



How to Write a Great WE Innovate Application

Queen's University Belfast | WE Innovate 2026

Introduction

Writing a strong application is the first step to joining **WE Innovate**, a six-month entrepreneurship programme for women founders at Queen's University Belfast. This guide will help you make your application stand out, using real examples and practical advice from the programme team.

1. Focus on the Problem, Not the Solution

What to do:

- Clearly explain the problem your idea addresses.
- Use evidence or statistics to show why it matters.
- Avoid jargon or assuming specialist knowledge.
- Keep your language precise and straightforward.

Example of a weak problem statement:

“Many vaccines are spoiled during delivery, especially in remote areas. The problem is that cold chain infrastructure during the last mile needs innovating.”



Why it's weak:

It's vague, lacks evidence, assumes the reader knows what "last mile" means, and already hints at the solution.

Example of a strong problem statement:

"Up to 50% of vaccines are spoiled, with rates in remote areas reaching as high as 85%. During the final stage of delivery, known as the last mile, a lack of proper cold storage facilities critically undermines vaccine safety and effectiveness."

Why it's strong:

It uses relevant statistics, explains key terms, stays focused on the problem, and avoids unnecessary adjectives or generalisations.

2. Show You've Spoken to Real People

Customer conversations are crucial. They show that you understand your target audience and have tested your assumptions.

What to include:

- Who you spoke to (for example, potential customers, users, or stakeholders).
- How many people you spoke to.
- How you carried out the conversations (for example, interviews, surveys, or informal discussions).
- What you learned from them.

Tip:

Avoid making claims about what people *want* unless you have evidence from conversations or research to back it up.

3. Be Clear About Your Idea

What to do:



- Explain your idea simply, in plain language.
- Focus on what it *does* and the value it creates.
- Avoid long technical explanations or unnecessary detail.
- Remember that reviewers may come from a range of disciplines and won't necessarily be experts in your field.

Example:

“Our product is a portable solar-powered water filter designed for small rural communities. It allows families to access safe drinking water without relying on electricity or expensive replacement filters.”

4. Keep It Evidence-Based

Back up your claims with data, research, or insight from customer discovery. This shows that your idea is grounded in real-world need rather than assumptions.

If you're making bold claims (for example, “no one else is doing this”), include a short explanation of how you know that, such as desk research, competitor analysis, or expert feedback.

5. Demonstrate Your Drive and Fit for WE Innovate

The selection panel is looking for people who are:

- Curious and open to learning
- Willing to test, adapt and refine their ideas
- Motivated to grow their entrepreneurial skills
- Interested in working collaboratively and receiving feedback

You don't need to have a complete business plan or a finished product. WE Innovate is designed to help you develop your idea, so focus on showing your enthusiasm and potential.



6. Practical Tips for Writing Your Application

- Write clearly and concisely. Avoid long paragraphs or complicated language.
- Use bullet points where appropriate to make your points easy to follow.
- Proofread before submitting. Ask a friend or colleague to read it.
- Don't copy material from websites or other applications.
- Submit early so you have time to check your answers and upload any required documents.

7. Final Checklist Before Submitting

- ✓ Have you clearly defined the problem?
- ✓ Have you avoided describing the solution too early?
- ✓ Have you spoken to potential customers or users?
- ✓ Have you provided evidence to support your claims?
- ✓ Have you written clearly, without jargon?
- ✓ Have you explained why you're applying and what you hope to gain from WE Innovate?

Closing Note

A strong WE Innovate application tells a clear story about a real problem, supported by insight and curiosity. The programme isn't about having all the answers, but about showing potential to learn, test ideas, and grow as an entrepreneur.

Good luck with your application, we look forward to reading it!

