

THE BRAZIL
ENERGY
PROGRAMME

Brazil Energy Programme of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Challenge Competition - Solar Energy, Energy Storage and Smart Grids

Questions and Answers - Updated 10th September 2020

1. What is the Brazil Energy Programme?

The UK Government's Prosperity Fund will invest £9m in a series of challenge competitions to support Brazil's energy transition to a lower carbon economy through the Brazil Energy Programme (BEP). The programme aims to leverage Brazil's enormous potential as a global leader in renewable energies for social impact.

The BEP will be implemented between June 2020 and March 2023 and will focus on regulatory, policy, market and technological innovations in renewable energy sectors such as solar, storage, smart grids, biogas, biodiesel, wind and natural gas as a transition fuel.

2. What are the challenge competitions?

The objectives of the challenge competitions are to promote UK-led demonstration projects of innovative low carbon technologies in the solar, storage, smart grids and waste to energy sectors that solve specific identified challenges faced by Brazilian industry partners.

The aim of technology demonstration is to prove the technical and financial viability of technologies so that they can be deployed at scale and reduce poverty, improve energy access, and promote gender equity and social inclusion.

The Brazil Energy Programme offers technical and commercial incubation support to challenge competition winners to support their growth and development in the Brazilian market.

Challenge competitions will lead to grants being awarded to consortia or single business applicants to address the challenge described in the Guidance Notes.

3. Who can apply?

Any business can apply at the Pre-Qualification stage if they meet the competition criteria as specified in the Guidance Notes (please see page 16 of the PQQ Guidance Notes). Following assessment, a shortlist of applicants will be invited to apply to the Full Application stage.

You should be aware that where a lead applicant submits a Pre-Qualification application on behalf of a consortium this will cover all members of that consortium as a group. Other shortlisted qualified applicants can then be added to the consortium and members can leave; however, a consortium member cannot join another consortium or apply on their own unless they have submitted a Pre-Qualification application in their own right and been shortlisted.

Organisations are therefore encouraged to apply individually if they meet eligibility criteria. A facilitated consortium building stage after the Pre-Qualification application will help to match organisations in order to submit a full proposal.

4. How much funding is available for this Competition?

A total of £3m is expected to be available for pilot projects under this Challenge Competition. You should be aware that the grants will not all be the same value, with a range of between £300k and £1.5m anticipated.

5. What are the key dates for this competition?

The table below outlines the anticipated timeline for the competition process. The timelines for pilots 2 & 3 (i.e. not the Pilar Solar Pilot) consortia building and full applications will be released at a later date on the BEP website.

Activities	Deadline
Launch Pre-Qualification stage	17 August 2020
Deadline for Pre-Qualification Questionnaire submissions	25 September 2020
Consortia building facilitation (Pilar Solar Pilot only)	7 October – 23 October 2020
Launch full Challenge Competition (Pilar Solar Pilot only)	26 October 2020
Deadline for full applications (Pilar Solar Pilot only)	23 November 2020
Notification of applicants of result and preferred bidder (Pilar Solar Pilot only)	4 January 2021
Anticipated pilot launch (Pilar Solar Pilot only)	Early 2021

6. What is incubation support?

To help ensure that companies achieve maximum commercial impact from a BEP grant, industry specialists will provide incubation support to grant recipients – in addition to their grant. Incubation support includes helping companies prepare commercial plans and actions that will increase the chance of successfully bringing the innovation to market or reduce the time to market.

7. How do I know whether my technology is eligible for a BEP grant?

The key element is responding to the challenge statement set out in the Guidance Notes. If your technology can do that alone or as part of a collaboration, your technology is eligible. Your organisation will still need to meet the full eligibility criteria set out in the Guidance Notes.

8. My technology has UK health and safety certifications, but is not certified for Brazil, can we still apply?

Yes. As part of your full application you will need to explain your plans for obtaining Brazilian health and safety certification for your technology

9. Can I discuss my application with someone from BEP?

BEP will not be able to engage in detailed discussions about specific project ideas or technologies. If you have a question you can email pilotinfo@ukbrep.org.

An Early Market Engagement will also be held in early September to introduce the Challenge Competition and answer questions. Further details of this event will be published shortly on the BEP website.

Please note though that we are required to provide any answer or information given to one applicant to all applicants, so answers will also be made public via updated versions of these Q&As. Applicants are therefore reminded that anyone can view the Q&As, thus questions should not reveal anything commercial in confidence or sensitive to your application.

10. How do I submit my application?

Pre-Qualification Questionnaires should be submitted by email to pilotapplication@ukbrep.org by midday UK 25th September 2020. We will confirm receipt of applications but would advise that you use a delivery receipt so you can be assured that your application arrived before the deadline.

Further guidance on submissions is provided in the full Guidance Notes.

11. Do I need a partner in Brazil?

No. It is not a requirement that you have a delivery partner in Brazil.

12. Do I need to set up a subsidiary company in Brazil?

No. A subsidiary company in Brazil is not a requirement.

13. Does the BEP provide any pre-financing?

We are unable to pay a grant in advance of need, however the cash-flow for the project will form part of the discussions to agree the Grant Offer Letter for successful applicants.

14. Are registered charities allowed to apply?

Charities and social enterprises are eligible to apply.

15. How many applications can one company make?

An individual organisation may not submit more than one application to a specific challenge competition as the applicant or lead applicant, but they can also be a partner in multiple applications.

You should be aware that where a lead applicant submits a Pre-Qualification application on behalf of a consortium this will cover all members of that consortium as a group. Other shortlisted qualified applicants can then be added to the consortium and members can leave.

16. Is there any guidance or size limits associated with the supporting appendices and / or attachments that can be included with the submission?

There is no specific limit to the size of the supporting appendices, however applicants should be aware that assessors have limited time to spend going through too much information. Ideally the application should stand alone, however we accept that there may be additional information which needs to be appended.

17. How can we respond to questions if the drop-down lists do not work?

Some operating systems may not support the pre-qualification application form. You can manually type in the correct response using the drop-down lists responses provided below:

Is this a collaborative application? (Yes / No)

Title (Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms / Dr / Prof)

Business Type (Charity / Co-operative / Limited by Guarantee / Limited Company / Limited Liability Partnership / Other / Partnership / PLC / Sole Trader / University/Educational / Unlimited Company)

Business maturity (Pre-start-up / Start-up<1yr / 1-5 yrs / 6-10yrs / >10yrs)

Does the business have a parent company? (Yes / No)

Is the company able to recover VAT? (Yes / No)

Which article are you applying under? (Article 22 Small Innovative Start Up / Article 25 Experimental Development)

If you are applying under Article 25, is this a Collaborative Application? (Yes / No)

Company maturity (Pre-start-up / Start-up<1yr / 1-5 yrs / 6-10yrs / >10yrs)

18. How much work needs to be carried out in Brazil or by Brazilian companies/partners?

As the demonstration projects will be based in Brazil, the grant recipient will not be responsible for installation and maintenance. Performance monitoring and analysis will be undertaken by the grant recipient in collaboration with Brazilian companies and research institutions sourced by BEP.

19. Could you confirm whether the grant is limited to UK based companies?

Non-UK companies can receive grants.

20. Can the match funding be a contribution in kind (e.g. managerial/expertise time)?

In kind contributions are services delivered without payment. In kind contributions are not accepted as match funding. Managerial/expertise time does not qualify as in-kind contributions because a payment is made to the managers/experts.

21. One of the eligibility conditions for the small innovative start up grant is that the company must not have been in existence for more than 5 years. Is this condition applicable at the application date or the project finish date?

At the application date, though it would still need to be correct at the point we award a grant. This period also includes any periods of dormancy with Companies House.

22. Will the company that is successful in applying for the pilot project automatically win the others?

No, success in the pilot project does not mean you will automatically be awarded further projects. The programme will also provide incubation support to successful applicants over the 12 months of the pilot which will include support to scale up and commercialise the technology into the Brazilian market.

23. What is the timeline from submission to outcome for the PQQ?

This will depend on the number of PQQ responses that we receive. Our objective is to complete the eligibility checking, assessment of PQQ responses, quality assurance checks and provide notifications to applicants after two weeks. If we anticipate that this timeline will slip due to a higher than anticipated number of PQQ responses being received, we will inform all applicants and give them a revised timeline.

24. Will the pilot have an option to fund research activity (university based) to support the pilot?

There are no reasons why a university cannot be part of a consortium and enter the competition. The critical issue is how the technology and activity address the challenge statement as set out in the competition guidance documents.

25. Does a company need to be registered in Brazil as a Brazilian company?

No, this is not a requirement. If a company chooses to set up a Brazilian subsidiary the incubation support element of the programme could help them. This might be beneficial to help the business to grow in Brazil after the pilot but is not a requirement for the pilot.

26. Will the first pilot be just the implementation of solar panels or their integration with storage systems as well?

The Pilar Solar pilot will cover integration of solar PV, storage and home energy management. The PQQ competition is wider than this as it covers all of the first three pilots, including the Pilar Solar pilot, for example solar technologies, storage, home energy management systems, smart meters, grid management, interface technologies, business models, etc.

27. Does a company have to be revenue generating at this stage to apply?

No, pre-revenue companies can apply and participate.

28. What is the timeframe for launching further pilots?

We expect that the second and third pilots under the Solar, Storage and Smart grids challenge statement will launch towards the end of the year, likely to be in December. Updates will be published on the website as available.

29. Should we apply independently, or should we find partners before applying and then apply as a consortium together?

If you know the consortium partners you will want to work with then you can apply as part of a readymade consortium. That means that you can leave that consortium, but you cannot then join another one. If you are not sure who you would want to work with or think that you might want to change from one consortium to another, then you should apply in your own right. Any business can apply both as part of a consortium and in their own right.

30. Is the technology crucial to pass the pre-qualification stage? Can an organisation that does not itself have a specific technology become pre-qualified and work with technology companies?

The primary focus of the pre-qualification stage is to identify technologies that could help to deliver against the challenge statement, this includes non-technical elements like business models. The critical issue is that whatever element you bring to a consortium must help to deliver against the competition challenge. Provided this is justified then you can apply as an individual business. If your contribution is in bringing together partners rather than a direct contribution to meeting the challenge statement that you are likely to need to apply as part of a readymade consortium, for example as a lead.

31. How much match do applicant businesses have to contribute?

Contributions from companies vary depending on which State Aid article they are applying under. Businesses which apply as small innovative enterprises under Article 22 of the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER), can receive a grant covering all of their costs with no requirement for a contribution from them. Businesses applying under Article 25 of GBER can receive a grant of between 25% (for a large business applying alone not as part of a consortium) and 60% (for a small business working as part of a consortium). The details are set out in the Guidance Notes on pages 16-18. Questions on State Aid can be sent to pilotinfo@ukbrep.org.

32. Can a company join more than one consortium?

Yes. One company can be a member of more than one consortium, but we are unlikely to accept them as the lead for more than one consortium for each pilot application. However, they can also apply under the other pilot competitions.

33. Will you be able to share this presentation, please?

Yes, the presentation from the webinar and the recording will be made available on the ukbrep.org website.

34. Can the majority of rooftops in Pilar take conventional PV?

We believe that some of the Pilar rooftops can take conventional PV, but we will confirm this prior to the full application stage.

35. Does a UK company need to have a Brazilian point of contact for installation?

No, the installation will be conducted by the Brazilian R&D elements of the pilot. The technology provider should explain how this will be supported, which could, for example, be through the provision of instructions in Portuguese and/or the attendance of their staff to oversee installation.

36. Is the Light PV sub-station installation outside of the scope of the grant competition?

The installation on the Light sub-station is not part of the grant competition.

37. Is the use of off the shelf components to support our technology acceptable or do we have to find a consortium partner to provide them?

This is for the applicants to agree. For the consortia building stage we recommend you make clear both what additional technologies you may need and what you could, if necessary, source independently. This will help the consortia building stage to operate most effectively.

38. We have developed part of a potential technology solution to the challenge, but the basic technology upon which our product is based is not European. Are we still able to apply?

Yes.

Adam Smith
International

