

[News story: Improving prison detection systems: apply for contracts](#)

The [Ministry of Justice](#) has up to £950,000 to invest in innovative projects that help to tackle the presence of drugs, drones and mobile phones in UK prisons.

Innovative ways of detecting contraband

The presence of contraband and illegal items in prison is a major issue that has been regularly highlighted in the media.

In response, the Ministry of Justice is seeking projects that can demonstrate innovative ways of detecting at least one of the following:

- mobile phones and SIM cards, including phones with very low metal content
- illegal substances, particularly in very small quantities
- other contraband, including tobacco, alcohol, weapons and explosives
- drones

Projects must aim to detect contraband in one or more of a number of circumstances including on people, concealed inside the body, in bags, in buildings, at entry and exit points, in vehicles, and in open areas.

A 2-phase opportunity

Funding for projects is under SBRI (Small Business Research Initiative) and will be in 2 phases.

Phase 1 will allow a number of organisations to develop and explain concepts. The best ideas will receive funding in phase 2 to develop them into a working prototype.

Competition information

- the competition opens on 18 September 2017, and the deadline is at midday on 1 November 2017
- up to £500,000 is available for phase 1 projects. These should have costs of up to £50,000 and last 4 to 6 months
- up to £450,000 is available to develop the best ideas from phase 1 into working prototypes
- any organisation that can demonstrate a route to market for its idea, working alone or in partnership with others, may apply
- successful projects will attract 100% funded development contracts
- a briefing event will be held in October