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NIA Project Registration and PEA Document

Date of Submission

Oct 2025

Project Reference Number

NIA_UKPN0113

Project Registration

Project Title

Click & Quote

Project Reference Number

NIA_UKPN0113

Project Licensee(s)

UK Power Networks

Project Start

November 2025

Project Duration

0 years and 11 months

Nominated Project Contact(s)

Wayne Siggers

Project Budget

£634,392.00

Summary

Nominated Contact Email Address(es)

innovation@ukpowernetworks.co.uk

Problem Being Solved

In the Competitions in Connections (CiC) business, most quotes issued are not accepted, leading to a high level of wasted effort and higher customer costs.

A major reason for the low acceptance rate of quotes is that there may be multiple applications for a single site by different customers. This could occur, for example, when there is a tender opened for a job and several customers require a connection cost to allow them to produce their bid. UK Power Networks can receive up to eight CiC customer applications for the same site and load.

Based on the available data up to 60% of work could be made up of multiple applications for the same site. In this scenario, we process each application independently within the relevant regulatory timescales. However, the quote value will be identical, and only a single quote can be accepted for any one site. This results in duplicated effort by the Gateway, Project Designers, and Distribution Planning teams, as well as long waiting times for customers.

Therefore, UK Power Networks requires a simple, cost-effective way to prevent this duplication of efforts, leading to improved timelines, lower prices, improved customer experience and ultimately higher satisfaction for customers.

Method(s)

To address this issue, the CiC team has been exploring allowing quotes issued on specific sites to be able to be anonymised and issued to other requests for the same site, so that any customer can accept it. This would prevent a duplication of efforts, while complying with our regulatory and legal obligations.

Currently, the preferred solution is an implementation via UK Power Networks' Smart Gateway portal, where a customer completes their application by selecting their site, and entering their load requirements. This will be linked to a database which checks if there are available quotes for said location and load. If a quote is available, an anonymised version of the quote is automatically pulled from a central location and a full 'pegged quote' is offered to the customer instantly. If no suitable quote exists, the current existing process will be followed, and the customer journey is unchanged.

Open access to pegged quotes was also rejected, to prevent customers from gaining unfair access to jobs, and underbidding competitors. Applications for each location must be completed; only then can a pegged quote be offered.

In validating the business and customer need for such a solution, we have collated a detailed list of requirements. This will be used to engage with a project partner to develop a software solution which looks to ingest requests via the Smart Gateway portal, assess the request to match it to an existing available quote, and issue a new quote for the new request automatically if there is one. If the request is unique, then the quote gets added onto a peg system which makes it available to be issued to new requests if required and is automatically removed once a quote has been accepted.

Scope

The scope of the Click & Quote project is to build, deploy, and trial a digital tool that automates the reuse of previously issued CiC quotes for identical sites and loads.

The tool will be designed to support CiC offers up to 1MVA and 11kV Point of Connection (POC) voltage, with a 180-day validity period. It will exclude bespoke and interactive offers and will initially target Independent Distribution Network Operator (IDNO) customers only.

The tool will integrate with Smart Gateway and Salesforce, allowing customers to receive anonymised, pre-existing quotes instantly if a match is found. This will reduce duplicated effort, improve quote turnaround times, and enhance customer satisfaction.

The project will be trialled across all three UK Power Networks licence areas to ensure sufficient volume and diversity of feedback.

Objective(s)

The primary objective of this project are to provide a cost-effective way to prevent the duplication of efforts for CiC quotes at the same site. This project will focus on delivering a fully functional solution and validating its effectiveness through live trials.

- Specific objectives include:
- Build a software solution that integrates with Smart Gateway and Salesforce to enable automated quote matching and issuance
- Define and implement new business procedures and system changes required to support the tool's operation
- Allow IDNO customers to receive anonymised quotes instantly if a match is found, improving turnaround times and reducing duplicated effort
- Conduct trials across all three UK Power Networks licence areas to gather customer feedback and validate performance
- Complete an impact assessment including key metrics related to time savings, cost efficiencies, and incentive improvements resulting from the tool's deployment
- Identify and address barriers to customer uptake and assess the feasibility of future enhancements such as convertible quotes
- Produce an outcomes report including feedback from stakeholders, potential improvements, updated CBA, recommendations for full BAU adoption and potential considerations for GB-wide replication

Consumer Vulnerability Impact Assessment (RIIO-2 Projects Only)

The project looks to create OPEX cost savings through greater efficiency. Any savings realised will be shared across all customers equally.

Success Criteria

The project will be deemed successful on achievement of the following criteria:

- The automated quoting tool is successfully built and integrated with UK Power Networks' Smart Gateway and Salesforce platforms
- The tool reliably identifies and matches quote requests for identical sites and loads, issuing anonymised quotes instantly where applicable
- The tool supports CiC offers up to 1MVA and 11kV POC voltage, with an appropriate validity period, excluding bespoke and interactive offers

- The tool is trialled across all three licence areas, with measurable customer engagement and actionable feedback collected
- Demonstrable reduction in duplicated effort and quote turnaround time, supported by key metrics, updated CBA figures and incentive metrics

Project Partners and External Funding

This project will involve an external technology partner to deliver the solution. A tender will be undertaken to select the most appropriate supplier to deliver the scope of this project. The project will not be receiving any external funding from the selected supplier.

Potential for New Learning

The project will be the first to provide self-service, automated quotes based on prior applications for the same site and load by another customer. It will explore whether a digital self-service model can reduce the time to provide a quote in these circumstances, reduce costs without impacting accuracy and customer service levels, whilst keeping customer data protected and without impacting competition amongst customers.

Key areas of new learning include:

- **Technical Feasibility:** Understanding how existing systems can be adapted to support automated quote matching and issuance, including data architecture, system triggers, and anonymisation protocols
- **Process Design:** Identification of the business process changes required to support automated quoting, and how these can be implemented without disrupting existing workflows
- **Customer Experience:** Evaluation of customer engagement with the tool, including uptake rates, feedback, and behavioural patterns when presented with pegged quotes
- **Operational Efficiency:** Measurement of time and resource savings, and validation of the projected benefits outlined in the CBA

The findings will be documented in a final report and shared to support broader industry learning and inform future innovation initiatives across the GB electricity distribution sector.

Scale of Project

The aim is to provide the capability to automate the issuing of quotes, where a quote has with the same load already been requested for the same site by another customer, for all the UK Power Networks regions. If the project were of a smaller scale, it would limit the availability of the functionality to a subset of customers but would not lead to a reduced cost as the same functionality would still need to be developed. A trial needs to be undertaken across all three license areas to capture sufficient volume in order to validate effectiveness and receive sufficient feedback.

Technology Readiness at Start

TRL6 Large Scale

Technology Readiness at End

TRL9 Operations

Geographical Area

The project will cover all three licence areas of UK Power Networks.

Revenue Allowed for the RIIO Settlement

No funding was provided within the current RIIO-ED2 settlement that will become surplus to requirements as a result of this project.

Indicative Total NIA Project Expenditure

We estimate UK Power Networks' total project budget will be £634,392, of which £570,953 (90%) will be recovered from NIA

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:

As the transition to net zero accelerates, the volume of connection requests is set to rise significantly. Under current processes, this would necessitate an increase in staffing levels and associated costs to sustain existing performance standards—let alone uphold exceptional customer service. Additionally, only 15% of connection offers are presently accepted.

This project aims to introduce instant quote functionality for CiC customers requiring up to and including 1 MVA, provided a quote for the same site and load has already been requested. By streamlining this process, UK Power Networks can respond more effectively to growing demand driven by electrification, low-carbon technologies, and infrastructure development.

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

NA

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 – this is a RIIO-ED2 project.

Please provide a calculation of the expected benefits the Solution

The expected benefits arise from a reduction in resource costs derived from removal of duplicated effort, alongside a reduction in the number of fines received where we fail to complete a quote in time to comply with our regulatory requirements under licence condition (LC) 15.

The total benefits calculated across ED2 and ED3 is £3,090,990 and further details and assumptions can be found below.

Benefit 1: Resource cost savings - £3,070,080

The following method was used to calculate resource saving:

- Data of all offers for demands up to 1 MVA issued between Jan 2023 – Feb 2024 was taken and then annualised
- Quotes with identical postcodes were considered eligible to be serviced by Click & Quote
- A 30% scaling factor has been implemented to decrease the number of eligible quotes
- It was assumed that there will be 20% uptake Regulatory Year (RY) 3, 60% in RY4 and 75% in all following years

ED2 Baseline resource costs = £2,295,800

ED2 resource costs using Click & Quote = £1,697,830

ED2 resource cost savings = £597,970

ED3 Baseline resource costs = £4,859,570

ED3 resource costs using Click & Quote = 2,387,460

ED3 resource cost savings = £ 2,472,110

Benefits 2: Avoidance of penalties – £20,910

Cost savings from avoiding LC15 penalties (exceeding duration):

- Average number of annual LC15 penalties: 8
- Average cost of LC15 penalty: £500
- Assumed reduction due to Click & Quote: 90%
- Yearly savings due to Click & Quote: $90\% \times £500 \times 8 = £3,600$

Total savings for ED2: £6,710

Total savings for ED3: £14,200

The project will also provide non-quantified benefits including:

Improvement in customer satisfaction in CiC business

By using an approach based on pegged quotes, we will be able to issue quotes faster where a previous quote for the same site and load requirements exists. This represents a more efficient service for the customer and is therefore expected to translate to greater customer satisfaction.

Improved Consistency

Currently, if quotes are received from different customers for the same site, they may not be addressed by the same designer. This means that the quotes received by different customers may have minor variations where slightly different, but equally valid designs are produced. This new approach will mean that customers will receive identical quotes leading to greater consistency and, therefore fairness

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

The Click & Quote method is highly replicable across Great Britain. While the tool will initially be developed and trialled within UK Power Networks' three licence areas, the underlying logic, automated reuse of previously issued CiC quotes for identical sites and loads, is applicable to all DNOs.

The core functionality relies on standardised data inputs (site location and load requirements) and can be adapted to other DNOs' systems with appropriate integration into their customer application portals and internal quotation processes. The method does not rely on region-specific infrastructure or regulatory exemptions, making it suitable for broader deployment.

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

The solution could be deployed in any licence area providing the DNO implements processes and systems to incorporate it into their BAU process. A tender is underway to select a developer to build the tool, and the cost to deploy to additional DNOs would be subject to negotiation of commercial terms with the selected party or another third party. Based on similar systems, we expect the maintenance and upkeep of Click & Quote to be in the region of £20,000 per annum.

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

If the project proves that it is possible to identify quote requests by different customers for the same site, and successfully automate the process of providing a quote, relevant Network Licensees would have the ability to use these learnings to develop and offer a similar service, thereby increasing the benefits to customers more broadly.

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 – RIIO-2 project

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.

This is a capability not currently offered by any other DNO. As far as we can ascertain, there are also currently no in-flight projects looking at this type of automation within the sector, nor any similar projects listed on the ENA smarter networks portal.

Research has shown that, whilst some organisations offer online submission of quotes and automation of budget estimates, they are not utilising previous applications for the same site and load to improve efficiency. For example, National Grid offer a budget estimate tool for all property types up to 210kVA and is for illustrative purposes only. SP Energy Networks provide the ability to submit a quote application online, but timescales are in line with Ofgem guaranteed standards.

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

No other DNO currently uses an automated quoting methodology reusing previously issued quotations for their CiC business.

Northern Powergrid currently operate a budget estimate tool, while National Grid Electricity Distribution are close to launching a quotation tool that allows customers to produce their own quote, but it is limited to less than 100A single phase service. Unlike these tools, Click & Quote leverages historical quote data to deliver instant, anonymised quotes through a fully integrated digital platform. The solution ensures fairness by restricting access to pegged quotes only after a formal application is submitted, thereby protecting customer data and maintaining competitive integrity.

This project represents a novel approach in the CiC quotation process to improve the experience for customers while supporting the energy transition.

Relevant Foreground IPR

The data and the processes that already exist within UK Power Networks is background IPR for the project. Extending this with the input of UK Power Networks to cover the new system requirements is also UK Power Networks foreground IPR. Any system architecture or system design documents developed by a third party to create the capability will be the Foreground IPR of that entity.

Data Access Details

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.

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>

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

In the NIA Governance document, Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) are encouraged to explore various methods and solutions to address challenges impacting customers and network operators. This project aims to provide a solution that could significantly enhance customer satisfaction while promoting the transition to low carbon technologies by making the connection application process more efficient..

These activities are not part of routine operations due to the low Technology Readiness Level (TRL) and the inherent risks associated with the project, given the unproven benefits. Therefore, NIA project funding is essential to advance the innovative aspects of the project and manage the associated risks for its implementation.

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

The Click & Quote project requires NIA support due to the innovative nature of the solution and the operational risks associated with its development and deployment. The project proposes a novel quoting methodology that has not been trialled within UK Power Networks or across other DNOs, and therefore carries a degree of uncertainty in terms of technical feasibility, customer acceptance, and regulatory compliance.

Without NIA funding, the speculative nature of the project and the lack of a proven commercial return would make it difficult to justify investment under standard operational budgets.

This project has been approved by a senior member of staff

Yes