



V&A Innovate National Schools Challenge FAQs

Who is eligible to take part?

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 in state-funded secondary schools are eligible to enter the Challenge. You are still encouraged to use all the free Innovate resources if you don't fall in this age range or are in a different type of school.

How much time do I need to deliver Innovate?

It is your choice. Innovate could be run over a term within D&T, or over a day with a STEAM project, or over a few weeks with an extra-curricular club. You can use our Time Planning tool to work out how you would like to deliver Innovate.

Does it cost anything to take part?

No, there is no fee for signing up or entering the challenge. Our CPD opportunities are also free. If your students are selected as Innovate finalists, we will also provide bursaries for travel for the Pitching and Awards Day.

Are students allowed to work individually?

If you're entering the challenge, students need to work in teams of 4-6 members. Entries from teams with any less or more students will not be accepted. Students might have lots of ideas but teams should only submit one entry.

Can I enter more than one team into the challenge?

Yes, there is no limit on the number of entries per school. However, we can only accept one entry per student team.

Do we need to visit the V&A during Innovate?

We have resources available online to support delivering Innovate without needing to visit the Museum. Finalists will be invited to the Pitching and Awards Day at the V&A in the 2022 Spring Term. If your students are selected as finalists, we will provide bursaries for travel.

What are the awards and prizes?

All students that enter will receive certificates and feedback on their ideas. Nine finalists will be invited to attend the Pitching and Awards Day, at which they'll have the opportunity to pitch their ideas to the judging panel and be in with the chance of winning prizes.



All finalist teams will receive an Innovate plaque for their school. Entries will be judged in different categories and the winning teams will receive trophies to display at school. The overall winning team will also receive the opportunity to take part in a bespoke designer-led workshop related to their idea, either at the V&A or at school.

Are there awards and prizes for teachers?

In addition to student team awards, we also want to award teachers for their commitment and innovation. Teachers can nominate other teachers who they think have gone above and beyond delivering Innovate. This could be: encouraging participation from a broad range of students, showing commitment to developing their own practice, building relationships with local industry and innovators, or submitting a number of high-quality entries.

We will send teacher nomination forms to all participating schools.

Submissions FAQs

What are you looking for in the submissions?

Students should visualise their Innovate journey on two A3 design sheets, presenting: the design idea and the story of their journey, from research to final design. We encourage students to share their idea creatively through a range of methods, including annotated sketches, photographs of models, technical drawings, CAD, quotes from their research or testing. Please read the judging criteria and entry requirements for more detail.

There is not right or wrong way to present final concepts, but students need to make sure it is clearly communicated visually so that the judges can understand.

How developed does the final concept need to be?

We are not looking for finished, refined prototypes in the submissions. Judges will be looking to see how students have tested their idea and iterated based on feedback. They could test how products work through creating rough models, or test systems and services through role plays. The final concept can be described visually and through annotations on the design sheets but it doesn't need to be a finished prototype using expensive materials or equipment. We are looking for bold, creative ideas – something that has the potential to have real impact with real people – rather than finished products.

If you are delivering Innovate as a unit of work, after submitting their concept students could continue developing their idea further into more finished prototypes.



I work with students with disabilities who cannot write or sketch their idea. Is there another way they can enter the Challenge?

We want all students to be able to take part in Innovate. For teams that cannot write or sketch their idea, or present it another way on a design sheet, please submit a video or audio file (.mp4) no more than 2 minutes long describing their idea and Innovate journey.

Why take part in Innovate? FAQs

How does Innovate support the D&T curriculum?

- Students use creativity and imagination to design solutions to real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values.
- Through exploring the V&A collections students can evaluate the work of past and present professionals and others to develop and broaden their understanding
- Students follow an iterative process of designing and making, and use research and exploration to identify and understand user needs
- Students test, evaluate and refine their ideas, taking into account the views of intended users and other interested groups
- Students will develop and communicate design ideas using annotated sketches, detailed plans, 3-D and mathematical modelling, or computer-based tools
- Through industry insights, students understand developments in design and technology, its impact on individuals, society and the environment, and the responsibilities of designers, engineers and technologists
- Model and scaffold elements of the NEA component of the GCSE through investigating a contextual challenge, defining the needs and wants of a user through research, generating creative design ideas and modelling design solutions.

How does Innovate support STEAM teaching?

Innovate's broad contextual challenges encourage students to look across and use knowledge from different subjects and disciplines to find solutions to real-world problems. For example, connections to Maths and Science can be made throughout the Innovate journey, including:

- Visualising and representing 2D and 3D forms in Challenge entries
- Analysing responses to user questionnaires and presenting the data
- Developing knowledge of types and properties of materials when testing design concepts



- Learning about life cycle assessment and recycling in the challenge themes
- Watching a range of designers talk about their practice, including material designer Ella Bulley exploring the different properties and elements of sugar cane
- Learning about different objects in the V&A collections, including the Mitticool Fridge using a technique called 'evaporative cooling', which requires no electricity to run

How does Innovate support Arts Award?

Taking part in Innovate could support students to achieve an Arts Award. Students could keep a portfolio of their Innovate journey, which could be accredited through Arts Award.

Innovate can support aspects of all Arts Award levels but is particularly suited to Arts Award Bronze:

Part A: Take part in an arts activity

Taking part in Innovate and developing design skills

Part B: Be the audience

Visiting a V&A exhibition or the collections, or another design exhibition locally

Part C: Arts inspiration

Researching a designer from the V&A collections

Part D: Arts skill share

Sharing design skills with classmates; e.g. showing how to prototype or develop a design sheet

Find out more about Arts Award [here](#)

How does Innovate support Artsmark?

Taking part in Innovate can be part of your school's Artsmark journey.

- Use Innovate to both enrich Art & Design and D&T curricula, and embed creative design approaches across the curriculum, with links to Maths, Science, Geography, and Citizenship
- Attend an Innovate CPD to show your commitment to developing creative education teaching practice in your school
- Engage students in broadening their knowledge of the real-world applications of design



- Use Innovate to deliver Arts Award, supporting students to develop their design skills and knowledge, and leadership skills
- Use Innovate to develop partnerships with local innovators – designers, businesses, makerspaces, universities - to inspire your students
- Finalists have the chance to meet and work with designers, expanding their knowledge of creative careers

Find out more about Artsmark [here](#)

INNOVATE