

Business Recovery and Resilience Grant Scheme Grant Guidance Notes (October 2021)

The Business Recovery and Resilience Scheme delivered by SEMLEP's Growth Hub, will provide support to businesses across the South East Midlands that have been affected by Covid-19 and are looking at ways to recover and strengthen their business performance.

There is a limited pot of funding available to support companies across the whole South East Midlands, so we are looking for companies to bring forward investment projects that will have a significant impact on their business.

The South East Midlands is comprised of the following local authority areas:

- Bedford Borough
- Central Bedfordshire
- Luton
- Milton Keynes
- North Northamptonshire
- West Northamptonshire

Funding Available

The Business Recovery and Resilience Grant Scheme commenced in December 2020 with an initial allocation of £1.4m from the Getting Building Fund, along with £400k of existing Growth Curve (ERDF) funding. A further £1.2M (approx) was added to the programme in Summer 2021.

Maximum grant intervention through the programme will remain up to 50% of eligible capital costs of projects designed to improve initial resilience and future recovery of businesses, from £5,000 up to a maximum of £50,000. To be awarded the maximum of £50,000, total capital project costs of at least £100,000 must be evidenced and, in the view of the Panel, be a proportionate response by the business to addressing the negative Covid-19 impact.

Because this grant scheme is designed to aid future recovery, there is a requirement for businesses to plan for jobs to be created as a result of their R&R project. As a useful guide, we expect one job to be created per £10,000 of grant, consistent with your sustainable business case.

Please note, that whilst we endeavour to help as many businesses as possible, it is the nature of grant schemes that the pot of money available is finite. Submission of a completed application does not itself guarantee funding. Grants are awarded on the merits of each case on a discretionary basis against the aims of the scheme and are subject to funding availability, eligibility checks and approval (see process below).

Eligible Businesses

To be eligible for grant funding, applicants must meet the following essential criteria:

- Be an SME (employ less than 250 people and your turnover is less than EUR 50m or annual balance sheet less than EUR 43m).
- Be a trading enterprise (and have at least 1 years' worth of accounts).
- Be registered in the UK and have a base in the South East Midlands area (see list of Local Authorities above).
- Be ready to invest or expand in the local area.
- Must not have been a company 'in difficulty' on 31 December 2019.
- **Businesses that have already received a Recovery and Resilience grant can now apply for more, but the combined total cannot exceed £50,000, and the job creation expectations are as above. These businesses should submit in a new EOI.**
- Must not be a repeat application, including from a linked company.

Support Provided

The Business Recovery and Resilience Scheme will provide support to businesses in the SEMLEP region that have been affected by the Covid-19 Coronavirus and are looking at ways to recover and strengthen their business performance - including enabling innovation and ways to diversify. As part of the process, an initial in-depth diagnostic exercise will be undertaken by the SEMLEP Growth Hub advisers, to determine eligibility of the business and identify what type of support they require. The diagnostic exercise will cover:

- The negative impact of Covid-19 on the business.
- Plans for recovery.
- Aspirations for the future.

In addition, businesses experiencing or projecting high growth in the next 2-3 years may also be able to benefit from additional support through SEMLEP's Growth Curve programme, including university-led masterclasses for business leaders, meetings with business advisers and funding. Eligible businesses will be based in the South East Midlands, have between 3 and 250 employees, and have a current annual turnover of £200,000 with projected 20% annual growth. [Click here for more details of the Growth Curve programme.](#)

Eligible Expenditure

Capital costs could include but are not limited to:

- Premises construction and/or extension (maximum grant award 10% or £50k, whichever is the lesser). Please note, planning permission must be in place at the time of application and building work would need to be complete and paid for by 31st December 2021. **We regret that we cannot accept applications for building works relating to EOIs submitted after 30th September 2021.**
- Fixtures and fittings (maximum grant award 10% when part of building works above, and 50% where not material to the fabric/structure of the building).
- Plant and machinery.
- Commercial vehicles (limited to two per application).

- Social distancing measures, but only if the Covid-19 impact is severe and capital works were not already planned.

What we cannot fund:

- Core running or staff costs.
- Intangible Assets – IP, Patents, Trademarks, Trade Names.
- Any costs incurred before a grant offer is made.
- Items that are not directly needed to deliver the proposed work.
- The direct replacement of items for an existing purpose including laptops, software and consumables.
- Website creation, portals, databases and software systems.
- The purchase of land and/or buildings
- **Building works relating to EOIs submitted after 30th September 2021 (new).**
- VAT, unless this cannot be recovered.
- Any projects that can be funded from other LEP grant schemes.
- Repeat applications, including from linked companies.

The remainder of the funding for the project must come from private sources, e.g. company funds and or private investment.

For each item of expenditure up to £181,302 (ex. VAT): you will be required to seek 3 comparative quotes in a manner that provides reassurance of best value and due process. For items over this value, a tendering process will need to be followed and you will need to submit a full procurement plan.

Grants operate as reimbursement of eligible, approved expenditure. All project expenditure must be seen to be paid from your business bank account prior to the grant being claimed.

Process

Interested businesses should submit an **Expression of Interest** via SEMLEP's Growth Hub website. You are encouraged to save your entry frequently until submitted when you receive an auto-acknowledgement. Expressions of Interest will be dealt with in the order received. A Business Advisor will then be in touch to take the business through an initial diagnostic exercise to determine eligibility of the business and support you through the grant application process.

Once we have received your **Full Application**, we will undertake an eligibility review of your proposal based on the details and the supporting information that you provide. You may also be asked for additional information during this process, to enable an assessment of, for example, eligibility, financial viability etc.

Your application, along with a relevant report, will then be submitted to an independent **Assessment Panel** who will consider each proposal against the aims of the grant scheme and take a final decision, subject to funding availability. Grant applications will be considered at monthly panels. To be appraised in time, we will need to have received your **completed application by midnight on the 28th of each month** (or the Friday before if the 28th falls on a weekend) for applications to be assessed at the next monthly panel. Applications after this cut off will not be accepted in this Panel round but will be rolled to the following month. We will continue this process until all funding is allocated.

Successful applicants will receive an **Offer Letter**, this will need to be signed and returned to accept the terms of the grant. Once you have formally accepted a grant offer, you can begin expenditure on the project. **It is important to note that costs incurred before the acceptance of the offer cannot be supported.**

To claim your grant, you will need to submit a **Claim Form** and provide supporting documentary evidence:

- Invoice(s) for all items being claimed from the supplier of goods and/or services to the business.
- Copies of bank statement(s) from the applicant business confirming payment.
- If you pay your suppliers using a credit card, a certified redacted business bank statement showing full payment to the credit provider.

Next steps

Businesses wishing to apply for support should first complete an Expression of Interest form which will be available on SEMLEP's Growth Hub website from **4th October 2021**. [Click here for the Recovery & Resilience Grants Webpage](#). One of our business advisers will be in touch to make an appointment to work with you to discuss your proposal and assist you with your application.

