. Delivery

6.1. What are the reporting requirements for each of the phases?

Reporting requirements are set out in chapter 6 of the SIF Governance Document and further requirements may be specified in the SIF Project Direction.

6.2. What is required from the public show and tell webinar?

Innovate UK will arrange a public show and tell webinar for each of the SIF Innovation Challenge areas soon after the end of a phase. Each funding party will be provided with a time slot to present project findings (including whether research, development and demonstration activities were successful or not) and to briefly touch on plans for the next phase, if applicable. This will be followed by a facilitated live Q&A session. Presentations are expected to be no longer than 15 minutes in length and may be pre-recorded. Attendance from the project team will be required in order to answer questions. All webinars will be recorded and published online.

6.3. How will projects be monitored?

All projects receiving SIF funding will be subject to review and, for this purpose, be allocated a Monitoring Officer who will be appointed by Innovate UK. For the Alpha phase, funded licensees and their project partners must meet with the Monitoring Officer at the start of each project phase to discuss the project plan, at least once for a mid-phase meeting, and at the end of the project phase.

6.4. What is the role of the UKRI Monitoring Officer?

The Monitoring Officer will review a project's progress against the scope, timeline, deliverables, milestones, and budget agreed in the SIF Project Direction. The monitoring process will support the identification of potential problems, and the assessment of whether projects have met conditions to progress to the next project phase or stage. Monitoring Officers will also support Ofgem's assessment of requests for material changes.

6.5. Will Alpha phase projects have stage gates?

It is unlikely that Ofgem will request a stage gate for an Alpha phase project, however they reserve the right to make this decision on a case-by-case basis. Stage gates are likely to only be required for very high-risk projects.

Stage gates and their conditions (linked to project milestones and deliverables) will be set out in the Project Direction and projects will require approval by Ofgem to pass the stage-gate.

6.6. How will project benefits be measured?

All projects should have a well-justified potential to deliver a future net benefit to gas or electricity consumers. Net benefits are both financial and non-financial benefits (such as

environmental benefits, societal benefits, economic benefits or carbon cost). Licensees are required to outline and quantify a project's expected benefits in the application.

Innovate UK will develop a methodology (for approval by Ofgem) to measure and monitor the early indicators of benefits from projects for continuing measurement through the later phases of the projects (if applicable) where benefits should be realised and impacts evidenced when adopted as business as usual and at scale. Further support and guidance on reporting benefits realisation will be provided to funded projects.

6.7. Will project information be subject to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request?

Yes, subject to redactions of sensitive information.

8. Benefits Management

8.1 Project in the Networks have many other projects working in unison to deliver the projects that SIF fund how do they deliver the benefits mapping for all the players involved?

SIF require for all projects to submit their benefits mapping, and this should be done on no more than two pages provided for the Beta Phase.

8.2 When do we need to submit benefit maps for SIF projects?

Benefits can be submitted to us at a high level during the Discovery and Alpha phase but when we reach the Beta phase of a funded project the expectation is that we receive benefits mapping for all projects involved.

8.3 Will the SIF Team be able to provide Networks and partners training for Benefits management?

Yes, the SIF Team will be providing training for benefits mapping and will be available to answer any questions via sif_ofgem@iuk.ukri.org email. We prefer to give in person training but not limited to face to face.

8.3 Some projects will not realise their benefits till further on in the future how do we communicate these benefits to the SIF Programme?

It is understood that benefits may not be realised for a significant time beyond the timeframe of SIF and indeed into future RIIO periods. Innovate UK will work with the networks to capture benefits realisation data 1-, 3-, 5- & 10-years post SIF project completion. However, the Business Case, Cost Benefit Analysis and Benefits Map may quantify benefits up to 50 years from project start quantify benefits up to 50 years from project start.

8.4 Our Network has many projects, and some are external will you be able to provide benefits management training for everyone?

SIF team will only provide 2hrs training session per Network as we do not have the capacity to cover all the suppliers and projects.

8.5 In the Business Case section of the Project Management Book, the benefits sections ask for the details of the NPV of benefits. Would this be the appropriate place to include unquantifiable benefits as well?

Yes please. These can also be included in your response to Q6 of the application and in the

appropriate section of the Benefits Map.

8.6 The Baseline Scenario sheet does not have an NPV output. While we understand that this could be addressed by calculating the NPV of the other options as relative to the baseline scenario, the NPV calculation in the Option sheet does not appear to make any reference to the baseline scenario. Therefore, it is not currently possible to compare the options to the baseline scenario using the template as it is.

Should there be an NPV calculation in the baseline scenario sheet or a modification to the options sheet?

No. It is not standard practice for an NPV to be provided for a baseline scenario. The requirement of this section is for the Network to describe the status quo: that is the cost of business as usual in the absence of any investment intervention. In most cases we would expect the baseline to represent the current strategy employed by the Network and the associated level of expenditure currently being invested. The CBA options should represent the costs and benefits that would occur over and above the baseline scenario.

Revision History

Date	Issue	Status
26/11/2022	1.0	Issued
23/02/2023	2.0	Added questions
25/02/2023	3.0	Added questions and responses