

# UKDI launches new phase of fast paced innovation competition

24.2.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

**UK Defence Innovation (UKDI) has launched Phase 3 (Cycle 7) of Innovation Support to Operations - looking for tech that can be developed fast and scaled at pace.**

- UKDI has launched Phase 3 (Cycle 7) of Innovation Support to Operations
- Funded by the Ministry of Defence
- Cycle 7 closes on 12 May 2026 at 12:00 Midday (BST)

This competition is seeking cost competitive, innovative solutions across seven new challenge areas. Proposals are expected to request up to £350,000 (excluding VAT). Proposals must not exceed £1,000,000 (excluding VAT) and several proposals may be funded.

Our aim is simple: deliver useful technology into service faster than our adversaries.

## What the competition is seeking:

UKDI is looking for solutions that can be demonstrated quickly, manufactured at scale, and delivered within around 12 months. Projects must reach Technology Readiness Level 6 (TRL 6) within six months.

## The seven challenge areas are:

- **Counter-UAS interceptor sensors:**

Sensor solutions for high-speed counter-UAS (Unmanned Aircraft System) interceptors engaging targets at combined closing speeds of up to Mach 1.

- **One-way attack UAS seeker:**

Novel, passive seeker solutions that are resilient to countermeasures for sub-300kph one-way attack uncrewed aerial systems.

- **UAS survivability:**

Passive survivability solutions, including radar-absorbent materials and multi-spectral decoys.

- **UAS navigation:**

Autonomous navigation systems that operate without Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), achieving at least 50-metre positional accuracy.

- **Telemetry data:**

Low-probability-of-detection, jam-resistant ways to obtain telemetry data over distances of at least 300km.

- **Maritime autonomous navigation:**

Navigation solutions for unmanned surface vessels operating at up to 60 knots without GNSS.

- **Maritime terminal guidance:**

Automated terminal guidance for unmanned surface vessels using existing onboard hardware.

## **What makes a strong proposal**

UKDI is looking for proposals that:

- demonstrate value for money and competitive unit pricing
- propose innovative or creative technical approaches
- show a credible route to achieving at least TRL 6 within the project duration
- outline how the technology could transition beyond the competition

## **What UKDI will not fund**

This competition will not support:

- paper based studies or literature reviews
- unmodified resubmissions of previous UKDI or DASA bids
- off the shelf solutions without experimental development
- platforms themselves (e.g. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), Unmanned Surface Vehicles (USVs) or Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs))
- proposals unable to achieve at least TRL 6 within the project timeframe

## **Key dates:**

- Submission deadline: 12 May 2026 12:00 midday (BST)
- Projects start: September 2026
- Project length: Six months or less
- Feedback released: August 2026

## **How to get involved?**

Innovators with solutions that could address these challenge areas are encouraged to engage early with their local UKDI Innovation Partner. You can start that conversation by submitting a Contact UKDI Form on the Contact a UKDI Innovation Partner page.

To apply, review the full competition document and submit your proposal via the UKDI Online Submission Service by 12 May 2026.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukdi-launches-new-phase-of-fast-past-innovation-competition>