Open Call Documentation
Prototyping the Future of Planning
Future Cities Catapult invites UK businesses, individuals, entrepreneurs and planning authorities to develop ideas, proof of concepts, business cases and prototypes that demonstrate how we can create a more data-driven and digitally enabled planning system that is fit for the 21st century.
The Context

Integrated Urban Planning is one of the priority themes for the Future Cities Catapult. As part of this theme we have launched our Future of Planning programme to generate debate and stimulate the market to build a planning system fit for the 21st Century. We believe that a data-driven and digitally-enabled system is one way towards that.

Experimentation is central to innovation. To update the planning system, we need to bring planners, developers, architects and citizens, together with entrepreneurs, SME's and technology professionals, and give them the space to be able to think of different ways of working. The only way to understand the possible future of planning is to experiment; to temporarily forget how things are done today, and design, prototype and validate better ways of doing things in the future.

Our ambition with this Future of Planning Open Call is to create the space to experiment. We've identified four challenge areas, outlined in this report, where we believe new ways of doing things could have the maximum impact.
The planning system

There are two aspects to the British planning system—Plan Making and Development Control.

The Plan making process creates plans that set out the economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of an area over the coming decades.

Development Control decides on the acceptability of proposals by developers through a planning applications process where planning officers recommend the approval or refusal of the development by balancing the policies.

The diagram below sets out how these two systems interact.
The plan making process

In the UK local plans are prepared by local planning authorities (LPAs). This forms part of a process that is separate from, but interacts with, the planning application process undertaken by developers.

Local plans set out the strategic approach and planning policies for an area, against which planning applications are later decided. Strategies and policies are formulated by reference to an analysis of an evidence base. Traditionally, the evidence base is composed of a suite of thematic research reports that identify the various characteristics and needs of a local area. Themes usually include assessing needs for housing, employment, retail, environmental protection and a range of other topics.

The LPA then generally undertakes a ‘call for sites’, during which landowners and developers can propose to have their sites included within the local plan. It then carries out a sustainability appraisal of the sites that have been proposed. The most sustainable sites are selected to be included within the draft version of the plan, which is then put forward to the public for a period of consultation.

Plans can often be contentious, attracting mixed views from different interest groups and stakeholders. Therefore, it is important for planners to communicate clearly in order to help stakeholders and the general public understand the effects of any strategies or policies. Effective communication and engagement are vital to preventing unreasonable opposition to development and reactive ‘Not In My Backyard (NIMBY)’ responses to planned proposals.

Once consultation has been completed, the LPA considers any comments received before submitting a final draft of the plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. The allocated inspector tests the plan and makes recommendations on any changes to be made before it is adopted.
The planning application process

In order to develop a site, planning permission must be granted by the LPA. Developers will undergo a series of steps in order to get their proposed schemes granted. This usually begins with the identification of a site, followed by some preliminary work to understand the site's potential in development terms, with built environment professionals including architects, planners and, where relevant, other specialist sub-consultants.

Depending on the nature of the scheme, the developer may then undertake pre-application discussions with the LPA, who will provide an indication of what would be desired or acceptable, given the site's context and the local plan's policies.

Following pre-application discussions, the developer submit an outline or a full planning application for the proposed scheme. The developer may choose to undertake their own consultation and communication with the public if the scheme is likely to be of interest or potentially contentious. During the drafting of a proposal, any specialist input is also gathered from professional sub-consultants, which might include transport, ecology, daylight and sunlight, heritage or any other topics deemed to be of interest given the site's context. Such reports are included within the planning application for the LPA's consideration.

Once an application is submitted to the LPA, the authority has a target to determine a decision within 8 weeks, or within 13 weeks for major or more complex schemes. During that time, the LPA undertakes a statutory consultation with the public and any relevant stakeholders, which may include other internal departments, other external bodies and amenity groups. The authority is required to notify local residents and businesses in writing and to place notices in conspicuous locations around the site to inform the public that an application has been submitted. Planning legislation in the UK stipulates that ‘the decision must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise’.

During the determination period, the LPA also usually undertakes negotiations with the developer on any conditions to be attached to any potential permissions. These conditions normally focus on ‘planning gain’, to be obtained through CIL or section 106 agreements. These may include the provision of certain infrastructure on or around a site, or payments to allow for the requirements to be met elsewhere. It is also very common for negotiations on housing schemes to include the provision of affordable or social housing units in addition to market housing. Other conditions to be applied to a permission may include construction restrictions, provision of additional evidence, opening hours or licensing restrictions among others to minimise any impact on residents or businesses.

If permission is granted to the applicant by the LPA, it is usually conditional on the discharge of any and all conditions stipulated as part of the decision. Once all conditions have been discharged, the development can begin. If permission is refused by the LPA, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Secretary of State. The appeal is then managed by the Planning Inspectorate under a separate process on behalf of the Secretary of State, or ‘called in’ by the Secretary of State for decision (usually in the most complex or contentious of schemes).
The challenges identified are based on insights gathered as part of our Future of Planning User Research. As part of this we engaged with a variety of stakeholders, including architects, developers, planning committees, community engagement experts, planning consultants, citizens, activist groups, and people applying for home extensions.

This research established a number of issues that came up time and time again. These issues have been synthesized into four broad thematic groups which we call the challenge areas. The challenges have been refined by our Sounding Board (a group of practitioners including planners, councillors, developers and architects) and informed by sessions we have run with innovators (start ups, SMEs, academics and young professionals).

1. Data informed planning  
2. Flexible planning  
3. Improved user experience for planning applications  
4. Increasing citizen influence

* Please note that the Catapult will be providing further material, including research and inspiration to support your submissions during the open call response period, the timing of this will be on or before the time that we hold the open clinic. The intention is that the challenge briefs themselves will not be refined or materially altered.
Data informed planning

**Problem**

During the plan making process planning authorities pay hundreds of thousands of pounds for consultants to collect, synthesise and model data, to provide evidence for policies and demonstrate that a plan is sound. Authorities current ability to monitor both the outputs and outcomes of the plan is limited and not incentivised. The data that does exist is largely unavailable, inaccessible and lacking in common standards or clear purpose. This is resulting in overproduction, a short shelf life and a lack of reuse for different purposes, sharing between authorities or opening up to the public.

**How might we...**

*Bring together, open up and visualise existing planning data in one place? (Evidence, monitoring and planning application data)*

*Better measure outcomes as well as outputs?*

*Integrate new and diverse data sources not currently utilised in planning?*

*Cheaply and quickly understand what has been built?*

*Give planning authorities the means to do more of their own analysis?*

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*Please note we do not require a specific response to one ‘how might we’, these are designed as provocations to inspire responses to the problem.*
Flexible planning

Problem

It takes about four years to produce a local plan. During that time significant economic, political and technological shifts can and will occur. Plans, in their current form, lack the adaptability and holistic thinking to flex to these changes resulting in rapidly outdated or ambiguous policies, and uncertainty for developers and communities.

How might we...

Help planners better forecast impact and spot trends to inform plans and policies?

Develop ways of testing plans and policies?

Rapidly iterate plans in response to changing local needs, and technological, economic and political shifts.

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*Please note we do not require a specific response to one 'how might we', these are designed as provocations to inspire responses to the problem
Improving the user experience of planning applications

Problem

The planning application process is labour intensive, opaque and confusing to the inexperienced. It is a stop-start system that is characterised by a back-and-forth between those involved. On entering the system it’s unclear what lies ahead and large chunks of the process are hidden from view which can be frustrating and confusing.

How might we...

Increase transparency for applicants about what to expect from the application process?

Support applicants to better understand how local planning policy will affect their planning applications?

Automate the right aspects of the process, from administration tasks to decision making?

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*Please note we do not require a specific response to one 'how might we', these are designed as provocations to inspire responses to the problem.*
Increasing citizen influence

Problem

There are plenty of good citizen engagement practices out there but they are underused within the planning system. Citizen engagement follows the traditional ask/respond consultation model and is largely dictated by legislative requirements, repeatedly reaching similar demographics. Often occurring too late in the process, citizens input often has little influence on decision making. Engagement usually takes the form of ‘objections’ and citizens lack a positive way to influence plan making and local development in a meaningful way.

How might we...

- Engage citizens in setting the vision and objectives of the plan?
- Move from consultation to co-design by supporting planners to use different, but existing methods and models of engagement?
- Help citizens understand their role and how best they can have influence over decision making across the system, from responding to planning notices, to shaping a local plan?
- Increase the diversity of citizens engaging in planning?

*Please note we do not require a specific response to one 'how might we', these are designed as provocations to inspire responses to the problem.
The prize

The Catapult will be making available a total of £100,000 in this open call for solutions that address the challenges detailed in this call. Awards will range from £10,000 to £20,000 total each up to the maximum funding available. The funding is designed to cover salaries, overheads and other related costs to develop your solution into:

- a concept;
- proof of concept;
- business case;
- prototype;
- digital prototype;
- functional prototype; and/or
- a combination of the above

Contracts will be awarded to those whose proposals are successfully selected during this competition.

As part of this Open Call we are also seeking local planning authorities who would be interested in working with the winners to validate, develop or pilot their ideas under a given challenge area.

Who can apply? (Eligibility)
The call is open to individuals, associations, organisations, local authorities or businesses legally registered in a member state of the European Union

Deliverables

1. A High-level Project Plan and Project Initiation Document (PID) – this will set out the approach, direction and plans for the project of developing your solution.

2. A Concept brief - a brief report outlining the 'need for' and 'objective of' your innovative product or service. It could be supported by more details about the methodology you plan to adopt, or the way your product or service will operate in the future.

3. Any of the following:
   - A proof of concept - a light demonstration that your product or service (or the principles behind it) is feasible and has practical potential
   - Digital Prototype - a mock-up (potentially interactive) of how the service, tool or product would look like and operate based on minimum viable requirements
   - Functional prototype - an early working version of the service, tool or product that has real data and / or functionality incorporated

4. And:
   A outline business case - an overview of the economic, social and environmental impact of the concept and/or how it would be translated into a viable and sustainable business.

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| A High-level Project Plan + Project Initiation Document | A Concept Brief | Any of the following:
   A Proof of Concept
   Digital Prototype
   Functional Prototype |
| 10th February | 10th March | 28th April |
|             |             |             |
How to apply

Organisations interested in entering the competition are required to complete an online submission by midnight, Thursday 26th January 2017 and be available for interviews during 1-2nd February 2017. The winners will be notified by 3rd February 2017 and must be ready to start immediately.

APPLY NOW

For more information please contact futureofplanning@futurecities.catapult.org.uk

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Opening date
Thursday 15th December, 2016

Open call clinic events
Thursday 12th-13th January, 2017

Please note: Location envisaged to be at the Catapult’s offices in central London and in a location in the north of England, to be confirmed

Closing date for clarification questions
Tuesday 17th January, 2017

Closing date for applications
Thursday 26th January, 2017

Interviews
1-2nd February, 2017

Winners notified
Friday 3rd February, 2017
Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated by a panel of internal and external experts selected by the Catapult. The entries will be evaluated applying the following criteria (equally weighted):

**Fit with the Future of Planning Programme Principles (0-5)**

**Frees up time for planners to plan**
Routine tasks should be automated to give planners more time to focus on developing and monitoring planning policies, making informed planning decisions, and ensuring we create places where people want to live in.

**Be outcome and quality driven**
As well as facilitating the delivery of new homes and jobs, the planning system will understand, design and monitor quality and outcomes.

**Be dynamic and iterative**
Shorten timescales for plan making and implementation by creating quick feedback and monitoring mechanisms, allowing policies and decision to be assessed and adjusted easily.

**Be data driven**
Collect, aggregate and maintain data in a single publicly-owned database which can be accessed by all departments and used to provide evidence for planning and other city strategies.

**Be open**
Ensure that all data is open and can be shared as much as feasibly possible, whilst having commercial sensitivity, privacy and security in mind.

**Be inclusive**
Present all information in an easily and accessible way to make the planning process understandable by all without the need for professional expertise.

**Innovation (0 to 5)**

- Have you clearly described the product or service?
- Does the proposed deployment represent a new or innovative use of technology or design in response to the identified challenge areas?
- How does your product integrate into the urban system to demonstrate an interesting use case?

**Impact (0 to 5)**

- Does the idea address the challenge areas outlined?
- How does the proposal impact the challenge area?
- Who will benefit from this proposal (citizens, cities, business, area...)?
- What is the likely short, medium and long term potential for impact given deployment of this proposal on a larger scale?

**Feasibility (0 to 5)**

- Is the proposal feasible?
- Is there an achievable deployment plan?
- Is the proposal feasible given the technology features and maturity?
- Is the proposal feasible through the skills and expertise of the team?
- Is the budget and the timescales realistic and demonstrate value for money?
Marks of [0-5] will be allocated against each of the criteria for Technical and Professional Criteria Evaluation with the following scoring definitions. Each mark represents a corresponding percentage, which is multiplied by the weighting for the component evaluated. These are added together and a total score is concluded. The grades of mark available are:

0. No evidence provided that the Candidate meets the requirement. No confidence that the Candidate can meet the requirement.

1. Very limited evidence provided that supports that the Candidate meets little of the requirement with major concerns that leads to the conclusion of a low level of confidence that the Candidate can meet the requirement.

2. Some evidence provided that supports that the Candidate meets some of the requirement with minor concerns that leads to the conclusion of a low to mid level of confidence that the Candidate can meet the requirement.

3. Evidence provided that supports that the Candidate meets most of the requirement with minor concerns that leads to the conclusion of a mid-level of confidence that the Candidate can meet the requirement.

4. Evidence provided that supports that the Candidate meets the entire requirement that leads to the conclusion of a mid to high level of confidence that the Candidate can meet the requirement.

5. Comprehensive evidence provided that supports that the Candidate meets all of the requirement that leads to the conclusion of a high level of confidence that the Candidate has the required skills, experience or resources required.

The total scores will determine a ranking of applicants. The top ranked applicants will be awarded contracts.
Funding conditions

A. For which activities can I receive funding?

You are eligible for funding for all activities mentioned below, under the condition that these activities contribute to maturing and further developing the Planning innovation concept:

1. Planning and development of the concept
2. Co-creation and / or reviews of the products or services with stakeholders (citizens, companies, etc)
3. Cost of materials directly relating to the development of the product or service
4. Reporting the necessary effort and costs according to rules and management practices requested by the Catapult. You will be required to do this as a condition of funding

B. Which costs am I allowed to include in my budget?

For a cost within your project to be eligible for funding it must:

- be incurred and paid between your project start and end dates
- be directly related to the activities listed
- be best value for money
- be indicated in the original estimated budget
- be incurred in connection with the action as described in your project application and necessary for its development
- be identifiable and verifiable, recorded in your accounts and in accordance with the accounting standards and per your organisation’s usual cost accounting practices
- comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security

You can include:

- Staff costs
- Subcontracting costs
- Material costs
- Travel costs
- Other costs

The total amount of time and cost will be reviewed before approval for funding. The reviewers can decide to fund your proposal with a reduced amount.

C. Reporting

A written project status and financial report will be required around each of the following milestones:

Key Milestone Reporting dates
Funding Milestone 1
Friday 10th February, 2017

Winners Check-In Event
Friday 10th March, 2017

Funding Milestone 2
Friday 31st March, 2017

Funding Milestone 3
Friday 28th April, 2017

We will provide you with a description of the basic requirements and templates closer to the time. The Catapult reserves the right to amend this timetable at its discretion.
Deliverables

We require:

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**Important information**

**Form of Response**
Responses to this competition should provide the Catapult with sufficient information to evaluate an applicant’s potential to participate in the open call using the evaluation criteria detailed.

Applicants should respond in accordance with these instructions. Failure to respond in accordance with these instructions may result in your application not being considered further.

Applications will only be accepted as compliant if they:
- Provide the required information;
- Provide a response to all questions; and
- Supply all documentation referred to in the responses

Failure to be compliant may result in your application not being considered further. The Catapult expressly reserves the right to require an applicant to provide additional information supplementing or clarifying any of the information provided in response to the requests set out in this competition document. This does not create an obligation for the Catapult to have to make such requests.

**Point of Contact**
All contact is to be made by emailing futureofplanning@futurecities.catapult.org.uk or during the clinics to be hosted by the Catapult.

**Clarification Questions**
Clarification questions should be submitted in writing via futureofplanning@futurecities.catapult.org.uk by the Clarification Question Deadline (see timetable below).

Where the Catapult considers any question or request for clarification to be of significance, it may communicate both the query and the response, in a suitably anonymous form, to all applicants who have responded. If an applicant does not wish for a query or response to be disclosed to other applicants, it must communicate this and the reason why to the Catapult with the query. The Catapult will consider the request but reserves the right to disclose the query and/or the response to other applicants.

**Competition Costs**
Any expenditure, work or effort undertaken by your company prior to the award of a contract is a matter solely for your own commercial judgement. The Catapult reserves the right to terminate this competition at any time and not to enter into any contract. The Catapult and/or its advisers shall not be liable for any costs, liabilities or expenses whatsoever whether incurred (directly or indirectly) by your organisation, advisers or sub-contractors, in connection with the preparation of the response to this competition or in the event of discontinuance of this competition.

**Contracting**
Upon selection by The Catapult of applicants to participate in the demonstration as a result of this competition will be expected to enter into a collaboration contract with the Catapult. Applicants are advised that nothing herein or in any other communication made by the Catapult (written or oral) shall be taken as constituting a legally binding contract or agreement between the Catapult (save for a formal award of contract made in writing on behalf of the Catapult).

**Variations**
The Catapult reserves the right to amend any information or any requirements contained within competition documents and in the F6S system.

**Notice**
By participating in the competition process, Applicants shall be deemed to have agreed to be bound by the notices and undertakings in the competition documents and the F6S system.
Timeline

**Opening date**
Thursday 15th December, 2016

**Open call clinic events**
Thursday 12th-13th January, 2017

Please note: Location envisaged to be at the Catapult’s offices in central London and in a location in the north of England, to be confirmed

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Tuesday 17th January, 2017

**Closing date for applications**
Thursday 26th January, 2017

**Interviews**
1-2nd February, 2017

**Winners notified**
Friday 3rd February, 2017

**Funding Milestone 1 (20% payment)**
Friday 10th February, 2017

**Winners Check-In Event**
Friday 10th March, 2017

**Funding Milestone 2 (50% payment)**
Friday 31st March, 2017

**Final report due**
Friday 28th April, 2017

**Funding Milestone 3 (30% payment)**
Friday 28th April, 2017

The Catapult will invite applicants to a presentation stage to clarify aspects of the Bidder’s tender following receipt of tenders.

The Catapult reserves the right to amend this timetable at its discretion. All announcements regarding results of evaluations shall be sent via email to the lead contact.

**Clinic Events**
If you are interested in applying, we recommend you save the date to attend one of our Open Call Clinics in person and by live stream, on Thursday 12th January 2017 at the Urban Innovation Centre in London; In person, on Friday 13th January 2017 in northern England (to be confirmed).

At each of these events the Catapult will explain in greater detail the background to the open call challenges and answer your questions regarding the application process. This will also be a great chance to meet other businesses, who might wish to collaborate or offer assistance as part of a proposal. Where you can, we recommend you attend in person.

**IMPORTANT NOTE**
No extensions to the deadline for responses will usually be granted with very limited exception to situations where the Applicant finds themselves seeking to request an extension due to reasonable extenuating circumstances, those circumstances being beyond the Applicant’s control and unforeseen to them.

Subject to:
- the Applicant providing evidence that proves the extenuating circumstance; and
- the Applicant informs the Catapult as soon as reasonably practicable following it becoming apparent.
Thank you