Our Ref: GBIC-R&D RFP 02
Date: 24 May 2018

Built Environment Research and Innovation Institute /
Green Building Technology (GBTEC)
Tel: 6248 9988
Fax: 6258 0588
Email: tan_tian_chong@bca.gov.sg

Circular to Professional Institutes / Associations

Dear Sir/Madam

Innovation Challenge Call for Advancing Net Zero through Smart Building Technologies

Background

1. To support the national target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions intensities, BCA has set aspiration of achieving positive energy, zero energy and super low energy buildings in the tropics. A dedicated Super Low Energy Technology Roadmap has been introduced to guide the implementation of research and innovation.

2. To accelerate the development and deployment of innovative solutions for zero energy buildings, BCA is launching an Innovation Challenge Call for Advancing Net Zero through Smart Building Technologies. This challenge call, to be funded by Green Buildings Innovation Cluster (GBIC) programme, aims to develop and test-bed innovative smart building solutions to advance the agenda for Super Low Energy buildings through innovation.

Objective

3. This Challenge Call will provide opportunities for the industry to collaborate with researchers, technology providers and building owners to co-innovate Smart Building Technologies toward advancing Net Zero in the Tropics.
**Scope of Challenge Call**

4. Proposal shall involve development of smart technologies that are connected to building systems and are able to achieve significant energy savings. This includes smart sensor and control technologies, advanced data analytics, and artificial intelligence for building systems, etc.

5. The developed prototypes should be demonstrated in an operational environment (in an actual building) as part of the deliverables.

6. Proposals with strong commitment from building owners/developers to demonstrate their technologies in real buildings after R&D will be considered favourably. (Please see enclosed for details of Challenge Call)

**Application**

7. Interested applicants are required to submit White Paper proposal with the supporting documents and submit via email to BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg by 25 June 2018 at 1700 hours (Singapore time).

8. Full details of the challenge call, including the application form can be found at BCA’s GBIC website at [https://www.bca.gov.sg/ResearchInnovation/gbic.html](https://www.bca.gov.sg/ResearchInnovation/gbic.html)

9. A sharing workshop for Innovation Challenge Call will be conducted at 9am to 12:30pm on 1 June 2018 at the Auditorium T1-1, Academic Tower, Level 1, BCA Academy, 200 Braddell Road, Singapore 579700.

10. To register your interest to attend the workshop, please email to the GBIC Secretariat at BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg.

Yours faithfully,

TAN TIAN CHONG  
DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR  
BUILT ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH AND INNOVATION INSTITUTE (BERII)  
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

Enclosure – Challenge Call Document
**GREEN BUILDINGS INNOVATION CLUSTER (GBIC) REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

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<td>Category</td>
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<td>Open Date for White Paper</td>
<td>15 May 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close Date for White Paper</td>
<td>25 June 2018&lt;br&gt;Proposals must be submitted via email to <a href="mailto:BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg">BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg</a> by 25 June 2018 at 1700 hours (Singapore time).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact (for proposal submission)</td>
<td>Green Buildings Innovation Cluster (GBIC) Secretariat&lt;br&gt;c/o: Building and Construction Authority&lt;br&gt;Green Building Technology (GBTEC) Programme Office&lt;br&gt;200 Braddell Road&lt;br&gt;ZEB Level 3&lt;br&gt;Singapore 579700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enquiries</td>
<td>Please send your enquiries to: <a href="mailto:BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg">BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg</a></td>
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Background

1. Buildings account for approximately 40% of energy consumption globally, and contribute up to a quarter of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Singapore. In response to climate change, Net Zero Energy Buildings (NZEBs) represent a transformative shift in the building sector, with an astonishing momentum gained over the past years. According to Navigant Research, the global NZEB market is projected to grow from less than USD 100 billion in 2016 to USD 1.4 trillion by 2035. The trend, notably, is led by rapid advancements of technologies and governments’ sustainability agenda.

2. In 2016, BCA shared the aspiration of advancing net zero in the tropics, i.e. achieving positive energy, zero energy and super low energy buildings in our tropical and urban context. Subsequently, a technology development roadmap has been introduced to identify key technological areas and to guide research and innovation.

3. One of the most fast-growing and dynamic technologies towards net zero is the smart building technologies. Through tapping on Internet of Things (IoT), advanced sensors, data analytics, the smart technologies have shown a potential of saving an estimated 8-18% of total building energy consumption and providing a host of non-energy benefits. It is also considered particularly suitable for the research community and industry to drive co-innovation in this area.

4. BCA has been supporting R&D of smart and green building technologies under the Green Buildings Innovation Cluster (GBIC) programme since 2015. Substantial progress has been made in areas such as data-driven optimisation, model predictive control of multiple systems, etc. To continue driving the R&D towards innovative solutions with tangible outcomes, it is essential to strengthen academic-industry research collaboration to transform new knowledge into societal benefits through translational research and technology development efforts.

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1 Smart Buildings: A Deeper Dive into Market Segments, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), 2017
Objective of Challenge Call
5. In this context, BCA is launching an Innovation Challenge Call to provide opportunities for the industry to collaborate with researchers, technology providers and building owners to co-innovate Smart Building Technologies towards Advancing Net Zero in the Tropics.

Scopes of Challenge Call
6. Proposal shall involve development of smart technologies that are connected to building systems and are able to achieve significant energy savings. This includes smart sensor and control technologies, advanced data analytics, and artificial intelligence for building systems, etc. (Please refer to Annex C for details of the Challenge Statement).

7. The technologies proposed should achieve a Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of 6 or above. (Please refer to Annex D for TRL classification). The developed prototypes should be demonstrated in an operational environment (in an actual building) as part of the deliverables.

8. Proposals with strong commitment from building owners/developers to demonstrating their technologies in real buildings after R&D will be considered favourably. Proposals should also show clear evidence of technical and commercial viability of the solutions to scale up for wider adoption in the market. This should be indicated clearly in the submitted proposals.

9. Project duration should be not more than 2 years for technology development and validation.

Eligibility
10. This call is open to all public and private entities. Proposals with strong industry involvement and commitment (e.g. as host institution) will be assessed more favourably. Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs), Research Institutes, research start-ups, and not-for-profit organisations, are strongly encouraged to collaborate with the private sector companies to jointly submit proposals, together with support and commitment from public or private sector building owners/developers.

Evaluation Criteria
11. The following criteria will be used for the evaluation of proposals:

a. High-technical-merit research and innovation that is novel, internationally competitive, directly addresses identified industry-challenge(s), and can lead to breakthrough results;
b. Economic benefits to Singapore in terms of potential scale up for mass adoption, capabilities and manpower development.

c. Excellent execution by an experienced project team with a good track record and whose members have the relevant and complementary expertise. Close collaboration and partnership with industry and a clear business model for the proposed innovation will be the vital consideration for award.

**Funding Support**

12. Private sector companies will qualify for up to 70% of funding support of the approved direct qualifying costs of a project. IHLs, research institutes, public sector agencies and not-for-profit organisations will qualify for up to 100% funding support of approved direct qualifying costs of a project. Only IHLs and not-for-profit entities would be allowed support for indirect costs. These include up to 20% of qualifying costs for overhead costs.

13. Proposals should not be funded or be currently considered for funding by other agencies.

14. Funding awarded cannot be used to support overseas R&D activities. All funding awarded must be used to carry out the research and innovation activities in Singapore unless approved in the grant.

15. We expect each project to range in total size up to S$800,000, although we may consider projects outside this range.

16. Projects would be considered for further funding support for large scale demonstration in a real building environment if they show potential at the end of the technology innovation.

**Application and Evaluation Process**

17. The call for proposals has two stages: (i) White Paper stage; and (ii) Full Proposal stage.

**White Paper Stage**

18. Interested applicants are required to submit White Paper proposal (see Annex A) with the supporting documents and submit via email to BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg by 25 June 2018 at 1700 hours (Singapore time).

19. The White Paper should be kept to a maximum of 5 pages, describing the innovation proposal being proposed. Only CVs (2 page per team members such as PI, Co-PI, industry partners, building owner, etc. in the format specified in the Form) and references (up to 2 pages per White Paper) may be attached as supporting documents that will not be subject to the 5 pages limit. Please refer to Annex B for CV format.

20. Shortlisted applicants may be invited to present their proposals to the Project Evaluation Panel (PEP).

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2 Direct and indirect qualifying cost items shall base on National Research (NR) Fund Guide.
**Full Proposal Stage**

21. Lead applicants of the shortlisted White Papers will be invited to submit Full Proposals via NRF’s Integrated Grant Management System (IGMS). This will be followed by the final selection of proposals for award.

**Indicative Timeline**

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<td>Workshop-cum-launch</td>
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**Contact Details**

22. For further enquiries on this challenge call, please contact us at [BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg](mailto:BCA_Challenge_Call@bca.gov.sg).

**Rights of Awarding**

23. BCA reserves the right to select proposals to be awarded. For the avoidance of doubt, BCA reserves the right not to award to any proposal.
## Challenge Statement for Smarter Building Solutions

### Current Situation

In line with the national sustainability target and Smart Nation initiative, developing innovative solutions to make our buildings smarter and greener has been imperative for our industry and research community. In this context, GBIC launched its first R&D Grant Call on smart building technologies and awarded eight projects in 2016.

While the existing R&D efforts have addressed some of the technology challenges in this area, there are rooms for further improvement and continued efforts to drive R&D towards market-ready solutions:

- Most of the existing R&D efforts are yielding prototypes that are yet to be validated under operational environments.
- Few industry collaborators are playing an active role in driving R&D towards commercialisation and market adoption.
- Energy saving benefits of many existing R&D projects are unclear or difficult to be quantified.
- Latest developments of emerging technologies are not adequately addressed or used to benchmark against the proposed technologies.
- Less emphasis has been given to integration of proposed technologies into base building systems to realise benefits.
- There is a lack of deep understanding of building clients/occupants’ need for a smart, comfortable and productive built environment.
- There is a lack of incorporation of industry standards, practices, and comprehensive strategies to overcome technical and non-technical barriers to market adoption.

### Challenge Statement

The challenge is to develop innovative and viable smart building technologies / solutions that are ready for scale up for market adoption.

The energy saving potentials need to be clearly validated and demonstrated.

Besides pushing the boundaries of novelty and building R&D capabilities, the proposed solutions must clearly define and address practical needs of the industry.
The technologies proposed should be industry relevant and state-of-the-art. This is important as smart building technologies are fast-growing and rapidly evolving.

Possible technology proposals could include:

- Integrated information and communication technology (ICT)/Internet of things (IoT) solutions to improve building energy management;
- Accurate, low cost, multi-functional smart sensor network systems for indoor environment monitoring and control;
- Advanced data analytics and artificial intelligence techniques for optimising building operations;
- Open and universal data management platforms/applications that allow communication and integration of multiple building systems;
- Smart solutions that can capture individual users’ preference, deliver solutions, and influence occupants behaviours;
- Adaptive and smart controls for innovative cooling, lighting and process load control systems.

Desired outcomes

- The proposed technologies should be able to deliver energy savings of at least 20% over current best-in-class technologies.
- **The outcomes must be demonstrated in actual buildings at the end of the innovation process.**
DISTRIBUTION (via e-mail only):

President
Association of Consulting Engineers Singapore (ACES)
18 Sin Ming Lane
#06-01 Midview City
Singapore 573960
secretariat@aces.org.sg

President
Association of Property & Facility Managers (APFM)
110 Middle Road
#09-00 Chiat Hong Building
Singapore 188968
secretariat@afpm.mygbiz.com

President
Board of Architects (BOA)
5 Maxwell Road
1st Storey Tower Block
MND Complex
Singapore 069110
boarch@singnet.com.sg

President
Institution of Engineers, Singapore (IES)
70 Bukit Tinggi Road
Singapore 289758
ies@iesnet.org.sg

President
Institution of Facilities Management (IFM)
Kent Ridge Post Office
Yusof Ishak House (NUS)
Kent Ridge PO Box 1058
Singapore 119260
bekkh@singnet.com.sg

President
International Facilities Management Association (IFMA)
Killiney Road Post Office
P O Box 2104
Singapore 912352
contact@ifmasingapore.org

President
Professional Engineers Board, Singapore (PEB)
52 Jurong Gateway Road, #07-03
Singapore 608550
registrar@peb.gov.sg
President
Real Estate Developers’ Association of Singapore (REDAS)
190 Clemenceau Avenue #07-01
Singapore Shopping Centre
Singapore 239924
enquiry@redas.com

President
Singapore Contractors Association Limited (SCAL)
Construction House
1 Bukit Merah Lane 2
Singapore 159760
enquiry@scal.com.sg

President
Singapore Green Building Council (SGBC)
#06-05 King’s Centre, 390 Havelock Road
Singapore 169662
enquiry@sgbc.sg

President
Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA)
79 Neil Road
Singapore 088904
info@sia.org.sg

Chairman
Sustainable Energy Association of Singapore (SEAS)
1 Cleantech Loop
#02-16 Cleantech One
Singapore 637141
info@seas.org.sg