



Royal College of Art

**DESIGN AGE**<sup>®</sup>  
**INSTITUTE**  
**28th March 2023**

# MOBILITY PATHFINDER INNOVATION PROGRAMME

**CONTACT AT:**

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UK Research  
and Innovation





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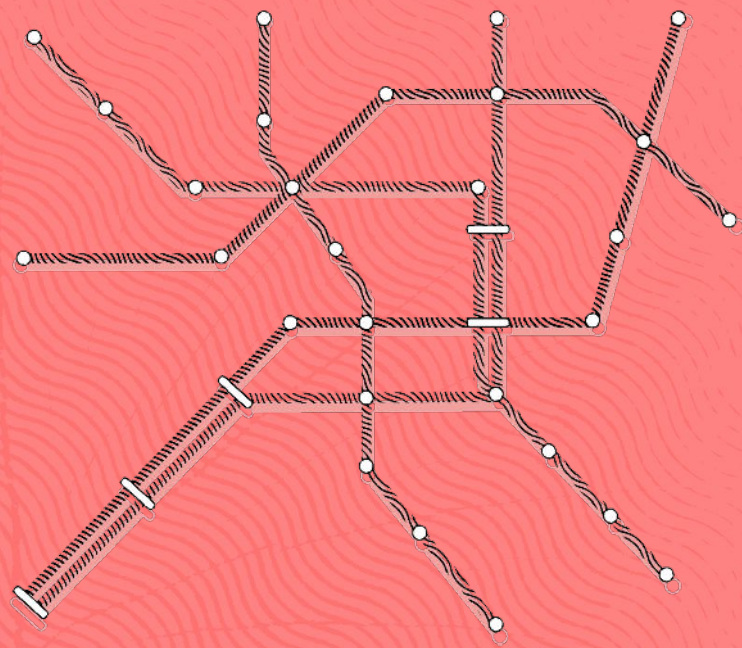
Design Manager





# AGENDA

- **WHO WE ARE**
- **WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR**
- **OUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS**
- **TIMELINES**
- **Q&A**



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# THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC UNIT FOR DESIGN AND THE HEALTHY AGEING ECONOMY



## UK GOVERNMENT'S GRAND CHALLENGE ON AGEING

- Enjoy 5 Extra Healthy, Independent Years Of Life
- Narrow The Gap Between Richest And Poorest
- Support People To Remain At Work For Longer
- Build Consumer Markets That Better Meet Needs
- Drive Improvements Across Social Care





# WHAT IS A PATHFINDER PROJECT?

**Accelerating an innovative idea for healthy ageing  
from concept to market**

- Initial concept stage onwards towards market
- Meets healthy ageing objectives
- Commercial potential - feasible, desirable and viable
- Innovative and distinctive from other ideas in the market.





# TRANSPORT OR MOBILITY?

**PERSONAL MOBILITY IS SOMETHING YOU HAVE**  
**TRANSPORTATION IS SOMETHING YOU DO**

**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, handrail or wheelchair.

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





# MOBILITY INNOVATION PATHFINDER PROGRAMME

- Approximately one third of older people in the UK report unmet travel needs which worsen with progressing age
- First mile / Last miles needs - both within home and externally
- Multi modal journey planning and service integration

(LUIU ET AL, 2016)





# MOBILITY INNOVATION PATHFINDER PROGRAMME

**Whether on foot, wheels or tracks, good design has the potential to help transform how we socialise, work, and navigate the cities, towns, offices, neighbourhoods and homes of our future selves.**





# MOBILITY INNOVATION PATHFINDER PROGRAMME

## WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Inspirational, life-enhancing ideas, prototypes, or plans to reimagine how mobility support can better help a rapidly ageing population to stay connected, active, and independent for longer.





# KEY FACTORS TO ADDRESS

## A: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

- How does the context and environment contribute to, or block, safe and effective personal mobility?
- Home - doors, steps, thresholds, handrails, lighting.
- Externally - signage, flat or gently sloping, non slippery or reflective floors
- Negative examples: uneven and poorly lit areas, narrow doors and aisles in public spaces, limited and uncoordinated transport, personal weather protection
- Positive examples: curb ramps, provision of public seats and well maintained toilet facilities, signage and wayfinding

# KEY FACTORS TO ADDRESS

## B: USER PERCEPTIONS

- Usually products that are clinically prescribed perform well.
- Some carry a stigma which prevents people choosing them when they could be a benefit. Users only accept them when they cannot manage without.
- Negative examples: walking frames and rollators, electric mobility scooters, support shoes and lower limb joint braces
- Positive examples: tablet pcs, cross chest shoulder bags, rear entry trainers



# KEY FACTORS TO ADDRESS

## C: PRODUCTS - EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

- Products engineered to perform without due consideration of their aesthetics, or emotional fit, into a household. They can carry a high selling price for individual units, with a lack of choice, colour and materials that reinforce negative imagery and stigmas
- Negative examples: household handrails, shower seats and bathing accessories
- Positive examples: multi generational kitchens, lightweight folding wheelchairs

Barriers and facilitators of older adults' usage of mobility devices: a scoping review by Dayeon Lee & Sunghee H. Tak, 2022.

# KEY FACTORS TO ADDRESS

## D: OTHER EXCLUSION FACTORS

- We are interested in projects that are based on demonstrable evidence of need. If your project meets a need we have not covered please select this theme on the application form and provide supporting evidence.



# ELIGIBILITY 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.



# ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

5. Applicants should aim to start proposed projects by 31 July 2023 in accordance with our funding from Innovate UK.
6. Applicants should aim to have completed proposed (phase) 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.



# WHAT WE OFFER

- Seed funding, up to £70K (grant - exempt from VAT)
- 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:** £70k 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.



# WHAT WE DON'T FUND

We do not support:

- Salary costs (unless for design and bringing to market costs)
- Stand-alone research
- Feasibility studies
- Experimental development



# DESIGN ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE PROJECT

- The role of the Institute's Design Management team is to advise, scope and facilitate the design process within each project.
- We have a broad range of experience from commercial design backgrounds but do not provide design services or project management on the programme.
- Your proposed budget must allocate funds for design activities including any external design consultancy required.
- If awarded, the DAI team can recommend longlists of suitable design agencies as appropriate for your work and budget.



# HOW WILL WE EVALUATE YOUR PROJECT?

**Phase 1:      Assessment**

**Phase 2:      Interview**

**Phase 3:      Award**



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# HOW WILL WE EVALUATE YOUR PROJECT?

## PHASE 1: ASSESSMENT

Applications submitted will be scored against the following criteria based on the clarity of achieving each goal and managing associated risks.

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



# HOW WILL WE EVALUATE YOUR PROJECT?

## PHASE 2: INVITATION TO INTERVIEW

A max of eight applicants will be selected for interview from the initial assessment based on how their proposal meets the assessment criteria.

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

Decisions will map to our objectives and criteria across a diverse and distinctive range of outcomes, and that also will enable DAI to have a significant impact on the project.



# HOW WILL WE EVALUATE YOUR PROJECT?

## PHASE 3: INTERVIEW AND AWARD

Interviews will be scored as follows:

1. Unclear, unsuitable for funding.
2. Partially clear but unresolved in key areas, does not meet objectives.
3. Adequate, to some degree meets objectives, queries.
4. Quality idea, meets objectives, but some question to resolve.
5. Excellent, exciting idea, meets objectives and route to market potential.

3 - 4 projects will be awarded up to £70k depending on quality of proposal and value for money

# AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A Collaborative Project Agreement with each awardee will outline:

- planned project activity
- staged milestones
- reporting dates linked to payment instalments.



# Q&A

- We will talk through some FAQs to kick start the discussion
- Please put questions in Q&A only.
- If there are any questions that we can't answer we will respond directly to you after the session.



**Q: When do projects need to start and end by?**

**A:** Agreed projects MUST start by 31 July 2023 and the phase of work be complete by 31 January 2024 due to our funding requirements with Innovate UK

**Q: Can I apply if I have already received funding from the DAI?**

**A:** The DAI will consider repeat applications from public sector organisations, charities, HEIs but not from SMEs already working with the DAI. We will not fund the same projects.



**Q: I have previously applied to the Transport Pathfinder Innovation Programme and was unsuccessful. Am I eligible to re-apply to the Mobility Pathfinder Innovation Programme?**

**A:** We will only consider applications that address the specific criteria for the Mobility Pathfinder Programme. If you were previously shortlisted and interviewed in the Transport round and were not successful, we would assess whether you have fully addressed the feedback we provided in your new application.

**Q: I have already taken my product to market and would like to apply for more funding to develop it further. Am I eligible?**

**A:** We would consider providing support if the development was a new innovation of your initial product e.g. if you wanted to develop a service that would promote the use of your product.



**Q: Do you need to be registered as a business or be part of an organisation to be eligible for funding?**

**A:** You can either be a business or intend to set up a business to exploit your idea. We only fund projects where we can make a significant contribution towards a successful market launch. We do not fund research projects.

**Q: I am studying in the UK and have a registered business in the EU. Am I eligible for funding?**

**A:** Due to our funding requirements from Innovate UK you must have a registered UK business or an undertaking to set one up to receive funding.



# OUR RECRUITMENT PROCESS

- Public launch and call for entries - 15th March 2023
- [Application form](#) available for download
- Applications close - midday Monday 15th May 2023
- Internal review and filter by DAI team
- Selection panel convened
- Shortlisting and interviews May / June
- Notifications by end June



# ACTIVITIES AND DEADLINES

- In person workshop - Tuesday 25th April at 2pm - 4pm (RCA Battersea)
- Online workshop - Wednesday 10th May at 2pm - 4pm
- Closing date - midday Monday 15th May 2023
- Interviews - early June w/b 5th or 12th
- Notifications - by end June
- Project commencement - 31st July 2023
- Project (phase) completion - 31st January 2024





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