**HOTEL INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2019**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Submission of Preliminary proposal and subsequently Business Improvement Fund (BIF) application

1. **Are productivity issues, i.e. address manpower challenges faced by hotels, the biggest concern faced by the industries and should my proposal be tailored to address this need as such?**

* Productivity issues are one of the key concerns faced by the hotel industry. Others could include, enhancement of hotel guest experience as well.
* The problem statements were crafted to reflect these concerns, and should guide the development of solutions in view of increasing productivity, enhancing guest experience, while increasing job satisfaction and/ or optimising resources by allowing hotels to move towards producing work of higher value.
* The Challenge is hence seeking innovative proposals that addresses the problems statements in the respective areas with outcomes described above, while considering the scalability and ease of implementation of the solutions.

1. **May STB introduce me to a hotel I can work with prior to submission, so that my proposal can be more customised and relevant?**

* We strongly encourage all Participants to leverage their existing contacts with hotels, to better understand and contextualise the problem statements for prototyping.
* The Learning Trips and resources provided in the Challenge website are additional opportunities for Participants to learn more about the industry, prior to the submission of the preliminary proposal. 1-1 Guiding sessions with hotel representatives will also be organised for shortlisted Participants to fine-tune proposals for relevancy. However, by no means are the hotels involved in these activities obliged to pilot and co-develop the solutions being proposed.
* It is important to keep in mind that we are also looking at the scalability of the solution in order for the entire hotel industry to be able to adopt these solutions.

1. **How many proposals may I submit?**

* Each Participant may submit one (1) proposal per problem statement as the lead applicant (whether as an organisation or as a consortium), with the exception of problem statement 7, where Participants can choose to address the problem statements jointly, or as individual parts. Participants should not submit multiple proposals for the same problem statement.
* This is encouraged to ensure that resources are best optimised towards developing a solution well.

1. **May I submit proposals on prototypes which I had previously piloted in another hotel?**

* No, proposals replicating a prototype without a certain degree of customisation and/ or replicating off-the-shelf solutions, will not be accepted. The customisation is required to ensure a holistic address of the hotel industry needs. The proposal will be disqualified if it is found as a replication of a prototype.
* STB will however, accept proposed solutions used in other industries (such as in hospitals, banks etc.) which have been adapted and/ or customised to the needs of hotels.

1. **Can the Committed Pilot Partner in my proposal be an overseas partner?**

* No, the Committed Pilot Partner must be a Singapore-licensed hotel.

1. **Will the IP rights of my idea/ solution remain with me?**

* All submissions to the Challenge remain the intellectual property of the Participants who developed them.
* For consortia, the ownership of any intellectual property created for the purposes of and in connection with the participation in this Challenge shall be a matter privately agreed between the collaborating organisations prior to the submission of their solution proposal.

1. **What are some constraints inherent within the industry I should be aware of, and how can STB help me get around them to ensure that my proposal is relevant?**

* STB will be organising Learning Trips in April, that would allow interested Participants to understand first-hand the problems hotels are facing, pertaining to the Challenge. After the assessment of preliminary submission, 1-1 guiding sessions will be arranged for Participants to further connect and acquire guidance from representatives from the hotel industry. STB highly encourage Participants to leverage your contacts with the industry to further understand if there are constraints surrounding the problem statements to identify alternative ways which technology, or how your solution may resolve them.

1. **If I have a ready hotel pilot user, can I propose to work with them?**

* Yes, the Participant should indicate the Committed Pilot Partner in the proposal.

1. **Are submissions of proposal done via GeBiz?**

* Submission of preliminary proposals must be done via email, using the template found in Annex A, to the following email address: [STB\_Hotel@stb.gov.sg](mailto:STB_Hotel@stb.gov.sg) by 10 May 2019, 2359hrs SGT.
* For participants that have successfully secured 1 committed pilot hotel, submission of application for STB’s Business Improvement Fund (BIF) must be done via the Business Grant Portal (BGP), by 13 Sept 2019, 2359hrs SGT. The BGP is accessible via www.businessgrants.gov.sg, using your Business CorpPass.
* For more information, please refer to the Challenge documents on the Challenge website (<https://www.stb.gov.sg/trade-events/Pages/Tourism-Innovation-Challenges.aspx>).

1. **Will STB grant an extension of deadline for submissions?**

* Proposals received after the stated deadline in item 9 will not be accepted. This applies to both the Preliminary Proposal Submission and subsequent submission of application for BIF.

## Evaluation of Preliminary proposals

1. **What is the evaluation criteria of Preliminary Proposals?**

* All proposals will be assessed based on the evaluation criteria as indicated in the Challenge Launch Deck and Challenge Document, available in the Challenge Website.

## 1-1 Guiding Sessions

1. **How may I sign up for the 1-1 guiding sessions?**

* The 1-1 guiding sessions are strictly by invite only, and will only be made available to Successful Participants with shortlisted preliminary proposals. STB will work with relevant hotel representatives to develop a schedule for these sessions, and extend the invites to successful Participants. The dates of these sessions will be released at a later date.
* The objective of the 1-1 guiding sessions is for Participants to acquire guidance from representatives from the hotel industry.

## Business Improvement Fund

1. **May I claim for the same cost item (e.g. developmental costs for a solution) which is used for multiple proposal submissions?**

* The costs in such instance, will only qualify under one proposal. However, if there are degrees of customisation required for each proposal, the incremental difference may qualify. STB will need the details for each proposal to make that assessment.
* Similarly, the developer’s cost taken to develop the solution will only qualify under one proposal, and any incremental man-days required for customisation may qualify.
* Note that any costs (e.g. developmental, professional services etc.) incurred prior to STB’s approval of grant funding will not qualify for reimbursement.

1. **If my organisation’s development team is based outside of Singapore, will their costs qualify as part of the grant?**

* The grant supports internal manpower costs, i.e. salaries of the in-house development team directly related to the proposal submitted. However, the personnel must be working in Singapore for their salaries to qualify (There is no restriction on citizenship however, i.e. non-Singaporeans are supportable).
* Should internal manpower costs be proposed as a qualifying cost, the Participant shall provide STB with more information on the list of staff to be funded.

1. **Most of my development team are freelance personnel. Will their costs qualify as part of the grant?**

* Costs to hire freelance personnel qualify as professional services.
* However, to note that these should be costs payable to a third-party company or individual that is not a subsidiary, parent or associate of the Participant(s).

1. **Will funding from the Challenge support 70% of the project qualifying costs?**

* Funding from the grant will support up to 70% of qualifying costs. For more information on items that qualify under the grant, please refer to the Challenge Documents.
* As such, Participants should anticipate that the rest of the project costs shall be borne by themselves, or sought from alternative sources of private funding.

1. **What are the deliverables for me in order to receive 100% of the committed level of funding, and when will the reimbursement take place?**

* STB’s funding will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis, based on the project support level and at agreed project milestones, subject to key project deliverables which could include, but not limited to, successful development and completion of the prototype solution, and/ or trialling the solution in the Committed Pilot Partner’s actual operating environments.
* Third-party audited documents on qualifying costs are required for the disbursement of grant. STB does not predetermine the list of eligible auditors, although the auditor engaged should be a certified third-party auditor not related/ affiliated to the Participant.

## Prototyping stage

1. **What is the timeframe for the prototyping?**

* Depending on the complexity of the solution proposed, the development and implementation period could span approximately 6 months. The exact duration should be proposed by each successful Participant, for STB’s consideration.

1. **Can STB share what datasets will be made available for prototyping?  And what type of data do hotels have now?**

* STB will not be providing any hotel data.
* All Participants may work on the basis that each hotel own a unique set of Point of Sales (POS) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) data which may be shared with partners. Participants should validate with the Committed Pilot Partner the availability of required data to develop and pilot the solution.

1. **Can STB share what social media channels/ legacy systems do hotels use?**

* This varies between hotels but the common social media tools are Facebook, Instagram and Google Analytics. Additionally, there is no one standard system being used across the hotel industry besides the dominant Global Distribution Systems (GDS) already existing in the market. This should be validated with the Committed Pilot Partner.

## Demo/ showcase

1. **What opportunities to showcase will the Participants be provided with?**

* STB will explore relevant platforms (e.g. articles on industry journals and technology publications, demo days at industry events etc.), where appropriate, in view of inspiring greater take up of the Participant’s solutions.