

Applicant Guidance Notes

SME LEADERS PROGRAMME

Index

[Introduction](#)

[Who should apply?](#)

[Details of the programme](#)

[Expected future interaction with awardees](#)

[Background – the Enterprise Hub](#)

[Eligibility criteria](#)

[Submission deadline](#)

[Monitoring](#)

[How to apply](#)

[Completing the Application Form](#)

1. [Applicant summary](#)
2. [Project details](#)
3. [Support requested](#)
4. [Marketing and Declaration](#)

[Assessment of Applications](#)

[Contact](#)

[Annex A: Training and executive education](#)

[Annex B: Provisional Masterclass and workshop schedule](#)

[Annex C: Further information regarding mentoring](#)

The above links will take you directly to the section required.

Introduction

This programme supports promising leaders of high growth engineering small and medium enterprises (SMEs). We support the development of leadership skills through four main channels:

[Channel 1](#): Training courses, executive education

[Channel 2](#): Masterclasses and workshops delivered by senior business leaders

[Channel 3](#): provision of an experienced personal mentor

[Channel 4](#): Hub Membership

Further details on each of these aspects is outlined below. The peer group of awardees also forms an additional support network. By improving the skills of these leaders, the Academy aims to support the pursuit of excellence in engineering.

The [assessment process](#) and [timeline](#) is explained below.

Who should apply?

Leaders (Founders, MDs, or C-level executives) of engineering SMEs which are experiencing scale-up 'growth pains' are encouraged to apply, as are those who have

plans to scale the SME they lead. We are committed to improving diversity and inclusion in engineering and we welcome applications from those currently under represented within the engineering sector.

Details of the programme

Channel 1: Training courses, Executive education

There are many leadership training and executive education courses available from a myriad of providers (private companies, professional institutions, business schools, etc). Options are available which can maximize the investment in learning and minimize time away from the 'day job'. Successful applicants for this award will receive a grant of £10,000 to £15,000 (payable in instalments/arrears) to enable them to have the flexibility to take undertake training such as this. We ask applicants to submit a proposed training and development plan in their application. Please see [Annex A](#) for suggested types of training/qualification which would be eligible.

Channel 2: Masterclasses and workshops delivered by senior business leaders

The Academy has a unique resource in its Fellowship, which includes senior business leaders from across all engineering sectors. Awardees will be invited to a series a Masterclasses and workshops, which will be in part delivered and curated by a Fellow of the Academy. The provisional schedule is listed in [Annex B](#). Travel and accommodation expenses for attending these workshops at the Academy can be reclaimed from the Academy (with receipts), not from the grant awarded but in addition to the grant.

Channel 3: provision of an experienced personal mentor

Awardees will have the option of a Hub Mentor (some of whom are profiled [online](#)). The Mentor will be on a personal level, rather than a business level. The mentor can help motivate and encourage the awardee, through this period of personal development and growth. Mentors can provide an independent view of ideas or opportunities. The mentor may also be able to provide introductions through their own networks, to experts or potential partners, investors, or clients. More information about the mentor role is in [Annex C](#).

Channel 4: Hub Membership

Membership of the Hub provides the selected leaders with access the wider Academy networks. The Enterprise Hub team will available throughout the award period and beyond to assist by providing networking opportunities with and through the Academy's Fellowship, events programme (such as the [Showcase](#)), signposting opportunities and additional support, building a public/media profile to help promote engineering to a wider public, and opportunities to engage in other areas of the Academy's work both in the UK and internationally. One to one surgeries with specialist advisors will also be offered, either in person at the Academy or via video call. Hub Members also have access to bookable and drop-in facilities such as meeting rooms and touchdown working space at the Taylor Centre, which is the home for the Hub within the Academy.

Programme Duration

The programme will run twice a year and the programme duration will be 6 months

Expected future interaction with awardees

On completion of any Hub award/prize/programme, we ask all 'alumni' to help support UK engineering in future by passing on the skills they have acquired during the programme, and taking part in events and/or media activity to help communicate the importance of engineering to the wider public. Awardees will also be expected to help with evaluation of the programme by responding to any surveys or requests for information either from the Academy or an external evaluator appointed by the Academy.

Background: the Enterprise Hub

The Royal Academy of Engineering's Enterprise Hub is a national resource for the UK's most promising engineering entrepreneurs. The Hub forms part of the Academy's commitment to stimulate excellence, creativity and innovation in engineering. The Hub does this by making awards to exemplars of excellence and innovation in engineering who will be the founders and leaders of tomorrow's high-tech companies. The awards include provision of money-can't-buy bespoke support and one-to-one mentoring from its Fellowship, which comprises many of the country's most successful engineers from across academia and industry, including prominent entrepreneurs and business leaders.

Enterprise Hub Vision and objectives

Our vision is to be a key driver of sustained economic benefit to the UK by supporting the formation of a robust ecosystem that fosters a culture of entrepreneurship, innovation and success amongst UK-based engineers. Success will be evidenced by:

- UK engineering and technology entrepreneurs with global vision creating successful applications of engineering and technological innovations and associated social and societal benefits; and
- A society in which talented engineers are inspired to become entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial spirit is valued and celebrated.

The objectives of the Hub are to:

- **Accelerate** innovation for the benefit of society by supporting founders of engineering and technology enterprises with grants, bespoke training and mentoring from Academy Fellows.
- **Inspire** and encourage business minded UK-based engineers to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours by celebrating and promoting successes.
- **Enhance** the climate for engineering and technology entrepreneurs and growth of technology enterprises in the UK.

Further information can be found here: www.enterprisehub.raeng.org.uk

Eligibility criteria

- Applications must be submitted by leaders (Founders, MDs, or C-level executives) of engineering SMEs in the UK
- Applicants from SMEs which are wholly or majority owned by another company are not eligible.
- Applicants must come from a company based in the UK and registered with Companies House. For multinational companies the Head-Office must be based in the UK.
- The programme will begin in February 2018 and applicants must be committed to the programme as it runs for a limited time. One day each month for 6 months will be needed to attend workshops or other events at the Academy.
- Training courses to be paid for using the grant awarded must be booked and paid for by end of September 2018 in order to be eligible for reimbursement via the RAEng grant.
- This programme replaces Pathways to Growth. Awardees of Pathways to Growth are eligible to apply if no reporting is overdue and reports submitted have been accepted.
- Successful applicants will be required to attend the induction day on **1 February 2018** and the training/workshop days throughout the six-month programme.

We anticipate being able to support up to 10 applicants in this round.

The Academy is committed to diversity and we welcome applications from minority and under-represented groups in engineering, and especially women.

Submission deadline

The submission deadline for this round of applications is **4pm on Monday 13 November 2017**.

Monitoring

- At the end of the programme, a Final Report and expenditure statement must be submitted.
- Awardees will be required to provide interim reports during the programme in order to trigger the staged payments (payment will be released for expenses occurred/invoiced).
- Reports should follow the reporting guidelines, which will be provided by the Programme Manager post award.
- On request, the Awardee must provide a brief annual update for a minimum of five years after the completion of the Award to help us assess any ongoing impact.
- Awardees will not be required to submit information they consider confidential or sensitive to the business. All information is aggregated for monitoring of KPIs; individual data is not identifiable unless featured in, for example, an agreed upon case study.

Evaluation

An independent evaluation of the programme will be commissioned 12 months after the completion of the first year, to assess impact. Awardees should be prepared to speak with the evaluators.

How to apply

All applications must be submitted via the online system, available here: <https://grants.raeng.org.uk>. If they have not already done so, all Applicants must first register with the system and provide some basic log-in details to create a profile.

The application form has three main sections. A summary of the guidance notes are imbedded within the system itself, however the guidance given below is more detailed so we recommend you keep this document to hand.

Many of the questions have prescribed word limits which are designed to keep your answers focused and to give you an indication of the level of detail we require. In such cases the number of words you have used will be displayed beneath the question and updated in real time.

You will have the option to download a pdf of your application after submission, which may be useful for future reference and for passing on to your colleagues.

If you have any questions concerning the application or the online system, please contact the Programme Manager, Catherine Capone, on Catherine.capone@raeng.org.uk or 020 7766 0615.

Completing the Application Form

After logging in via the Academy website and selecting the application form for the *SME Leaders programme* you should be presented with the "Instructions" screen. Here you will see some general instructions on how to use the system as well as this list of the sections of the application form:

1. Applicant Summary
2. Project details
3. Support requested

At any stage in the application process you can save your work and return to it at a later time. You can answer the questions in any order you like so you may freely skip some sections to return to later if you so wish. It is therefore worth viewing the application early on for an indication of what is required, and you should also ensure that you have all the necessary documentation and information to complete the application.

1. Applicant summary

The form should autocomplete your name and contact details, but it is worth checking the details are up to date.

CV

Please upload a pdf copy of your CV (3 pages max.) or provide a link to an online profile (such as LinkedIn) which details your experience and any qualifications.

Can you attend the induction event on 1st February 2018?

You should be able to attend the induction events to be eligible for a grant. The induction day will consist of welcome talks, tour of the Taylor Centre, speed mentoring sessions, and networking.

Company profile

Complete the table with the following data.

Companies House registration number?

This allows verification that your company is registered in the UK and therefore eligible to apply for this funding scheme.

Number of employees

Enter number of employees FTE. Applications are only accepted from leaders of SMEs (SME as per the [EU definition](#)).

Turnover

Enter annual turnover. Applications are only accepted from leaders of SMEs (SME as per the [EU definition](#)).

When the company was established?

Please enter the year the company was established, in the format yyyy.

Equity funding raised to date and type of investment round

How much funding have you received, if any, in return for providing equity in the business? Please provide details of size/type of recent investment.

Grant funding received to date

Provide details of all Royal Academy of Engineering awards or any other awards which are relevant to the Application and were received by the applicant in the last two years.

This should only include awards which have actually been granted or applications which are still being assessed; you do not need to enter details of awards which have been applied for unsuccessfully. Please indicate which are still being assessed and which were successful with the amount awarded. Examples could include funding awarded by Innovate UK or from competitions. Enter 'n/a' if not applicable. Do not include grants for conducting basic research; you should only include grants aimed at bringing technology to market.

Other funding raised to date

If you have raised other funding (non-grant, non-equity based – e.g. loans) to grow the business, please provide details of size/type here.

Company Summary

Provide a brief description of the company and the product/services offered

Only engineering and technology companies are eligible for support under this

scheme. The Academy defines engineering in a broad sense, as can be seen from the project titles of Academy supported entrepreneurs and researchers in universities around the UK. If you are unsure that your company's activities qualify as engineering, please contact the programme manager.

Business plan

Please upload a copy of your company's business plan/model here. There is no set format but please ensure the document has no more than 10 pages of A4. You may wish to use a template such as the Business Model Canvas, or upload a slide deck instead. The business plan/model should clearly outline your ambition and vision for the company, and your strategy for achieving it.

2. Project details

Programme dates

Please enter your proposed start and end dates.

Training programmes you wish to undertake must take place between February 2018 and end of September 2018. The exact dates can be an estimate at this stage, and can be confirmed later, before the contract for grant agreement is issued to awardees. Please note the Academy's staff may wish to visit Awardees during this period to check progress.

Training and executive education

Provide details of any aspects of personal development which you have already considered and may wish to undertake

The award comes with a grant of £10,000 to £15,000 towards executive education and training. If you have already made some assessment of training you may need, please provide some details here of what types of courses or less formal learning options have been identified, how they were identified, and what development needs would be addressed. Consider the timeliness of the training. You may propose a selection of options. If you are successful, you may also wish to reconsider your options after consulting your Hub Mentor, and then submit an updated proposal post-award.

Contribution to excellence in engineering

How would this award contribute to engineering excellence?

Outline your goals/objectives for how the award will allow you to assist your company achieve excellence in engineering. Consider how the programme may also contribute to excellence in engineering more broadly outside your company.

Acting as a role model

The Hub aims to help stimulate creativity and innovation in engineering across the UK, and awardees can assist in this aim by passing on the skills they have learned by acting as role models to inspire the next generation of engineering entrepreneurs. What ideas do you have about how you can help support the next generation of engineering entrepreneurs at the Academy?

3. Support requested

How much funding are you seeking from the Academy for this training programme?

This scheme will provide awardees with funding of between £10,000 and £15,000. Please enter the value for which you are applying. Where appropriate the Selection Panel may recommend the award of a smaller grant.

Hub support

How would you and your company benefit from the personal mentoring and networking available through the Enterprise Hub?

As part of the award, a 'speed mentoring' session will be held at the Academy as part of the induction day on **1 February 2018**. Mentors are drawn from the Academy's Fellowship and Hub Partners. If there are any particular personal or professional networks you would like to be part of, please note this here. If the application is successful, we will do our best to match you to the most appropriate Mentors for the induction event (and to ensure any future event invitations are likely to be relevant to you). The mentor matching is completed on an applicant by applicant basis, based on your answers to this question, feedback from the steering group who review the applications, our knowledge of the Mentors' experience (type of expertise, stage of companies developed, etc), and our experience in matching entrepreneurs with mentors who will connect on a personal level – mentor-mentee 'fit'.

Identification of areas where advice and guidance would be beneficial will not be perceived as a weakness but rather recognition of any current limitations, and a desire to address these.

Please note mentoring and other networking opportunities can only be provided to successful applications.

'Elevator Pitch' video

Please provide a link to your YouTube (or similar) 'Elevator Pitch' video produced in support of your application. The video should last 60 to 90 seconds and give an overview of your personal background, your goals as leader of a growing SME, and why you would benefit from the award.

Please ensure that the link starts with <http://www>

The quality of the recording itself is not being judged here, just the content. You may use any recording technology available to you, including handheld video cameras, webcams, mobile phones, etc. Name the video in the following format: "Elevator Pitch – Your Name – 2017/18 – SME Leaders Application" so that it is easy for reviewers to identify it.

You do not need to be visible in the video; you may choose to narrate a video composed of a set of video clips or images. If you are going to be in the video, try to have minimal visual and audible distractions in the background, as you want the reviewer to focus entirely on you, not what else is going on in your office.

If you wish to restrict viewing of your video, feel free to designate it as "Unlisted" in settings, however DO NOT designate it as "Private" as that will make it

inaccessible to reviewers. Also in 'settings', check the box to allow the video to be embedded in an external site.

4. Marketing, and Declaration

The marketing question is optional and any information provided will help the Academy to understand which of our marketing materials and methods are most successful, so enabling us to improve our future communications activities. It does not form part of the assessment process.

The declaration is a required section, which seeks confirmation that the Applicant has provided accurate information and will update the Academy of any material changes which may affect the award, and also that the company will support the Award. You must tick the box and enter your name to complete the declaration and confirming the information provided is correct.

Assessment of Applications

The process summary is as follows:

- Written application (including CV) completed online by applicant and submitted to the Academy
- Each application reviewed by at least two selection panel members, and reviews returned to the Academy for collation
- Selection panel meets to discuss all applications and reviews, select awardees
- (Optional) Selection panel may wish to interview selected candidates
- Applicants notified of outcome by Programme Manager

All applications will be reviewed by the Selection Panel which includes Fellows of the Academy with entrepreneurial and industrial experience and representatives from the investment community. They will not necessarily have technical expertise in any particular engineering discipline so you should ensure the application is understandable to a non-specialist reader.

Each application will be fully reviewed by at least two members of the Selection Panel, in advance of a selection meeting. All applications will then be discussed at the selection meeting, at which the majority of the Selection Panel will be present. The Selection Panel will decide which applications are successful; some may be asked to go through to interview before a final discussion.

Applicants invited for interview will be required to deliver a 5-minute presentation detailing their vision and ambition for their company and how the award could help them reach these goals. There will then be a Q&A with the interview panel for up to 20 minutes.

Assessment Criteria

The Selection Panel will take into account a number of factors. These include the extent to which the application complies with the aims and objectives of the award, as well as:

- *Quality, ambition and vision of the applicant*
- *Effectiveness and innovativeness of technology, product or service described by the applicant*

- *The potential for that technology, product or service to grow in scale (evidenced in business model/plan or strategy document uploaded by the applicant)*
- *Potential benefits to UK economy (such as job creation) and/or expected benefits to wider public*
- *How the making of an award would contribute to excellence in engineering*
- *Impact the award would have on success of the applicant, his or her company, and therefore potential impact on UK engineering sector and UK economic growth*
- *The potential shown by the applicant to make valuable use of the award and implement learning points*

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the assessment by the Programme Manager in December 2017.

Contact

If you have any further queries, please contact Catherine Capone, Programme Manager, Enterprise, on Catherine.capone@raeng.org.uk

This programme is made possible by funding from the UK government Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Annex A

Training and executive education

The following types of training course may be eligible for grant reimbursement under this award:

- Leadership skills, negotiation skills, influencing skills
- Scale-up related skills
- Strategy development
- Design thinking
- Governance structures, management structures
- Financial management
- Financing value creation
- Project/programme leadership/management

Courses which may promote personal development, but are without a business aspect, are not eligible.

International travel and accommodation costs will not be eligible. Travel and accommodation costs within the UK will be eligible if they follow the Academy's expenses policy (available upon request).

Annex B

Provisional Masterclass and workshop schedule

Please ensure that you are free on 1st February 2018

Induction day – *Why the UK needs scale-ups with ambition*

Led by Norman Apsley OBE FEng, Catalyst Inc (formerly Northern Ireland Science Park)

Norman will introduce the day briefly by discussing why scale ups are needed in the UK. We will then invite each awardee to share their personal vision for themselves and their company, and their challenges. Everyone gets a chance to learn about each other. Followed by a 'speed mentoring' session where each awardee will have the opportunity to meet with Fellows of the Academy and Hub Partners, who can share stories from the same industry or perhaps from when they were at the same stage of personal and professional growth. The day will close with an informal networking reception.

DATE TBC

Mindfulness and Productivity – *Why always being busy doesn't mean all is well for you - or your business*

Led by Suranga Chandratillake FEng - TBC

Loss of personal productivity – whether through inefficiencies, not sleeping enough, or being overwhelmed – means a loss of productivity for companies, and therefore for engineering as a sector. As a former Silicon Valley based founder turned venture capitalist in London, Suranga will relate some stories from his journey and those he has shared journeys with. This will be followed by a workshop with practical tips on mindfulness, and a peer to peer session on productivity tools/tips that awardees have tried/failed/successfully implemented.

DATE TBC

Financing growth – The power behind the hockey stick

From pre-seed, through angel investment to venture capital and then trade sale or IPO. But what about debt based finance options, crowd funding, micro-Vcs, baton-passing investors? We will be joined by Fellows who have set up, grown, and been senior leaders in a number of companies at various stages and which have taken different routes – and will demystify the landscape. Followed by a 'Reverse Pitching' session, where investors and alternative finance providers have the tables turned on them, and have to pitch to the audience about what they do and why you might want to work with them.

DATE TBC

Scaling up – *How to prepare for rapid growth*

Fellows will discuss the challenges of scale up and solutions to overcome these challenges. This will be followed by a workshop on practical ideas on how you can prepare yourself and your company to be ready to scale up, including strategies for sales and marketing.

DATE TBC

Recruitment and retention – *How to create the company culture you need for growth*

From personnel, to HR, to 'talent acquisition': employees want more than just a paycheck and companies want more than a disengaged '9-5er'. Fellows will share their own experiences of when company culture has fostered talent and grown, and also when it hasn't worked. This will be followed by a practical workshop on steps you can take to identify the culture you want to develop, and how to achieve it.

Annex C

Further information regarding mentoring

The Mentor will be selected by the Academy, drawn from the Academy Fellowship and wider network.

The mentor will not make or take business decisions, perform the functions of a consultant, take the role of an executive or non-executive director of the company, or make investments in the company. The mentor will take no stake or interest in the venture of any kind, so they remain independent and able to offer impartial advice to both the Academy and the mentee. Prior to a mentor-mentee relationship going forward, both parties will be required to sign a document confirming the agreement with the principles of each role.