Frequently Asked Questions

1. General

What is the Open Innovation Platform about?

The Open Innovation Platform (OIP) is a virtual platform that connects and matches Problem Owners to a pool of Problem Solvers, building up digital innovation capabilities for both large and small enterprises. The platform is supported by a structured innovation process from ideation to commercialisation, as well as a physical innovation facility that can support rapid prototyping and other innovation activities.

What are the benefits of OIP?

Benefits to Problem Owners

The OIP provides Problem Owners with access to a large community of solvers with multi-disciplinary expertise. The process also reduces overall innovation costs, de-risks and accelerates innovation outcomes through a crowd-sourcing, agile and iterative problem solving process.

Benefits to Problem Solvers

Through the OIP, Problem Solvers have visibility of real business needs articulated by potential customers in different sectors, and in turn, have opportunity to proactively engage customers to co-create with them. Being plugged into the OIP also offers Problem Solvers opportunities to collaborate with other technology providers for multi-disciplinary solutions.

Who are the Problem Owners placing challenges on OIP?

OIP Problem Owners can be from the Private or Public Sector.

Singapore government agencies that place Public Sector challenges on the OIP are seeking innovative digital solutions to transform public service delivery for the benefit of Singapore and Singaporeans. Public sector challenges on the OIP are linked to innovation procurement (please refer to "How does Innovation Procurement apply to Public Challenges?").

SMEs and Large Enterprises that place Private Sector challenges are seeking innovative ideas, products and solutions to their business challenges or to leverage digitalisation opportunities.

What are the different categories of challenges?

The category of challenge is proposed by the Problem Owner and published within the description of each problem statement. The two main categories of challenges are:

Proof-of-Concept (POC): Demonstration of the technical viability of concepts or features of the proposed solution, in a lab setting or as an isolated exercise.

Prototype: Demonstration of a working prototype to be tested in an intended or simulated environment, and can be extended to a pilot.

For both categories of challenges, there is the potential for Problem Owner and winning Solver to continue development, commercialise and deploy the solution at scale beyond the OIP.

What is the timeline and process for each call?

Each innovation call is split up into 2 - 3 phases depending on the challenge category. Ideation challenges have an application phase (8 - 12 weeks) followed by an evaluation and selection phase (4 - 8 weeks) before finalist(s) are selected. For POC/Prototype challenges, there will be an additional POC/Prototype development phase, typically about 3 to 6 months. The winner(s) for the challenge are selected after the POCs or Prototypes have been successfully completed.

What are the criteria to be a Problem Solver on the Open Innovation Platform?

We are open to individuals, research providers and companies that have digital technology expertise and innovation capabilities. Some of these include Info-Comm and Media (ICM) start-ups, SMEs and larger companies. Problem Solvers should have the ability and desire to co-create and innovate with Problem Owners and/or other partners to translate their ideas into solutions that can address the problem statements.

Can an individual apply for challenges on the OIP?

Yes, we welcome individuals above 18 years old to apply for challenges on the OIP if you have an idea that can be translated into a solution, and for POC/Prototype stage challenges, with the eventual aim of commercialisation and scaling.

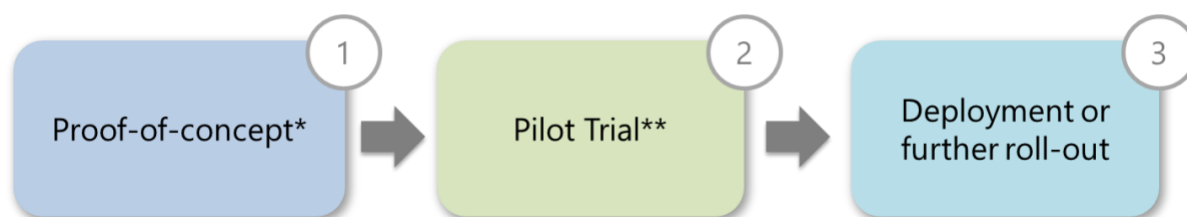## Can global solvers apply for challenges on the OIP?

Yes, global solvers may apply for challenges on the OIP. However, from time to time, some Problem Owners may require applicants to have a physical presence in Singapore in order to perform a demonstration of the Proof-of-Concept or Prototype. Global applicants must be prepared to bear the additional cost of travel as no additional funding would be provided aside from the published prize money (unless otherwise stated). Applicants are encouraged to check the respective challenges if there are such requirements before applying.

How does Innovation Procurement apply to Public Challenges?

Innovation Procurement allows the Government Agency to use Challenges to identify one or more suitable proposal(s) with a view to selecting the most advantageous final proposal to provide the proposed solution. This process extends beyond the Challenge and may require further contractual agreements to be executed between the Government Agency and shortlisted Problem Solvers, as illustrated below.

As a further illustrative guide, the Government Agency may choose to contract Problem Solvers in stages as shown in the diagram below. For example, the project may commence with a proof-of-concept (Stage 1), followed by a pilot trial (Stage 2) and subsequently deployment or further roll-out (Stage 3). Depending on the nature of the problem statement and the maturity of the proposals, the Government Agency will assess and make a recommendation on whether the project could also commence in Stage 2 or Stage 3.

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*Proof-of-concept: Involves development of working prototype

** Pilot Trial: Involves test-bedding of the proposed solution in Singapore, at sites designated by the Government Agency or as mutually agreed between the Government Agency and Problem Solver

The Problem Solver is advised to read and understand the sample terms covered in Annexes A-D in the "Challenge Brief & Submission" and "Challenge Terms" of each Government Agency challenge.

Does IMDA provide any funding support to participating companies on the OIP?

The objective of OIP is for Problem Owners to work with Problem Solvers to build innovative solutions that can solve their real business problems. The support we provide to participating companies is to facilitate the development of the innovation community, the matching of problems to solutions, and support for the innovation process. We expect Problem Owners to provide prize monies for challenges they post on the OIP to signal their commitment to their innovation need, as well as to encourage Problem Solvers to submit quality ideas and solutions. We hope that Problem Solvers who have successfully developed a solution through the OIP will continue to work with Problem Owners to deploy innovative products on a commercial basis.

Following completion of the Innovation Challenge and awarding of prize money, IMDA may leverage existing funding schemes to support either Problem Owners or Solvers in the OIP to further develop and commercialise their solutions.

2. Application Process for Problem Solvers

How do I register as a problem solver?

Simply sign up for an account on the OIP here. You will then be able to view the details of the challenges and can log in to apply for any of the challenges.

Steps for Registration:

1. Fill up your name, email address, password
2. Accept the terms and conditions
3. A confirmation email will be sent to your email (Please check your Spam/Junk mailbox)
4. Follow the instructions in confirmation email to complete your registration

How do I apply to solve the challenges on OIP and what information is required?

If you would like to apply for any of the challenges on the OIP, you would need to submit your solutions for the selected problem statements before the end of the call. Each challenge has specific requirements for the information to be submitted. Problem Solvers should look at the respective application form for the required information. The information given about your company/ institution/

you and the solution will allow Problem Owners to assess your solution and fit for solving their challenge.

All applicants are strongly encouraged to read through the specific terms and conditions of each challenge before submitting proposals. For Public Sector challenges, terms and conditions may cover process extending beyond this Challenge and further into contractual agreements that could be executed between Agency and shortlisted Problem Solvers.

Will I retain my Intellectual Property rights?

Intellectual Property (IP) rights refers to patents, utility models, rights to inventions, copyright and related rights, trademarks and service marks, trade names and domain names, right in get-up, goodwill and the right to sue for passing off or unfair competition, rights in designs, rights in computer software, database rights, rights to preserve confidentiality of information (including know-how and trade secrets). It can also include any applications for (and rights to apply for and be granted) renewals or extensions of, and rights to claim priority from, and all similar or equivalent rights or forms of protection which subsist or will subsist, now or in the future, in any part of the world.

Each Problem Owner has a preferred IP arrangement for their challenge, which is also reflected under the respective Challenge Terms.

After the selection of the finalist(s) and prior to the development of the POC/Prototype, the Problem Solver and Problem Owner can enter into a new agreement governing the terms of the POC/Prototype. If necessary, IP workshops can also be provided to guide Problem Solvers on IP arrangements.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read through the specific terms and conditions of each challenge before applying.

Can I submit solutions for more than one problem statement?

Yes. If you or your organisation has solutions to more than one challenge, we welcome you to submit your applications to different challenges within each challenge call.

Can Problem Solvers collaborate to address a multidisciplinary challenge on the OIP?

We welcome collaborations among Problem Solvers on the OIP using the Forum. Each team should nominate a Lead Applicant who will front all communication with IMDA and the Problem Owner, submit the solution and, where applicable, manage division of prize monies (which will be paid out solely to the Lead Solver in full). Team members are responsible for working out their own commercial arrangements, including sharing of IP.

All Problem Solvers that are listed in the application will be acknowledged if the submission is awarded as finalist or winner.

How would multiple Problem Solvers working together on a submission be reflected in the application form?

The details of the Lead Applicant should be used to fill the application form. There will also be a field where other contributing Problem Solvers (Individual name / Company name) can be included, with a short description of their contribution. Please note that all contributing Problem Solvers listed in the application form would have to be registered on the platform as well. All Problem Solvers that are listed in the application will be acknowledged if the submission is awarded as finalist or winner.

I have left out some details in my application. Can I edit my submission?

Applicants are able to save their draft application before submitting. Once submitted, edits are not permitted and requests will not be entertained. Therefore, we encourage applicants to review their applications thoroughly before final submission.

Supplementary information, if necessary, can be provided to the Problem Owner or/and IMDA only if you are shortlisted to be a finalist subsequently.

3. Application Process for Problem Owners

What are the guidelines for problem statements that the OIP will seek to address?

Problem statements should articulate real business problems or new opportunities to digitalise your organisation. An OIP problem statement could be looking for:

- Solutions that are not yet commercially available in their sector or for their business
- Solutions to develop new tech capabilities or combine tech capabilities in different disciplines
- Solutions leveraging existing capabilities and applied to new business/markets
- Solutions that can potentially disrupt service models or the industry
- Solutions that are scalable and exportable

Problem Owners will be guided through a process of curating, framing and refining their problem statements with IMDA before challenges are posted on the OIP.

How can Problem Owners participate in OIP?

You can participate as a Problem Owner if you are looking to digitalise and have a defined business need, and are willing to put up a prize money as an award for it to be solved. The OIP is a good avenue for innovation if you wish to tap on an external community of multi-disciplinary talent, expertise and technologies to widen their catchment of high-quality and innovative ideas. Problem Owners would typically be interested to accelerate the pace, reduce the risk and cost of developing new digital products and services by working with external partners.

What are the capabilities of the Solver pool on the OIP?

Our current Solver pool on OIP comprises of diverse expertise from Companies (primarily start-ups and small businesses), Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) and Individuals from both Singapore and the region. Areas of expertise include domain areas such as Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), Blockchain, Immersive Media, Cybersecurity, Robotics, etc.

Do challenges have to be from Singapore?

No; we welcome opportunities to host overseas challenges that provide Singapore-based problem solvers with opportunities to develop innovative solutions to solve problem statements in other markets.

Problem Owners with a base in Singapore can collate and submit problem statements on behalf of their overseas business units. Problem Owners without any base in Singapore can also submit problem statements to IMDA and we will assess the feasibility of hosting these on a case-by-case basis.

If accepted, all overseas problem statements will only be open to Singapore-based solvers. Problem Owners with problem statements that require testing or deployment overseas are encouraged to absorb part or all of the travel costs, on top of the prize monies.

Problem Owners with overseas problem statements are also encouraged to work with Singapore-based solvers closely to provide market channels to commercialise and deploy successful solutions post-OIP.

Do Problem Owners have to pay to participate?

IMDA does not collect any fees for participation in the OIP.

However, Problem Owners are required to put up prize money that would be awarded in tranches to Problem Solvers for solutions that successfully address the problem statements posted. The exact amount of prize money is determined by the Problem Owner, and ranges depending on the complexity and category of challenge (e.g. POC, Prototype). As part of engagement with Problem Owners, IMDA will assess the problem statement and provide recommendations on the minimum amount and typical range of prize money based on market benchmarks.

What Intellectual Property rights will Problem Owners have?

Intellectual Property (IP) rights refers to patents, utility models, rights to inventions, copyright and related rights, trademarks and service marks, trade names and domain names, right in get-up, goodwill and the right to sue for passing off or unfair competition, rights in designs, rights in computer software, database rights, rights to preserve confidentiality of information (including know-how and trade secrets). It can also include any applications for (and rights to apply for and be granted) renewals or extensions of, and rights to claim priority from, and all similar or equivalent rights or forms of protection which subsist or will subsist, now or in the future, in any part of the world.

For POC and Prototype challenges, Problem Owners have to acknowledge the Problem Solver ownership of IP rights, and all IP created from Problem Solver's work on the Challenge is to be owned by the Problem Solver. However, you may propose IP and exclusivity positions with the finalist(s) before proceeding further to the development, testing and evaluation of the solution proposed.

How do I become a Problem Owner?

If you wish to participate in the OIP as a Problem Owner, kindly sign up for an account on the OIP here or email us at info@openinnovation.sg and we will contact you shortly to process your application.

Steps for Registration:

1. Fill up all 4 fields in the form (Company Profile, Challenge, When and Other information)
2. Click Submit

Once completed, we will reach out to you for further discussion. If you need any help or clarification, please email to info@openinnovation.sg

5. Forum & Community

What is Forum?

The Forum is for Problem Solvers to be plugged into the wider OIP community. If you are looking to collaborate with another Problem Solver to apply for a challenge, you can use the Forum to look for other Problem Solvers with specific areas of expertise and are interested in the same challenge.

The Forum is also where Problem Solvers can post questions on the challenge to Problem Owners. From time to time, additional information or clarifications on the challenge could also be provided in response to queries.

How does the OIP Forum work?

On the forum, each challenge will have a "Collaboration Group" that you can join. Once you join a group, you will be able to post in the forum. In your post, you should have a clear explanation on what you're looking for with relevant tags in the 'Keywords' section such as [Design]. That way, the Problem Owner and other Problem Solvers can easily find your post and respond to them.

Note: The OIP Team reserves the right to exclude inappropriate posts from the platform, such as advertisements, without giving any reason for doing so. Further, you have full responsibility for avoiding infringement of the intellectual property or personal rights of others in connection with your content.

Can I use the Forum to ask Problem Owners questions?

Yes. Each problem statement's Forum will have a representative from the Problem Owner team who shall address queries directed to them. However, it is left to the discretion of the Problem Owner whether or not to reply through the Forum. If you have an urgent query that has not been addressed on the Challenge page or in the FAQ page, you may also send an email to info@openinnovation.sg.

Can I use the Forum to ask questions about the OIP process?

No. Please send an email to info@openinnovation.sg if you have any questions that have not been addressed on the Challenges page or in the FAQ. The OIP team will not respond to queries on the Forum.

What is Community?

This is the community of Problem Owners, Problem Solvers and partners that have joined the Open Innovation Platform. This allows our community to be connected to each other, and to also view Problem Solvers that have been selected as Finalists or Winners of past challenges.

I am from a Trade Association and Chamber (TAC). How can I partner IMDA's OIP?

TAC are key enablers in driving digitalisation and innovation within their membership base. From sharing the benefits of innovation and OIP to the members, to aggregating common sector challenges on behalf of members, there are many ways whereby a TAC can partner with the OIP. Please contact the OIP team through info@openinnovation.sg if you are interested to collaborate with IMDA and use the OIP as a resource for your members.

I am from a Venture Capital / Incubator / Accelerator. How can I partner IMDA's OIP?

We welcome collaboration with Venture Capital Firms, Incubators and Accelerators to be part of the OIP ecosystem.

We work with many VCs, incubators and accelerators that provide referrals to their portfolio companies, so that their companies have opportunities to solve challenges on the OIP and get access to customers. In addition, we organise pitching and networking sessions to showcase promising OIP finalist(s) and winner(s) to VCs/Incubators/Accelerators who are on the lookout for potential investment or incubation candidates.

4. Submitted Solutions and Post-Call

How will the submitted solutions be evaluated?

Problem Owners, together with IMDA, will evaluate the solutions based on the criteria set out in each of the challenge. Please refer to Evaluation Criteria which can be found in each challenge under Challenge Brief.

How many winners will be selected for each challenge?

Problem Owners will decide on the number of finalists and winners that can meet the needs of their challenge after reviewing all the applications. There is no limit to the number of finalists or winners who may be awarded.

How is the award disbursed to selected solvers?

The award disbursement model depends on the preferred choice of disbursement stages by the Problem Owner.

For Proof-of-Concept and Prototype challenges, there is typically a two-stage process. Finalist(s) will be selected from the shortlisted Solvers and awarded a stipulated proportion, typically 30%, of the prize money, which would go towards defraying the cost of the POC/Prototype. Finalist(s) will then be required to generate POC/ Prototypes. A winner (or multiple winners) would be awarded at the conclusion of the POC/ Prototype generation stage and receive the remaining prize money (typically 70%).

The award arrangement, including the proportions of prize money that are paid up at different stages, could differ from challenge to challenge. Applicants are encouraged to read through the specific terms and conditions before applying.

Can the Problem Owner hold back the second tranche of money after the POC or Prototype is developed?

If you or your organisation is selected as the finalist of the call, you will get the opportunity to collaborate with the Problem Owner to develop your idea into a POC or Prototype. This is typically based on a pre-determined set of criteria and terms and conditions under a separate written agreement. The Problem Owner has the right to evaluate the POCs or Prototypes of different finalists

based on pre-determined selection criteria and select the winner(s) of the challenge. Only the winner(s) of the challenge would be awarded the second tranche of prize money.

What happens to the projects after the end of the challenge? Will there be more support from IMDA or the OIP after the POC / Prototype is completed?

After the challenge is completed, IMDA will work with successful Solvers and Problem Owners and offer opportunities to support development and commercialisation. We will work with Problem Solvers as well as partners like investors, incubators and accelerators to facilitate Solvers who would like to bring successful POCs/Prototypes to market. Government funding from existing schemes can potentially be tapped into for further development work, if necessary.

What if I have more questions?

If you have any further questions that have not been addressed on the problem statement page or in this FAQ, please send us an email to info@openinnovation.sg and we will respond to you as soon as possible.