Innovate NI Assessment Crib Sheet

Innovation: "The development and implementation of a new or improved product, service, model, or process which is novel (significantly different), and has/will be introduced to the market (product/service) or implemented within the business (process, model) creating value".

1) Clearly explain your innovation.

When explaining your innovation, focus on clarity. Clearly define the problem you're solving and the opportunity you're seizing. Then, explain what you're developing (or have recently developed) and how it directly addresses the problem. Keep the focus on the innovation itself, not on yourself or the broader business. Use simple, jargon-free language to make sure the core solution is crystal clear. Stay concise, highlighting the key points that showcase the value and impact of what you're developing

2) Please provide details of why this innovation is novel (significantly different) from what is currently in your business and/or available in the market.

When explaining why your innovation is novel, focus on what sets it apart. Highlight the key features or aspects that make your innovation new or significantly different. Be specific about how your innovation improves on or addresses gaps in existing solutions. Avoid generalizations—provide concrete examples or comparisons to demonstrate how your solution is significantly different from what's currently available in your business or the market. This will help clarify why your innovation is a meaningful advancement and what unique value it brings.

3) Clearly explain how you believe your innovation will create value within your business and/or the Northern Ireland economy? Your response may also include any elements of inclusivity, sustainability, or positive environmental impact.

When explaining how your innovation will create value, focus on the tangible impact it will have within your business and/or the broader Northern Ireland economy. For example, explain how your innovation might improve efficiency, reduce costs, or open new revenue streams and market opportunities. Consider how it could help your business grow or become more competitive. Additionally, think about any wider economic benefits—such as job creation, skill development, or attracting investment—that your innovation could bring to Northern Ireland. Being specific about these outcomes will help show the real value your innovation can deliver

4) Outline what validation and testing activities you have or will carry out?

When explaining how you validated or plan to validate and test your idea or product in the market, focus on the steps you used to gather valuable feedback from real users and assess its fit within the market. Describe how you conducted (or will conduct) tests to ensure the product meets industry standards or relevant accreditations, emphasizing compliance and quality. Outline any specific actions

taken, such as adjustments to features or functionality, and key decisions made based on insights from this validation and testing process. This approach highlights how feedback and standards directly shaped your product's development and market readiness

5) If purchasing or bringing into your business new technologies/products, explain in detail how they will enable the development of your innovation?

Simply purchasing software or new equipment doesn't count as innovation; it's how you use it to develop you innovation, create value or solve a problem that matters. When explaining this, focus on how the new equipment enables you to develop a novel solution or improve existing processes in a way that adds real value.

6) Please clearly explain your plans, including any support (financial or other) you feel you may require to progress your innovation?

Make sure to clearly explain each step you'll take to move forward, as well as any specific support you might need to make it successful. This includes detailing the resources required, such as funding/grant funding, technical expertise, advice and guidance, or access to specialized equipment or expertise , to fully develop and implement your idea. Being transparent about the support you need—whether it's funding, mentorship, or partnerships.