

CHALLENGE RULES

PARTICIPATION IN THE STARTOFF COMPETITION:

‘Energy supply in field operations’

Case number 24/01056

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1 What is a StartOff project?

A StartOff project aims to make it easier for the public sector to harness the innovative power in the startup market. A StartOff project is conducted as a pre-commercial procurement and aims to make it easier for smaller companies to work with the public sector. Here, projects are carried out together with the public sector, with the following common characteristics:

- Quick and easy procurement process
- Minimal level of detailed specifications
- Short development process
- Development of a Minimum Viable Product (MVP)
- Payment to selected suppliers for developing a solution proposal and for the development of the MVP

The Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI) has set aside NOK 725 000 for this challenge. The aim is to develop an MVP that results in better energy management and distribution in the field for FFI and other actors with the same, or similar, needs.

2 Introduction to the process

Through a StartOff project public sector entities gain experience with startups as suppliers, and startups gain experience with public entities as their client and customer. The contracting authority (FFI in this case) is therefore facilitating a process where your company, in competition with other companies, can win a development contract with FFI. The process consists of the following steps:

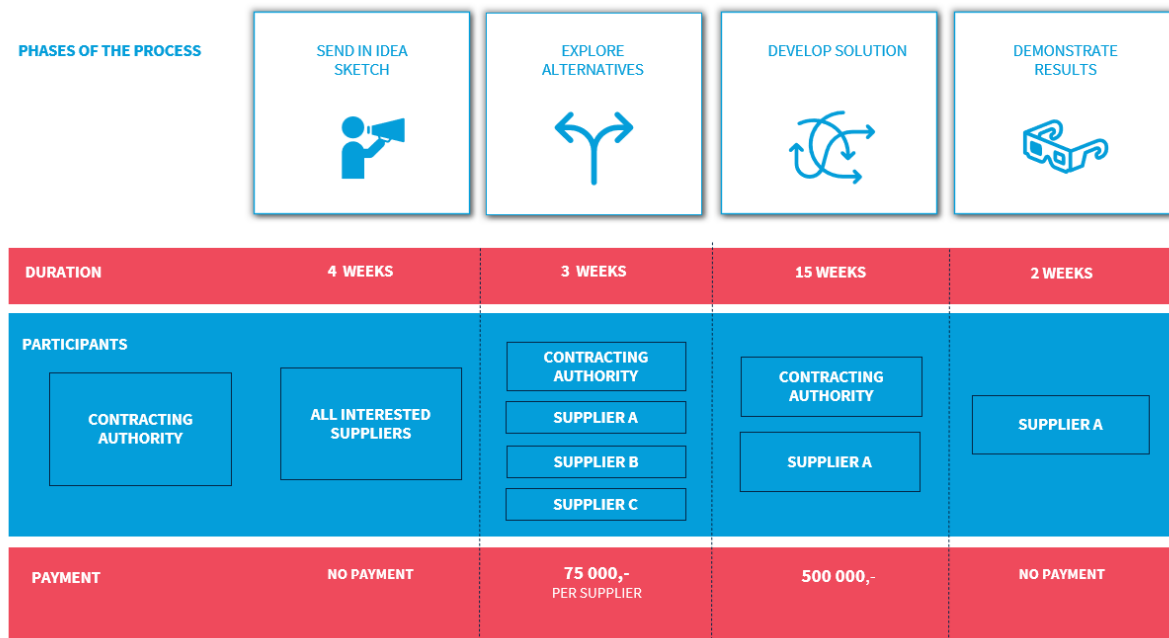


Figure 1. Overview of the process

The process starts with the ‘Send in idea sketch’ phase, in which the market is invited to propose an idea for a solution that can solve a concrete challenge. FFI accepts matchmaking between companies if the individual companies cannot submit a complete solution on their own. The idea sketches will be evaluated against the

given evaluation criteria (see paragraph 6). FFI will sign a research and development contract with up to 3 suppliers based on their idea sketches. These 3 suppliers will partake in the '**Explore alternatives**' phase. Suppliers partaking in this phase will receive NOK 75 000 each for their work done. The goal of this phase is to allow the suppliers to further develop their idea to a final proposal in dialogue with FFI over a 3-week period. During the 3 weeks, the client will be available for sharing information and knowledge.

The final proposals will be pitched to FFI and representatives from DFØ and LUP before a new evaluation will take place and a winner will be announced. The winner will move on to the 'Develop solution' phase.

In the '**Develop solution**' phase, a research and development process is carried out with the winning supplier. The aim of the process is to develop a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) that meets FFI's needs. The project is conducted in close collaboration with FFI, who will allocate resources to the project. The development has a timeframe of 15 weeks. The supplier receives a compensation of NOK 500 000 for this phase.

When development is completed, the next phase is '**Demonstrate results**'. In this phase, the supplier demonstrates the developed solution to the client. The supplier does not receive any compensation for this phase.

FFI will receive assistance from DFØ in exploring the next steps for continuing the project (further development or procurement).

FFI will also facilitate so that the supplier may present their solution to a selection of other public and private enterprises at an event or gathering. Invitations will be broadly sent with the ambition of participation from many different public and private enterprises that could be new customers, investors, or partners. No compensation is paid for this phase.

See paragraph 4 in this document for a more detailed description of how the process is carried out.

3 The need the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment wants to solve

The Armed Forces have a complex and increasing need for energy in field operations, with many different units each having their own power supply solutions. Very often, different systems and equipment in the Armed Forces use their own solutions for energy supply.

This results in the following challenges:

- One often has to bring along a lot of different accessories to supply the field equipment with energy, which means that the equipment takes up more space and weighs more, wears out, and needs to be managed, etc.

- The different systems often communicate poorly with each other. Therefore, one does not necessarily achieve a complete overview of total energy data such as energy consumption and available capacity.
- There is a risk of operating systems less efficiently without flexible coordination.
- Bringing more equipment than necessary also has environmental disadvantages in terms of logistics, as the physical footprint becomes larger.

FFI wants to challenge the market to explore whether it is possible to develop a unit (MVP) that addresses the challenges mentioned above. If the unit proves to be sufficiently good, there are also good opportunities for further collaboration on product development and resources until a finished product is achieved. We believe there will be other interested parties both domestically and internationally for a product like this.

In Attachment 1 "The Norwegian Defence Research Establishment needs document" you will find a more detailed description of the need. FFI encourages innovative companies to submit idea sketches that can address this need.

Ongoing information about the competition can be found on the following page:
<https://innovativeanskaffelser.no/utviklingskonkurranse-energiforsyning-i-felt/LUP>.

4 .Step by step: How to enter a StartOff contract with the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment?

The selection of the best idea sketches will be able to participate in the 'Explore alternatives' phase.

Announcement

The challenge starts when the challenge documents are published on <https://innovativeanskaffelser.no/utviklingskonkurranse-energiforsyning-i-felt/LUP>. The challenge documents consist of the challenge rules with attachments (this document) and the StartOff Research and development contract.

In attachment 1 to the challenge rules, you will find the needs description document. This document explains the challenge the client requires a solution to, the needs, and the requirements for a possible solution.

If you have an idea about how to help FFI with developing a solution, we would like to hear from you. The only requirement is that you are registered in a public business register (see qualification requirements under paragraph 5 in this document),

Preparation of idea sketch:

If you wish to enter a contract with FFI, please use the 'Idea sketch template' to describe your proposed solution. The idea sketch should be **2000 words at most**. We challenge you to think creatively to solve our needs. You submit the idea sketch

by sending it as an attachment in an email, together with a copy of a proof of public business registration, to malin.karlsson@dfo.no before the submission deadline.

Evaluation of idea sketches

Everyone who fulfils the requirements to participate in the challenge will have their idea sketches evaluated. The idea sketches will be evaluated by a panel who will consider and rank the sketches according to the evaluation criteria (see paragraph 6 in this document).

The best suppliers are invited to an interview

If your idea sketch is ranked as one of the (up to) 6 best proposals, you will be invited to an interview. The interview will be digital and last for about 45 minutes. You will be sent an agenda for the interview in advance.

Entering into the 'Explore alternatives' phase

Based on the idea sketch and the interview, FFI will carry out a new evaluation of the proposed solutions. The evaluation panel will produce a revised ranking of the proposals based on this second evaluation. FFI will enter a contract with the top three suppliers of this revised ranking. These will be invited to the 'explore alternatives' phase.

Execution of the 'Explore alternatives' phase

Joint kick-off meeting

The 'Explore alternatives' phase will be conducted over a period of 3 weeks. The purpose of this phase is for each supplier to develop a final proposal based on the idea sketch. The three suppliers will receive compensation of NOK 75 000 each for completing this phase. During the first week, a joint kick-off meeting will take place between the three suppliers and FFI. The purpose of this meeting is to provide information to the suppliers, including how the phase will be conducted, and how to interact with FFI throughout the phase.

1:1 meeting for clarification of needs and scope

During the 3-week period, FFI will be available for information and knowledge sharing so that you may adjust and develop your proposed solution. Following the joint kick-off, the 1:1-meeting will be conducted between your company and FFI every week for the 3 weeks.

Development of solution proposal

During the 3-week period, suppliers will develop their solution proposal. The final version will be your proposal for the development of a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) that addresses the needs of FFI. The proposal should be submitted by email to the project leader from DFØ, Malin Karlsson, before deadline.

Presenting the solution proposal

The three suppliers will have the opportunity to present their solution proposals in a pitch to the evaluation panel consisting of representatives from FFI, DFØ and LUP.

Based on the final solution proposal and the presentation, FFI will assess and rank the proposals. The intention is to proceed with the supplier who offers the best proposal. Only this supplier will be invited to the 'Develop solution' phase. For the two other suppliers the project will be concluded and their contracts terminated.

Execution of the 'develop solution' phase

Preparations and procedures

The 'Develop solution' phase will be carried out over a period of 15 weeks, with the goal of developing a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) based on the solution proposal. The selected supplier will receive a compensation of up to NOK 500 000 to complete this phase. The 'Develop solution' phase begins with a kick-off meeting between FFI and the supplier. FFI and the supplier will create a detailed project plan for the phase during this meeting. The project plan must be mutually approved in writing.

Development of a Minimum Viable Product

The supplier will develop a Minimum Viable Product in close collaboration with FFI. The supplier is responsible for the execution of the development process. We encourage the supplier to follow a development process that includes the following activities:

- Development of solution design
- Development of a Minimum Viable Product
- User testing

These activities should be repeated as necessary to meet the needs outlined by FFI.

Participation on demo day

The supplier who develops the MVP will have the opportunity to present their solution at the demo day. The purpose of this event is to showcase and market the company and solution that has been developed to a larger audience. Potential customers in the public and private sectors will be invited.

5 Important information about the challenge

Procurement method

The challenge will be conducted as a pre-commercial procurement. A pre-commercial procurement is based on an exemption provision in the Regulation on Public Procurement of 12th of August 2016 No. 974 (§ 2-5. Exemption for contracts for research and development services). This entails that the Act on Public Procurement and Regulation on Public Procurement is not applicable.

Challenge documents

The challenge documents consist of the following parts:

1. Challenge rules (this document)
2. The Norwegian Defence Research Establishment needs document

3. Template for the idea sketch
4. The StartOff research and development contract (StartOff contract)
5. Self-declaration regarding Russian involvement
6. Self-declaration of ethical guidelines
7. Caution, duty of non-disclosure and conflict of interest
8. Appendix 8: Changes to the general contractual wording before entering into the Agreement

About the client

Go to: <https://www.ffi.no/om-ffi>

Deliverables

FFI's description of the assignment is provided in section 3 of this document. The description of needs will also constitute Appendix 1 in the StartOff contract.

The StartOff contract pertains only to the purchase of research and development services and the associated MVP (i.e., the prototype), and not a fully developed product or service. A fully implemented solution requires a subsequent procurement process. DFØ can assist FFI regarding possibilities after the project.

Qualification requirements

To participate in the competition, you must be a company registered in a business register. Therefore, please attach a copy of such registration along with your idea sketch. (For companies registered in the Brønnøysund Register, you can obtain a company certificate from <https://www.brreg.no/>).

Confidentiality

Information that FFI becomes aware of as part of the idea sketch or interviews, or that is otherwise evident from the proposal, shall be treated confidentially and not be made available to external parties or other participating suppliers without consent from the concerned party. FFI shall take necessary precautions to ensure that unauthorised individuals do not have access to or become aware of confidential information.

The confidentiality obligations and their extent in the contract phase are outlined in section 5.3 of the Research and development contract attached to this document.

Intellectual Property Rights

Regulation of intellectual property rights is stated in section 8 of the Research and development contract.

Language

All written and verbal communication in connection with this challenge shall be conducted in a Scandinavian language or English. The language requirement also applies to the idea sketch and solution proposal itself.

Partial offers

You may not submit offers for only parts of the assignment (challenge). FFI is seeking a solution that covers as large a portion of the need as possible.

Questions regarding the challenge documents

FFI encourages the supplier to thoroughly familiarise themselves with the challenge documents and submit questions if anything is unclear. If any errors are discovered in the challenge documents, FFI requests that this is communicated by email to the project leader from DFØ (Malin.karlsson@dfo.no).

Any questions should be submitted by email to the project leader from DFØ. All questions that are submitted before the information meeting will be answered in an anonymised form and made available to all parties who participate in the information meeting.

Updates to the challenge documents

FFI has the right to make corrections, additions, or changes to the challenge documents. If there is a need to make significant changes, the competition may be cancelled and re-published.

Any corrections, additions, or changes to the challenge documents will be communicated to all suppliers who have submitted an idea sketch.

Rejection

You may not make substantial reservations against any of the conditions in the challenge documents. Idea sketches and/or solution proposals that contain significant reservations or significant deviations from the competition documents may be rejected.

FFI may also reject idea sketches and/or solution proposals that, due to discrepancies, reservations, errors, incompleteness, ambiguities, or similar issues, may raise doubts about how they should be assessed in relation to other idea sketches and/or solution proposals.

Key dates

FFI has set the following timeframe for the process:

EVALUATION OF IDEA SKETCH	
Activity	Date and time
Announcement of challenge	June 12 th , 2024
Digital information meeting about the challenge CLICK HERE for registration link.	August 13 th , 12:00 AM
Deadline for submitting idea sketch	August 20 th , 12:00 PM
Evaluation	August 26 th
Interview with the suppliers of the 6 best idea sketches	August 29–30 th
Evaluation	September 2 nd

Entering a contract with up to 3 suppliers for the 'Explore alternatives' phase	September 9 th
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EXECUTION OF THE 'EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES' PHASE	
Activity	Date and time
Kick-off with suppliers	September 9 th
1:1 meeting with FFI (in person or digital upon FFI's discretion)	Week 37
Optional work meeting 1 with FFI	Week 37
Optional work meeting 2 with FFI	Week 38
Optional work meeting 3 with FFI	Week 39
Submission of solution proposal	September 30 th
Presentation of solution proposal	October 7 th
Evaluation	October 9 th
Contract signing with 1 supplier for the 'Develop solution' phase	October 14 th

EXECUTION OF THE 'DEVELOP SOLUTION' PHASE	
Activity	Date and time
Kick-off	October 14 th
Development finished	February 10 th , 2025
Closing workshop	Not set

The time frame is tentative.

6 Evaluation criteria

Evaluation of idea sketches

Idea sketches will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria (see table below)

Table 1 Evaluation criteria

Criteria	Weighted	Documentation requirements
		<u>You should use the idea sketch template to describe your solution idea</u>
Quality – the solution's effect and degree of innovation Under this criterion, the following are considered: 1. To what extent the proposed solution idea demonstrates	60%	Describe the proposed solution as well as how and to what extent the solution or idea will meet the described needs as outlined in the requirements specification (see section 3 of this document).

Criteria	Weighted	Documentation requirements
<p>that it can function as a unit that helps the Armed Forces achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A flexible energy system in the field that connects various components • An efficient energy system with low energy loss and long operational lifetime • A streamlined setup that reduces the number of components in use and management • A remote-controlled system that contributes to control, operational optimisation, and increased performance <p>The following areas are emphasized in the evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection/inputs • Supply/outputs • Battery charging • Data exchange • Signature • Sustainability • Efficiency • Climate and external impact • Safety and security <p>2. Degree of innovation in the offered solution idea</p>		<p><u>You should use the idea sketch template to describe your solution idea</u></p> <p>Describe the degree of innovation in the solution. The degree of innovation should be described in a way that highlights the difference between the current situation and the proposed solution, emphasising what is the innovative parts of the solution.</p> <p>For reference, the following definition of innovation can be used: the introduction of a new or significantly improved product, service, or process, including production, construction, or installation processes, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization, or external relations.</p>
<p>Capability to execute/team This criterion assesses the team’s ability to materialise and execute the idea. The following areas are emphasised in the evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise/experience • Team composition/interdisciplinarity • Motivation 	20%	Briefly describe resumes for each of the key resources of the team, and describe the skill set and experience profiles of resources who will be part of the team.

Criteria	Weighted	Documentation requirements <u>You should use the idea sketch template to describe your solution idea</u>
Commercial potential for the solution idea	20%	Describe your assessments regarding the commercial potential of the proposed solution. Can the proposed solution be used by a larger market than FFI?

Evaluation of solution proposals

The best solution proposal in the 'Explore alternatives' phase will be invited to the 'Develop solution' phase. In the 'Develop solution' phase, you will have the opportunity to develop a Minimum Viable Product based on the challenge provided by the client. Evaluation criteria for this phase will be communicated to the suppliers during the kick-off meeting of the 'Explore alternatives' phase (see time schedule in section 5 above).

During the evaluation, FFI may also invite a third party, for example to contribute with specific technological expertise. The third party will be bound by confidentiality regarding any business secrets they access during the evaluation process.

7 Submission of solution proposals in the challenge

The idea sketch should be submitted according to the format provided by the electronic submission system.

The idea sketch template must be used as a basis for describing your solution idea.

The idea sketch must not exceed 2000 words. Idea sketches that exceed this may be rejected.

Submit the idea sketch by email to malin.karlsson@dfo.no alongside a copy of confirmation of company registration in a business register.

8 ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: The Norwegian Defence Research Establishment needs document
- Attachment 2: Template for idea sketch
- Attachment 3: The StartOff research and development contract
- Attachment 4: Self-declaration regarding Russian involvement
- Attachment 5: Self-declaration of ethical guidelines
- Attachment 6: Caution, duty of non-disclosure and conflict of interest

- Appendix 8: Changes to the general contractual wording before entering into the Agreement