Frequently Asked Questions

General

1.   Who can issue challenges on Open Innovation Platform?

The Open Innovation Platform (OIP) Problem Owners can be from the Private or Public Sector, such as SMEs, Large Local Enterprises or Multi-National Corporations. Singapore government agencies can also issue challenges to look for innovative digital solutions, via innovation procurement.

2.   What are the different categories of challenges?

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

- **Proof-of-Concept (POC).** Demonstration of the technical viability of the concept 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, there is potential to continue development, commercialise and deploy the solution at scale beyond the OIP.

3.   What is the timeline and process for each call?

We launch an innovation call thrice a year, which is split up into three phases. Solution providers submit their proposals during the 8-week application phase. The corporate and IMDA then evaluate and select the finalist(s) (about 4 – 8 weeks). The final POC/prototype development phase takes about 3 to 6 months. The winner(s) are selected after the POCs or prototypes have been successfully completed.

For OIP Problem Owners (Corporates, Public Sector Agencies)

4.   Do Problem Owners have to pay for the OIP services?

No, the IMDA OIP's consultancy and marketing services are complimentary. Problem Owners are only required to offer prize money for Solution Providers who successfully complete the POCs/prototype as agreed. The exact amount is determined by the Problem Owner, and is typically about $30 – 50k. IMDA will assess the problem statement and recommend the amount based on market benchmarks.

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

To drive the overall innovative capacity of the economy, IMDA OIP has made its consultancy and marketing services complimentary. IMDA may provide funding for innovative solutions that address sector-wide challenges, or are highly innovative to support either Problem Owners or Solution Providers to further develop and commercialise their prototypes and solutions.

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6. What are the guidelines for problem statements on the OIP?

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 the sector or for the 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

Experienced industry consultants will guide Problem Owners to diagnose their business challenge and refine the problem statement before posting them on the OIP.

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

We have over 16,000 registered solution providers with diverse expertise from companies (primarily start-ups and small businesses), Institutes of Higher Learning and individuals from both Singapore and the region. Areas of expertise include Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things (IoT), Blockchain, Immersive Media, Cybersecurity, and Robotics.

8. Do challenges have to be from Singapore?

No. We welcome 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.

9. 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 Solution Provider's ownership of IP rights, and all IP created from Solution Provider's work on the Challenge is to be owned by the Solution Provider. However, you may propose IP and exclusivity positions with the solution provider before proceeding further to the development, testing and evaluation of the solution proposed.

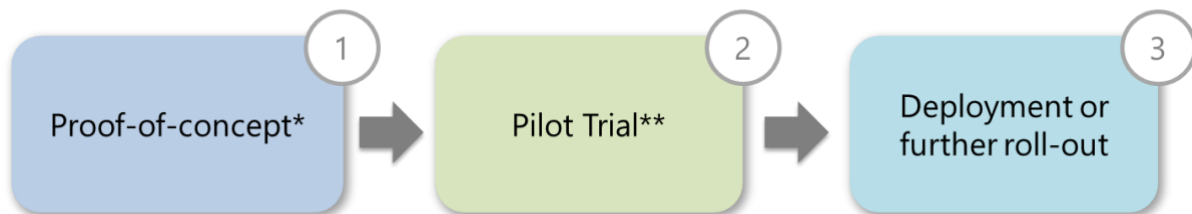**10. How do I become a Problem Owner?**

If you wish to participate in the OIP as a Problem Owner, kindly fill up the form here and we will contact you within 3 working days.

11.   How can Government agencies use Innovation Procurement?

Innovation Procurement allows Government agencies to use the OIP to identify one or more suitable proposal(s) with a view to select 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 solution providers, as illustrated below.

As a further illustrative guide, the Government agency may choose to contract solution providers 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). The Government agency can assess and make a recommendation on whether to commence Stages 2 or 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 Solution Provider*
The solution provider 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.

For OIP Challenge Solvers (Start-Ups, Solution Providers, Research Institutes)

12.   Who can apply to be a Challenge Solver?

Companies and research institutes with digital technology expertise and innovation capabilities can apply.

Individuals above 18 years old can also apply for challenges on the OIP.

13.   Can international solvers apply for challenges on the OIP?

Yes. 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).

14.   How do I register as a solution provider?

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.

15.   How do I submit a proposal to solve the challenges on OIP? What information is required?

You will 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. You should look at the respective application form for the required information. The information you provide 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 processes extending beyond this Challenge and further into contractual agreements that could be executed between the Government agency and shortlisted solution providers.

16.   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 Owner and Solution Provider can enter into a new agreement governing the terms of the POC/Prototype. If necessary, we will provide IP workshops to guide Solution Providers Solvers on IP arrangements.

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

17.   Can I submit solutions for more than one challenge?

Yes. If you have solutions to more than one challenge, we welcome you to submit your applications to them.

18.   Can Solution Providers collaborate to address a multidisciplinary challenge on the OIP?

We welcome collaborations among Solution Providers using the OIP Forum feature. 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 the 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 Solution Providers that are listed in the application will be acknowledged if the submission is awarded as the finalist or winner.

19.   How would multiple Problem Solvers working together on a submission be reflected on 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 OIP as well.

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

Applicants can save their draft application before submitting. Once submitted, edits are not permitted. Thus, 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 if you are shortlisted to be a finalist subsequently.

Submitted Solutions and Post-Call

21.   How will the submitted solutions be evaluated?

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

22.   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.

23.   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.

24.   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 will be awarded the second tranche of prize money.

25. 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 Solution Providers and Problem Owners and offer opportunities to support development and commercialisation. Government funding from existing schemes can potentially be tapped into for further development work, where relevant.

Forum and Others

26. What is the Forum?

The Forum is for Solution Providers to be plugged into the wider OIP community. If you are looking tocollaborate with another Solution Provider for a challenge, you can use the Forum to look forother Solution Providers with specific areas of expertise.

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

27. 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 whatyou are 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 yourcontent.

28. 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 whowill 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 email open_innovation@imda.gov.sg.

29.   I am from a Trade Association and Chamber. How can I partner IMDA OIP?

Trade Associations and Chambers are key enablers in driving digitalisation and innovation amongst their members. A TAC can partner OIP by sharing the benefits of innovation and OIP through curated workshops to the members, to aggregating common sector challenges on behalf of members. Please contact the OIP team through open_innovation@imda.gov.sg if you are interested to partner and use the OIP as a resource for your members.

30.   I am from a Venture Capital Firm/Incubator/Accelerator. How can I partner with IMDA OIP?

We welcome collaboration to grow the OIP ecosystem. We work with VCs, incubators and accelerators that refer challenges to their portfolio companies, so that their companies have opportunities to solve challenges on the OIP and win reference customers. We also organise pitching and networking sessions to showcase promising OIP solution providers to VCs/Incubators/Accelerators.

31.   What if I have more questions?

If you have further questions, please send us an email to open_innovation@imda.gov.sg .