

Innovative nuclear competition launch – are you ready for the challenge?

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority – including Sellafield Ltd and Magnox Ltd – has teamed up with Innovate UK to call on companies to come up with new ideas and innovative approaches to the challenge.

Robotics, sensors, artificial intelligence and autonomous systems are just some of the potential technologies which could be used for the Sort and Segregate Nuclear Waste competition.

It is open to any interested organisations – they don't have to be from a nuclear background – to form consortia and develop a plan to address the challenge. It involves work at Sellafield and several Magnox nuclear reactor sites – the UK's first generation of nuclear reactor.

The NDA's Head of Innovation, Sara Huntingdon, said:

It's been a challenging time for businesses in recent months. We hope this competition will excite organisations – inspiring them to bring forward ideas which could help transform our work in the nuclear sector.

Dealing with waste is a huge ongoing challenge for us as we progress our mission to decommission nuclear sites. We want people to be creative and help us develop new and innovative solutions. We welcome technologies from all sectors – organisations don't have to have nuclear experience – just great ideas and a passion for turning those into a reality.

Innovate UK's Nuclear Innovation Lead, Derek Allen, said: "We are delighted to be working with the NDA again to deliver another Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) to help drive innovation into the nuclear decommissioning supply chain.

We look forward to working with a wide range of organisations, particularly those who will be new to the sector, to deliver exciting and creative solutions. This is a great opportunity for UK organisations to grow their business and at the same time help deal with the country's nuclear waste in a safer, faster and cheaper way.

This is the second competition to encourage integrated innovation in nuclear decommissioning. The first launched in 2017 to find solutions to help

decommission highly radioactive facilities at Sellafield – 15 submissions were identified in phase one as having potential, 5 then went forward to phase two to develop their ideas further and 2 winning consortia were then chosen to turn their ideas into reality.

This latest competition opens for applications from August 17 and the closing date is November 11. After a rigorous assessment process it is likely a number of consortia will be chosen in February 2021 to carry out a 3 month feasibility study into their idea, for which they will each be awarded up to £60,000.

The best submissions will then be given up to £900,000 to go forward to the design and build phase of the project, which can last up to 15 months.

Further competition details can be found [[here](#)]

An online briefing event/webinar takes place on August 25, to register click [[here](#)]

Further details on the technical specification can be found [here](#)