

Assessor Guidance

Innovation Loans Part A Scoring Matrix

Question 1: Need or challenge

What is the business need, citizen challenge, technological challenge or market opportunity behind your innovation?

9 – 10

There is a compelling business motivation for the project. There is a clear understanding of the nearest state-of-the-art available. The applicant has shown, if applicable, how the project will build on previous relevant work. Any wider factors influencing this opportunity are identified.

7 – 8

There is a good motivation for the project. There is a good awareness of the nearest state-of-the-art and wider factors influencing the opportunity.

5 – 6

The project motivation is good but a lack of understanding of the nearest state-of-the-art or wider factors influencing this opportunity.

3 – 4

Project motivation is poorly defined or not relevant to the applicant or team. References to the current state-of-the-art are not offered or are not relevant.

1 – 2

There is little or no business drive to the project. References to the current state-of-the-art are not offered or are not relevant.

Question 2: Approach and innovation

What approach will you take and where will the focus of the innovation be?

9 – 10

The approach addresses the need, challenge or opportunity identified in Q1. The main innovations and risks are identified. Evidence is presented to show how the innovation and project outputs will differentiate from those of competitors. The project is significantly innovative either commercially or technically and will make a substantial contribution to the field. Solid evidence is presented to substantiate the level of innovation and freedom to operate. There is a clear description of the current and proposed change in readiness over the life cycle of the loan utilising technology, manufacturing and/or commercial readiness scales (or appropriate equivalent).

7 – 8

The project addresses the need or challenge and the main innovations and risks are highlighted. Evidence shows that the proposed development is innovative and that the applicant has the freedom to operate. It is demonstrated how the project outputs will differentiate from those of competitors. There is an outline of the current and proposed change in readiness over the life cycle of the loan utilising technology, manufacturing and/or commercial readiness scales (or appropriate equivalent)

5 – 6

The project may address the need or challenge identified in Q1 and the innovations are highlighted. The level of innovation or freedom to operate is not strongly backed up with evidence. The main risks are not fully identified. Innovation focus is plausible and shows a link to improvements in competitiveness and/or productivity. There is limited consideration of their current and proposed change in readiness over the life cycle of the loan utilising technology, manufacturing and/or commercial readiness scales (or appropriate equivalent).

3 – 4

The approach is poorly defined with an unconvincing link to the need or challenge identified in Q1. Improvement in competitiveness and/or productivity is not very convincing. The changes in readiness over the life cycle of the loan utilising technology, manufacturing and/or commercial readiness scales (or appropriate equivalent) are poorly addressed.

1 – 2

The approach is not well defined or inconsistent with the need or challenge identified in Q1. There is no identification of how this will improve competitiveness. Changes in readiness have not been considered.

Question 3: Team and resources

Who is in the project team and what are their roles?

9 – 10

The applicant is well placed to carry out the project and exploit the results. There is a clear plan to obtain all the resources, equipment and facilities they will need.

7 – 8

The applicant's project team makes sense given the approach described in Q2. The applicant indicates how access will be obtained to all the resources, equipment and facilities they will need.

5 – 6

The applicant has most, but not all, of the required skills and experience required. It is unclear whether or not the consortium will work well together

3 – 4

There are significant gaps in the project team with little or no information about how these will be filled.

1 – 2

The applicant will not be capable of either carrying out the project or exploiting the results.

Question 4: Market awareness

What does the market you are targeting look like?

9 – 10

The target market size, drivers and dynamics are fully quantified and evidenced. Where the market is new or unexplored, possible routes are identified based on precedents. Relevant secondary markets are substantiated and described in brief.

7 – 8

There is a good awareness of the target market's drivers and dynamics. The market size is quantified with some evidence. For a new market, a good attempt is made at describing the possible routes to market and estimating the market size. Relevant secondary markets are described showing good awareness.

5 – 6

The general market size and dynamics are understood but the addressable market is poorly quantified. Secondary markets are mentioned but little information is offered.

3 – 4

Some information about the general market is offered but the extent of the addressable market for the project is not described. Secondary markets are barely mentioned.

1 – 2

The market is poorly defined or is irrelevant to the motivations of the project.

Question 5: Outcomes and route to market

How do you propose to grow your business and increase your productivity into the long term as a result of the project?

9 – 10

Target customers are identified along with the value proposition to them. The routes to market and how profit, productivity and growth will increase is identified and evidenced. . The exploitation and/or dissemination of the main project outputs is outlined.

7 – 8

Target customers are identified along with the value proposition to them. The routes to market and how profit, productivity and growth will increase is outlined with some evidence. The exploitation and/or dissemination of the main project outputs is outlined.

5 – 6

Target customer types are described but the value proposition to them is less clear. There is some information about how profit, productivity or growth increases may be achieved at some point.

3 – 4

There is some information about the target customer types but there is little about the value proposition or how profit, productivity or growth will be affected.

1 – 2

The applicant provides little or no information about the target customers.

Question 6: Wider impacts

What impact might this project have outside the project team?

9 – 10

The positive impact on others outside of the team is understood (supply chain partners, customers, broader industry, etc) Social, economic and/or environmental impacts are considered. Expected

regional impacts are described with compelling evidence to justify claims. Any possible negative impacts are fully mitigated where appropriate.

7 – 8

There is good awareness of how the project may impact others outside of the team. . Expected regional impacts are described. Any possible negative impacts are partially mitigated where appropriate.

5 – 6

There is basic awareness of how the project could impact some others outside the project. Some relevant stakeholders are not considered. Little mitigation is offered where there may be negative impacts.

3 – 4

The applicant provides some information about possible impacts but significant gaps remain.

1 – 2

There is no information about how the project might impact others or the project would be detrimental to other UK interests.

Question 7: Project management

How will you manage the project effectively?

9 – 10

The project work packages are outlined with the research category and total cost provided for each one. The applicant has clearly and realistically stated how the project relates to each stage of the innovation loan and how it will be managed. The approach to project management is described. The plan is designed to meet the objectives of the project in a realistic and efficient way. Any links or dependencies between work packages or milestones are identified.

7 – 8

The project work packages are outlined with the research category and total cost provided for each one. The applicant has stated how the project relates to each stage of the innovation loan and how it will be managed. The approach to project management is stated. The plan seems appropriate to the project objectives. Any links or dependencies between work packages or milestones are identified.

5 – 6

The project work packages are outlined but there are some details missing. The applicant has provide limited information on how the project relates to each stage of the innovation loan and how it will be managed. The plan seems reasonable but not tailored to the objectives of the project.

3 – 4

The plan has serious deficiencies or major missing aspects. The plan has little chance of meeting the objectives of the project. The applicant has not stated how the project relates to each stage of the innovation loan and how it will be managed.

1 – 2

The plan is totally unrealistic or fails to meet the objectives of the project. There is no information on how the project relates to each stage of the innovation loan and how it will be managed.

Question 8: Risks

What are the main risks for this project?

9 – 10

The key risks and uncertainties of the project are considered and mitigated. Critical inputs to the project are identified. Relevant constraints or conditions on the project outputs (regulatory requirements, certification or ethical issues) are identified. The risk analysis is appropriate and professional.

7 – 8

The key risks and uncertainties of the project are considered with appropriate mitigations. Relevant constraints or conditions on the project outputs are identified.

5 – 6

Most major risks have been identified but there are some gaps or the mitigation and management is insufficient to properly control the risks.

3 – 4

The risk analysis is poor or misses major areas of risk. The mitigation and management is poor.

1 – 2

The risk analysis is superficial with minimal mitigation or management suggested.

Question 9: Additionality

Describe the impact that an injection of public funding would have on this project.

9 – 10

There is a compelling case for the positive difference funding will make. Alternative sources of support are described with an explanation of why they are discounted or used in conjunction with the innovation loan. There is strong evidence provided that suitable alternative sources of commercial funding have been sought with partial or no success. The project will significantly increase the applicant's R&D spend during the project and afterwards.

7 – 8

The arguments for public funding are good and justified. There is limited evidence provided that suitable alternative sources of commercial funding have been sought. The project will significantly increase the applicant's commitment to R&D.

5 – 6

The public funding arguments are acceptable but the difference made by the grant will be modest. There is little evidence that alternative commercial sources of finance have been considered. The project will improve the applicant's commitment to R&D.

3 – 4

The funding arguments are poor or not sufficiently justified. There is no evidence that alternative commercial sources of finance have been considered. There is not likely to be any improvement to the applicant's commitment to R&D.

1 – 2

There is no justification for public funding and no reason why the applicant should not fund the work.

Question 10: Costs and value for money

How much will the project cost and how does it represent value for money for the team and the taxpayer?

9 – 10

The project costs are entirely appropriate and represent excellent value for money compared to alternative approaches outlined (including doing nothing). The applicant has a clear idea of how they will finance the full costs of the project at each stage. The use of subcontractors is justified and reasonable for the proposed project.

7 – 8

The project costs are appropriate and should be sufficient to successfully complete the project. The applicant has outlined how they will finance the full costs of the project at each stage. The use of subcontractors seems reasonable. The project represents good value for money compared to alternative outlined approaches (including doing nothing).

5 – 6

The project costs seem ok but the justifications are not clear. The applicant has described poorly how they will finance the full costs of the project at each stage. Little information is offered about alternative approaches and the value for money this project offers.

3 – 4

The project costs seem too high or too low given the proposed project. The applicant has not considered how they will finance the full costs of the project at each stage. Inappropriate use is being made of subcontractors.

1 – 2

The costs are not appropriate or justified or do not cover the full extent of the project. The balance between partners and subcontractors is not justified.

Do you believe this application is suitable for consideration by Innovate UK Loans Ltd for funding, subject to detailed credit analysis?
YES: If you believe overall the proposed project is a good business proposition, is innovative, will be successfully delivered, will be effectively exploited, is value for money and public funding is justified.
NO: If there is a reason why the proposed project is a poor business proposition, is not innovative, would not be successfully delivered or exploited, is poor value for money or public funding is not justified.