

Countering Illegal Use of UAS Around Prisons and Sensitive Sites

24.4.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

Seeking low-collateral solutions to counter hostile Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS), used for contraband delivery, surveillance near prisons and sensitive sites

Introduction

This UKDI (UKDI) competition is run on behalf of Ministry of Justice (MOJ), His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), Ministry of Defence (MOD), the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), Home Office, Police, Innovate UK and wider UK security stakeholders.

It is seeking proposals that offer innovative, low-collateral solutions to counter or defeat hostile drones targeting secure sites and locations. Drones, or 'uncrewed aerial systems' (UAS), pose a growing challenge when used for contraband delivery, surveillance and disruption near prisons, sensitive sites or critical national infrastructure, including in congested urban areas.

The end-users for the solutions would include HMPPS security teams, MOD, police, law enforcement agencies, and operational staff, these groups need solutions to work alongside existing 'last line of defence' technology that are activated when other mitigation measures fail. This competition focuses on two competition challenge areas:

Challenge 1: Higher TRL Solutions

- must reach technology readiness level(TRL) 7 by the end of the project.
- maximum project length is within 3-6 months

Challenge 2: Medium TRL Concepts for Future Capability

- must reach TRL 4 or 5
- maximum project length 12 months

Competition key information

Key Information	Competition Details
Submission deadline	12:00 Midday on 31 March 2026 (BST)
Total funding available	Up to £1.85m (excluding VAT). A number of proposals may be funded.
Technology Readiness Level (TRL)	Challenge 1 must reach TRL7 and Challenge 2 must reach TRL4 or 5
Contract start month	Aim to start Early Aug 2026
Project duration	Equal to or less than 12 months
Cyber Risk Assessment (CRA) number and risk level	RAR-LJCLJ3E, Cyber Risk Profile - Level 1
Feedback release date	24 June 2026
Pre-sift criteria	See Section 8 Pre-sift Criteria

UKDI Webinar: Countering Illegal Use of UAS Around Prisons and Sensitive Sites

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countering-illegal-use-of-uas-around-prisons-and-sensitive-sites>