

SPARK Awards: Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I apply?

We require you to complete an online application form and a case of support document. The online application form gives us who you and your collaboration partner are. The case of support document explains what you want to do and why it will be of benefit to the SME partner.

Application forms can be submitted by either partner. More information and access to the online application can be found [here](#).

Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

2. Am I eligible to apply?

The eligibility criteria can be found in the call document for each competition. Make sure you check through all the eligibility requirements before submitting your application. If in doubt, please contact a member of the KTN team.

3. Does the application have to be led by industry?

Either partner can submit the SPARK Award application form but yes, the application needs to demonstrate a clear industry partner need for the work and a clear benefit to the SME from the project.

4. Is an academic partner necessary?

SPARK Awards fund collaborative projects between an SME partner and a research-based partner (University or Research Technology Organisation). At the moment we are not able to fund business-to-business collaborations so a research partner is required.

5. How are the applications assessed?

Applications are assessed by an evaluation panel comprising the KTN team and the Chairpersons of the four KTN Sector Groups. The criteria for evaluation can be found in the call document.

6. When will I hear if my application has been successful?

A date will be detailed in the call document for when you should hear the outcome of your application.

7. How will I hear if my application has been successful?

All applicants (both SME and research partner) will be sent a letter notifying them of the outcome of their application(s).

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8. Can I submit more than one application?

Yes, you can submit as many applications as you like, as long as the eligibility criteria have been met. Please note that if you are applying with the same collaboration partner for more than one project, only one of the applications can be counted as a new collaboration.

9. New collaborations versus existing collaborations?

The SPARK Awards programme is designed to support new collaborations between industry and the research base and therefore gives priority to these applications; however, you are not excluded if you put forward an application with an existing collaborator.

We understand that most research institutes have a diverse range of topics that they research so if you want to work with a different department or in a new area of work in a research institute that you have previously collaborated with then that would be counted as a new collaboration.

10. Who will get the rights to any Intellectual Property (IP)?

KTN does not get involved in any IP agreements and takes no share in any IP generated in a SPARK project. IP arrangements should be made and agreed by the partners themselves. We recommend that you discuss and ensure from an early stage that you have a clear IP understanding with your collaborative partner.

11. Are there any restrictions on what can be disseminated?

You are free to disseminate the results of your project as agreed with your collaboration partner. We would encourage you to let a member of the KTN team know of any press releases etc related to your project, particularly as we can help you disseminate the information through our website/network. If you are planning to disseminate information relating to your SPARK project, please include a reference to the “KTN SPARK Awards programme”.

12. What information will be disseminated by the KTN?

We will announce the successful project applicants (organisation names) and project title via our newsletters/website. Once the project has been completed the KTN may publish the 250 word summary provided as part of the report together with a summary of how the SPARK Award has benefited the partners if appropriate. The KTN will not disseminate any information provided in the main report form unless permission is provided by the partners. If you have any questions about what information we will make public, please contact a member of the team.

13. What is required to complete the project?

A project report should be written up by the research partner and provided to the SME partner. The SME partner should then sign this to indicate that they are satisfied with the work completed and submit this to the KTN (a scanned, electronic copy can be accepted as well as a hard-signed copy). The SME partner is also required to complete a short report form to indicate the outcomes of the project together with a publishable summary of the project that can be used by the KTN. Once these two reports have been submitted, the research partner should invoice for the grant.

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14. How do I invoice for the work completed?

Invoices should be issued by the academic partner, included the supplied Purchase Order number and sent to finance@ktn-uk.org.

15. How detailed does the invoice need to be?

The invoice should detail the main costs incurred in the SPARK project e.g. staff time, consumables etc but we do not require further evidence such as timesheets or receipts. The fact that the SME partner has to sign off the project provides sufficient evidence to us that the project has been completed appropriately.

16. How much can I claim for in the invoice?

The maximum grant payment that can be made is £10,000 (plus any applicable VAT) so costs claimed may not exceed this amount. Remember that invoices will not be paid until all of the reporting requirements have been appropriately satisfied.

17. Who can I speak to for more information?

Details of the AgriFood Team can be found here:

<https://ktn-uk.co.uk/interests/agri-food>

Details of the Industrial Biotechnology Team can be found here:

<https://ktn-uk.co.uk/interests/industrial-biotechnology>

Email: sparks@ktn-uk.org