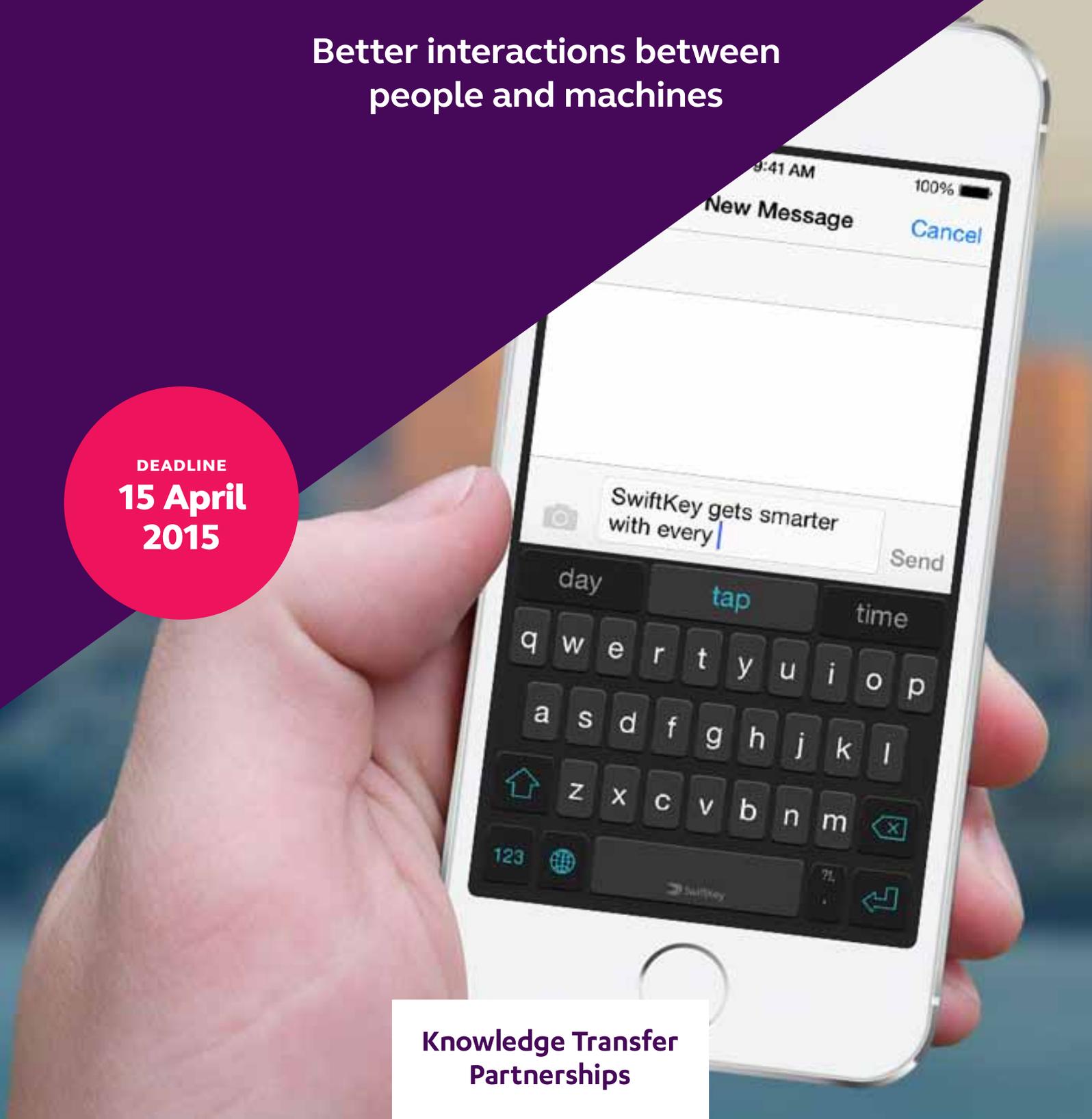# Innovate UK
Technology Strategy Board

Competition for partnership funding

Better interactions between people and machines

DEADLINE
15 April 2015

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

Innovate UK is to invest up to £1m in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) in the area of user experience (UX). The aim is to encourage new, enhanced forms of interaction between computing systems and the people who use them.

Proposals may address technologies that contribute to these new forms, such as sensing information about the user, or those that improve specific types of experience, such as mobile and wearable devices.

This competition will support up to 10 KTP projects of between six and 36 months, for greater knowledge and skills transfer relating to UX from the cutting edge research base into industry.

It is part of a £1.5m Innovate UK programme to stimulate innovations in user experience. The KTP competition runs in parallel with a competition for feasibility studies.

We fund part of the cost of running the KTP project, with the level of grant depending on the size of the company. Project costs vary, with the average being around £60k a year, of which an SME might contribute about one third, but this depends on the individual project.

This competition opens on 7 November 2014 and is open for applications until noon on 15 April 2015. A briefing day for potential applicants will be held in London on 14 November 2014.

Background

Computer systems and devices often present impractical or even poor experiences for users. Innovative technologies and approaches can address these issues, improving user satisfaction and engagement with computing systems.

Computing environments and software systems are increasingly pervasive, but simply using a keyboard, mouse or screen is becoming outdated.

Instead, new devices and embedded software systems are making the way we use computers a more immersive experience. This makes it easier for people to interact with machines and to adopt new systems and processes more quickly. Greater computing power can also enhance, enrich and optimise interaction with the user.

Various technologies have the potential to revolutionise the way computing systems are used in every sector and application area. Perfecting these so that they are exploitable and practicable will improve the way everyone can use computer systems more effectively and easily.

User experience (UX) extends beyond a computer system's effectiveness, efficiency and the satisfaction it offers in a specific context. It involves other aspects, such as user's emotions in using the system. Although system usability is central to a good UX, the simple use of new and innovative technologies is not sufficient for better usability or UX.

NB: This document provides information on the targeted competition for KTPs only. Those wishing to apply for the related Feasibility study competition should visit **interact.innovateuk.org** and look under Competitions.

Scope

The competition encourages innovation in improving interaction between people and computer systems and devices, so enhancing the overall user experience.

That innovation could be in underlying technologies, in combining emerging technologies, or in employing tools to improve the user experience.

Examples of such innovations include, but are not limited to:

Sensors and interactions
Eye tracking, emotion-sensing, advanced gesture tracking, haptic interfaces, expression analysis, voice/speech interaction.

Wearable technology
Devices/clothing worn outside or on the body, in contact with the skin or embedded within the body.

Mobile user experience
Supporting natural and easy interactions on the move

Multiple device user experience
How seamless co-operation among various devices can enhance the user experience.

Multi-disciplinary approaches
Methods and tools to involve non-ICT experts in user experience design, including artists, anthropologists and psychologists.

Brain-controlled computing
Practicality – such as when user is wearing protective headgear, such as in sport, construction and cycling.

Combinations of emerging technologies
Short-range, ad-hoc wireless technologies or application performance management tools.

Out of scope are innovations where the user experience is influenced by the content itself or other social trends and fashions.

Funding allocation and project details

We have allocated up to £1m to fund projects that address the technical challenges outlined in the scope.

We will fund part of the cost of running the KTP, with the level of grant depending on the size of the company. KTP is open to all UK companies and the UK-wide knowledge base.

As an example, a small or medium-sized enterprise might contribute around a third of the project costs, with the remainder being paid as grant. Larger companies generally receive a lower level of funding. Annual project costs will vary, depending on the type and duration of project, but the average is currently around £60k.

The grant is paid through the academic partner. Your local KTP adviser will be able to provide more details on funding levels (see details on the next page).

Aside from the direct benefits to the three partners from involvement in a KTP we support knowledge sharing between KTPs. For example, we stage events that bring the KTPs together, providing information-sharing through our _connect networking platform, and introducing KTPs to partners in other types of funded innovation projects.

From February 2015, Innovate UK will be running a parallel competition for feasibility studies (mainly pre-industrial research projects) in the area of user experience. See **www.innovateuk.gov.uk** under Competitions for more information and how to apply to the user experience feasibility study competition.

Organisations applying to both competitions must make sure that their proposals stand alone and are not dependent on both applications being successful.

What is KTP?

KTP is Europe's leading programme helping businesses to improve their competitiveness, productivity and performance through the better use of the knowledge, technology and skills available within the UK knowledge base. The programme is UK-wide, headed by Innovate UK, and supported by 12 other public sector funding organisations.

A KTP involves the formation of a partnership between a business, an academic institution (or knowledge base partner) and a recently qualified person, known as the Associate. The aim of the partnership is to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and embed new capability within the business.

Through collaboration, these partnerships can:

- find highly qualified people to spearhead new projects
- access expertise to take an organisation forward
- devise innovative solutions to help an organisation grow
- develop the capacity and capability to innovate more effectively beyond the life of the KTP project.

Looking for partners to work on your project? Go to _connect

connect.innovateuk.org

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Application process

If you are interested in applying you should first discuss project ideas with a university KTP office or contact one of our regional KTP advisers directly through the KTP website. **www.ktponline.org.uk/advisers**

The application process involves:

Stage 1: expression of interest (EOI) submitted

Stage 2: approved EOIs invited to submit a grant proposal and application form

Stage 3: KTP partnership approvals group (PAG) establishes suitability as a KTP project *

Stage 4: Innovate UK assesses whether the application fulfils the scope of this competition (with involvement from co-funders, as appropriate).

Both the EOI and application are agreed with a KTP adviser before submission by the academic partner for consideration by the PAG.

* If your proposal is not within the scope of this competition or is not selected as part of this cohort, you may still be eligible for a KTP grant. There is a general scheme open for applications year-round and supporting projects in many fields. Contact your local KTP adviser for more information.

A briefing day is being held in London on **14 November 2014**. Go to **connect.innovateuk.org/events** to register for the event and for the webinar.

Key dates

Open for applications	**7 November 2014**
Briefing event: 110 Rochester Row, Victoria, London, SW1P 1JP (www.110rochesterrow.co.uk)	**14 November 2014**
Deadlines for applications (corresponding to stage 2 of the application process)	**11 February 2015 noon** **15 April 2015 noon**
Partnership approvals group (PAG) meetings (corresponding to stage 3 of the application process)	**5 March 2015** **May 7 2015**

More information

For more information about your eligibility for KTP or the suitability of projects for this competition, please contact your KTP regional adviser or local university KTP office. Adviser contact details are available on the KTP website. **www.ktponline.org.uk/advisers**

For details of the user experience feasibility study competition, visit **www.innovateuk.org** and look under Funding & Support > Funding competitions.
Competition helpline: 0300 321 4357
Email: KTP_companies@innovateuk.gov.uk

Publicity

As part of the application process all applicants are asked to submit a public description of the project. This should adequately describe the project but not disclose any information that may impact on intellectual property, is confidential or commercially sensitive. The titles of successful projects, names of organisations, amounts awarded and the public description will be published once the decision to offer an award has been communicated to applicants by email. Information about unsuccessful project applications will remain confidential and will not be made public. E-mail **pressoffice@innovateuk.gov.uk** with any queries.

Competition helpline
0300 321 4357
Email
support@ innovateuk. gov.uk

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