

[News story: Take on the biggest healthcare challenges: apply for funding](#)

New healthcare technologies, products and processes could transform the life sciences sector and improve the lives of patients.

Through the [Biomedical Catalyst](#) – a partnership between Innovate UK and the [Medical Research Council](#) – there is up to £10 million available to UK businesses to:

- prevent disease and support proactive management of health conditions
- detect and diagnose disease earlier, leading to better patient outcomes
- develop tailored treatments that offer potential cures or change an underlying disease

Hundreds of projects already funded

Since 2012, the Biomedical Catalyst has awarded over £250 million in grants to more than 300 projects.

Previous projects include [Calon Cardio](#) and [Swansea University](#), which received £1.66 million for their artificial heart pump, the MiniVAD (ventricular assist device).

Biomedical Catalyst funding supported the evaluation of performance and safety data. It has helped to move the device one step closer to being used on patients in clinical trials – with the potential to slow the progression of heart failure and prolong the life of people waiting for heart transplants.

Any life science sector or discipline

Projects in the competition can be in any life science sector or discipline, including:

- medical technologies and devices
- stratified healthcare, which involves grouping patients based on risk of disease or response to therapy
- advanced therapies, such as gene and cell therapies
- digital health
- drug discovery
- diagnostics

There are 2 parts:

- feasibility studies and primer awards, for projects to test and provide proof of concept

- early and late stage awards for projects that are further along in their development

Feasibility and primer projects

There is up to £3 million for organisations to explore the commercial potential of an idea and carry out technical evaluations.

This could be through:

- reviewing research evidence and identifying possible applications
- assessing business opportunities
- assessing or protecting intellectual property
- validating initial concepts and pre-clinical work through experimental studies
- initial demonstration using in-vitro and in-vivo models, but not human clinical trials
- early-stage prototyping
- developing preliminary regulatory advice

Competition information

- the competition opens on 21 January 2019 and the deadline for applications is midday on 3 April 2019
- UK-registered small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) or research and technology organisations are eligible to lead a project
- total eligible costs must be between £50,000 and £1 million
- projects must start by 1 September 2019 and end by 31 March 2021. They should last between 3 and 18 months
- businesses could get up to 70% of their eligible costs

Early and late-stage projects

There is up to £7 million for early and late stage projects. These should have moved beyond initial research and are ready to be tested and evaluated in a clinical setting or other relevant environment.

Projects could look at:

- experimental evaluation at the laboratory scale
- evaluating proof of concept or safety through the use of in vitro and in vivo models
- exploring various production mechanisms
- prototyping ideas
- product development planning
- intellectual property protection
- demonstrating clinical utility and effectiveness
- demonstrating of safety and efficacy, such as through phase 1 and 2 clinical trials
- regulatory planning

Competition information

- the competition opens on 21 January 2019 and the deadline for applications is at midday on 3 April 2019
- UK-registered SME or research and technology organisations are eligible to lead a project
- applicants that pass the written stage will be invited to an interview panel on 10 May 2019 to present on their project
- projects must start by 1 September 2019 and end by 31 March 2021, lasting at least one year
- total eligible costs must be between £250,000 and £4 million
- businesses could get up to 70% of their eligible costs