



**Uchelgais  
Gogledd Cymru  
Ambition  
North Wales**

# **Advanced Wireless Technology Grant Scheme Guidance for Applicants**

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**Date published:** 30 June 2026

**Version:** 1.0

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## 1 Introduction

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This document provides key information about the application process and funding available under Ambition North Wales's Advanced Wireless Technology Grant Scheme. It should be read in full by all applicants before submitting an application.

### 1.1 The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee and Ambition North Wales

The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, known as Ambition North Wales, is a regional body with responsibilities for regional transport and strategic planning as well as a responsibility to enhance and promote the economic well-being of North Wales. The Corporate Joint Committee comprises of the six local authorities and the Snowdonia National Park Authority. Ambition North Wales.

The wider Ambition North Wales partnership also includes Bangor University, Wrexham University, Coleg Cambria and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai who are responsible alongside the six local authorities and the Corporate Joint Committee with the delivery of the Growth Deal. The aim is to deliver over £1 billion of investment to North Wales in order to generate over 4,000 new jobs and an uplift in GVA. The UK and Welsh governments have committed to jointly investing £240 million capital over a 15-year period, with the remainder leveraged from private and public sources.

### 1.2 The Digital Connectivity Programme

The Digital Connectivity programme is one of several North Wales Growth Deal programmes and is designed to address connectivity challenges within North Wales. Whilst the rest of the UK has benefited from improved services in recent years, many of our communities lack strong mobile and fixed broadband connectivity. The programme will enhance our region's ability to develop technologies for the future, ensuring that we can meet the increasing demand for digital and benefit from fast, high-quality connectivity.

The Digital Connectivity programme has a funding allocation of £29.81 million from the Growth Deal and will leverage further funding from the public and private sectors. The programme will introduce sustainable connectivity to the region, attract inward investment and improve the provision for more residents and businesses leading to additional Gross Value Added (GVA) and job creation.

The Digital Connectivity programme currently comprises three projects, one of which is the Connected Campuses Project. This project has the following objectives:

- To create between 120 - 200 new jobs in North Wales through the project by 2033
- To create net additional GVA of £41m - £62m through the project by 2033
- To deliver a total investment of between £29.6m and £37.6m through the programme by 2033
- To enable 100-200 business and public sector users in of North Wales to take advantage of advanced wireless\* connectivity by 2030

*\*As defined in the [UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy](#)*

### 1.3 The Advanced Wireless Technology Grant Scheme

The Advanced Wireless Technology Grant Scheme is a key strand of the Connected Campuses Project. It is designed to help public and private sector organisations in North Wales to upgrade or enhance their use of advanced wireless systems. With the improvement of digital infrastructure across our region, it aims to help create stronger communities, more innovative businesses and a more resilient economy.

Advanced wireless technologies are revolutionising the way businesses operate by providing faster, more reliable and more secure connectivity. In this context, advanced wireless technologies cover the full range of wireless solutions used in communications services. While 5G networks will be a significant area of focus, we also recognise the important role of Internet of Things (IoT), Wi-Fi and satellite communications.

A total of up to £18.8 million capital funding is currently available between 2026 and 2030. Grant funding covers the implementation stage of projects only; it will not cover the operation stage. Following implementation, the successful applicants will operate the solution for at least three years, continuing to evaluate the impact of the solution as per the below table:

Project value	Impact measured over
Up to £500,000	3 years
£500,000 - £1m	5 years
Over £1m	Until 2036

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To reflect evolving Ambition North Wales priorities for Advanced Wireless connectivity, different criteria may be set for each round of funding, and within each round the assessment criteria will prioritise applications that most closely align with Ambition North Wales objectives.

### 1.4 Essential Considerations for Applicants

Applicants are advised to consider the matters set out below before deciding whether to submit an [Expression of Interest](#) (EOI) to the Scheme:

#### 1.4.1 Grant Scheme Summary

The Scheme operates on a competitive basis, and funding will be awarded to the highest scoring applications in each round, provided they meet the principles and criteria set out below. The decision whether to award a grant is at the absolute discretion of Ambition North Wales (AMBIITON NORTH WALES). The scheme will operate with initial expressions of interest (EOI) followed by invitations to full application for qualifying EOIs. Project proposals can be considered for fast-track evaluation where applicants can demonstrate rapid delivery.

#### 1.4.2 Match Funding

Applicants must be able to provide **at least 50% match funding** to deliver their project. Match funding can include own funds or other grants and must be confirmed, evidenced, and project-related. Match funding levels may vary, subject to Grant Panel approval and projects delivering greater benefits may require less match funding. Higher match funding will be scored more favourably during evaluation (see Section 2.1 for more detail).

#### 1.4.3 Financial transparency

Applicants are required to submit detailed financial information to support their application which may include commercially sensitive information such as return on investment (ROI) calculations or financial forecasts. Such information is required by Ambition North Wales to ensure that the Scheme and all grants awarded through the Scheme comply with the Subsidy Control Act (see Section 2). Ambition North Wales will treat all such information as strictly confidential.

#### 1.4.4 Fees

To support the delivery of the grant fund, an administration charge in the range of 1-3% of capital awards will be payable by the grant recipient upon signing of the Grant Funding Agreement. The administration charge may be adjusted depending on the scale and complexity of the award.

#### 1.4.5 Performance requirements

Minimum performance criteria will be agreed between Ambition North Wales and grant recipients. Evidence of compliance with the agreed performance criteria will be a mandatory requirement and Ambition North Wales will undertake periodic performance evaluations to validate outcomes.

### 1.5 Summary

<b>Project delivery</b>	Technical solution and use case(s) must be operational and in use by 31 March 2030, and a period of benefits realisation completed by March 2033.
<b>Total available funding</b>	Up to £18.8m capital funding
<b>Min. and max. grant values</b>	£20,000 - £2,000,000 capital funding.  Applications requesting funding above £2 million may be considered in exceptional circumstances where applicants are able to clearly demonstrate proportionately higher levels of benefit and impact, aligned with the scheme's objectives.
<b>Grant Claims</b>	Grant claims should be submitted on a quarterly basis and all funded activity must be completed by 31 March 2030.

<b>Match funding</b>	Applicants should provide at least 50% match funding. Projects contributing over 50% match funding will score incrementally higher during evaluation compared to those meeting only the minimum requirement.
<b>Who can apply ?</b>	<p>Applicants must be based in North Wales and projects must take place within the region. The North Wales region consists of the counties of Isle of Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Wrexham.</p> <p>The scheme is open to all industry sectors and to both public and private sector applicants. Awards will be granted to individual businesses or organisations only. They may work with partners, but the Grant Agreement will be with a single lead applicant.</p>
<b>Project scope</b>	<p>Funding is for implementing live technology solutions that enable one or more advanced wireless use cases to solve real-world issues in a live environment, such as improvements to existing business operations, processes and services.</p> <p>Projects should generate new jobs as well as economic, social and/or environmental benefits such as productivity gains, efficiencies, cost savings, welfare improvements etc.</p>
<b>Out of scope</b>	This grant scheme will not fund testbeds, trials, or the research and development stages of technical solutions.

## 1.6 Timetable

Important Activities	Date
Competition	
EOI window	1 July – 11 August 2026, 12:00 (midday)
Grant Scheme Briefing Webinar	14 July 2026, 10:30
EOI clarification questions deadline	10 August 2026, 16:00
Estimated applicant notification*	w/c 1 September 2026
Application window	8 September – 19 October 2026, 12:00 (midday)
Application clarification questions deadline	16 October 2026, 16:00
Estimated applicant notification*	w/c 23 November 2026
Grant Funding Agreements signed	by 9 November 2026

*Applications for grants over £500,000 could take longer to be assessed	
Implementation	
Projects mobilised and Grant Funding Period starts	15 December 2026
Grant claims Applicants can submit grant claims for eligible expenditure every quarter with a schedule specified in the grant funding agreement	As per GFA schedules
Implementation deadline The solution and use case(s) must be operational and in use by 31 March 2030	31 March 2030
Benefits realisation A period of benefits realisation must be completed before 31 March 2033	31 March 2033
Benefits Realisation Checkpoint 1 Case Study	March 2030
Operation	
Solution and use cases continue to be operated in a live environment	From implementation to at least three years post implementation (see Section 1.3)
Benefits Realisation Checkpoint 2 and 3 Updated Case Study	March 2031 and March 2032
Grant Funding Period ends	31 March 2033

## 2 Funding

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### 2.1 Overview

Ambition North Wales will make available capital grant funding up to the Total Available Funding of up to £18.8 million to support businesses and organisations to deliver advanced wireless projects in North Wales. Individual grant awards will be in the range of £20,000 and £2,000,000.

Funding will be released in stages and not all the £18.8m value will be committed unless each stage of the scheme provides evidence that the scheme will meet the objectives.

Ambition North Wales will fund **up to 50% of eligible implementation costs** for each project. Requests for funding above this level must be supported by evidence of a **proportionate increase in benefits and value for money**.

## 2.2 Match Funding

Applicants must provide at least **50% match funding** for their project. Match funding can come from the applicant's own funds or other grant programmes. All match funding must be confirmed, evidenced, and clearly linked to the project.

Match funding rates may vary, subject to Grant Panel approval. Projects that exceed the scheme's minimum targets may be considered for a lower match funding rate while projects offering a higher level of match funding will be viewed more favourably but must still meet the minimum targets.

Match funding must relate to eligible capital (or capitalised revenue) costs. Only eligible costs incurred from the date of application submission can be counted as match funding. Any expenditure before grant approval is at the applicant's own risk. Eligible costs incurred from the date of Expression of Interest (EOI) submission may also be counted, where agreed in advance by Ambition North Wales.

All costs relating to the operation of the use case must be covered by the applicant with no subsidy available for these.

## 2.3 Subsidy Control

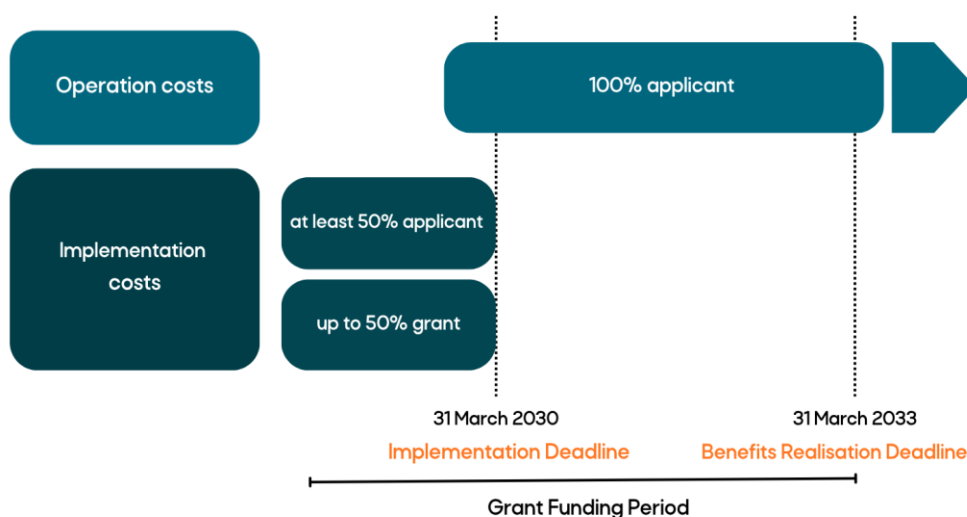
For projects requesting grants up to the value of £315,000 funding will be given as a subsidy. [Minimal Financial Assistance](#) (MFA) regulations apply and recipients are limited by previous cumulative subsidies that they may have received. For further information on MFA please see UK Government's [guidance for beneficiaries on MFA](#).

For projects seeking subsidy in excess of the MFA threshold, a standalone subsidy assessment will be undertaken by Ambition North Wales to ensure compliance for the award.

## 2.4 Timing of Spend

All grant funded activities must be completed by 31 March 2030. Grant payments will be made quarterly in arrears for Eligible Expenditure. Applicants must have spent their agreed match funding contribution by 31 March 2030.

Implementation must be completed, the solution and use case(s) operational and in use by 31 March 2030, and a period of benefits realisation completed by no later than 31 March 2033.



## 2.5 Eligible and Ineligible Expenditure

Project costs are the costs of implementing the solution, but not the costs of operating the solution or the business process that it supports.

In the context of this grant scheme, project costs could include but are not limited to:

- **Equipment:** The purchase of new hardware or tools essential for the project. Examples include.
  - network equipment (capital purchase or indefeasible right of use);
  - end-user devices (where the user may be a human or a machine);
  - facilities (offices, labs, venues);
- **Software and Licences:** The purchase of new software and licences to support the solution.
  - software (perpetual software licences that are categorised as Capital);
  - licences and permits (one-time licences);
- **Installation:** Costs associated with setting up the equipment or infrastructure required for the solution, including resource costs.
- **Adaptations to existing infrastructure:** Modifications or upgrades to current systems to enable the deployment of the new solution.
- **Project Management:** A maximum of 10% capitalised staff costs directly associated with project implementation within the permitted spending window.

Project costs **do not** include:

- Operation of the use case after implementation
- Operational costs: such as maintenance, utility costs, data charges, recurring software licences and subscriptions
- Staff operating costs: staff effort of operating the business process

- Staff training: costs for educating and training team members to operate or manage the new technology or processes.

To qualify as eligible expenditure that can be funded by the Advanced Wireless Technology Grant Scheme, costs must:

- be classed as capital under relevant accounting principles
- be incurred within the grant funding period (unless agreed with AMBITON NORTH WALES);
- be net of VAT recoverable from HM Revenue and Customs and gross of irrecoverable VAT (see the grant Terms and Conditions full details);
- be directly attributable to the implementation of the solution;
- be capable of being capitalised and/or treated as capital expenditure; and
- be categorised as one of the following:
  - Labour
  - Materials
  - Contract
  - Other direct project costs

The grant scheme will not fund the following costs (this list is not exhaustive):

- testbeds or trials;
- costs classed as Revenue expenditure, such staff training and operational staff costs;
- input VAT reclaimable from HMRC;
- liabilities incurred before the issue of this Grant Agreement unless agreed in writing by the Authority;
- products or services provided by High Risk Vendors, as defined by [NCSC advice on high risk vendors in UK telecoms - NCSC.GOV.UK](#);
- entertaining that would be a taxable benefit to the person being entertained, according to current UK tax regulations;
- any payment to a supplier not procured in accordance with Ambition North Wales procurement principles;
- payments reimbursed or to be reimbursed by other public or private sector grants, or any other source; and
- any procurement, commercial, business development or supply chain activity with any Russian or Belarusian entity in the project's supply chain, including any goods or services originating from a Russian or Belarusian source. Applicants must also ensure they do not engage with any individual or organisation designated under UK sanctions regulations.
- bank and other finance charges, and debt interest
- any activity which may bring Ambition North Wales or any of the local authorities in North Wales into disrepute.

The published template grant funding agreement provides full details of eligible and ineligible expenditure.

## **2.6 Grant Funding Agreement (GFA)**

### **2.6.1 GFA template**

A copy of a GFA template for the Scheme is attached for information at Appendix 1. Applicants should familiarise themselves with the template and ensure that their organisation can enter into an agreement with Ambition North Wales on these terms and conditions before submitting an EOI.

### **2.6.2 GFA Schedule 1 Terms and Conditions**

The Terms and Conditions set out in Schedule 1 of the GFA apply to all grants and are not negotiable.

### **2.6.3 GFA Schedule 2 Outcomes and Milestones**

The outcomes and milestones for the project are set out in Schedule 2 together with the dates by which they must be achieved. 5% of the grant will be retained until the outcomes have been verified by Ambition North Wales (see Section 5) and failure to achieve the outcomes or milestones by the agreed dates may result in some or all of the grant being withheld or clawed back.

### **2.6.4 GFA Schedule 3 Expenditure Forecast**

The expenditure forecast for the project is set out in Schedule 3. Where the cost of the project exceeds the Expenditure Forecast, the additional costs will be responsibility of the grant recipient and Ambition North Wales shall have no obligation to pay more than the Maximum Amount specified in the GFA. Where the cost of the project is less than the Expenditure Forecast, the amount of grant payable will reduce *pro rata* relative to the reduction in expenditure. The grant payable will therefore be either the Maximum Amount specified in the GFA, or the corresponding proportion of the eligible expenditure incurred, whichever is less.

### **2.6.5 GFA Fee**

There will be an application fee for successful applicants to support the costs of delivering the scheme, including administration and assessment. The scheme will identify a suitable rate to charge for applications based on the grant award sought, with this expected to be in the range of 1-3%.

## **2.7 Claims**

Applicants must submit grant claims quarterly with supporting evidence. Claims are verified within 2 weeks, with queries issued in writing. Approved claims are paid 10–15 days after verification. All funded activity must be completed by 31 March 2030.

### **2.7.1 Claims process**

Grant claims must be submitted in accordance with the North Wales Growth Deal Financial Grant Claiming Process (Appendix 3). Grant recipients will be issued with guidance on this process at the Project Initiation Meeting (PIM) including instructions on how and when claims should be submitted and the payment terms which will apply. The grant is payable in arrears based on eligible project expenditure

incurred and defrayed as set out in the GFA. Where provided for in the GFA, the grant may be claimed in instalments based on a profile of project expenditure.

### 2.7.2 Claims evidence

Claims must be supported by the required evidence as set out in the claim guidance, summarised as follows:

- Claims for equipment, supplies and external labour costs procured from third party suppliers must be supported with supplier invoices, evidence of payment and procurement in line with [Ambition North Wales's Procurement Principles](#) and thresholds.
- Claims for the use of existing assets must be supported by evidence of the asset value, an explanation of depreciation method used, and how the cost has been apportioned to the project.
- Claims for internal labour costs must be supported with timesheets and project accounts. Invoices and other claims evidence must be retained by the applicant for the period set out in the GFA and Ambition North Wales will request samples of these to accompany each claim

## 3 Project Design Requirements

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Project applications should:

- Clearly describe how advanced wireless solutions will solve real-world business challenges such as delivering improvements to the applicant's existing processes, operations and services.
- Clearly describe the proposed advanced wireless technology and solution.
- Clearly describe the expected benefits and impact from adopting the proposed advanced wireless technology and solution.
- Demonstrate how the project will generate positive economic, social and/or environmental benefits. Examples include increased revenue, productivity gains, cost savings, efficiencies, welfare improvements etc.
- Indicate key performance indicators that will be used to monitor the expected benefits.

Ambition North Wales will consider proposals for projects that support a larger, long-term initiative, even if the larger project is not yet ready within the same timeline. However, projects funded by this grant scheme are required to demonstrate self-sufficiency.

It is suggested that applicants contact Ambition North Wales for discussion on suitability of proposals before submitting an EOI on this basis.

## ***What is an advanced wireless use case?***

An advanced wireless use case describes a specific scenario, process, method or transaction that relies on the use of advanced wireless technologies. The key feature of a use case is the use of wireless connectivity to support a business or organisation activity.

For example, a use case might be where a business or organisation automates a complex process using a 5G network together with sensors and intelligent devices, meeting requirements for high levels of security, reliability, flexibility, and control over network coverage while handling high volumes of data at low latency. This use case could deliver efficiency savings and productivity improvements for the business.

Deploying or extending wireless network coverage alone is not a use case. However, the grant scheme may fund connectivity that is essential to deliver use cases.

The funding is not intended for developing new products or solutions, or for research activities. The focus is on the practical deployment of existing solutions and technologies enabled by advanced wireless connectivity.

### **3.1 Advanced Wireless Technology**

Advanced wireless technologies may include but are not limited to:

#### **Cellular Wireless Technologies**

- **5G Networks:** The fifth generation of mobile networks offering higher speeds, lower latency and high capacity. Other key features include:
  - mmWave technology (high spectrum)
  - network slicing capabilities

#### **Wireless LAN technologies (Wi-Fi)**

- **Wi-Fi 6 and 7:** The latest standards in Wi-Fi technology, providing faster data rates, increased capacity, and improved performance in dense environments

#### **Internet of Things (IoT)**

- Wireless networks designed for long-range communication with low power consumption
  - NB-IOT (Narrowband IOT) Low Power, Long Range
  - LoRaWAN Long Range up to 10km
  - Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) used in wearable devices

#### **Satellite Internet**

Global coverage, including remote areas

### Short-Range High-Speed technologies

- UWB Ultra-Wideband
- Indoor tracking
- RFID Radio Frequency Identification

### 3.2 Commercial Sustainability Requirements

Projects should be part of the applicant's longer-term roadmap for adopting advanced wireless technologies to deliver business benefits. Projects should accelerate the organisation's adoption of those technologies by providing evidence and outputs to inform and support the business case for sustaining the use case after the grant funding period comes to an end and for the wider adoption and investment in 5G and advanced wireless technologies.

The project's impact on the applicant's operations and future investment decisions regarding advanced wireless technology adoption should be clearly outlined.

Applications should explain how the project will inform future decisions to adopt and invest in advanced wireless technologies. A good response would discuss the key financial and strategic measures that will inform those decisions and provide details of the specific values required to justify adoption and investment. For example, you might describe the expected payback period and how you expect to achieve it. Other commonly used measures include, but are not limited to, Internal Rate of Return, Net Present Value, Return on Investment, Benefit Cost Ratio and Break-Even Analysis. You are free to describe any measures that are relevant to your decision.

Project aims should be defined, such as reducing operational costs, generating revenue, increasing productivity, or other outcomes relevant to future decisions to invest in advanced wireless solutions.

Projects should support the adoption of advanced wireless technologies by wider industry through dissemination of lessons learned and other mechanisms such as industry events.

### 3.3 Financial Requirements

If invited to full application stage, applicants must provide details of all capital and revenue costs that make up the total project costs over its lifetime and enter the value of capital grant funding that is requested.

Applications should describe why grant funding is required for the project to proceed. The competition is intended to provide funding to support adoption of advanced wireless solutions where a financial barrier exists. Financial barriers could include high costs of new technologies over older generation solutions, or resource constraints that would otherwise delay implementation, or uncertainty affecting the expected return on investment.

The response to this question should complement the response given to commercial sustainability. For example, if you have discussed a specific financial measure (e.g. internal rate of return), this response could set out how the grant would improve that measure.

### 3.4 Project Delivery Requirements

Applicants should describe how the technical solution and use case(s) will be operational and in use by March 2030. Applications should also describe how the project will be implemented and operated over its lifetime and how it will complete implementation and use all grant funding by the Implementation Deadline.

Project delivery should be managed according to good practice; for example, in accordance with Prince2 or a similar methodology. A project manager with appropriate executive support should manage the project using recognised management tools including a detailed project plan and risk management process.

Projects should have a clear understanding of the key delivery activities and their purpose. They should be clear about key decision points and the human resources and bought-in goods and services required for successful delivery.

Applications should describe the business change activities that will embed the new solution into the organisation's processes.

Project stage	Description
Implementation	Implement technology solution to enable advanced wireless use cases in a real-world setting. The solution and use cases must be operational and in use, and a period of benefits realisation completed, before March 2033. Grant funding can cover up to 50% of eligible project costs and must be spent by 31 March 2030. Match funding must cover the remainder of project costs and must be spent by 31 March 2030 (see Section 2.1 for more detail).
Operation	The continued operation of the use cases in a real-world setting from implementation until at least the end of the Grant Funding Period. All costs of the operation stage must be covered by the applicant.

## 4 Eligibility Criteria And Mandatory Outcomes

### 4.1 Applicant Eligibility

The competition is open to businesses and organisations in the private sector, public sector, academia, [Research and Technology Organisations \(RTOs\)](#), non-profit and charitable sectors. It is open to all industry sectors.

Projects may involve a collaborative approach between several organisations, but the application must be made by a single lead organisation capable of entering into a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) with Ambition North Wales. In the case of joint applications, all organisations in the collaboration must be

named in the application and the role they will play in delivering the project must be fully explained. Ambition North Wales requires lead organisations to enter into a collaboration agreement with the other organisations named in the application. Collaboration agreements must include all necessary legal provisions and must satisfy the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act (see 2.3). A copy of the collaboration agreement must be supplied to Ambition North Wales as a condition precedent.

Applications must be made by businesses or organisations that propose to adopt advanced wireless technologies. The proposals should clearly demonstrate how the project will impact the beneficiaries' operations and inform their future investment decisions. The competition will not consider applications from suppliers seeking to develop a wireless solution to sell to others.

An organisation may submit more than one application for different projects. Each application will be assessed on its own merits, and each must include its own match funding. Each application must demonstrate a use case. Applications must be viable as standalone projects; they cannot be dependent on the success of other applications.

#### **4.2 Project Location Eligibility**

Projects must be delivered within North Wales which consists of the counties of Isle of Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Wrexham. This means that the project's implementation and execution activities must take place within the geographical boundaries of the region. All funding (grant and match) must be spent on the project in North Wales.

Equipment and software may be purchased from non-UK suppliers.

#### **4.3 Financial Viability**

Applicants must be financially viable, including:

- More than half of the organisation's capital has not disappeared because of accumulated losses.
- The organisation is not subject to collective insolvency proceedings and does not fulfil the criteria under UK law for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors.
- The organisation has not received rescue aid where it has not yet reimbursed the loan or terminated the guarantee.
- The organisation has not received restructuring aid where it is still subject to a restructuring plan.

A new company that does not meet the requirements above can apply for funding. A guarantor, being at least one organisation creating the company's organisation, will be required for delivery of the project and responsibility for the spend, including match funding. This will be reflected in any legal agreement for funding between the funder and a successful applicant. In addition, the accounts for at least one organisation creating the company will be required to be assessed as part of the application, and this should satisfy the financial viability criteria set out above.

Ambition North Wales will conduct financial due diligence to ensure successful applicants meet the financial viability requirements. All applicants are subject to Ambition North Wales’s due diligence process and risk assessment, which includes the use of Spotlight, the government’s online automated due diligence tool.

#### 4.4 Project Eligibility

Project applications must:

- Demonstrate a clear requirement for advanced wireless solutions and a clear economic benefit for the funding that exceeds the scheme’s minimum threshold.
- Demonstrate, through appropriate financial metrics, that the project will achieve a return on investment equivalent to full payback of the grant funding within three years.
- Detail direct or indirect job creation plans, involving a commitment to create jobs or apprenticeships as well as a clear plan as to how they will be created in the medium to long term as a result of the investment. The expected rate of job creation is:
  - 1 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) per £90,000 - £120,000 of funding awarded. The option to recruit new apprentices will also be offered, either directly associated with the investment or in the wider business (indirectly).
- Commit to a match funding requirement of at least 50% in cash, subject to the benefits accrued to one or more business.
- Demonstrate a commitment to reducing carbon emissions and improving biodiversity (including operational and embodied carbon dioxide equivalents) where feasible.
- Develop use case for publication by Ambition North Wales.
- Comply with Social Value obligations and contribution through procurement.

#### 4.5 Procurement Requirements

Applicants must procure suppliers in accordance with the [Ambition North Wales Procurement Principles](#). The procurement thresholds and requirements for this scheme are as follows:

Contract value (incl. VAT)	Requirements	Records to keep
Under £10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One written quotation from a suitable supplier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quotation received</li> <li>• Rationale for supplier selection</li> </ul>
£10,000 – £75,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three written quotations</li> <li>• Set clear evaluation criteria in advance</li> <li>• Select the supplier offering best value for money, in line with Ambition North Wales principles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suppliers invited to quote</li> <li>• Quotations received</li> <li>• Evaluation notes and scoring. Award decision and justification</li> </ul>

Over £75,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run a competitive procurement (tender) process, unless a clear and evidenced exemption applies</li> <li>• Produce a Summary Evaluation Report for sign off by Ambition North Wales prior to award</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full procurement documentation</li> <li>• Evaluation notes and scoring</li> <li>• Summary Evaluation Report</li> </ul>
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For all contracts awarded with a total value exceeding £75,000 (inclusive of VAT) a Summary Evaluation Report must be prepared and submitted. This report should include the following elements:

- **Description of Goods/Services:** A concise overview of the goods or services procured.
- **Procurement Process Summary:** A brief outline of the procurement procedure followed, including key stages and decision points.
- **Evaluation Summary:** A summary of the evaluation criteria applied and the outcomes of the assessment process.
- **Award Recommendation:** A clear justification for the recommended supplier or contractor, based on the evaluation results.
- **Comply with Social Value obligations and contribution:** Applicants need to demonstrate that they will pursue social value through their suppliers. For guidance on Social Value please follow this [link](#).

All documentation relating to the procurement process must be retained and securely stored, as it may be subject to future audit or compliance review.

#### 4.6 Mandatory Outcomes

All projects supported through the Scheme must generate the following outcomes.

1. **A measurable increase in business productivity or efficiency** resulting from the Project, assessed by reference to agreed key performance indicators. Improvements and performance in one area must not lead to any deterioration in the wider area, and applicants will be required to explain how their project will achieve this objective. Grant recipients will also be expected to improve performance against these criteria over time to keep pace with technological advancements.
2. **Job creation** measured by the number of new direct or indirect jobs or apprenticeships created because of the investment during or after the capital phase of the Project.
3. **A commitment to reducing carbon emissions** and improving biodiversity (including operational and embodied carbon dioxide equivalents) where feasible. The applicant shall use all reasonable endeavours that the Project:

- achieves a reduction in operational energy emissions in respect of the Project
  - minimises embodied carbon in respect of the Project's capital assets
  - achieves a positive impact on biodiversity where feasible
4. **Social value** delivered in accordance with Ambition North Wales Procurement Principles. Applicants must describe any proposed social value outcomes and how these will be delivered and measured in line with Ambition North Wales' Procurement Principles.

Projects that offer the greatest outcomes and match funding rates will attract a higher score. The agreed outcomes for each project and the dates by which the outcomes must be achieved and evidenced to Ambition North Wales will be set out in the GFA. All outcomes of the Scheme must be achieved by the end of March 2033.

#### 4.6.1 Additional outcomes

In addition to the mandatory outputs listed above, projects may contribute to a range of outcomes including improved biodiversity. Applicants are invited to offer additional outcomes as appropriate, and projects offering the greatest additional outcomes will attract a higher score. The agreed additional outcomes for each project and the dates by which the outcomes must be achieved and evidenced to Ambition North Wales will be set out in the GFA. All additional outcomes of the Scheme must also be achieved by the end of March 2033.

#### 4.7 Ineligible Activities and Costs

The following activities and costs are not eligible for grant support (this list may not be exhaustive):

- Any payment to a supplier that is not procured in accordance with the [Ambition North Wales Procurement Principles](#) .
- Any involvement from a high-risk vendor as defined in the National Cyber Security Centre's advice on the use of equipment from high-risk vendors in UK telecoms networks: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/ncsc-advice-on-the-use-of-equipment-from-high-risk-vendors-in-uk-telecoms-networks>.
- Any goods or services originating from a Russian or Belarusian source.
- Any activity which has started or cost which has been incurred before the project start date shown in the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) except for any existing assets to be used for the project with the agreement of Ambition North Wales and as set out in the GFA.
- Any relevant activity not within the scope of Ofcom's General Conditions of Entitlement or equivalent regulatory cover.
- Revenue costs such as business running costs and overheads which are not directly attributable to the project or are not eligible for capitalisation under relevant accounting principles.
- Routine activities, including those fulfilling a statutory or regulatory requirement (e.g. preparation of financial accounts, audit fees, routine HR services etc.).
- Bank and other finance charges, and debt interest

- Reclaimable VAT
- Contingencies
- Depreciation
- Any activity which may bring Ambition North Wales or any of the local authorities in North Wales into disrepute.

## 5 Applicant Support

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### 5.1 Briefing Webinar

Ambition North Wales will host a briefing webinar on 14 July 2026 to introduce the scheme and highlight advanced wireless use cases from elsewhere. A link to register for the webinar will be available on the Ambition North Wales website.

### 5.2 Clarification Questions

Questions about the scheme may be sent to [digital@ambitionnorth.wales](mailto:digital@ambitionnorth.wales) no later than the Clarifications Deadline set out in the Timetable in Section 1.6.

As part of the Belfast City Council 5G Innovation Region scheme, an Adoption Toolkit was developed to provide practical information on adopting advanced wireless technology, example use cases and information on the local advanced wireless ecosystem. We have been given permission to share the toolkit to support beneficiaries of this scheme as we develop resources and case studies relevant to north Wales:

- [5G Adoption Toolkit](#)

## 6 Application Process

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### 6.1 Overview

The Scheme will operate in a series of funding rounds, with each round running over a period of 6-12 months. The first round will open in June 2026 and the key dates for following rounds will be published in advance. Expressions of interest submissions which propose rapid delivery and low risk may be considered for fast track approval.

Each funding round involves an expression of interest (EOI) phase and an application phase. There is a 6 week window for submitting EOIs followed by an assessment period during which applicants whose EOIs are approved will be invited to submit an application.

The application phase in each funding round commences when applicants whose EOIs are approved have been notified and invited to submit an application. There is a 6-week window for submitting applications after which all applications will be assessed, and decisions will be made on which applications will be offered a grant.

Ambition North Wales cannot accept an application unless an EOI for the same project has been submitted by the same applicant and approved within that round. There is no appeal process at either the EOI stage or the application stage, but feedback will be offered to unsuccessful applicants, and further EOIs are welcomed from unsuccessful applicants in subsequent funding rounds.

## **6.2 Expression of Interest (EOI) Phase**

### **6.2.1 EOI submission**

EOI forms are available via the Gov.UK Find a grant service <https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/>. EOIs must be submitted on or before the published deadline for submission, which will be 6 weeks after the funding round opens. Please contact the Ambition North Wales team at the following email address [digital@ambitionnorth.wales](mailto:digital@ambitionnorth.wales) if you want to discuss your EOI before you submit.

### **6.2.2 EOI assessment**

EOIs will be assessed by Ambition North Wales in accordance with the principles and criteria set out in section 22.1. If the Ambition North Wales assessment team has any queries about the EOI or requires more information from the applicant, they will contact the person named in the EOI form.

### **6.2.3 EOI decision**

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their EOI on or before the published date, and those whose EOIs are approved will be invited to submit an application. Applicants whose EOIs are not approved will be offered feedback and are welcome to submit a new EOI in a subsequent funding round, but there is no appeals process.

## **6.3 Full Application Phase**

### **6.3.1 Application submission**

Only organisations whose EOI is approved in the current funding round may submit an application in that round, and the application must be for the same project as the EOI approved in that round. Applicants may propose minor changes to the project at the application stage, such as increasing or reducing the project costs or the grant amount or changing the forecast outcomes. All such changes must be explained in the application form and justifications provided. Any increase in the amount of grant requested or decrease in the forecast outcomes of more than 10% will not normally be accepted. Application forms are available via the Find a Grant service <https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/>. Applications must be submitted on or before the published deadline for submission, which will be 6 weeks after the application window opens. Please contact the Ambition North Wales team at the following email address [digital@ambitionnorth.wales](mailto:digital@ambitionnorth.wales) if you want to discuss your application before you submit

### **6.3.2 Application assessment**

Applications will be assessed by Ambition North Wales in accordance with the principles and criteria set out in Section 2 and if the Ambition North Wales assessment team has any queries with the application

or requires more information from the applicant, they will contact the person named in the application form.

### 6.3.3 Application decision

Following assessment of the applications, decisions whether to award or not to award grants will be made in accordance with Ambition North Wales's scheme of delegation. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application on or before the published date, and those whose applications are approved will be issued with a GFA. Applicants whose applications are not approved will be offered feedback and are welcome to submit a new EOI in a subsequent funding round, but there is no appeal process.

## 7 Assessment

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### 7.1 How Applications will be assessed

The Grant Scheme is designed to be fair, transparent and objective. Applications for the competition will be assessed through the following stages:

#### 7.1.1 Eligibility

The eligibility assessor will assess the initial eligibility check using pass/fail questions to ensure the organisation and project meet basic criteria. If an application passes the Eligibility Stage, it will progress to evaluation. If an application does not pass the Eligibility Stage, the application will not be assessed. We will notify the applicant with an explanation as to why. Early submission of the EOI may allow for it to be amended, resubmitted and reviewed ahead of the submission deadline.

#### 7.1.2 Triage

Ambition North Wales may triage applications if it receives a high volume of applications. If it decides to triage, the assessment panel members will each individually review and score the assessment triage questions for applications passing the Eligibility stage. The panel will meet in a moderation session to agree a single panel score for each triage question for each application. Any application scoring fewer than 3 marks against any of the triage questions will be withdrawn from the competition and the rest of the application will not be assessed. The qualifying applications will proceed to Application Assessment.

1. **Application Assessment:** Assessment panel members will review and score the remaining assessment questions for each application that passed the Triage stage. They will meet in a moderation session to agree a single panel score for each question for each application. Applications scoring less than the minimum score required on any question after moderation will be eliminated from the competition.
2. **Outcome:** The qualifying applications will be ranked in descending order of Total Weighted Score. Grant funding will be offered to the qualifying applications with the highest Total Weighted Scores until the Available Funding is used up.

Funding will be awarded to the applications that achieve the highest overall scores against the assessment criteria until all the available budget is allocated. For example, where a funding round

receives several high scoring applications, the assessment panel may award funding to a portfolio of projects that together deliver the strongest overall outcomes, taking into account the maximum grant value of £2m per project.

The scheme will also retain flexibility to reallocate or increase the funding available to a particular round where there is clear evidence of a strong pipeline of high quality, deliverable projects that meet the scheme’s objectives and represent value for money.

The outcome of an application will be shared with the applicant. Where appropriate suggestions will be provided on how the application could be improved to allow future resubmission.

Ambition North Wales reserves the right to request additional clarifications and corrections following the submission deadline. Additional information submitted at the request of Ambition North Wales must meet any timing, format and length requirements we may specify at the time.

If the total funding requested by bids that meet the required standard exceeds the Total Available Funding, some bids may be placed on a reserve list. Should additional funding later become available to increase the Total Available Funding further grants will be offered to the applications with the next highest Total Weighted Scores in the same way.

### 7.1.3 Continuous improvement and external evaluation

Ambition North Wales will continuously review the Scheme during the delivery phase to inform adjustments to which could improve value for money and impact. Ambition North Wales will also commission an end of project external evaluation which will require the cooperation of grant recipients.

## 7.2 Scoring Methodology

For applicants invited to proceed to the full application phase, responses to questions will be assessed using the following scoring methodology:

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	The bid meets all the requirements to an exceptional standard. It gives full confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives of the competition. The bid uses advanced wireless technologies.
4 - Good	The bid meets all or almost all the requirements and excels in some parts of its response. It gives a good level of confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives of the competition. The bid clearly describes a roadmap towards advanced wireless adoption.

3 - Satisfactory	The bid meets most of the requirements but with minor reservations in one or more areas. It gives a satisfactory level of confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives and conditions of the competition. The response lacks detail in some areas.
2 - Poor	The bid fails to meet many of the requirements. It gives low confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives and conditions of the competition. It lacks substantial detail.
1 - Inadequate	The bid fails to meet almost all of the requirements. It does not give confidence that the applicant understands the requirements and that the project will achieve the objectives of the competition. It provides very limited detail
0 - Unacceptable/ No Response	The bid fails to address any of the requirements. The response does not provide sufficient detail to be marked.

## 8 Monitoring And Evaluation

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The timeline in 1.6 Timetable sets out the dates relevant to the activities and deliverables described below.

### 8.1 Delivery and Financial Monitoring

Ambition North Wales will monitor project finance and delivery performance to ensure appropriate oversight and accountability. It will conduct more frequent check-ins to address any challenges and support the project's success and adherence to the planned timeline. Successful applicants must make a reasonable time and information available for these reviews.

#### 8.1.1 Project Inception Meeting (PIM)

After the GFA is signed, a Project Inception Meeting (PIM) will be held between Ambition North Wales and the grant recipient at which the project monitoring and reporting arrangements and the claims process will be explained, and periodic review meetings will be scheduled.

#### 8.1.2 Project monitoring and reporting

Grant recipients will be required to submit regular monitoring reports to Ambition North Wales in a format and on dates which will be agreed at the PIM.

#### 8.1.3 Project changes

Grant recipients must notify Ambition North Wales as soon as possible of any changes they may wish to make to the project including, but not limited to, changes to any of the following:

- The agreed outputs or outcomes

- Milestones
- Start Date, End Date or Target Completion Date
- Expenditure Forecast and/or funding of the Project
- Benefits
- Match funding

Requests for changes will be undertaken via the Ambition North Wales Change Control Process. All such changes must be agreed in writing with Ambition North Wales before taking effect.

Where agreed changes result in a material reduction in scope, outputs, outcomes or match funding, Ambition North Wales reserves the right to reduce the level of grant awarded and/or seek recovery (clawback) of grant funding, in accordance with the terms of the Grant Funding Agreement.

Where changes are approved, the Grant Funding Agreement will be deemed to be varied to reflect the agreed position through an exchange of written correspondence.

## **8.2 Benefits Monitoring**

Ambition North Wales is required to provide internal reports on the progress of projects. A schedule for this will be set upon the Grant Offer but as a guide this will be on a quarterly basis with information required confirmed upon Grant Offer.

The Grant recipient and Ambition North Wales will agree project-specific benefit Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) applicable to their project and use cases e.g. economic benefits (such as productivity gains, cost savings etc), efficiencies, welfare improvements (safety improvements etc), security benefits etc. and the schedule for reporting against the KPIs.

The Grant Recipient will also be expected to contribute to sharing knowledge, generated from their project and provide Ambition North Wales with any relevant data to support the quarterly reporting including:

- number and type of use cases deployed
- number of new wireless networks or technologies deployed as part of the project and if they continue operation at the end of the project
- number and type of companies/organisations engaged in the project
- any alternative funding generated by the project
- new jobs and/or apprenticeships created through the project
- number of staff trained
- knowledge dissemination activities (such as workshops and events)
- any other communication activities e.g. PR

If a project fails to meet GVA or job creation commitments, clawback will apply proportional to the shortfall. All recipients must participate in reporting, case studies, and lessons learned activities.

### 8.3 Lessons Learned

The Grant Recipient will contribute to a lessons learned log which will record the lessons that emerge from the Digital programme and projects. This includes lessons specifically for your project as well as those that may be relevant to the broader ecosystem, Ambition North Wales.

Lessons captured will help to inform future iterations of project work, share learnings across the industry and inform policy decisions within Ambition North Wales.

### 8.4 Case Studies

Grant recipients must develop a project case study which can be published by Ambition North Wales to share learnings and insights on use cases with the wider industry. A case study template will be provided by Ambition North Wales.

### 8.5 Continuous Improvement and External Evaluation

Ambition North Wales will continuously review the Scheme during the delivery phase to inform adjustments to which could improve value for money and impact. Ambition North Wales will also commission an end of project external evaluation which will require the cooperation of grant recipients.

## 9 Policy And Programme Context

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UK Government's Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) published [the UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy](#) in April 2023, which set out the strategic framework for the development, deployment and adoption of 5G and future networks. It articulates a vision for how advanced wireless infrastructure can become an integral part of the fabric of the UK's economy and society by 2030, and how we want people, business and public services across the UK to realise the full benefits of 5G and other advanced wireless connectivity.

The UK Government's Digital and Technologies Sector Plan further describes the role of Advanced Connectivity Technologies in delivering benefits to people and businesses.

## 10 Additional Information And Notices

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Applicants should be aware of requirements of the Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021 which introduced duties on providers of public electronic communications networks and services to identify and reduce the risk of security compromises and prepare for the possibility of their occurrence.

The Act also places duties on providers to prevent, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects of security compromises. These overarching security duties are intended to provide an effective and enduring basis for protecting networks and services.

Applicants should consider the cyber security of any new assets deployed. Applicants are therefore encouraged to read and implement the relevant Secure Connected Places guidance at [Secure connected](#)

[places playbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/connected-places-playbook) which provides advice to set a strong cyber security foundation. The Playbook is complementary to existing NCSC cyber security guidance such as the Connected Places Cyber Security Principles at [Connected Places Cyber Security Principles - NCSC.GOV.UK](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/connected-places-cyber-security-principles), a further source of technical guidance which applicants are also encouraged to read and implement.

We reserve the right to undertake a detailed financial and technical appraisal of each applicant and their proposal and for this process to continue up to the award of any grant funding. Any such appraisal will be conducted in line with government policy at the time of assessment. Further appraisal may continue if required through the duration of the grant funding period.

No representation, warranty or undertaking, express or implied, is or will be given by Ambition North Wales or any of its agents or advisers with respect to the information contained in the competition material, including with respect to its accuracy or completeness.

Information provided in response to this document, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated confidentially, please be aware that, in accordance with FOIA, public sector organisations are required to comply with a statutory code of practice which deals, among other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you wish that information to be treated confidentially. If we receive a request for disclosure of that information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. Any such requests should be sent to

Ambition North Wales will process your personal data in accordance with DPA and GDPR and, in most circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

All applicants are solely responsible for all their costs and expenses incurred in connection with this selection process at all stages. Under no circumstances will Ambition North Wales be liable for any costs or expenses borne by or on behalf of the applicant or any party associated with this selection process.

We reserve the right to cancel the competition at any point. We will accept no liability for any losses caused by any cancellation of this competition nor any decision not to award funding as a result of the competition.

At any time prior to the deadline for receipt of proposals, we reserve the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of the competition material at any time during the competition. Any such amendments, additions, or removals will be identified in the documentation on the competition web page.

Answers can be submitted in Welsh or English. Applicants will be treated no less favourably on the basis of the language they choose to submit in. Applicants should note that where any supplementary

documents are not published in Welsh or English, certified translations into English must be provided with the proposal (if applicable) and at the cost of the applicant.

Proposals should remain valid for a period of 120 days from the competition closing date. A proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

We reserve the right to discuss, for the purpose of clarification, any aspect of a proposal with the relevant applicant prior to the award of grant funding.

## **11 APPENDICES**

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**Appendix 1. Grant Funding Agreement Template**

**Appendix 2. Financial Grant Claiming Process**

**Appendix 3. Privacy Notice**