



Sponsor roles and responsibilities

This document outlines the NC3Rs' expectations of Sponsors involved in CRACK IT Challenges.

Confidentiality

Sponsors are expected to:

- Treat any information disclosed from potential applicants, including written applications, as confidential. Details of individual applications and consortia, activities of the Panel or the outcomes should not be discussed with any other external parties. The NC3Rs will co-ordinate applicant feedback. Full details can be found in the Review Panel appointment letter.
- Treat the details of the Challenge as confidential until the Challenge is launched.

Intellectual property (IP)

- Sponsors will not have any rights to intellectual property (IP) developed within the project. IP developed within the project is the property of the contractor (Challenge winner) and its sub-contractors, as described in the agreement between the NC3Rs and the contractor. Please refer to section 6.1 of the [Guide for Participants](#) for further information relating to IP.

Challenge development and launch

Sponsors are expected to:

- Work with the NC3Rs to develop the Challenge brief, including the Challenge deliverables (Phase 1, Phase 2 and Single Phase).
- Support the Challenge launch event and present a brief introduction on the background and scope of the Challenge to potential applicants.
- Attend Challenge surgeries at the launch event to describe and define the Challenge to potential applicants.
- Comment and approve the Challenge surgery Q&As after the launch event for publication on the Innovation Platform website.



- Interact with potential applicants between the Challenge launch event and the application closing date to ensure the best quality applications are received from the most appropriate teams.

Two Phase Challenges

Phase 1 application review

Proposals are assessed by the Review Panel and up to three proof-of-concept projects will be recommended for funding by the NC3Rs.

Sponsors are expected to:

- Read all guidance related to the review process.
- Review all applications according to the scoring criteria outlined in the Guide to Review Panel.
- Attend the Review Panel meeting online via Zoom.
- Introduce their Challenge at the start of the Review Panel meeting. This should take no longer than 10 minutes and aim to deliver an 'overall picture' of the Challenge and what they are hoping will be achieved.
- Comment on individual applications from a Sponsor's perspective, for example, quality of interaction between Sponsor and applicant and competitive advantage. Sponsors are not expected to make personal comments about individual applicants.
- Submit one review score per organisation regardless of how many representatives attend.

Phase 1 work

- In-kind contributions from the Sponsors are not required for Phase 1 but are encouraged should they benefit the Challenge.
- Sponsors should be available for project update meetings (recommended approximately quarterly) with Phase 1 contractors. Organisation of these meetings is the responsibility of the contractors.
- Sponsors should ensure, wherever possible, that all contractors have access to the same information in order to negate any potential bias.

Phase 2 application review

Proposals are assessed by the Challenge Panel in a 'Dragons' Den'-style pitch and interview. Up to one award is made for Phase 2.

Sponsors are expected to:

- Review all applications according to the scoring criteria outlined in the Guide to Challenge Panel.

- Gather and provide a consensus view from their organisation on each application.
- Attend the Challenge Panel to question the applicants.
- Provide feedback to the Panel on their experiences of working with the applicants during Phase 1. Sponsors are not expected to make personal comments about individual applicants.

Phase 2 work

Sponsors are expected to:

- Provide in-kind contributions to successful Phase 2 contractors.
- Sign an agreement with the NC3Rs describing the agreed in-kind contributions and intellectual property arrangements.
- Attend project management meetings as outlined in the agreement.
- Collaborate with the contractor throughout the project.

Single Phase Challenges

Single Phase application review

Proposals for Single Phase Challenges describe plans for addressing the key deliverables detailed in the Challenge brief. These proposals are assessed by a Review Panel.

The most promising proposals are shortlisted by the Review Panel and will be invited to a 'Dragons' Den' style interview by the Challenge Panel.

Sponsors are expected to:

- Review all applications according to the scoring criteria outlined in the Guide to Single Phase Challenge Panel.
- Gather and provide a consensus view from their organisation on each application.
- Attend the Challenge Panel to question the applicants.
- Comment on individual applications from a Sponsor's perspective, for example, quality of interaction between Sponsor and applicant and competitive advantage. Sponsors are not expected to make personal comments about individual applicants.
- Submit one review score per organisation regardless of how many representatives attend.

Single Phase Work

Sponsors are expected to:

- Provide in-kind contributions to successful Single Phase contractors.
- Sign an agreement with the NC3Rs describing the agreed in-kind contributions and intellectual property arrangements.
- Attend project management meetings as outlined in the agreement.
- Collaborate with the contractor throughout the project.

Notes:

- The Review and Challenge Panels are independent Panels consisting of members from academia and industry appointed by the NC3Rs for their scientific expertise.
- Membership of the Review and Challenge Panels including Declarations of Interest (DOI) is published on the [NC3Rs Innovation Platform](#).
- Panel Members with potential conflicts of interest are identified prior to the Panel Meeting and excluded from the discussions and scoring for the application to which they are conflicted. Sponsors are expected to notify the NC3Rs of any conflicts not identified by the Office ahead of Panel Meetings.