

Social Innovation Competition Application Guidance

Thank you for your interest in The Social Innovation Competition, delivered by Firstport on behalf of the Scottish Government.

This year's social Innovation Competition celebrates **the Great Outdoors**. For many, the 2020 lockdown has strengthened our appreciation for being able to get outside when possible. We wanted to mark this significance by supporting 3 of the most innovative, outdoor focussed enterprise ideas!

The Social Innovation Competition offers three £5,000 awards – including the Young Social Innovator category open to applicants aged 16 to 30 – combined with tailored support to refine and develop these ideas.

What we are looking for:

- Applications that involve innovative ideas that:
 - o encourage everyone to get out and about and enjoy the Great Outdoors in a responsible way
 - o seek to benefit the environment, for example through combatting climate change, promoting more environmentally sustainable lifestyles or tackling environmental damage
 - o run activities or services in the Great Outdoors that specifically benefit vulnerable individuals and communities
- The idea may be at a very early stage or may have already done some early testing/trading but it must demonstrate the potential to create significant, lasting social impact
- Applicants must be aged 16 or over and permanently resident in Scotland.

Check out our [case studies](#), including last year's winners, for examples.

Key steps to apply to the competition

- Read these guidance notes
- Apply using the online [application form here](#)
- Upload your two-minute video pitch through the online form
- Submit your application before noon on 11 December 2020

Key dates

Applications open	Wednesday 23 September
Applications close	Noon, Friday 11 December
Competition results announced	February 2021

You are encouraged to meet with a Firstport business advisor for free business support before submitting your application. Unsuccessful applicants will be provided with feedback and may be encouraged to meet with a Firstport business advisor for free business support and/or to apply for alternative funding.

Pre-application Checklist

You will not be able to progress with your application without meeting all the eligibility criteria listed below.

I am aged 16 or over
I am permanently resident in Scotland
Most of the people who will benefit from my idea are resident in Scotland
The activities of my venture do not directly involve political campaigning or the advancement of religion
My innovation is in the early stages of development – i.e. it is at the ‘idea’ or ‘start-up’ phase (up to 3 years) and has not begun trading on a regular basis (this does not include any occasional pilot activity undertaken as part of market research)
My innovation aims to provide direct social benefit to individuals, communities and/or the environment
If you have received funding from Firstport before: I have completed the funding milestones (<i>you can check this with your grant manager if you are unsure. Please note that priority will be given to new applicants</i>).

Your application

Describe the social issue or challenges, your solution and how your idea connects to the theme of The Great Outdoors. We will ask you about the size and scale of the issue, how you respond to this problem in an innovative way and what your vision is. We will also ask you to outline how you will use the £5,000 if you win.

It is essential that you are the owner of the idea/innovative solution and that you have the capacity and ability to take the idea forward in the next 12 months. You can be a team or an individual, or you might see this as an opportunity to create a spin-off to your established business or activity.

Eligible costs – What can you use the prize money for?

You can use the prize money to help pay for some of the start-up costs. The kinds of costs we cover are wide-ranging. Typical examples include:

- Legal fees for setting up a legal entity for the enterprise, and/or registration as a charity or community interest company
- Intellectual property or trademark applications
- Rent
- Website, branding, logo design
- Marketing materials
- Stationery
- Insurances

What can't you use the prize money for?

- To pay for your own time or to contribute to your salary, or that of anyone else involved in the delivery of your enterprise's services. If you are looking for salary funding, check our Build It Award.
- To buy IT equipment for personal use (e.g. laptops)
- To pay for consultancy work on your business plan, market research, or feasibility study (although our business support team can give you further advice and assistance with these areas)
- To fund overseas travel
- To fund long term training or academic qualifications.

The two-minute video pitch

This will help the panel assess your idea. Do you have a clear vision, drive and passion to succeed and make a difference in your society? It will also help us to see how well you can pitch or sell your idea – to potential customers, funders, investors, local authorities, partners, media etc.

You should cover:

- What is your social innovation?
- How does it connect to the theme of The Great Outdoors?
- Who will benefit from your innovation?
- Your vision for the future – how are you planning to grow and develop your innovation?

You can record your video on your phone, a tablet or computer. You may wish to practice a few times. Think about light and keeping background noise to a minimum. See our [Video Pitch Guide](#) for more details.

Are you a Young Social Innovator?

To apply for the Young Social Innovators category, you (as the founder or creator of the idea) must be aged between 16 and 30 years old on Friday 11 December 2020.

Do you need help and support to develop your idea?

If you would like to discuss your idea with a Firstport business advisor, contact us on 0131 564 0331 to arrange a meeting, stating that you wish to apply for the Social Innovation Competition.

You can also send enquiries to info@firstport.org.uk, stating “Social Innovation Competition” in the subject line.

Data protection

Firstport is committed to respecting your privacy and protecting your personal data.

We will keep the information provided within your application on file for a period of seven years. It will be permanently deleted after the publication of Firstport annual accounts. This is for accounting purposes and in line with HMRC requirements.

Submitting an application to the Social Innovation Competition is acknowledgement that you understand and accept our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) set out in our Privacy Policy.