

# Funding and support available for transport accessibility innovators

October 25, 2024



**Connected Places Catapult**, the UK's innovation accelerator for cities, transport, and place leadership, has announced that applications are open for the Scaling Innovation Programme. The programme is led by the National Centre for Accessible Transport (ncat) and delivered by the Catapult.

The programme is inviting applications from innovative firms with novel solutions to help disabled people navigate streets and use public transport more easily.

Up to 15 SMEs (small- to medium-sized enterprises) will be selected to access funding of up to £150,000 each to develop their innovations aimed at tackling barriers that have been identified through research and feedback from disabled communities. Alongside the funding, they will also receive bespoke business support from specialists at the Catapult.

Companies will be able to apply for one of two challenges:

- 'Overcoming physical barriers in street environments' such as street furniture on footways;

- 'Enhancing interactions between transport staff, the public, and disabled people', with a focus on booking, ticketing, boarding, and alighting.

In addition, an open call is available for companies to come forward with innovations aimed at addressing other accessibility issues within the transport sector.

Prospective applicants have until 28 November to [apply via the Catapult's website](#). An application support webinar on 12 November will offer further details on the programme, the application process, and scoring criteria, with a chance for attendees to ask questions. The webinar will be delivered in clear spoken English with simple visuals, audio descriptions, and a detailed agenda. Additional accommodations can be arranged upon request.

A spokesperson for the National Centre for Accessible Transport said: "ncat is delighted to see the launch of the grant funding programme, aimed at bringing disabled people and SMEs together to co-design innovative solutions to address transport accessibility. This funding call is the first opportunity to bring our research together with innovation specialists to develop ideas and test solutions that could have a real impact in the transport sector."

Connected Places Catapult's Innovation Director, Michael Edwards said: "ncat's Scaling Innovation competition sets out to drive real-world impact and improve the transport experience for disabled people across the UK.

"Built upon on the centre's research and co-developed with disabled people, we will be providing funding to organisations that have ideas or solutions that can tackle evidenced transport challenges.

"We see this as an important milestone for the centre and hope that this first competition sets the foundation for running future innovation programmes, co-developed with disabled people, that help to reduce the transport accessibility gap."

The National Centre for Accessible Transport (ncat) is working with disabled people to influence the transport sector and shape the future to ensure that all transport systems are accessible for disabled people. ncat is a consortium that includes Coventry University, Designability, RiDC, Policy Connect, WSP, and Connected Places Catapult, and is funded by Motability Foundation.

More information, including details on how to apply, are available here: <https://cp.catapult.org.uk/opportunity/national-centre-for-accessible-transport-ncat-scaling-innovation-programme-2025/>