

TRANSPORT PATHFINDER INNOVATION PROGRAMME

APPLICATION NOTES

With funding from Innovate UK, the UK's Innovation agency, Design Age Institute's **Transport Pathfinder Innovation Programme** invites innovators, businesses and entrepreneurs from across the UK to propose solutions that offer more accessible, affordable and sustainable transport options for later life that can be supported towards the market by investment in good design.

The Transport Pathfinder Innovation Programme builds on the Institute's successful [Pathfinder Innovation Programme](#), providing funding and design management to accelerate ideas for products and services that support healthier and happier ageing from concept and prototype towards market.

A second programme focused on **Personal Mobility solutions** will be announced later in Spring 2023. Please [subscribe to our mailing list](#) to receive the latest updates on how to apply.

What we will provide to awardees:

- Funding of up to £120k* to support selected projects towards market
- Design management support and mentoring (not project management) from our team of experts in design for healthy ageing
- Access to existing research, exclusive insights into the healthy ageing marketplace, and peer-networking
- Skills development and training opportunities
- Support to run two research development sessions with end users

* Note that while £120k is the maximum that can be applied for, we are looking for a breadth of entries on cost, and value for money will be a key assessment criterion.

** Note that VAT is excluded from seed funding and cannot be claimed.

What is the difference between transport and mobility? *Transportation is something you do. Personal mobility is something you have.*

Transport: moving things and moving people i.e. trains, buses, taxis, planes, boats, cars, as well as systems like roads, tracks, airports, and the ways we navigate them whether using a bus schedule or an app.

Mobility: the ability of a person to move or be moved freely i.e. personal mobility can be supported by devices like a walking stick, shoe, app, stairlift or wheelchair.

No matter our age, whether on foot, wheels or tracks, good design has the potential to transform how we socialise, work, and navigate the cities, towns, offices, neighbourhoods and homes.

REQUIREMENTS

Design Age Institute will fund and support design interventions for proposals at ideation and proof of concept stage onwards that meet the following criteria:

1. Individuals or enterprises applying for funding must be based in and trading in the United Kingdom.
2. Proposed projects must be suitable for the healthy ageing marketplace.
3. Applicants must be able to demonstrate the ability to find a pathway from ideation or prototype towards market.
4. Applicants will be asked to demonstrate that receiving the award, and working with the Institute, would form a critical part of their success.
5. Applicants should aim to start proposed projects by 30 April 2023 in accordance with our funding from Innovate UK.
6. Applicants should aim to have completed proposed projects by 31 Jan 2024.
7. Applicants must be able to demonstrate how they meet at least one of our key objectives linked to the UK Grand Challenge on an Ageing Society.
 - a. Enjoy five extra healthier, independent years of life at home
 - b. Support people to retain their mobility, transport and social connections.
8. Applicants must be able to demonstrate how they address one or more of the following factors impacting access to transport in later life. These factors are based on research and evidence from the Royal College of Art's [Intelligent Mobility Design Centre](#).
 - a. **Physical exclusion:** poor design of vehicles and infrastructure.
 - *Positive example:* bus suspension lowers and a ramp comes out to facilitate ingress and egress.
 - *Negative example:* a vehicle starts moving before a passenger reaches their seat.
 - b. **Digital and information exclusion:** difficulty understanding and actioning information.
 - *Positive example:* trains with open carriages and digital displays showing where there are more seats available.
 - *Negative example:* difficulty paying at a car park.
 - c. **Cost and payment exclusion:** payment methods and people's personal circumstances.
 - *Positive example:* Older Person's [Freedom Pass](#) - free off-peak accesses to public transport for older people in London.
 - *Negative example:* being unable to find cheaper fares online.

- d. **Service exclusion:** issues with availability, administration and staffing of service.
 - *Positive example:* [dial-a-ride](#), TfL's door to door transport service.
 - *Negative example:* unavailable or unhelpful staff.
 - e. **Psychological exclusion:** fear and anxiety about travelling
 - *Positive example:* quiet train carriages and quiet coaches.
 - *Negative example:* lack of services or staff support during journey
 - f. **Other exclusion factors as applicable:**
 - We are interested in projects that are based on demonstrable evidence of need. If your project meets a need not outlined above please select this theme and provide evidence in your application.
9. Design Age Institute aims to fund and support proposals from idea and proof of concept stage onwards that meet the following criteria:
- a. Towards market ready and launch
 - b. Commercially viable inventions
 - c. Demonstration of creativity, innovation, distinctive from other ideas in the market.
10. The Institute is not able to fund or support:
- a. Salary costs (unless for design and bringing to market costs)
 - b. Stand-alone research
 - c. Feasibility studies
 - d. Experimental development
11. Applications received after **12:00 pm on Monday 27 February** will not be considered.

Please review our [terms and conditions](#) before submitting your application.

Where necessary we will review an applicant's legal status and financial stability prior to approving an Award. We will verify claims around previous funding, endorsement or partnership prior to approving an Award.

ASSESSMENT AND AWARD

Design Age Institute aims to support commercially viable projects where design can transform an idea from an early concept stage to a prototype and towards market.

Selection process

Our selection process aims to be transparent, open and fair, following a phased approach.

Each application is scored by a minimum of two assessors.

Phase 1 - Assessment

Applications submitted through the Transport Pathfinder Innovation Programme will be scored against the following criteria based on the clarity of achieving each goal and managing associated risks. To progress, applicants must achieve a minimum score of 70% across the criteria below:

- 1. Credible** - *problem, solution and desire (weighted 20%)*
- 2. Feasible** - *support and funds (weighted 20%)*
- 3. Deployable** - *route to market, marketing and sales (weighted 20%)*
- 4. Sustainable** - *profit or self-sustaining (weighted 20%)*
- 5. Value** - *value for money and value that Design Age Institute can add (weighted 20%)*

Phase 2 - Invitation to interview

Up to eight applicants will be selected for interview from those passing initial assessment based on how their proposal meets the following selection criteria.

- 1** - Unclear, unsuitable for funding
- 2** - Partially clear but unresolved in key areas, doesn't meet objectives
- 3** - Adequate to some degree meets objectives, but questions to resolve
- 4** - Quality idea, meets objectives, but some questions to resolve
- 5** - Excellent, exciting idea, meets objectives, route to market

Phase 3 - Interview and Award

Applicants shortlisted for interview will be assessed by a panel composed of experts in design, transport and innovation.

The panel will ensure that decisions map to our objectives and criteria across a distinctive and diverse range of outcomes, and that enable the Institute to have a significant impact on the project.

Responses at interview will be scored as follows, and applicants will need an average score of three or above to be Awarded funding.

- 1** - Unclear, unsuitable for funding
- 2** - Partially clear but unresolved in key areas, doesn't meet objectives
- 3** - Adequate to some degree meets objectives, but questions to resolve
- 4** - Quality idea, meets objectives, but some questions to resolve
- 5** - Excellent, exciting idea, meets objectives, route to market

Up to 4 projects will be awarded up to £120k, depending on proposal quantity and quality.

Award administration:

A Collaborative Project Agreement with each awardee will outline planned project activity; staged milestones; and reporting dates linked to payment instalments.

If you have any questions please email Melanie.Andrews@rca.ac.uk and visit designage.org for all the latest news and opportunities.