



Department
for Transport

National e-cycle support programme 2021 to 2022: expression of interest guidance

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Contents

National e-cycle support programme 2021 to 2022: expression of interest guidance	1
Introduction	3
Scope of this competition	4
Objectives	4
Deliverables	4
Location	6
Application process	6
Indicative timetable	8
Funding amounts	10
Monitoring and evaluation	11
Eligibility	13
Who is eligible to bid?	13
Assessment process	13
Phase 1: expression of interest	14
Experience and deliverability	17
Experience in monitoring and evaluation	17
Value for money	18
Assessment of bids	19
Phase 2: business case development	20
Transparency and privacy	21
Fraud	21



Introduction

In July 2020, the Prime Minister outlined his vision for the future of cycling and walking in [Gear Change](#). A step-change in investment is needed to ensure cycling and walking become the natural first choice for short journeys and account for half of all journeys in towns and cities by 2030.

Investing in active travel measures brings a range of benefits, including reduced mortality risk, reduced workplace absenteeism, improved journey quality, and benefits from mode-shift away from cars (for example, reduced congestion, carbon emissions and air pollution).

The health benefits are particularly significant. Physical activity, like cycling and walking, can help to prevent and manage over 20 chronic conditions and diseases, including some cancers, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and depression. Physical inactivity is responsible for 1 in 6 UK deaths (equal to smoking) and is estimated to cost the UK [£7.4 billion annually](#).

E-cycles, specifically, have the potential to reduce carbon emissions, especially as e-cycles allow journeys that would be taken by car to be replaced with journeys by cycle. This is possible as e-cycles cover on average [22% more kilometres](#) than normal bicycles, allowing journeys perceived to be too far on traditional cycles to be achieved by e-cycles.

As e-cycles attract those who have previously faced [barriers to traditional cycling](#), the numerous health, wellbeing, fitness and cognitive [benefits to cycling](#) can be realised by a wider demographic than those with barriers to traditional cycling. For example, one study found e-cycles to have the [biggest effect on women](#) enabling them to cycle more often.

We are pleased to announce this opportunity to improve health, economic and environmental outcomes across the country through a national e-cycle support programme.



Scope of this competition

Objectives

The national e-cycle support programme aims to:

- get more people to e-cycle and accelerate the uptake of e-cycles, in particular, those who would not normally consider cycling without the benefit of electric assistance in order to maximise health benefits: including for underrepresented groups such as disabled people, BAME groups, women and lower socioeconomic groups
- accelerate the number of trips by e-cycle replacing motor vehicle journeys to maximise health, economic, wellbeing and carbon savings by 2025
- increase public awareness and understanding of the benefits of e-cycles

Ultimately, this programme will contribute towards the Prime Minister's commitment to cycling and walking, as outlined in [Gear Change](#). This recognises the step-change in investment needed to ensure cycling and walking become the natural first choice for short journeys and account for half of all journeys in towns and cities by 2030.

Benefits of this programme will be felt by e-cyclists, wider road users, local residents and the cycle trade. More broadly there will be a range of economic and environmental benefits.

Deliverables

The delivery organisation or consortium will be responsible for delivering:



- short-term opportunities to try e-cycles schemes: offering people a chance to ride in a relaxed, pleasant environment
- longer-term loans of e-cycles: encouraging people to see how e-cycles can be used in their daily routine
- provide e-cycles to help people access opportunities for employment and skills

All components of the scheme should include training for users and maintenance for the cycles. The schemes should also be delivered without any pressure to buy.

A wide range of e-cycles are expected so people are able to try out different brands and types of e-cycles. Adapted e-cycles must also be included in the e-cycle fleet.

All e-cycles must comply with the [electrically assisted pedal cycles \(EAPCs\) regulations](#).

The delivery partner is expected to deliver all components of this programme. You may wish to form consortia with other organisations and coordinate a bid. The consortium should assign a lead organisation who will be responsible for the coordination and management of the bodies within the consortium.

The grant agreement for this programme will be for one year. If the pilot is successful and funding is secured, the programme may be extended for up to 3 further years.

Applicants are expected to provide a plan for what happens to the e-cycles at the end of the scheme.



Location

All schemes in the programme are to be delivered nationally. This can include London. In the pilot year, we may look to trial initiatives in specific locations. This may then be expanded in future years if the programme is extended.

Application process

The scheme will take the form of a 2-stage competition:

Phase 1

This is an expression of interest (EOI) stage where we invite organisations and consortia leads to express their interest in delivering the scheme and to outline their proposals for delivery. Applicants should complete the application form. This will be assessed against the criteria outlined in the assessment process section.

Phase 2

This is a business case development stage where those successful in the EOI stage will be invited to develop proposals, with support from the Department for Transport (DfT). Successful applicants will be awarded funding to deliver the 3 projects.

This guidance is to support an application for Phase 1 of the competition. Further guidance and support will be given to applicants successful in advancing to Phase 2 of the programme.

How to apply

Complete the application form and return an electronic copy only of the bid to Walking.Cycling@dft.gov.uk.



You should address each of the questions within the stated maximum word count. Content that exceeds the maximum word count will not be considered.

It is also important to note that only information in the application form will be considered, so do not send additional information or appendices.

Include “EOI E-Cycle Application [Org name]” in the subject line of the email. Proposals must be received no later than 24 December 2021. You will receive confirmation that we have received your proposal within 1 working day.

Applicants can only submit one application.

Enquiries may be directed to Walking.Cycling@dft.gov.uk.

We may wish to discuss the content of bids with applicants to seek clarity on any aspects following the deadline.



Indicative timetable

The table below outlines the timetable for this programme. These dates are indicative and subject to change.

Stage	Timeline
Stakeholder information event	23 November 2021
Deadline for EOI guidance feedback	25 November 2021
Phase I: EOI launch	26 November 2021
Phase I: EOI deadline	24 December 2021
Phase II: launch	14 January 2022
Phase II: deadline	4 February 2022
Review and select winners	11 March 2022
Successful schemes begin to deliver	1 April 2022



Successful delivery partners will be expected to have committed funding for at least the purchase of e-cycles by the end of March 2022.



Funding amounts

On 28 July 2020, the Prime Minister announced ambitious [plans to boost cycling and walking](#), with a vision for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be cycled or walked by 2030. This included a £2 billion package of funding for active travel, which is the largest ever boost for cycling and walking.

The plan includes the commitment to increase access to e-cycles by setting up a new national e-cycle support programme. There is up to £8 million available for 2021 to 2022 to deliver both aspects of the scheme: up to £4 million will be available for opportunities to try schemes and up to £4 million for schemes that provide e-cycles to help remove barriers to accessing education and employment. We expect bids to offer good value for money, which in some cases may not require use of the full amount of funding.

In Phase 1, the EOI stage, we expect applicants to outline indicative costings for the project elements and overall budget. If the applicant is successful in the EOI stage, they will be invited to develop the business case further and provide more detailed costings.

The grant funding will be allocated to successful applicants during financial year 2021 to 2022. Funding is expected to be committed within the financial year 2021 to 2022, but operational delivery can commence in 2022 to 2023.

The grant agreement will cover one year. However, bids should demonstrate how they would deliver funding over 4 years, in the event that the grant agreement was to be extended for future years. Funding over additional years only needs to be indicative.

DfT is under no obligation to accept any application or make an award of funding and costs incurred in submitting an application are defined as ineligible expenditure under the terms of the grant.

Interested organisations are encouraged to approach DfT to discuss their bids prior to submission if they have questions.



Monitoring and evaluation

The first year of the national e-cycle programme will run as a pilot. This is due to the novel and innovative nature of the programme, which means we will need to collect monitoring data to understand and learn lessons on the delivery of the programme, and evaluation evidence to understand the impact and value for money.

This evidence will be used to determine how the programme is delivered in the future if further funding is secured.

DfT is in the process of procuring a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) partner to evaluate the national e-cycle programme in addition to other e-cycle interventions (such as schemes funded through the Access and Capability Fund).

We would expect the M&E partner to be in place in February or March 2022. The delivery partner will be expected to work closely with the M&E partners to determine what M&E data needs to be collected by who, when and how.

More specifically, the delivery partner's role would be:

- working with the evaluation partner to design the monitoring data needed and to ensure its collection
- providing that data to DfT/the evaluation partner
- working with the evaluation partner to ensure the programme is built in a way to enable robust impact evaluation

It would be the role of the evaluation partner to analyse the data and write the evaluation report.

We expect any delivery partner to evidence their commitment, capability and capacity to work with our M&E partner throughout the programme.

The M&E activity will look at the programme as a whole as well as individual elements. The delivery partner will also need to work with



the M&E partner when designing the implementation of the programme itself.

This is to ensure that the programme is set up in a way that allows experimental or quasi-experimental impact evaluation to be conducted (for example, comparing the impacts of different types of interventions, comparing the impacts of interventions in different areas).



Eligibility

Who is eligible to bid?

To be eligible as the sole delivery partner or to lead a consortium, you must:

- be a charity, or other organisation eligible under either Section 70 of the Charities Act 2006 or Section 153 of the Environment Protection Act 1990
- have experience in delivering trial schemes and/or schemes which that benefit underrepresented groups to access e-cycles
- demonstrate commitment, capacity and capability to work with DfT's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) partner to deliver a pilot scheme

You must demonstrate capability to deliver all activities. You may wish to form consortia with other organisations and coordinate a bid. The consortium should assign a lead organisation who will be responsible for the coordination and management of the bodies within the consortium. The consortium or sole delivery partner may also be able to subcontract, where appropriate.

The lead organisation should submit the expression of interest on behalf of the consortium.

Assessment process

The competition will take place over 2 phases, to minimise the burden on applicants submitting applications:



- Phase 1: this is an expression of interest (EOI) stage where we invite organisations and consortia leads to express their interest in delivering the scheme and to outline their proposals for delivery
- Phase 2: this is a business case development stage where those successful in the EOI stage will be invited to develop proposals with support from the DfT

Phase 1: expression of interest

In this first phase we are looking for applicants to outline intended activities as part of the pilot. We don't expect your project plans to be fully formed at this stage, but we are interested to understand your ideas for the national programme and how you intend to deliver all projects:

- short term opportunities to try e-cycles schemes: offering people a chance to ride in a relaxed, pleasant environment
- longer-term loans of e-cycles: encouraging people to see how e-cycles can be used in their daily routine
- provide e-cycles to help people access opportunities for employment and skills

Other things we would like to know about are:

- how you will reach underrepresented groups and groups with barriers to cycling. This includes disabled people, BAME groups, women and lower socioeconomic groups
- proposed training offer for each of the above elements
- how e-cycles will be maintained
- plans for the procured e-cycles in the case that grant agreement is not extended in future years
- plans for the programme if the grant agreement is extended for 3 further years. These costing only need to be indicative



As outlined above, in the first phase we expect applicants to outline indicative costings for the project elements and overall budget. We do not expect applicants to state specific numbers of participants or locations in this stage.

If the applicant is successful in the EOI stage, they will be invited to develop a business case and provide more detailed costings.

If you are forming a consortium with other organisations, the lead organisation must coordinate this bid. The consortium lead will be responsible for the coordination and management of the bodies within the consortium. At this stage, we expect the consortium to have agreed on its members and have outlined the projects each member will deliver.

Applicants need to complete the separate EOI form. You need to submit your bid as a single document as either a word document or accessible PDF. We will not accept any additional information unless specifically requested. Please do not exceed the word count on questions.

You will need to answer a number of mandatory fields. If you have any further questions on the questions, contact walking.cycling@dft.gov.uk.

Expressions of interest will be assessed against the following criteria:

- how well the plans consider the programme aims and plans to deliver projects
- experience in delivering similar projects and deliverability
- experience in monitoring and evaluation
- value for money

How well the plans consider the programme aims and plans to deliver projects

We are looking for consideration of how each project will be delivered. The applicant will also be assessed on their plans for the programme based on both 1-year funding and 4-year funding scenarios.



Appropriate, yet ambitious, plans are encouraged for both funding scenarios.

We are also looking for ambitious bids that are able to achieve our programme objectives, reach a wide range of beneficiaries and offer valuable learnings from the pilot.

We will assess applications on their ability to effectively achieve the following programme objectives:

- get more people to e-cycle and accelerate the uptake of e-cycles, in particular, those who would not normally consider cycling without the benefit of electric assistance in order to maximise health benefits: including for underrepresented groups such as disabled people, BAME groups, women and lower socioeconomic groups
- accelerate the number of trips by e-cycle replacing motor vehicle journeys in order to maximise health, economic, wellbeing and carbon savings by 2025
- increase public awareness and understanding of the benefits of e-cycles

In particular, we are looking for bids that demonstrate capability in getting currently underrepresented groups in cycling to try e-cycles. We will therefore assess applicants' knowledge and understanding of common barriers and enablers to cycling and e-cycling.

Other specific components of the scheme we are looking for include:

- adapted e-cycles must be present at events and available for longer term loans. We will assess applicants' experience in delivering inclusive cycling events, with the relevant expertise and training
- a training package that is proportionate and appropriate for each of the programme activities. This should include initial plans on the level of training and adherence to the Government's National Standard for Cycle Training and evidence of capability to offer training to beneficiaries with varying levels of cycling skill and confidence. We



would expect trainers to hold an up to date National Standard Instructor qualification¹

- a maintenance package will also be required for all e-cycles in the scheme
- capability in delivering effective advertisement and outreach to raise awareness of e-cycles

Experience and deliverability

The applicant will be assessed on experience of delivering large active travel programmes.

The applicant will also be assessed on experience in managing and effectively distributing large amounts of funding. If the applicant is applying on behalf of a consortium, this will need to show the capability of the lead organisation to manage funding and distribute effectively to its partners. It also includes the capability of the organisation to commit to, and deliver, funding at pace.

This programme seeks to deliver behaviour change interventions. Therefore, evidence of delivering behaviour change projects is required. This may include evidence of using behaviour change models.

Experience in monitoring and evaluation

The first year of the national e-cycle programme will run as a pilot, testing the various interventions to better understand which deliver value for money. This means there will be a focus on collecting M&E evidence to inform future programme design.

¹ National Standard Instructor (NSI) status or Level 2 Award in Instructing Cycle Training, or equivalent



Applicants should demonstrate experience and capability in delivering projects with monitoring and evaluation requirements. Evidence of delivering programmes with experimental or quasi-experimental designs are also preferable.

Value for money

In Phase 1, we will be qualitatively assessing bids for their potential to deliver value for money. Value for money refers to the optimum combination of whole-life cost and quality (or fitness for purpose) to meet the government's objectives. Value for money will be assessed against the criteria of economy, efficiency, equity and effectiveness.

Criteria	Description
Economy	Are you buying inputs of the appropriate quality at the right price?
Efficiency	How well do the inputs of the project deliver the desired outcomes? (spending well)
Equity	How fairly are the benefits distributed? To what extent will we reach marginalised groups?
Effectiveness	Are the outputs produced by an intervention, having the intended effect? ('Spending wisely')

A full quantitative value for money assessment is not expected at this stage. This will be developed as part of the business case stage (Phase 2).



For question 1 in Phase 1 of the application, explain how you will effectively meet the programme objectives and include the potential costs and risks.

Up to £4 million will be available for opportunities to try schemes and up to £4 million for schemes that provide e-cycles to help remove barriers to accessing education and employment. We expect bids to offer good value for money, which in some cases may not require use of the full amount of funding.

While not expected, if appropriate, a description of any additional matched funding sources that have been secured or applied for and what they will be used for and how they will provide additional value.

Assessment of bids

Proposals that have satisfactorily met the mandatory requirements will be assessed against the scheme criteria. Each section will be marked and weighted accordingly. The bids will primarily be assessed relative to one another, but should none of them reach a basic standard we reserve the right not to award any funds.



Phase 2: business case development

We will invite a small number of applicants who are successful in the EOI stage to proceed to Phase 2: developing their plans into a strategic outline business case. This includes details of project costings, delivery plans, timelines and value for money assurances.

We will work with successful applicants from the EOI stage to advance bids. This includes workshops with analytical, financial, and evaluation colleagues.

Phase 2 will be a competitive stage and not all applicants that are progressed to Phase 2 will be awarded funding.

This should also build detail on how legal requirements will be met, including in relation to procurement and subsidy control. As part of the application process, all applicants must confirm that they have received legal advice on the UK's international obligations on subsidy control and the implications of their proposal and provide a short summary of that advice in the application form.

If applicable, you should also seek legal advice on state aid. [Guidance for public authorities on complying with the UK's international obligations on subsidy control](#) is available.



Transparency and privacy

Any personal data provided through the application will be processed in line with data protection legislation, with DfT as the controller. The lawful basis that applies to this processing is Article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR, as the processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority. Where personal data is collected, it will be used for the national e-cycle support scheme. We are processing your data as part of Phase 1 of the application process. We may also contact you about further opportunities should we decide to expand the scheme in future.

We may share information, including your personal data, with internal assessors as we assess the applications. Your personal data will only be shared with the assessor for that purpose and will only be retained by them for the duration of the assessment process.

We will keep any personal data you provide for the duration of the trial, and for two years after it ends. [DfT's privacy policy](#) has more information about your rights in relation to your personal data, how to complain and how to contact the Data Protection Officer.

Fraud

DfT adopts a 'zero-tolerance' culture in relation to acts of fraud, bribery and corruption. We do not permit it under any circumstances – any such acts will be investigated fully and where appropriate, legal action will be taken, in line with Cabinet Office guidelines.

To protect public funds, DfT may use the information provided to prevent and detect fraud. DfT may also share this information, for the same purpose with Cabinet Office, Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) or other civil service departments or organisations responsible for the monitoring or handling of public funds.



Department
for Transport

DfT and/or Cabinet Office or GIAA may process application data provided to undertake data analytics for fraud and/or error prevention and detection purposes, including the use of [Spotlight](#).