Contracts for Innovation: In-Orbit Demonstration (IOD) of In-Orbit Manufacturing (IOM) in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Phase 0/A Studies

Commercial Reference: UKSAC25_0088

Competition Guidance Notes

Contents

Short Summary

Eligible organisations can apply for up to £300,000, excluding VAT, to develop a Phase 0/A study for an In-Orbit Demonstration of In-Orbit Manufacturing technologies in Low Earth Orbit.

This procurement is split into two Lots:

- Lot 1: In-Orbit Manufacturing for terrestrial healthcare or medical applications
    - Up to £300,000 excluding VAT
- Lot 2: In-Orbit Manufacturing for other terrestrial applications
    - Up to £300,000 excluding VAT

Applicants may only apply to one Lot and may only submit one application.

This funding is from the UK Space Agency.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

3D	Three-Dimensional
CA	Contract Award
CdTe	Cadmium Telluride
CfI	Contracts for Innovation
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
HMRC	His Majesty's Revenue and Customs
IOD	In-Orbit Demonstration
IOM	In-Orbit Manufacturing
IP	Intellectual Property
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
ISAM	In-Orbit, Servicing, Assembly & Manufacturing
KDP	Potassium Dihydrogen Phosphate
KO	Kick-Off
MDR	Mission Definition Review
PDF	Portable Document Format
PRA	Prudential Regulation Authority
PRR	Preliminary Requirements Review
R&D	Research and Development
UK	United Kingdom
UKSA	UK Space Agency
VAT	Value Added Tax
WBS	Work Breakdown Structure
WPD	Work Package Description

Definitions

In-Orbit-Demonstration (IOD)	The process of testing and validating new space technologies or capabilities directly in the space environment to prove their performance, reliability, and readiness for operational use, which otherwise could not be fully validated through ground-based testing alone.
Payload	The specific equipment, instruments, or cargo a spacecraft carries to achieve the mission's primary goals, such as scientific research, communication, navigation, or ISAM services.
In-Orbit Manufacturing	The process of creating products or materials in space that are intended for use in space or on Earth, often leveraging the unique conditions of space to enhance their quality or properties. Examples of In-Orbit Manufacturing applications **for use on Earth** include, but are not limited to: • **Advanced Materials and Manufacturing** including semiconductors, optical fibres (ZBLAN), nonlinear and linear optical material (KDP crystals), high magnetic materials, thin layer deposition. • **Photovoltaics:** including vapour deposition and production of relevant crystals such as Silicon and CdTe. • **Biopharmaceuticals** including protein crystallisation and tissue engineering. • **Regenerative Medicine** including cell and gene therapy, treatment of deadly diseases, organ growth, and premium skin-care products. • **Gene Editing:** Using natural radiation in space for mutagenesis, for example to identify approaches to grow more climate resilient crops. Examples of In-Orbit Manufacturing applications **for use in Space** include, but are not limited to: • 3D printing of spare or new parts, enabling spacecraft or space stations to produce tools, brackets, or other components without needing to launch them from Earth. • Recycling and Reprocessing of waste materials in orbit, including space debris. • In-Orbit Extrusion and Curing of resins or other thermosetting/thermoplastic materials launched in raw form.

1 Summary (Description)

This is a Innovate UK Contracts for Innovation competition funded by the UK Space Agency.

The Aim is to undertake research and technology development to examine the feasibility of delivering a mission that is compliant to the In-Orbit Demonstration (IOD) of an In-Orbit Manufacturing (IOM) mission requirements (Annex F), mature key technologies, identify top risks and develop the business case for the selected IOM application.

The following documents support this Competition Guidance and are available on the Find a Tender website:

- Contracts for Innovation Terms and Conditions (Annex A)
- UKSA Contracts for Innovation Additional Guidance (Annex B)
- Contracts for Innovation Finance Sheet (Annex C)
- Evaluation Criteria and Marking of Applications (Annex D)
- IP Declaration (Annex E)
- IOD IOM Mission Requirements (Annex F)
- Contracts for Innovation Application Form (Annex G)

It is recommended that you review all the annexes before starting your application and familiarising yourselves with the terms and conditions of the competition.

1.1 Background

The UK is committed to advancing its leadership in space-enabled manufacturing, as outlined in the Space Industrial Plan (March 2024). In-Orbit Manufacturing (IOM) is one subset of the wider In-Orbit Servicing, Assembly, and Manufacturing (ISAM) market. Investing in ISAM allows the UK to exploit early investments to become leaders in the market. The UK has developed the essential building blocks for ISAM, but we need to act now to secure our competitive advantage.

In-Orbit Manufacturing (IOM) represents a transformative opportunity to produce materials and products in space that offer superior quality and performance compared to those manufactured on Earth. By overcoming terrestrial limitations, IOM can unlock new markets and drive innovation across multiple sectors.

This procurement is structured into **two Lots** to address distinct terrestrial applications:

- **Lot 1:** In-Orbit Manufacturing for terrestrial healthcare or medical applications
- **Lot 2:** In-Orbit Manufacturing for other terrestrial applications

Applicants may apply to only one Lot and submit a single application. Each Lot will fund a feasibility study (Phase 0/A) to assess the technical and commercial viability of delivering an In-Orbit Demonstration (IOD) mission in Low Earth Orbit (LEO), in accordance with UKSA's mission requirements (see Annex F).

The competition aims to:

- Demonstrate the technical feasibility of in-orbit manufacturing processes in LEO for the selected application area
- Mature key payload and manufacturing technologies relevant to the chosen Lot
- Evaluate suitable mission architectures and operational concepts for demonstration
- Identify and assess risks, constraints, and enabling technologies
- Develop a credible route to market, including engagement with end users and stakeholders

Projects must address the high-risk, high-cost environment of in-orbit technology testing and provide evidence of engagement with end users to demonstrate commercial potential. Proposals should detail intended customer groups, integrators, and suppliers, and present a comprehensive management approach, including Work Package Descriptions (WPDs) and a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) for both Phase 0 and Phase A. Applications must demonstrate compatibility against the mission requirements (Annex F) and ability to deliver the tasks set out below (Section 5). You should elaborate and critique these tasks, identifying any additional suitable activities (with justification).

This competition aims to fund two studies.

1.2 Contracts for Innovation Summary

This is a single-phase competition that the UK Space Agency will use to inform decision making when developing a potential In-Orbit Demonstration (IOD) programme for ISAM payloads.

In applying to this competition, you are entering into a competitive process.

Any adoption and implementation of a solution from this competition would be subject to a separate, possibly competitive, procurement exercise. This competition does not cover the purchase of any solution by the UK Government.

This competition closes at 17:00 GMT (UK time) on Monday 01 December 2025.

2 Your Project

2.1 Eligibility

Projects must:

- Be ready to commence by 08 December 2025
- Be completed by 31st March 2026
- Focus on a terrestrial application of In-Orbit Manufacturing (in-space applications of IOM are out of scope of this competition)

- Conduct the majority of the research and development within the UK

2.2 Applicant

To lead a project, you:

- Can be an organisation of any size
- Can work alone or with others from business, research organisations, research and technology organisations or the third sector as subcontractors
- Must have a valid UK bank account capable of accepting BACS payments
- Must be able to provide reporting against North Star Metric (see section 7.1)

This competition will not fund any procurement, commercial, business development or supply chain activity with any Russian or Belarusian entity as lead or subcontractor. This includes any goods or services originating from a Russian or Belarusian source.

Contracts will be awarded to a single legal entity only. However, if you can justify subcontracting components of the work, you can engage specialists or advisers. The project and delivery against the project milestones will still be the responsibility of the main contractor. For clarity your subcontractors may not meet all the eligibility criteria, however we maintain the right to review subcontractors on a case by case basis and to object where we see a need to.

3 Funding

A total of up to £600,000 exclusive of VAT is allocated to this competition.

We expect to fund a maximum of two projects, one per Lot. Each project should be delivered by 31st of March 2026.

Each project can range in size up to a total cost of £300,000 (excluding VAT) per study, and for a duration of up to four months.

The contract is completed at the completion of all milestones set out in the project plan, and the successful organisation is expected to pursue commercialisation of their solution.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

You must state whether you are VAT registered before entering your project costs.

VAT is the responsibility of the invoicing business. We will not provide any further advice and suggest you seek independent advice from HMRC.

VAT registered

If you are VAT registered, you must enter your project costs exclusive of VAT. As part of the application process VAT will be automatically calculated and added to your project cost total. Your total project costs, exclusive of VAT, must not exceed £300,000.

Not VAT registered

If you are not VAT registered, you must enter your project costs exclusive of VAT. You will not be able to increase total project costs to cover VAT later should you become VAT registered. Your total project costs must not exceed £300,000.

Research and development (R&D)

Your application must have at least 50% of the contract value attributed directly and exclusively to R&D services, including solution exploration and design. R&D can also include prototyping and field-testing the product or service. This lets you incorporate the results of your exploration and design and demonstrate that you can produce in quantity to acceptable quality standards.

R&D does not include:

- commercial development activities such as quantity production
- supply to establish commercial viability or to recover R&D costs
- integration, customisation or incremental adaptations and improvements to existing products or processes

4 Subsidy Control

Contracts for Innovation competitions involve procurement of R&D services at a fair market value and are not subject to subsidy control criteria that typically apply to grant funding.

5 Scope

5.1 Your project

The aim of this competition is to examine the feasibility of delivering an In-Orbit Demonstration (IOD) mission that will demonstrate the ability to conduct In-Orbit Manufacturing (IOM) of a chosen technology (i.e. product(s) or material(s)). The competition invites applicants to submit proposals of how they will deliver Phase 0/A feasibility studies which are compliant with the UKSA's mission requirements (Annex F). Applicants must also identify top risk areas in those designs, preliminary costs and schedules, and highlight end users through business strategies.

In-Orbit Manufacturing (IOM) for terrestrial use shall be interpreted as:

The process of creating products or materials in space that are intended for use on Earth, often leveraging the unique conditions of space to enhance their quality or properties.

Note that **the IOD mission shall not include a return-to-Earth element** – the intention of the IOD is to obtain payload data on ground that confirms the quantity and quality/performance of the product(s) or material(s) manufactured in space.

The Authority is agnostic over both the manufactured material / product chosen and the testing regime, provided there is clear alignment with the selected Lot. However, clear reasons, which include the economic benefits, on both material choice and test regime, including identified instrumentation, shall be provided.

The overall requirements (at this stage) are for in-situ production and testing to comprise an In-Orbit Manufacturing demonstration mission.

UKSA reserves the right to change or modify these requirements at any time, but all proposals shall submit designs and costed workplans based around and compliant to the requirements (Annex F).

The project shall be delivered in two Phases:

Phase 0: Mission Definition

The objectives of this Phase are to:

- Assess technical, operational and programmatic feasibility of an IOM demonstration mission in LEO;
- Define high-level mission and Payload concepts for demonstration;
- Identify critical technologies, risks and preliminary cost/ schedule constraints.

Phase 0 shall focus on completing TASK 1 to TASK 5 (Section 5.1.1-5.1.5).

Phase A: Feasibility

The objectives of this Phase are to:

- Mature the selected Phase 0 IOM demonstration mission and Payload concept;
- Refine system architecture, preliminary requirement and CONOPS for demonstration operations;
- Define technology maturation plan for IOM Payload;

Phase A shall focus on completing TASK 6 to TASK 10 (Section 5.1.6-5.1.10).

Phase 0 and Phase A refer to the mission lifecycle Phases listed in Table 1, as defined in ECSS-M-ST-10C[1]:

Table 1: Mission Lifecycle Phases

Phase	Title	Purpose
Phase 0	Mission Definition	Identify mission needs, constraints, and initial technical requirements.
Phase A	Feasibility	Assess technical and programmatic feasibility; refine requirements.
Phase B	Preliminary Definition	Develop system architecture and preliminary design; prepare for development.
Phase C	Detailed Definition	Finalize detailed design and prepare for implementation.
Phase D	Qualification and Production	Manufacture, integrate, and qualify the system for flight.
Phase E	Utilisation	Operate and maintain the system during its mission life.
Phase F	Disposal	Safely dispose of the system post-mission.

The Contractor shall perform a number of key tasks during the contract, as outlined below. In your response to this call for proposals, you should elaborate and critique these tasks, identifying any additional suitable activities (with justification), presenting Work Package Descriptions (WPDs) and a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) demonstrating a comprehensive and organised management approach.

You must demonstrate a credible and practical route to market, so your application must show how you will engage with potential end customers, integrators and suppliers, including a plan to commercialise your results.

Contracts will be given to a maximum of two successful applicants.

Contractors must perform the following tasks over the duration of the contract:

Phase 0: Mission Definition

Task 1: High-Level Requirements Definition

This task aims to:

- Capture strategic goals, mission objectives and high-level constraints for the IOM mission.
- Define high-level requirements for the space (platform and payload), ground and launch segments.

Associated deliverables shall include:

- High-Level Requirements Definition report

Task 2: Initial Mission Analysis and Trade Studies

This task aims to:

- Review the proposed IOM process, including evaluating materials, environmental constraints, and TRL gaps for in-orbit-demonstration.

- Compare Platforms, orbital parameters and logistics for demonstration.
- Perform initial mission analysis to identify CONOPS scenarios including demonstration sequencing, payload operations and end-of-life planning, deriving design drivers for the payload and identifying suitable launch and ground segment options.

Associated deliverables shall include:

- Initial Mission Analysis and Trade Studies report

Task 3: Risk, Cost & Schedule Assessment

This task aims to:

- Identify preliminary technical, programmatic and IOM specific risks.
- Provide a rough order of magnitude cost for the full mission lifecycle.
- Provide a mission schedule with assumptions and constraints clearly identified.

Associated deliverables shall include:

- Mission Risk Register (Version 1)
- Mission Schedule (Version 1)
- Mission Cost report (Version 1)

Phase 0 Deliverables:

Overall, the following set of deliverables are required as outputs of the Phase 0 tasks:

- High-Level Requirements Definition report
- Initial Mission Analysis and Trade Studies report
- Mission Risk Register (Version 1)
- Mission Schedule (Version 1)
- Mission Cost report (Version 1)

Further detail on the acceptance criteria associated with each of these deliverables can be found in Section 5.2.

Phase A: Feasibility

Task 4: Mission Architecture Refinement and Feasibility Assessment

This task aims to:

- Further refine the options for mission design identified in Task 2, producing a set of full mission architecture options, each enabling execution of the mission objectives.
- Critically evaluate each mission architecture option, indicating and justifying compliance, non-compliance or partial compliance with each mission requirement listed in Annex F.

- Establish plans for further development in the subsequent phases of the mission lifecycle, driven by reaching full compliance to the mission requirements listed in Annex F.
- Review and update the high-level requirements defined in Task 1, capturing lower-level system/subsystem requirements where possible.

Associated deliverables shall include:

- Mission Architecture Refinement and Feasibility Assessment report

Task 5: Risk, Cost & Schedule Assessment

This task aims to:

- Build upon and refine the deliverables from Task 3, based on the outcomes and findings of the other tasks completed in Phase A.
- Review and update the Risk Register.
- Provide a rough order of magnitude cost for the full mission lifecycle, supported by a more detailed bottom-up cost analysis.
- Review and update the Mission Schedule.

Associated deliverables shall include:

- Mission Risk Register (Version 2)
- Mission Schedule (Version 2)
- Mission Cost report (Version 2)

Task 6: Business Case Development

This task aims to:

- Develop a high-level, 5-case model business case for the IOD mission, in line with Green Book guidance, providing particular detail to the Economic Case.
    - Strategic Case: Demonstrate the alignment of the IOD mission with UKSA's objectives, the Space Industrial Plan, and broader government priorities. Articulate the mission's rationale, objectives, and expected benefits, including how it advances UK leadership in In-Orbit Manufacturing and supports the growth of the ISAM sector.
    - Economic Case: Provide a robust assessment of the economic benefits versus costs, including:
        - Market analysis for the IOM application (size, growth, competitors)
        - Expected economic impacts (jobs, exports, supply chain, spillovers)
        - Value for money assessment, including options appraisal and cost-benefit analysis
        - Identification and quantification of risks, uncertainties, and sensitivities
        - Anticipated price points for commercialisation/scale-up of the IOM capability (post-IOD potential) – cost of manufacturing the

product/material in orbit vs. manufacturing on Earth, and the price a customer is willing to pay for the delta in quality/performance obtained by manufacturing the same quantity of product/material in space.

- Commercial Case: Explain how the IOD mission would be procured and delivered, including:
  - Route to market for the IOM technology
  - Engagement with end users, integrators, and suppliers
  - Intellectual property arrangements and exploitation plans
  - Any partnership or subcontracting strategies
- Financial Case: Set out the funding requirements, sources, and financial viability, including:
  - Cost breakdown for the mission lifecycle
  - Expected funding profile across mission phases
  - Affordability and sustainability of the project
- Management Case: Describe how the IOD mission will be managed and delivered, including:
  - Project governance and delivery structure
  - Work Package Descriptions (WPDs) and Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)
  - Risk management, monitoring, and reporting arrangements
  - Milestones, deliverables, and performance metrics

Associated deliverables shall include:

- Business Case Development report

Task 7: Business Growth & Investment Strategy

This task aims to:

- Develop a strategy for business growth and investment following demonstration of the In-Orbit Manufacturing capability, including:
  - Market Entry and Expansion Plan:
    - Define how to move from demonstration to commercial deployment.
    - Identify and prioritise target markets.
    - Outline strategies for customer acquisition and partnerships.
  - Investment Strategy:
    - Identify funding needs for scaling up.
    - Map potential sources of investment (public, private, VC, etc.).
    - Propose a phased investment plan aligned with milestones.
  - Business Model Development:
    - Define commercialisation models (sales, licensing, partnerships).
    - Consider pricing, revenue streams, and cost structures.
    - Assess scalability and adaptability.
  - Stakeholder Engagement and Ecosystem Building:

        - Identify key stakeholders (end users, partners, regulators, investors).
        - Develop a plan for engagement and collaboration.
        - Leverage the UK and international space ecosystem.
    - Growth Roadmap and Milestones:
        - Set out a clear growth plan with short-, medium-, and long-term objectives.
        - Define measurable milestones and KPIs.
        - Include risk assessment and mitigation strategies.
    - Policy, Regulatory, and Export Considerations:
        - Address regulatory hurdles and compliance.
        - Plan for international growth and export opportunities.

Associated deliverables shall include:

- Business Growth & Investment Strategy report

Phase A Deliverables:

Overall, the following set of deliverables are required as outputs of the Phase A tasks:

- Mission Architecture Refinement and Feasibility Assessment report
- Mission Risk Register (Version 2)
- Mission Schedule (Version 2)
- Mission Cost report (Version 2)
- Business Case Development report
- Business Growth & Investment Strategy report

Further detail on the acceptance criteria associated with each of these deliverables can be found in Section 5.2.

5.2 Deliverables & Acceptance Criteria

Item #	Category	Requirement Guidance	Contract Deliverables	Lead Time	Acceptance Criteria
1	**Kick-Off Meeting**	The Contractor shall work with the UK Space Agency to agree a date for a virtual (online) Kick-Off meeting. The Contractor shall attend this meeting and take minutes to be distributed to attendees following the meeting. The Contractor shall produce a presentation as a deliverable, to be presented in the Kick-Off meeting. The Kick-Off presentation shall outline the Contractor's plan to achieve the overall aim and both objectives for this procurement, including as minimum: • Project team (including roles and responsibilities) • Objectives and scope • Schedule • Milestones and Deliverables • Any identified risks, issues and dependencies • Milestone Payment Plan	1.1. Kick-Off Meeting	Within 5 working days of Contract Award	• Completion of the Kick-Off meeting with the Kick-Off Presentation presented.
			1.2. Kick-Off Presentation	Pdf or ppt. copy sent to the UK Space Agency by the date of the Kick-Off Meeting at the latest	• The Kick-Off Presentation includes all of the following elements: ○ Project team (including roles and responsibilities) ○ Objectives and scope ○ Schedule ○ Milestones and Deliverables ○ Any identified risks, issues and dependencies ○ Milestone Payment Plan
			1.3. Kick-Off Meeting Minutes	Within 5 working days of the Kick-Off Meeting	• Kick-Off Meeting Minutes accurately reflect the Kick-Off meeting discussions.
2	**Phase 0 Deliverables**	The Contractor shall produce a written report for each of the Phase 0 deliverables. All reports shall be delivered in .pdf format.	2.1. High-Level Requirements Definition report	At least 5 working days prior to the MDR meeting	• The deliverable shall deliver all aims for the corresponding task, as set out in section 5.1.
			2.2. Initial Mission Analysis	At least 5 working days	• The deliverable shall deliver all aims for the corresponding task, as set out in section 5.1.

Item #	Category	Requirement Guidance	Contract Deliverables	Lead Time	Acceptance Criteria
			and Trade Studies report	prior to the MDR meeting	
			2.3. Mission Risk Register (Version 1)	At least 5 working days prior to the MDR meeting	• The deliverables shall deliver all aims for the corresponding task, as set out in section 5.1.
			2.4. Mission Schedule (Version 1)	At least 5 working days prior to the MDR meeting	
			2.5. Mission Cost report (Version 1)	At least 5 working days prior to the MDR meeting	
3	**Mission Definition Review (MDR)**	The Contractor shall work with the UK Space Agency to agree a date for an in-person (preferred) or virtual Mission Definition Review (MDR) meeting. The Contractor shall attend this meeting and take minutes to be distributed to attendees following the meeting. The Contractor shall produce a presentation as a deliverable, to be presented in the MDR meeting. The MDR presentation shall give an update on the project and detail the Contractor's progress in delivering Phase 0, including as minimum: • Top 5 highest scoring risks from the Mission Risk Register	3.1. MDR Meeting	No later than 06 February 2026	• Completion of the MDR meeting with the MDR Presentation presented.
			3.2. MDR Presentation	Pdf or ppt. copy sent to the UK Space Agency at least 2 working days prior to the MDR meeting	• The MDR Presentation includes all of the following elements: ○ Top 5 highest scoring risks from the Mission Risk Register ○ Overview of the Mission Schedule ○ Estimated CaC with assumptions made ○ Work performed on Task 1 ○ Work performed on Task ○ Breakdown of acceptance criteria

Item #	Category	Requirement Guidance	Contract Deliverables	Lead Time	Acceptance Criteria
		• Overview of the Mission Schedule • Estimated CaC with assumptions made • Work performed on Task 1 • Work performed on Task 2 • Breakdown of acceptance criteria compliance against deliverables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5, including justification • Overview of the plan for Phase A delivery • Any identified risks, issues and dependencies regarding delivery of Phase A • Up-to-date Milestone Payment Plan			compliance against deliverables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5, including justification ○ Overview of the plan for Phase A delivery ○ Any identified risks, issues and dependencies regarding delivery of Phase A ○ Up-to-date Milestone Payment Plan
			3.3. MDR Meeting Minutes	Within 5 working days of the MDR Meeting	• MDR Meeting Minutes accurately reflect the MDR meeting discussions.
4	**Phase A Deliverables**	The Contractor shall produce a written report for each of the Phase A deliverables. All reports shall be delivered in .pdf format.	4.1. Mission Architecture Refinement and Feasibility Assessment report	At least 5 working days prior to the PRR meeting	• The deliverable shall deliver all aims for the corresponding task, as set out in section 5.1.
			4.2. Mission Risk Register (Version 2)	At least 5 working days prior to the PRR meeting	• The deliverable shall deliver all aims for the corresponding task, as set out in section 5.1.
			4.3. Mission Schedule (Version 2)	At least 5 working days prior to the PRR meeting	

Item #	Category	Requirement Guidance	Contract Deliverables	Lead Time	Acceptance Criteria
			4.4. Mission Cost report (Version 2)	At least 5 working days prior to the PRR meeting	
			4.5. Business Case Development report	At least 5 working days prior to the PRR meeting	• The deliverable shall deliver all aims for the corresponding task, as set out in section 5.1.
			4.6. Business Growth & Investment Strategy report	At least 5 working days prior to the PRR meeting	• The deliverable shall deliver all aims for the corresponding task, as set out in section 5.1.
5	**Preliminary Requirements Review (PRR)**	The Contractor shall work with the UK Space Agency to agree a date for an in-person (preferred) or virtual Preliminary Requirements Review (PRR) meeting. The Contractor shall attend this meeting and take minutes to be distributed to attendees following the meeting. The Contractor shall produce a presentation as a deliverable, to be presented in the PRR meeting. The PRR presentation shall give an update on the project and detail the Contractor's progress in delivering Phase A, including as minimum: • Work performed on Task 4 • Top 5 highest scoring risks from the Mission Risk Register	5.1. PRR Meeting	No later than 31st March 2026	• Completion of the PRR meeting with the PRR Presentation presented.
			5.2. PRR Presentation	Pdf or ppt. copy sent to the UK Space Agency at least 2 working days prior to the PRR meeting	• The PRR Presentation includes all of the following elements: ○ Work performed on Task 4 ○ Top 5 highest scoring risks from the Mission Risk Register ○ Overview of the Mission Schedule ○ Estimated CaC with assumptions made ○ Work performed on Task 6 ○ Work performed on Task 7 ○ Breakdown of acceptance criteria

Item #	Category	Requirement Guidance	Contract Deliverables	Lead Time	Acceptance Criteria
		• Overview of the Mission Schedule • Estimated CaC with assumptions made • Work performed on Task 6 • Work performed on Task 7 • Breakdown of acceptance criteria compliance against deliverables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6, including justification • Up-to-date Milestone Payment Plan • Key lessons learned and recommendations to UKSA regarding implementation of the potential IOD mission			compliance against deliverables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6, including justification ○ Up-to-date Milestone Payment Plan ○ Key lessons learned and recommendations to UKSA regarding implementation of the potential IOD mission
			5.3. PRR Meeting Minutes	No later than 31st March 2026	• PRR Meeting Minutes accurately reflect the PRR meeting discussions.

5.3 Project Management

5.2.1 Access

To allow acceptance of deliverables associated with technical development, the Authority will require access to any document, data, procedure, specification or equivalent process/ document relied upon to demonstrate completion of the task. Documents will need to be provided to the Authority to allow for assurance to be undertaken and successful acceptance of deliverables. Failure to provide the Authority with access to any document, data etc. relied upon to demonstrate successful completion of a milestone, may result in the deliverable being rejected.

5.2.2 Meetings and Reports

Aside from specific outputs from Tasks 1-7, UKSA requires the following deliverables, which shall be built into any project management plan. The deliverables below will be held with or delivered to the Authority.

Item	Requirement
Monthly progress report	Every month, Monthly progress reports, with reports sent on the last Tuesday of every month and prepared following the 'monthly written report template' outlined by UKSA. A progress report shall be provided by the Contractor and shall give: • A description of the progress made during the reporting period on each of the tasks (actual vs. schedule, Milestones and events accomplished). • Key technical achievements within the reporting period. • A status report on critical delivery items. • Reasons for delays and/ or problem areas, and corrective actions planned and/ or taken, with revised completion date per activity (if any). • Project risk register status. • Key events anticipated during the next reporting period.
Milestone Review Meetings	Milestone review meetings will be held when milestones are complete, documentation has been submitted and the appropriate time to review the documentation has passed. The authority will agree milestone acceptance criteria with successful applicants at Contract Award stage.
Ad-hoc Meetings	Ad-hoc meetings shall be held as required between the Contractor and the UKSA.

5.2.3 Workflow and Timeline

Figure 1 presents an indicative timeline of how the study may be run. Phase 0 and Phase A shall be delivered sequentially, with a Mission Definition Review (MRD)

convened between the Contractor and the UK Space Agency by no later than Friday 06 February 2026. The MDR shall act as the project's Mid-Term Review with associated deliverables reviewed against their acceptance criteria. Similarly, the Preliminary Requirements Review (PRR) shall act as the project's Final Review with associated deliverables reviewed against their acceptance criteria. The PRR shall be convened between the Contractor and the UK Space Agency by no later than 31st March 2026.

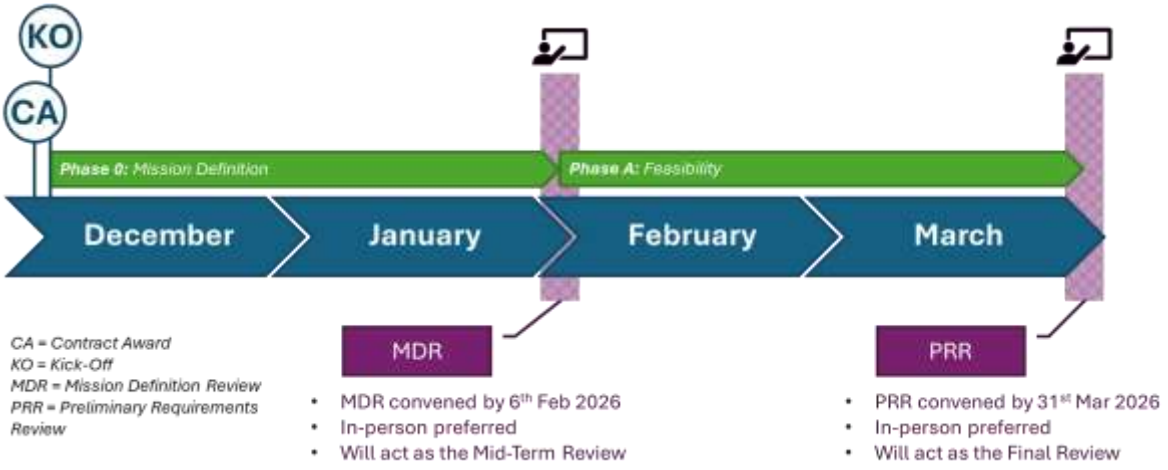

Figure 1: Indicative study timeline

The project must be completed by Tuesday 31 March 2026. This is the end of UKSA's financial year, and extensions beyond this period are strictly forbidden. Similarly, any proposals with a project end date beyond 31 March 2026 will not be accepted. The project will be punctuated by a series of project milestone meetings, checkpoints, and monthly updates, outlined in section 5.2.3. Ahead of these meetings, the Contractors will be required to provide the relevant outputs and deliverables to the UKSA panel for review.

UKSA requires 5 working days to review deliverables ahead of milestone review meetings. The only exceptions to this are the presentations for the KO, MTR, and FR – Contractors should provide them at least 24 hours ahead of the corresponding review meeting.

5.3 Research categories

Technical feasibility studies

This means planned research or critical investigation to gain new knowledge and skills for developing new products, processes or services.

5.4 Projects we will not fund

We will not fund projects that:

- are not original or in scope

- duplicate someone else's work
- do not demonstrate significant support and engagement from potential customers
- do not evidence the potential for their proposed innovation to generate positive economic, environmental or societal impact
- do not address how any potentially negative outcomes would be managed
- are being funded elsewhere in the UK Space Agency or UK Government
- would directly duplicate other UK Government or EU funded initiative you have already been funded to deliver
- are covered by existing commercial agreements to deliver the proposed solutions
- involve solutions considered below Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 2
- cannot provide reporting against the UK Space Agency's North Star Metric
- Projects that do not deliver both the MDR and PRR milestones before Tuesday 31 March 2026

6 Dates & Competition Deadline

Open date	30/10/2025
Close date	01/12/2025
Applicants notified and feedback provided	05/12/2025
Contracts awarded	08/12/2025

7 How to apply

7.1 Before you start

By submitting an application, you agree to the terms of the draft contract which is attached to the Contract Notice in Annex A. The terms of the contract are non-negotiable and are included in the draft contract. We reserve the right to change the terms and conditions if necessary prior to contract signature.

The final contract will include any milestones you have agreed with the funding authority and will be sent to you if your application is successful. The contract is binding once it is returned by you and signed by both parties.

Annex D sets out the standard assessment process you are required to fill in the application form with your response and you must stick to the page limits set out in the evaluation criteria if you are attaching appendix to your submission they must be a readable format PDF or other. DO NOT submit your application a zip folder.

As the applicant you are responsible for:

- collecting the information for your application
- representing your organisation in leading the project if your application is successful

The UK Space Agency's North Star Metric: In addition to ongoing reporting, successful applicants will be expected to provide the UK Space Agency with 6-monthly updates on North Star Metrics during the course of project delivery, and information on the impact of funding support up to 10 years after project completion. Details of this can be found in the additional guidance document.

7.2 How to apply

If you wish to submit an application for this procurement, please email commercial@ukspaceagency.gov.uk, with "UKSAC25_0088 IOM Phase 0-A Studies" as the subject line. Provide at least two contact email addresses in your email.

You will be emailed a link to a SharePoint folder to which you must upload your application. It is strongly recommended that you test this link on receipt by uploading a test file. You may email the commercial mailbox to request confirmation that a test file has been successfully uploaded.

Applications will close at 17:00 on Monday 01 December 2025. It will not be possible to submit applications beyond this deadline.

7.3 What happens next

A selected panel of assessors will review and score your application. You will be notified of the outcome and feedback will be provided. Contracts for this competition will then be issued to all successful applicants. Further details can be found in the additional guidance document.

7.4 What we will ask you

The application is split into 4 sections:

1. Project details
2. Application questions
3. Finances
4. Background IP

Before submitting, it is the lead applicant's responsibility to make sure:

- that all the information provided in the application is correct
- your proposal meets the eligibility and scope criteria
- all sections of the application are marked as complete

You can resubmit your application once submitted, up until the competition deadline.

Accessibility and inclusion

We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and are committed to making our application process accessible to everyone. This includes providing support, in the form of reasonable adjustments, for people who have a disability or a long-term condition and face barriers applying to us.

You must contact us as early as possible in the application process. We recommend contacting us at least 5 working days before the competition closing date to ensure we can provide you with the most suitable support possible.

You can contact us by emailing Commercial@ukspaceagency.gov.uk

7.4.1 Project Detail

This section provides background for your application and is not scored.

Application details
Give your project's title, start date and duration.

What is your organisation's primary area of focus?
state your organisation's primary focus area.

Project and scope summary
Please provide a short summary of your project.

Describe your project briefly. Be clear about what makes it innovative and how it relates to the scope of the competition. How does it tackle different aspects of the challenge and how will it provide an integrated solution?

Give details of the lead organisation. Before you submit, we expect you to have discussed your application within your organisation.

Your answer for this section can be up to 1,000 words long.

This section is not scored, but we will use it to decide whether the project fits the scope of the competition. If it does not, it may be rejected.

Public description
Please provide a brief description of your project. If your application is successful, we will publish this description. This could happen before you start your project. This question is mandatory, but we will not assess this content as part of your application.

Describe your project in a way that you are happy to see published. Do not include any commercially sensitive information. We have the right to amend the description before publication if necessary but will consult you about any changes.

Your answer can be up to 400 words long.

Applicant location

You must state the name of your organisation along with your full registered address and Companies House number.

You must also state the name and full registered address of any potential or confirmed subcontractors. You must demonstrate the active support and commitment of potential end customers. You can submit a letter of support with your application to highlight this commitment.

We are collecting this information to understand the geographical location of all participants of a project.

7.4.2 Application questions

The assessors will score all of your questions except questions 1 and 2 which are not scored. You will receive feedback for each scored question. The Scoring Criteria can be found in Annex D. A high-level summary is provided below:

Criteria	Page Limit	Weighting %
1. Lot	1	Not Scored
2. Permits	2	Not Scored
3. Proposed idea or technology	3	15
4. Technical feasibility	4	25
5. Project plan, methodology and risk management	3	15
6. Value for Money	3	15
7. Commercial Potential	4	25
8. Benefit to the UK	2	5

Your answer to each question must not exceed the page limits specified above. Do not include any URLs in your answers unless we have explicitly requested a link to a video.

7.4.3 Finances

Enter your project costs, organisation details and funding details within the template at Annex C.

You must state whether you are VAT registered before entering your project costs. We advise you answer the VAT registered question first before entering your costs. Your total project costs must not exceed £300,000 excluding VAT.

If you are VAT registered, you must enter your project costs inclusive of VAT.

If you are not VAT registered, you must enter your project costs exclusive of VAT and no VAT will be added. You will not be able to increase total project costs to cover VAT later should you become VAT registered.

VAT is the responsibility of the invoicing business. We will not provide any further advice and advise you to seek independent advice from HMRC.

For full information on what costs you can claim, see our supporting documents.

7.4.4 Intellectual Property

You are required to identify any and all background Intellectual Property (IP) that you are bringing to the project using the template set out in Annex E. The arrangements for intellectual property rights and exploitation of IPR are set out in the contract terms and conditions for this competition (Annex A).

8 Supporting information

8.1 Background and further information

About Contracts for Innovation competitions

Contracts for Innovation provides innovative solutions to challenges faced by the public sector. This can lead to better public services and improved efficiency and effectiveness.

The Contracts for Innovation programme:

- supports economic growth and enables the development of innovative products and services through the public procurement of R&D
- generates new business opportunities for companies
- provides a route to market for their ideas
- bridges the seed funding gap experienced by many early-stage companies

Contracts for Innovation competitions are open to all eligible organisations that can demonstrate a route to market for their solution. Under current regulations, Contracts for Innovation contracts are open to applications from organisations registered in the UK, European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA).

The Contracts for Innovation scheme is particularly suited to small and medium-sized businesses, as the contracts are of relatively small value and operate on short timescales. Developments are 100% funded and focused on specific identified needs, increasing the chance of exploitation.

Contracts for Innovation is a procurement of R&D services. If successful, you will receive a contract to deliver the proposed activity. Costs quoted must reflect actual costs at a ‘fair market value’ and not include profit.

You must submit an invoice for the work undertaken. All payments are made in arrears on submission of an invoice. Invoices must be submitted within 30 days of the end of each monitoring period for all completed milestones.

If you are VAT registered, your total costs are expected to include VAT that you would charge as a service provider. VAT is the responsibility of the invoicing business, and applications are expected to list total costs inclusive of VAT.

Suppliers, integrators and customers for each project will be selected by an open competition process and retain the intellectual property generated from the project,

with certain rights of use retained by the contracting authority. This is an excellent opportunity to establish an early customer for a new technology and to fund its development.

8.2 Next steps

After the assessment stage, all applicants will receive a short summary of key feedback regarding their applications irrespective of whether they are successful or not. UKSA aims to provide all feedback to applicants once all applications have been reviewed and assessed. Feedback will be given at the same time as the successful/unsuccessful letters are sent to the applicants.

If you are successful with this application, you will need to provide:

- the name and contact details of your project manager and project finance lead
- a redacted copy of your bank details

You must complete this within 7 days of receiving notification that you have been successful.

In order to process your claims, we need to make sure that the bank details you give to us relate to a UK high street bank that is regulated by the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA). The account must have a BACS clearing facility and be in the same company name as your application.

In order to process your payments, you must provide details of a valid UK bank account that account must have a BACS clearing facility and be in the same company name as your application.

8.3 Finance checks

We will carry out checks to make sure you are an established company with access to the funds necessary to complete the project and other relevant due diligence (financial standing assessment, governance, conflicts of interest, technical expertise).

We will carry out checks to make sure you are an established company with access to the funds necessary to complete the project.

Your Contract

Once we have completed our due diligence, we will issue the contract.

Your contract will show the start date for your project, do not start your project before this date. Any costs incurred before your start date cannot be claimed as part of your contract.

8.4 If you are unsuccessful with this application

If you are unsuccessful with your application this time, you can view feedback from the assessors. This will be provided directly to the lead applicant by UKSA.

Sometimes your application will have scored well, and you will receive positive comments from the assessors. You may be unsuccessful as your average score was not above the funding threshold or your project has not been selected under the portfolio approach if this is applied for this competition.

8.5 Further help and guidance

If you have any questions about the scope requirements of this competition, or if you need more information about how to apply, email: Commercial@ukspaceagency.gov.uk

>>END OF BRIEF<<