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## NIA Project Registration and PEA Document

### Date of Submission

Mar 2025

### Project Reference Number

NIA\_UKPN0107

## Project Registration

### Project Title

Engage+

### Project Reference Number

NIA\_UKPN0107

### Project Licensee(s)

UK Power Networks

### Project Start

April 2025

### Project Duration

1 year and 5 months

### Nominated Project Contact(s)

Charlie.Barnes@ukpowernetworks.co.uk

### Project Budget

£706,088.00

## Summary

UK Power Networks are using behavioural science and data-driven approaches to remove barriers for customers to sign up to the Priority Services Register. We are undertaking primary research and testing with consumers to apply learnings from behavioural science to enhance the registration journey. We are also building a case for data sharing between the utility and health and social care sectors for the benefits of customers. Through these methods we are aiming to increase the accessibility of the Priority Services Register and increase the support we provide to households in need.

### Nominated Contact Email Address(es)

innovation@ukpowernetworks.co.uk

## Problem Being Solved

UK Power Networks is committed to identifying and providing support to consumers in vulnerable situations, including maintaining and expanding our Priority Services Register (PSR). We currently source PSR registrations through marketing and outreach campaigns, partnerships with energy and water suppliers, as well as via our website.

A gap we have identified is collaboration with health and social care providers, which have access to hundreds of thousands of customers that could require support. Many of these customers will be eligible for registering on the PSR, but when in the process of receiving healthcare may not have the capacity or ability to register themselves. With many healthcare services struggling with resource, they may be unable to proactively support eligible customers with PSR awareness or completing the registration process.

We also recognise that there are customers that are still facing barriers to registering for the PSR such as awareness, perception and

understanding. There is further research to be done into identifying these barriers and developing methods of overcoming them.

## Method(s)

After primary research the project will follow two workstreams, exploring the behavioural science applications and scope of data sharing collaboration with the health and social care sector. Learnings will be documented and shared to ensure benefits can be replicated across sectors.

- Primary research with consumers will identify key barriers to registration and to support evidence of public need and expectations for collaboration between the energy sector and health and social care sector
- Behavioural Science:
  - o Methods to address behavioural findings will be identified and trialled. This could include alterations to the PSR webform or design of promotional campaigns
  - o Hands on training for key colleagues on the learnings and practical application of the behavioural science concepts and insights
- Health & Social Care Collaboration
  - o Establish stakeholder network and identify opportunities and barriers
  - o Identify first adopters and collaborate to establish data sharing methodology, feasibility and timescale
  - o Drive ongoing programme of data sharing, sharing best practice and evidence of impact
  - o Document pertinent findings and the quantified benefits case for stakeholder network

Share learnings and effective methodologies with wider sectors to enable replication

## Scope

- Primary research with UK Power Networks' customers to identify barriers to PSR registration and how they feel about the utility and health and social care sectors sharing data for the customers benefit
- Behavioural Science
  - o Review of current PSR data to identify existing registration patterns and potential gaps
  - o Review of PSR website journey
  - o Identify potential changes to make to existing website and communications to reduce barriers to registration
  - o Undertake testing with selected changes and plan for implementation of successful changes to website and/or future communications
- Health and Social Care Collaboration
  - o Produce materials to evidence of benefits of data sharing and proposed route for success, share with stakeholders from the health and social care sector
  - o Engage with stakeholders to progress data sharing initiative, including sharing learnings and progress across stakeholders

Create plan including learnings and roadmap to establishing wide scale data sharing between utilities and health and care sectors in UK Power Networks' regions

## Objective(s)

- Undertake primary research with consumers to identify key barriers to registration and to support evidence of public need and expectations for collaboration between the energy sector and health and social care sector

- Identify and test key behavioural change actions across suitable channels (e.g. website, customer services, communications)
- Produce a strategy, plan and legal framework co-designed with health social care stakeholders to share data with health and social care organisations

## Consumer Vulnerability Impact Assessment (RIIO-2 Projects Only)

It is one of our licence conditions to identify domestic customers in vulnerable situations and to offer to add them to the PSR. By adding them to the PSR, UK Power Networks can be effectively informed and therefore ensure that appropriate support is provided during power outages.

To undertake the primary research, we will be working with market research experts that specialise in engaging with vulnerable consumers and are familiar with the PSR. By working directly with vulnerable consumers to identify barriers to the signup process for the PSR, UK Power Networks is working to make our services more accessible.

By applying the learnings from this project we can provide improved accessible services to customers and minimise barriers to engagement and support. Enabling efficient identification and communication to eligible consumers of the PSR reduces the reliance on the customer, who may not be aware of the service or face other barriers to registration.

## Success Criteria

- Behavioural Sciences
  - o Identification of barriers to PSR registration
  - o Playbook of practical actions to implement across PSR communications and campaigns to make the PSR more accessible
- Health and Social Care Collaboration
  - o Data received from one or more health and social care organisations that demonstrates our capability to update or add customer records to the PSR
  - o Roadmap defining the steps from the current state of play through to wide scale data sharing between UK Power Networks and health and social care organisations, including considerations of wider sector/regulatory engagement

## Project Partners and External Funding

AxiaOrigin Management Consultancy bring extensive knowledge in data, digital and analytics to the project, with experience operating across both the utility and health and social care sectors. They will be collaborating closely with LAB Group, a digital experience agency who are experts in the application of behavioural science and digital design.

Initial engagement with the health and social care sector will be through the National Health Service (NHS) Integrated Care Boards. These organisations are responsible for planning health services for their local population and collaborate with local providers to develop long term strategies to improve people's health and wellbeing.

We will also utilise a market researcher that is has experience engaging with vulnerable consumers to conduct the primary research.

## Potential for New Learning

The primary research with UK Power Networks' customers will identify key barriers to registration and evidence of expectations for collaboration between the energy sector and health and social care sector. This research should provide learnings and insight into existing barriers and indicate actions that could be taken to address them.

The engagement with health and social care organisations and sharing learnings from our existing work on the PSR (such as current

outreach methods and established data sharing arrangements with energy suppliers and water suppliers) should provide insight into what elements of our existing knowledge base are applicable to this method, and where we may need to take a new approach. These learnings will help us to understand how to more effectively engage with this sector going forwards and identify new ways to collaborate.

Receiving data from health and social care organisations that want to support the PSR will ensure that learnings are effectively captured and shared with key stakeholders.

UK Power Networks will also provide project information publicly on our Innovation microsite, and social media posts where appropriate.

**Scale of Project**

The scale of the project is appropriate to ensure sufficient primary research and user testing is undertaken to provide statistically significant results. This is necessary for it to be able to reliably inform our approach to addressing the defined challenges.

The project is also scaled to demonstrate the benefit of the implemented changes by evidencing the impact, through sufficient testing, trials and/or data collection.

**Technology Readiness at Start**

TRL7 Inactive Commissioning

**Technology Readiness at End**

TRL9 Operations

**Geographical Area**

To the primary research and data analysis will be undertaken across all of UK Power Networks’ licence areas to ensure that the findings are robust enough to apply across our geographic areas.

Receiving data from the health and social care sector will consider all the UK Power Networks licence areas in the road map development. However, depending on the availability and engagement of organisations that we engage with, may primarily be focused on certain regions during the project.

**Revenue Allowed for the RIIO Settlement**

No funding was provided within the current RIIO settlement that will become surplus to requirements as a result of this project.

**Indicative Total NIA Project Expenditure**

The total project budget is £706,088. 90% of this (£635,479.20) will be recovered from NIA expenditure and 10% (£70,608.80) will be contributed by UK Power Networks.

## Project Eligibility Assessment Part 1

There are slightly differing requirements for RIIO-1 and RIIO-2 NIA projects. This is noted in each case, with the requirement numbers listed for both where they differ (shown as RIIO-2 / RIIO-1).

### Requirement 1

Facilitate the energy system transition and/or benefit consumers in vulnerable situations (Please complete sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 for RIIO-2 projects only)

Please answer **at least one** of the following:

#### How the Project has the potential to facilitate the energy system transition:

N/A

#### How the Project has potential to benefit consumer in vulnerable situations:

This project aims to remove barriers for customers to be signed up to the PSR, which helps us to provide the required support more effectively in the case of power outages.

### Requirement 2 / 2b

Has the potential to deliver net benefits to consumers

Project must have the potential to deliver a Solution that delivers a net benefit to consumers of the Gas Transporter and/or Electricity Transmission or Electricity Distribution licensee, as the context requires. This could include delivering a Solution at a lower cost than the most efficient Method currently in use on the GB Gas Transportation System, the Gas Transporter's and/or Electricity Transmission or Electricity Distribution licensee's network, or wider benefits, such as social or environmental.

#### Please provide an estimate of the saving if the Problem is solved (RIIO-1 projects only)

N/A

#### Please provide a calculation of the expected benefits the Solution

The project will result an increase in the number of eligible customers registered on the PSR during RIIO-ED2.

When customers are on the PSR, they receive support and information about fuel poverty during our winter campaign, as well as targeted support during power outages which typically results in reduced stress levels. The project is projected to produce over £1,000,000 societal benefits within the UK Power Networks licence areas during RIIO-ED2.

#### Please provide an estimate of how replicable the Method is across GB

The behavioural science learnings for reducing barriers to customers being able to sign up to the PSR are replicable in an array of applications. All other DNOs as well as energy suppliers, water suppliers and GDNs could apply the methods to increase improve the accessibility of their PSRs.

#### Please provide an outline of the costs of rolling out the Method across GB.

The roll out costs will vary for each organisation, and will be comprised of:

- The cost of implementing changes to their existing website and PSR sign up forms
- The cost of implementing changes to existing processes for campaigns or other methods of PSR sign up
- The cost of implementing data sharing and data processing processes to securely share data between organisations that results in customers being signed up to the PSR

### Requirement 3 / 1

Involve Research, Development or Demonstration

A RIIO-1 NIA Project must have the potential to have a Direct Impact on a Network Licensee's network or the operations of the System Operator and involve the Research, Development, or Demonstration of at least one of the following (please tick which applies):

- ☐ A specific piece of new (i.e. unproven in GB, or where a method has been trialled outside GB the Network Licensee must justify repeating it as part of a project) equipment (including control and communications system software).
- ☐ A specific novel arrangement or application of existing licensee equipment (including control and/or communications systems and/or software)
- ☐ A specific novel operational practice directly related to the operation of the Network Licensees system
- ☐ A specific novel commercial arrangement

RIIO-2 Projects

- ☐ A specific piece of new equipment (including monitoring, control and communications systems and software)
- ☐ A specific piece of new technology (including analysis and modelling systems or software), in relation to which the Method is unproven
- ☒ A new methodology (including the identification of specific new procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyse information)
- ☐ A specific novel arrangement or application of existing gas transportation, electricity transmission or electricity distribution equipment, technology or methodology
- ☐ A specific novel operational practice directly related to the operation of the GB Gas Transportation System, electricity transmission or electricity distribution
- ☐ A specific novel commercial arrangement

## Specific Requirements 4 / 2a

### Please explain how the learning that will be generated could be used by the relevant Network Licensees

Many of the methods and learnings generated through this project will be applicable to other network licensees that are regulated to operate and maintain a PSR, and promote it to vulnerable customers. Methods to reduce barriers to registration on the PSR, such as through website design and communications could be implemented by any network licensees.

The learnings generated from engagement with the health and social care sector, such as the methods used to establish data share agreements and technical data sharing processes could also enable other network licenses to implement similar processes to increase the number of eligible customers registered on the PSR.

### Or, please describe what specific challenge identified in the Network Licensee's innovation strategy that is being addressed by the project (RIIO-1 only)

N/A

### Is the default IPR position being applied?

☒ Yes

## Project Eligibility Assessment Part 2

### Not lead to unnecessary duplication

A Project must not lead to unnecessary duplication of any other Project, including but not limited to IFI, LCNF, NIA, NIC or SIF projects already registered, being carried out or completed.

### Please demonstrate below that no unnecessary duplication will occur as a result of the Project.

To date, the specific application of behaviour science to understand and enhance the registration of vulnerable consumers to the PSR has not been undertaken.

Currently, data sharing between health and social care providers and the utility sector for identification of eligible customers does not occur at scale.

**If applicable, justify why you are undertaking a Project similar to those being carried out by any other Network Licensees.**

N/A

## **Additional Governance And Document Upload**

**Please identify why the project is innovative and has not been tried before**

Behavioural sciences have not been applied to reducing barriers to signup to the PSR. Undertaking targeted primary research with customers and then applying the findings and undertaking focussed customer testing to capture benefits through this specific lens is a novel way to tackling the challenge of supporting vulnerable consumers at risk during power outages.

The project also goes one step further, to exploring how barriers can be further removed by automating identification of eligible consumers through data sharing with trusted health and social care organisations for the benefit of the vulnerable consumers.

**Relevant Foreground IPR**

The outputs and deliverables produced as part of the project will conform to the default treatment of IPR.

**Data Access Details**

To view the full Innovation Data Sharing Policy, please visit UK Power Networks' website here:

<https://d1oyzg0jo3ox9g.cloudfront.net/app/uploads/2023/10/UKPN-InnovationDataSharingPolicy-Nov-23-v1.0.pdf>

UK Power Networks recognises that Innovation projects may produce network and consumption data, and that this data may be useful to others. This data may be shared with interested parties, whenever it is practicable and legal to do so, and it is in the interest of GB electricity customers. In accordance with the Innovation Data Sharing Policy, UK Power Networks aim to make available all non-personal, non-confidential/non-sensitive data on request, so that interested parties can benefit from this data.

**Please identify why the Network Licensees will not fund the project as apart of it's business and usual activities**

Although behavioural science is an established field, it can be complex to extricate methods that can be applied to influence specific outcomes when there are a large number of variables. There is a risk that the research may identify results that are challenging or not practicable to implement, or when the methods are applied the results are lower than anticipated.

**Please identify why the project can only be undertaken with the support of the NIA, including reference to the specific risks(e.g. commercial, technical, operational or regulatory) associated with the project**

As noted in the NIA guidance, certain projects are speculative in nature and yield uncertain commercial returns. This is the case for this project. There is a commercial risk that the solution developed as part of the project is not adopted by the stakeholders involved following the trial period. This could be due to the fact that the solution has not reach the level of maturity required for business-as-usual application, or due to stakeholder sentiment. This risk is being mitigated against through early engagement with stakeholders and ensuring requirements are clearly defined and documented. If the project is successful, it will have proven the beneficial application of bespoke behavioural science research targeting vulnerable customers which will improve customer service. The specific details regarding the benefits are captured earlier in this document.

**This project has been approved by a senior member of staff**

☒ Yes