

**DRAFT:  
SMART STRATEGY &  
DELIVERY PLAN 2015/16**

# BACKGROUND

## VISION

Innovate UK creates wealth through innovation and growth. We assist UK based SMEs by providing a value for money, flexible, supportive, and fit for purpose funding plus programme. The following five key points will help keep Smart successful:

1. Keep application numbers the same but gain a much higher quality of application.
2. Keep Smart the leading Responsive activity and working alongside the wider Innovate UK product range as seen in the footfall of those we fund, with Smart taking 20%.
3. Allow Smart to demonstrate its more positive actions from participants as a result of their application, i.e. tangible benefits even if not successful.
4. Small improvements in the customer journey and experience are what the Smart programme is now developing with the BIC Programme team i.e. the process of applying for Smart is simpler.
5. A more visible, documented satisfaction process from applicants, Opinion Leaders and stakeholders about Smart's effectiveness in the innovation market.

## AIM

By developing a strategy for Smart, we can create a product that is the best fit for British innovation, with the aim of identifying the right companies at the right time with the right ideas – so enhancing the Innovate brand voice as a leader.

The reality of finding the right company at the right time with the right idea, comes down to three core values of communication – attitude, awareness and behaviour.

**Attitude** – It is hard to get a Smart funded programme and each stage of the process needs to be thought through – before you even apply.

**Awareness** – Smart can make a difference to SMEs, but only if they have great Innovation Ideas.

**Behaviour** – People who interact with Smart need to realise that although it is difficult to get funding, when it is awarded we give them our full and total support.

# INSIGHT

## AUDIENCES

Our target audience is any pre start-up, start-up or small/medium-sized business carrying out Research & Development across the UK and is eligible for Smart funding.

Each audience segment will need different messages created through various communication channels – e.g. Thought Leadership will be used to highlight Smart success to Ministers/MPs and Lords.

With regard to potential investors, we are trying to make them understand that funded companies by Smart and so by Innovate UK prove a de-risking tool to their investments. We need to demonstrate Innovate UK as the authority for innovation funding so the investors see our funded companies as a top choice for investment.

## STAKEHOLDERS

### **Head of Smart & the Strategy & Planning Director (and to a lesser extent EMT)**

Ownership and participation in engagement and marketing activities by this group will ultimately determine the success of a large proportion of Smart activity. As such this group needs to have an awareness and acceptance of Smart marketing plans and strategy.

### **Funders (BIS, Ministers, Treasury KOLs)**

Effective engagement with funders plays a vital role in presenting the Smart programme.

### **Partners including EENs and LEPs as well as potential match funding investors**

Innovate UK works closely with many public and third sector partners who may use Smart as an alternative.

### **Media (all modalities)**

Social, digital and printed media are the current way Innovate UK with Smart presents its public face to the public and potential applicants.

# APPROACH

## REVERSE MARKETING

In Reverse Marketing, the idea is to get the customer to seek out the business rather than marketers seeking the customer. Usually, this is done through the traditional means of Thought Leadership, proof of success by UK business and third party statements. While traditional marketing mainly deals with the seller finding the right set of customers and targeting them, Reverse Marketing focuses on the customer approaching potential sellers who may be able to offer the desired product.

## PROPOSITION

Our proposition is about understanding how difficult Smart funding is to be awarded. It is about thinking long term with the SME's idea and ensuring their application is not a wasted one. It is also about thinking 'if I didn't get Smart funding, then would my company be here today?'

**If you have a cutting-edge idea with promise and potential, Smart will ignite the spark that makes it shine.**

## MESSAGING

### 1. Style/tone

The tone of Smart needs to be concise, enticing and engaging and aimed at demystifying Smart and making it relevant to all audiences. For example, the style uses 'you' frequently to convey that our communications are always talking directly to the reader.

### 2. Headline examples

- What's your big idea?
- Everything starts with a great idea
- Get your idea off the ground
- One idea can change the world
- Great ideas start here
- Make your idea matter
- Be the spark/Be the best
- Be a game changer
- Turning ideas into reality or Turning ideas into opportunities
- Do you have what it takes?
- Your idea. Our support - Together, we can do it.

### 3. Smart descriptors (The tone we want to take out to the market)

The telephone, locomotive and World Wide Web are just three world-changing British innovations that started with a great idea. But they all needed support to be successful. The same is true today. Turning an idea into a reality is challenging. Funding can be hard to come by, especially in tough economic times. That's where Smart can help. If you have a cutting-edge idea with promise and potential, Smart will ignite the spark that makes it shine.

### The Smart choice for funding

Smart is a funding competition run by Innovate UK – the UK government's innovation agency. Individuals, pre-start-ups, start-ups, and small and medium-sized businesses working in science, engineering and technology can apply any time for grants from £25,000 to £250,000 to progress their ideas. That's not just good news for your idea and business, as your idea will eventually create wealth and perhaps attract investment from other sources, its great news for the UK's economy too.

### Bring your innovation to life

First, make sure Smart ticks all the boxes for your idea and business. If it doesn't apply to a science, engineering and technology innovation, there are other schemes you can consider. If Smart is right for you, you'll find applying for a grant fast and straightforward.

There are no more than 10 questions to answer online. An independent expert panel will assess your application, and you'll hear within 30 days if it was successful. From there, the funding will be yours in up to 20 days. If you have what it takes to win a grant, you'll be among the UK's elite: bright people with game-changing ideas that are likely to become big business.

### Giving you more than money

There's more to Smart than funding alone. Winning a grant will also give you access to advice from experts in your sector plus a wealth of technical resources and training from Innovate UK. Working together, you'll have the support necessary to help make your idea successful. Even if you've submitted a good quality application and don't win, we can advise you on other initiatives and ways to build your business.

### Three steps to success

When making an idea matter, there are challenges at every step. Perhaps you need to assess the best market for your product, service or technology. Maybe you want to explore whether your idea is technically and commercially viable. Or you might be planning to develop a prototype product or process. It all takes time and money. Whether you're starting out or ready to take your idea to the next stage, you can choose from three types of funding:

- Have an idea but don't yet know your market? A 'Proof of Market' grant will enable you to assess your idea's commercial viability by, for example, researching and testing markets, checking the intellectual property position and analysing competitors. It can also support your initial plans for commercialising your idea, such as assessing costs, timescales and funding requirements. It provides a maximum grant of £25,000 for up to 9 months and will cover no more than 60% of your total project costs.
- Want to know if your idea will work? A 'Proof of Concept' grant will enable you to explore the technical feasibility and commercial potential of your new technology, product or process. This might involve conducting initial feasibility studies; building, testing and demonstrating basic prototypes, protecting intellectual property and investigating production and assembly options. For healthcare technologies and medicines, the grant can also include pre-clinical research, such as target identification and validation. It provides a maximum grant of £100,000 for up to 18 months and will cover no more than 60% of your total project costs.
- Know your idea will work in your chosen market? A 'Development of Prototype' grant will enable you to develop a technologically innovative product, service or process. This might involve creating small demonstrators, protecting intellectual property, conducting trials and testing, market testing, developing marketing strategies, identifying routes to market, product design work and pre-clinical studies for medicines. It provides a maximum grant of £250,000 for up to 2 years and covers no more than 35% of a medium-sized business's total project costs and up to 45% for small and micro businesses.

## COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

### Specific

1. Smart applications need to stay at the levels of 2014/15 (400 per two month period).
2. The quality of the Smart application needs to be improved, compared to 2014/15.
3. Smart requires an increase in visits to the Innovate UK main website - Smart pages.
4. Deliver 4 Champion stories.
5. Deliver 12 Success stories.
6. Deliver 50 editorial items for mixed media.
7. Smart Twitter followers need to be established.
8. Smart LinkedIn needs to be set up and followers established.

### Measurable

1. This year, Smart's communication programme will increase the annual traffic to the website (Smart pages) by 5% from 2014/15 audience numbers.
2. Smart will also develop a social media strategy to help generate traffic to the main website, but only to raise awareness using Social Media (cautious approach – we require 2,000 new followers on Twitter).
3. Smart will increase its presence using case studies/editorials to mixed media by 20%.
4. Smart will also increase its presence in Trade Publications by 150%.

### Attainable

With the new planning function in the Communications Team, we are able to plan the Smart approach to the market using examples of success. This will aid awareness of the programme and protect the message of how hard it is to obtain Smart funding.

It is time for both Smart/Communications teams to highlight to the various audiences just how hard it is to qualify for Smart funding, but once you have a strong idea, a good plan and a favourable position, you can become a Smart success.

### Realistic

We want to deliver an increase in traffic to the website but we need to manage people who apply for Smart funding. So the role of Communications in 2015/16 is to communicate just how difficult it is to qualify for a Smart funded project by using the Reverse Marketing strategy we are putting in place.

### Time

- Quarter 1 – Launch the Smart Mission Statement across all channels (Mainly Digital).
- Quarter 2 – Develop new stories and Champions of Smart.
- Quarter 3 – Identify Social media as core to development of Smart creating social circles.
- Quarter 4 – Insight building and development of who applies for Smart and plans for 2016.

## MILESTONE FOCUS

Smart's strategy means we need to develop reasons for coming to smart, but only when the company is ready for a smart application. If they are not ready we need to discourage them.

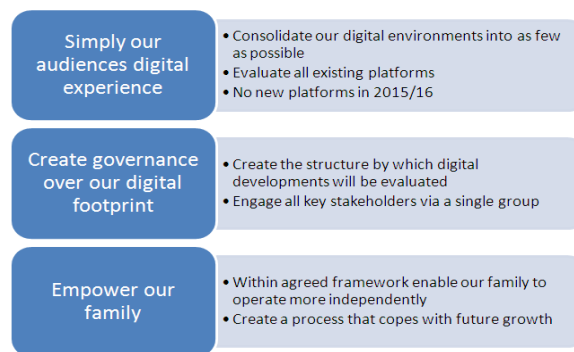
1. Smart Thinking content –
  - a. What made the business come to Innovate UK for Smart?
  - b. Why did the business choose Smart?
  - c. What made the business come to Innovate UK for Smart?

2. Think Smart content –
  - a. What aspects of Smart helped your business succeed?

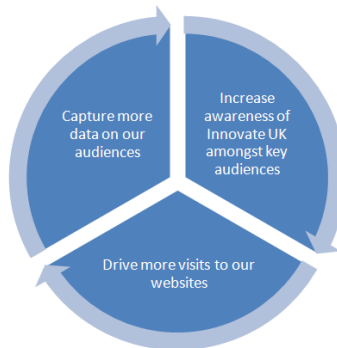
## TACTICS

### Digital

The first step in developing a Smart digital strategy is to link into the strategy being developed by the Communications Digital Team. The approach is simple and is made up of three focus points. 1. Simplify the audience's digital experience, 2. Create governance in our digital footprint and 3. Empower our family (making them more independent).



The main objective of the digital approach is to improve the customer experience and to drive increased awareness of Innovate UK and Smart amongst our key audience via digital channels. The approach is simple and is made up of three objectives. 1. Capture more data on our audience, 2. Increase awareness of Smart amongst key audiences and 3. Drive quality visits to our websites.



By following the six step methodology set out in various digital channels we believe that Smart's digital strategy will improve being linked to the following six pillars of the digital plan:

1. **Improving business as usual**

For our major existing channels of email and social we will look to adopt a test/learn/improve process by which we take our current performance metrics and look to improve them further.

2. **One brand**

Whenever and wherever we communicate digitally we should always be presenting ourselves as a single brand. In social, for example, this means every part of Innovate UK uses the @innovate\_UK handle with the use of # to allow for differentiation e.g. #Smart #Smartthinking and all communications should be managed via a single tool, Hootsuite in this case.

**3. Less is more**

Reducing our footprint will mean that we can focus our efforts and resources in improving a small portfolio of properties that, as a result of more attention and bespoke content, will be made more search engine friendly.

**4. Using insights to drive content placement**

By employing the insights of the Smart sector we will be able to create, and subsequently place, our content on external sites knowing they are the most effective in reaching quality audiences.

**5. Empowering our partners to be more agile**

Empowering our family members to operate in a more independent fashion, but within an agreed governance framework - primarily business objectives, brand, data policy and digital maturity - should enable them to further develop their networks without being tied to our systems and processes. This approach is scalable and therefore copes with potential expansion of our family in the future.

**6. Using technology to be more efficient and effective**

The introduction of marketing automation technology will enable us to better understand our key audience's journeys, deliver content to them based on that journey and free our people from highly manual processes.

Noting the six key points above, we need to create content to match the strategy of Reverse Marketing. The following content themes will ensure we get quality applications and build funding around the Innovation segments not just applications for ideas sake.

**Website**

Peter Wilson to supply .Gov site usage

**Social Media**

The Twitter platform will be an excellent platform to highlight Success stories, winners and developed projects that are now in market. We hope to deliver these messages to a wider audience using the Innovate UK brand as specified above, with the #Smartthinking tag - thus developing a unity within the Innovate UK brand.

Setting up a Smart group on LinkedIn will help to develop and encourage conversation between the various competition winners. This could be either a closed or open group as there are merits for both. But once open, we need to deliver regular researched linkedIn activity with images, content and questions on technology. These take planning over the year and not just adhoc.

**The Digital Ambassador**

Using Social Media we need to identify a number of high profile business individuals to support Smart and what it stands for.

Having our Ambassadors in place will help Smart become a discussion topic, not just through Innovate UK but through other notable business leader channels. The digital Ambassadors will create discussion through innovation topics and get the message across of how important it is to get an application for Smart funding thought through –as well as other topics.



We will give our Smart Ambassador ideas of how to feature Smart and share the latest Innovate UK information with their networks. Key note: Ask the Ambassador how they want to be involved — some people might prefer hosting blogs or just tweeting.

Ambassador feedback is just as crucially important to us as our messages going out to their networks. We need them to pass along any feedback they hear from their networks so we can build insight and understanding. Don't forget we need to encourage Ambassadors to offer their feedback on the Smart programme as well.

### **Gaggleamp**

Gaggleamp is a platform that we should consider to populate with informative facts from our Smart Success stories editorials and Ambassador Networks, making content easier to download using Twitter and linkedIn platforms.

### **Bloggers & Blogging**

With Innovate UK now being fully cemented to the .Gov platform, we have a great opportunity to use the blogging pages on this platform. Smart is an ideal opportunity to have a monthly blog on topics such as applications, services, success or any of the themed quarters we are using for marketing communications.

Another blogging area we want to review is a series of blogs called Springwise. This blog covers new entrepreneurial business ideas covering headline topics of Entrepreneurism and Emerging Trends, which is perfect for the Smart programme. Springwise has a blog coverage of one million plus readers per month and an influence score of 70 out of 100.

With blogging we need to make sure to feature the various links to our social communities such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Google+ on every piece of Smart content.

### **Smart's 'Smart App'**

This app will deliver a virtual Smart process with a full virtual assessment of the innovation idea along with scoring models. This will help the Smart programme team reduce the number of wasted applications and improve the number of successful innovation ideas that have more opportunity of funding.

The application Scope document will need to be created in quarters 1 and 2 in co-ordination with the BIC Application team which is presently reviewing applications.

## **Events**

### **Regional Events - Venturefest**

Various days will be set aside for the Venturefest programme. For various entrepreneurs working in the Science, Technology, Creative or High Growth Business environments, Venturefest is the ideal regional closed door show which allows Smart to showcase itself. Venturefest will have 7 exhibition shows this year, they are:

- Venturefest East Midlands
- Venturefest West Midlands
- Venturefest Oxford
- Venturefest Scotland
- Venturefest North East
- Venturefest Manchester
- Venturefest Wales

### **National Events for Smart to attend**

In quarter 3, we can attend the Innovate UK 2015 Event, the Best of the Best, Collaboration Nation, Advanced Engineering 2015 and the CENEX LCV 2015 show. Each event gives us opportunities to survey key audiences on the Smart product.

In quarter 4, we can also piggy back on to the Cleantech Innovate show which enables us to close off the year with 12 core regional and national events.

## **Content**

### **Landing Content**

Smart's strategy is about the business discovering Smart, but once discovered we need to ensure that companies are armed with the correct approach and understanding of Smart. We need people to land on the Smart Mission Statement first. See messaging section of this document.

Our statement needs to be friendly and approachable but at the same time show how hard it is to attain Smart funding.

### **'Successful' Content**

With an average of 360 Smart projects funded per year, it is deemed that 20 projects a year will meet the Success story criteria. The Smart Thinking campaign is aiming to develop stories using content themes in line with the future world process, because Smart businesses can later feed in to the Challenge-led programmes.

There are two areas that make this up:

- Product: Prototype, Proof of Market, Proof of Concept.
- Industries: linking to particular leading technologies – i.e. the future World.

### **'Champion' Content**

Industry champions in their fields who have received Smart funding over the past three years are invited to have video/editorial interviews.

Each video interview will last a maximum of 5 minutes and will promote the benefits of Smart in line with Innovate UK's Smart message of how hard it is to attain Smart funding. The direction of all Champion interviews should demonstrate the hard road to innovation, how they embraced their successful idea and the process of Smart funding.

These sound bites/interviews can be used in various media at events, on screens and sent via attachments in emails as direct mail support.

# DELIVERY

## EVALUATION

Smart Grants are a bonus if the business gets them - but they shouldn't count on it. Smart is very competitive and therefore very risky to Innovate UK. We need to manage both the quantity and quality of the Smart applications as we do not want to increase the number of denied applications which would bring down our 25% success rate. So:

1. We need to measure website visits per week, per month, per year to understand peaks and troughs.
2. We need to understand the trends of social media to identify high peaks of traffic and discussion, so to expect more applications in the near future.
3. We need to understand how the Champion, Success and Editorial stories are having an effect in Trade media by receiving statistics back from those groups.
4. We need to create the virtual application to help eliminate bad ideas from the Smart application process, e.g. the idea may score low but the applicant may qualify for a voucher rather than a Smart grant.
5. We need to evaluate the power of blogging on .Gov website via readership numbers but also the power of third party blogging on applications.

## BUDGET

# QUARTERLY OVERVIEW

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
MILESTONE	<b>Smart Thinking</b> What made the business come to Innovate UK for Smart?	<b>Smart Thinking</b> Why did the business choose Smart?	<b>Smart Thinking</b> Other than funding, what were the experiences during application?	<b>Think Smart</b> What aspects of Smart helped your business succeed?
SMART SUCCESS CAMPAIGN	1 x Champion Success 3 x Success Stories Apr/May/Jun 8 x Editorial Stories	1 x Champion Success 3 x Success Stories Jul/Aug/Sep 10 x Editorial Stories	1 x Champion Success 3 x Success Stories Oct/Nov/Dec 10 x Editorial Stories	1 x Champion Success 3 x Success Stories Jan/Feb/Mar 12 x Editorial Stories
SMART MARKETING CAMPAIGN	Twitter Content @ #Smartsuccess Identifying the Smart Ambassador(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Venturefest East Midlands</li> <li>Venturefest West Midlands</li> </ul>	Twitter Content @ #Smartsuccess Twitter Content with Smart Ambassador Springwise Blogger invite to meet with Innovate UK (1-2-1) Development of Smart Digital app to work with BIC Application processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Venturefest Oxford</li> <li>Venturefest Scotland</li> </ul>	Twitter Content @ #Smartsuccess Twitter Content with Smart Ambassador Springwise Blogging – Innovate UK 2015 Event Smart's Smart App on .GOV + others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Venturefest North East</li> <li>Innovate UK 2015 Event</li> <li>Collaboration Nation</li> <li>Advanced Engineering 2015</li> <li>CENEX LCV 2015</li> </ul>	Twitter Content @ #Smartsuccess Twitter Content with Smart Ambassador Springwise Blogging – Projects/Stories/anecdotes Smart's Smart App on .GOV + others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Venturefest Manchester</li> <li>Venturefest Wales</li> <li>Cleantech Innovate</li> </ul>
SMART ROUNDS	Smart Round 1 & 2	Smart Round 3 & 4	Smart Round 5 & 6	Smart Round 7 & 8

