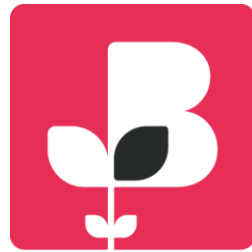




Overview of Funding

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire





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Overview of Funding

UK Shared Prosperity Funding

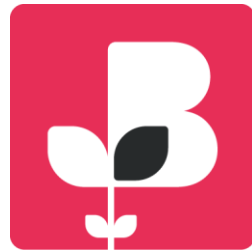
- Funding has changed in the last 12 months.
- Through Brexit, we have come to the end of our European funded programmes of business support and these have been replaced with local funding called UK Shared Prosperity.
- This means that funding is very postcode based and it will depend where your business is based – trading location.
- Also, each local authority has different priorities so grants and growth programmes are very different across all parts of the region.
- I am going to give you a bit of an insight into what different funding streams are available as well as different programmes of support.



Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub

- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub was established by the Local Enterprise Partnership to play a major role in the drive for strong, sustainable business growth across the LEP area.
- It acts as the focal point for businesses that wish to grow by referring them to co-ordinated and cohesive growth programmes, business networks, growth groups and links to specialist information, advice and services.
- They are aware of all the local funding and support that is available for businesses to access.
- Businesses can access this advice through their website – www.stokestaffsgrowthhub.co.uk
- This includes a postcode tracker that businesses can use to find out what is in their area.
- There is also a business helpline that business can contact – 0300 111 8002





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Funding Snapshot:
Stoke-on-Trent

Fly High Start-up and Enterprise

- Grants are open to Stoke-on-Trent residents wishing to start up a new business or new, start-up businesses that have been trading for less than 12 months.
- Grants starting at a minimum of £500 up to £3,000 are available which must be matched by **20 per cent of your own private** funding or other equity funds..
- Examples of eligible expenditure include:
 - ICT equipment
 - Web development
 - New technology to support product and process development and innovation
 - Marketing/branding
 - Office equipment
- Only one grant per applicant can be awarded and the project must be delivered within Stoke-on-Trent .
- Businesses can be from any sector but to be eligible they must be an SME with between 1 and 249 employees and an annual turnover of less than £42 million.
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council is administering this programme.
- For further information on the Fly High Start-Up grants please contact the Business Growth Team on 01782 238091 or email business.growth@stoke.gov.uk



City of
Stoke-on-Trent

Promoting Innovation Pathways Programme

***ALL GRANTS COMMITTED**

- The Promoting Innovation Pathways Programme (PIPP) is supporting SMEs, social enterprises, and early-stage start-ups across Stoke-on-Trent to develop new products, services and processes.
- The programme will provide:
 - Business Diagnostic – to assess the current capability of a business to successfully engage in innovation, their areas of strength and their areas of weakness.
 - Innovation Grant (up to £5,000) – to support the purchase of capital equipment, prototyping, software costs, engagement of researchers and consultants, IP costs etc.
 - Innovation Peer Network
 - Events and Workshops
 - R+D Tax Clinics
 - Innovation Suppliers Directory
- For further information on the Promoting Innovation Pathways Programme, please contact the pipp@staffordshirechambers.co.uk

**PROMOTING
INNOVATIONS
PATHWAYS
PROGRAMME**

Powering Up Investment

- Stoke-on-Trent Powering Up Inward Investment, is an exciting initiative aimed to propel the city's economic growth by attracting new businesses and new jobs into the area.
- Grant funding between £10,000 and £50,000 for businesses in Advanced Manufacturing, Digital, Life Sciences and Energy sectors can apply with priority given to businesses who are making a first investment in Stoke-on-Trent.
- Existing businesses with expansion projects, in the named sectors, may be considered on a case by case basis.
- The grant covers capital items only, such as fixtures and fittings, plant and machinery for up to 30% of total capital project costs with match funding to be provided by applicants.
- Applications are actively encouraged to take advantage of the £325,000 available before the programme ends in March 2025.
- A grant evaluation panel will assess and score all applications according to their strategic fit, deliverability within set timescales, subsidy control compliance and eligibility, project impact in the local economy and regeneration potential.
- For further information and to apply, contact Grant Wardle at Invest Stoke-on-Trent
- Tel: 01782 233505 or email grant.wardle@stoke.gov.uk



Skills and Apprenticeship Hub (Stoke-on-Trent)

- The Hub will provide impartial skills advice and brokerage support to SMEs, social enterprises, and early-stage start-ups across Stoke-on-Trent to help to upskill their workforce and support their economic growth.
- The Hub aims to deliver the following main initiatives:
 - Training Needs Analysis (TNA) for businesses of all sizes to understand their skills challenges and issues.
 - Skills brokerage services, where businesses will be directed to training courses (accredited and non-accredited).
 - A Skills Grant (up to £500) will also be available for businesses to access to cover the costs of any non-accredited training courses to support the upskilling of their workforce.
 - Apprenticeship brokerage services, where our advisor will capture information on businesses' levy status during TNA and support levy-paying businesses who are interested in transferring underspent levy to non-levy paying businesses.
- For further information on the Skills and Apprenticeship Hub programme, please contact the skillshub@staffordshirechambers.co.uk



Skills Hub
APPRENTICESHIP

Small Community and Heritage Assets Grants

- Stoke-on-Trent City Council has launched the Small Community Events and Heritage Assets Grants programme, to support local initiatives that enrich our city's culture and history.

The programme offers two funding streams for Stoke-on-Trent organisations:

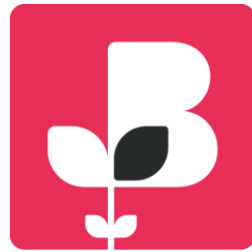
- Small Community Events: Organise engaging events within Stoke-on-Trent, with grants covering costs like professional help, staff salaries, and service fees.
- Small Heritage Asset Grants: Breathe new life into local heritage assets by applying for funding for repair plans, surveys, or labour costs for physical restoration (think re-installing historical features!).
- Grants range from £500 to £5,000, with the council contributing 80% of your project's total cost. You'll need to match this contribution with at least 20% which can be a financial or in-kind contribution, such as:
 - Cash donations or crowdfunding
 - Volunteer time (including management and staff)
 - Costs associated with the event space
 - Equipment or materials needed for the project

Should you have any questions regarding the application process or about the funding or wish to request an application, please contact

angela.halls@stoke.gov.uk



City of
Stoke-on-Trent



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Funding Snapshot:
Newcastle-under-Lyme

Keele University – Flourish

- SMEs, community groups, and not-for-profit organisations in Newcastle-under-Lyme are able to benefit from Keele University's student and graduate talent, through a brand new initiative called FLOURISH.
- FLOURISH will deliver 60 projects across the following themes:
- Digital Society and Economy – including digital transformation projects with SMEs and other organisations, as well as supervised 1:1 assistance to build digital capabilities for communities and individuals.
- Sustainability – including projects round carbon literacy, sustainable energy, biodiversity, circular economy, and sustainable transport.
- SME innovation – product, service and process innovation, market engagement, and supply chain management in areas where Keele has post-graduate expertise.
- Culture and Creativity – 'In Residence' programme for town centre businesses across history, creative writing and film-making and music, with creative outputs exhibited and/or performed in a town centre location.
- Entrepreneurship – supporting entrepreneurial readiness for individuals, and early-stage incubation of new businesses including graduate start-ups.
- Organisations in Newcastle-under-Lyme can register their interest in these programmes today by contacting the Keele Gateway team: gateway@keele.ac.uk or 01782 733001.

FLOURISH

Leveraging student and graduate talent



Keele University – Moving Ahead

- Moving Ahead is a new initiative that will enable Keele University to work with a cohort of innovation-ready businesses to develop detailed, fundable proposals for intensive Research, Development and Innovation projects.
- Moving Ahead will also promote networking and collaboration through the creation of a broader Newcastle-under-Lyme Innovation Network, bringing together businesses and partners across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth.
- The Innovation Network will prepare a new generation of collaborators in the Borough through a series of events to stimulate peer-to-peer learning, and opportunities to engage with academic experts and visits.
- Organisations in Newcastle-under-Lyme can register their interest in Moving Ahead today by contacting the Keele Gateway team:
gateway@keele.ac.uk or 01782 733001.

**MOVING
AHEAD**



Advanced and Digital Technologies Innovation Accelerator

- Exclusively available to SMEs, large businesses and charities in Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council area. The Advanced and Digital Technologies Innovation Accelerator is a fully funded* initiative that offers support for businesses looking to develop or adapt digital or advanced technologies.
- The project includes a trained Staffordshire University student or graduate (Innovation Consultant) who will work with your business for the duration of the programme. The Innovation Consultant will have support from the University's expert academics to help deliver activities, such as:
 - Innovation advice
 - Market research
 - Idea scoping
 - Evaluating options and designing a product or a service
 - Feasibility studies of adopting new technologies
 - Embedding new technologies or processes in business
 - Developing new products or services
- To access the support contact - employers@staffs.ac.uk



Staffordshire 0% Start-up Loans

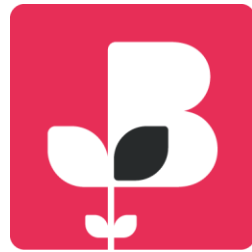
- Now is your time to start-up - unsecured loans of up to £5,000 are now available.
- If you've a brand-new business or your business is less than Five years old, you could be eligible for an interest-free loan of between £3,000 to £5,000, which can be used for most purposes to allow you to fund those key purchases to get your business off the ground.
- The loan is unsecured, so there's no need to put forward any assets or guarantors to support an application.
 - Interest free loans of £3,000 to £5,000
 - No set-up fee
 - No requirement for match-funding
 - Unsecured
 - Repaid in full after 12 months with no repayments prior to this. If the loan is not repaid in full after 12 months interest will be added.
- More information can be found here - <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Business/Staffordshire-means-Business/0-Start-up-loans.aspx>



Funded Courses for Businesses

- Newcastle and Stafford College Group have launched a series of courses for employers and their employees that are fully-funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Programmes. Please see below a list of courses with links to book places:-
- Level 4 Marketing Processes and Planning <https://nscg.ac.uk/study/course-departments/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-level-4-marketing-processes-and-planning-htq>
- Level 4 Motion & Manipulation <https://nscg.ac.uk/study/course-departments/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-level-4-digital-motion-manipulation-htq>
- Level 4 Digital Cameras & Communication <https://nscg.ac.uk/study/course-departments/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-level-4-digital-cameras-communication-htq>
- Level 4 Design & Branding <https://nscg.ac.uk/study/course-departments/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-level-4-design-branding-htq>
- Level 4 Cyber Security in Business <https://nscg.ac.uk/study/course-departments/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-level-4-cyber-security-in-business-htq>





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Funding Snapshot: Stafford

Business Innovation Grants

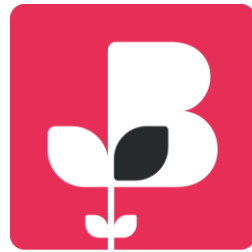
- Stafford Borough Council has launched a fund to help support small to medium businesses (SMEs), that are located within Stafford Borough. This fund is open to those businesses where a minimum of 75% of the business income is from sales to other businesses.
- A limited fund of £200,000 is available. Grants of between £10,000 and £25,000 will be available to support businesses across Stafford areas who have plans to develop new products and services. A match fund of 20% will be required.
- A technology or process is new to the firm if it did not use a technology or process with the same functionality before, or the production technology or process is fundamentally different from those already used.
- A product or service is new if the business has not previously made this product or service available to the market before.
- Examples of eligible expenditure:
 - Website design
 - Marketing materials for new product or service
 - Capital equipment
 - Advertising, PR, publicity to launch new product or service
 - Recruitment, training and skills to support development
 - Digital projects
- Find out more here - <https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/business-innovation-grants>



Staffordshire 0% Start-up Loans

- Now is your time to start-up - unsecured loans of up to £5,000 are now available.
- If you've a brand-new business or your business is less than Five years old, you could be eligible for an interest-free loan of between £3,000 to £5,000, which can be used for most purposes to allow you to fund those key purchases to get your business off the ground.
- The loan is unsecured, so there's no need to put forward any assets or guarantors to support an application.
 - Interest free loans of £3,000 to £5,000
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Funding Snapshot:
Cannock Chase

Net Zero Pathfinder

- This is a 12-week fully funded programme designed for businesses in the Cannock Chase District area looking to implement a Net Zero plan aligned with Net Zero commitments.
- The programme is delivered in partnership with Cannock Chase District Council and offers tailored support to help businesses take the first step towards Net Zero targets.
- A trained Staffordshire University student or graduate (Innovation Consultant) will work closely with the University's expert academics throughout the duration of the project to deliver activities such as innovation advice, market research and ideas scoping.
- Each bespoke partnership will receive a dedicated Academic Net Zero Expert to support the business and Innovation Consultant, and access to Staffordshire University's state-of-the-art equipment based at the Innovation Enterprise Zone.
- The programme is fully funded in partnership with Cannock Chase District Council and offered free of charge to each participating organisation. Participating businesses can also apply for a £1,000 Net Zero grant at the end of the project to support the adoption of Net Zero practices.
- <https://www.staffs.ac.uk/business-services/funding/net-zero-pathfinder>



Go Digital Accelerator

- This is a fully funded programme designed to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to grow and innovate in new ways.
- Go Digital Accelerator is tailored to the needs of the business and offers specialised R&D assistance to help develop new products and services or adopt digital and/or advanced technologies.
- Examples include robotics, 3D printing (metal, ceramics, plastics), artificial intelligence, sensor technologies, logistics, gas analysers, pollution, Internet of Things, Industry 4.0, Virtual and Augmented Reality, Metaverse, Big Data, 5G demonstrator, simulations, and testing.
- Similar to the Net Zero Pathfinder programme, the Go Digital Accelerator also includes a trained Staffordshire University student or graduate (Innovation Consultant) and support from the University's expert academics and Innovation Advisors to help deliver activities.
- Businesses will also benefit from access specialist equipment such as 3D printers, robotic arms, and a Mixed Reality Studio, as well as high-tech PC equipment with access to a variety of leading software.
- <https://www.staffs.ac.uk/business-services/funding/go-digital-accelerator>



Let's Get Started and Let's Grow Grants

- The Let's Get Started grant scheme is available for companies who have been trading for six months or less.
- Grants of up to £1,500 are available and are match funded by 50% to help individuals that have an idea for a sustainable business which over time has the potential to develop and create jobs.
- The grants are open to Cannock Chase residents that will be setting up or have recently set up a business in the district.
- Applicants must have a credible business plan to be able to apply for this funding.
- Meanwhile, businesses that have been trading longer than six months may be able to apply for up to £5,000 to expand their business and take on new staff using the Let's Grow Grant.
- The Let's Grow Grant is 50% match funded and can help businesses purchase capital equipment including (but not limited to): office furniture, electrical equipment, machinery or vehicles.
- The business must be paying business rates (or will be) to the Cannock Chase District, trading for at least six months, be in an eligible sector and have not committed to the expenditure already.
- For more information on funding for the Cannock Chase area, click here: <https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/business/economic-development/open-business-business-support/sources-finance>



West Midlands SME Grant Programme

- The West Midlands Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) Grant Programme (WMGP) has launched, and funding round 12 will open on 12 February 2024.
- This grant is for:
 - start-up SMEs based in Cannock Chase
 - existing SMEs based in Cannock Chase
- We expect most applications to apply for an average grant of between £10,000 to £20,000, and only in exceptional circumstances will grants of up to £100,000 be awarded.
- Businesses from all sectors* are eligible for consideration, except for charities
- Business projects can be considered for:
 - expanding and growing existing businesses
 - developing new markets opportunities
 - innovation, including new product development
 - capital investment
 - an increase in the productive capacity of new and existing premises through new property builds, refurbishment and extensions
 - digital projects
 - a one-off £2,000 apprenticeship grant (for Cannock Chase based businesses only)

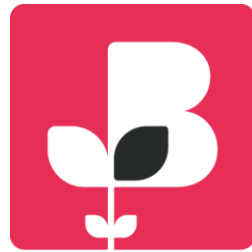


https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50293/wm_sme_grant_programme/2693/about_the_west_midlands_sme_grant_programme

Staffordshire 0% Start-up Loans

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Funding Snapshot: East Staffordshire

Skills and Apprenticeship Hub (East Staffordshire)

- The Hub will provide impartial skills advice and brokerage support to SMEs, social enterprises, and early-stage start-ups across East Staffordshire to help to upskill their workforce and support their economic growth.
- The Hub aims to deliver the following main initiatives:
 - Training Needs Analysis (TNA) for businesses of all sizes to understand their skills challenges and issues.
 - Skills brokerage services, where businesses will be directed to training courses (accredited and non-accredited).
 - A Skills Grant (up to £500) will also be available for businesses to access to cover the costs of any non-accredited training courses to support the upskilling of their workforce.
- For further information on the Skills and Apprenticeship Hub programme, please contact the skillshub@staffordshirechambers.co.uk



Skills Hub
APPRENTICESHIP

Boosting Business Programme

- The ESBC Boosting Business Programme scheme is aimed at new and existing small and medium sized businesses located in East Staffordshire wishing to grow and expand their business.
- The scheme is also aimed at local entrepreneurs who need some financial support to make their business idea a reality.
- What can I apply for?
 - Existing businesses can apply for up to £10,000 with up to 60% match funding.
 - For eligible new start-up companies that have been trading for less than twelve months, a slightly lower maximum grant of up to £5,000 is available, although a grant rate of up to 60% is still available.
- Learn more and apply: <http://eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/business/business-support-and-advice/boosting-business-programme>



Tourism Development Grants

- Are you a tourism business, or organisation linked to the tourism sector in East Staffordshire?
- Do you have a great new idea or event that you'd love to do but need some financial help to do it?
- East Staffordshire Borough Council is offering grants to businesses and organisations to support new projects, developments, services or events, which will raise the profile of East Staffordshire and help attract more visitors.
- The purpose of the Tourism Development Grant (TDG) is to help fund projects, events and new initiatives that aim to generate tourism and leisure activity, provide opportunities for residents and visitors to 'Discover' East Staffordshire and bring economic benefit to the Borough.
- The maximum grant available is £3,000 with one application made per project and per organisation. TDG is a one-off grant funding scheme and will not be used to fund on-going commitments or repeat applications for the same project/activity in the same and/or consecutive financial years.
- Learn more and apply: www.discovereaststaffordshire.com/tourism-development-grants/



Staffordshire Succeed and Grow Programme

- Are you a rural business in East Staffs or Moorlands?
- Succeed and Grow is a fully funded Marketing, Legal and Financial support scheme for rural microbusinesses trading in Staffordshire Moorlands and East Staffordshire.
- Rural Marketing
 - Website Design
 - Logo and Branding
 - Social Media Support
 - Graphic Design
 - Content Creation
- Rural Financial & Legal Support
 - Taxation
 - HR legislation
 - Employment law
 - Budgeting
 - Employment rights and responsibilities
 - Business planning
 - Personal development
 - Accounting
 - Communication and teamwork
 - Investment.
- More information can be found here –
<https://stokestaffsgrowthhub.co.uk/projects/succeed-and-grow/>



East Staffordshire Growth Catalyst

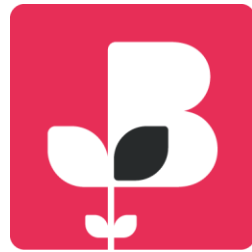
- Unlock your business's potential with our tailored support designed to help businesses in East Staffordshire flourish. East Staffordshire Borough Council has commissioned Growth Catalyst to help you expand your knowledge, develop vital business skills and address your business challenges.
- Alongside these benefits you will become part of a supportive community of business leaders who are dedicated to helping your business grow today and thrive tomorrow.
- After surveying businesses throughout Stoke and Staffordshire, we have created a programme that reflects the needs and wishes of local businesses and has proven to deliver the most positive impact. Our approach is tailored to your business's unique needs, offering comprehensive support from highly qualified advisers who will take the time to understand your business. They will share their real world experience to help you overcome challenges and develop strategies for a prosperous future.
- The programme includes:
 - Personalised diagnostic
 - Peer Networks
 - Focused Mentoring
 - High-Impact Workshops
 - Comprehensive Support
 - Access to Funding
- To find out more visit – <https://winningmoves.com/east-staffordshire/>



Staffordshire 0% Start-up Loans

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Funding Snapshot:
South Staffordshire

Strive for Success

- Strive for success is a business growth programme designed to assist existing businesses trading for two years and over realise their growth potential.
- Businesses will receive one to one support and have the opportunity to work with a growth specialist through a bespoke series of workshops focusing on the importance of business planning.
- The short workshops are designed to inspire confidence and equip businesses with the fundamental tools and knowledge required to become investment ready.
- Following completion of the workshops eligible businesses will have the option to apply for a grant (Grant funding of up to £7,000) to support their growth aspirations.
- If you are a business based in South Staffordshire and you would like to strive for success, please complete the short application form to register your interest for our January cohort.
- Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.
- <https://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/uk-shared-prosperity-funding/strive-success>



South Staffordshire Council

UKSPF

Residual Fund

- The funding is aimed at supporting projects and schemes for people and businesses in the community to thrive and grow.
- The council is seeking expressions of interest from eligible organisations which meet the criteria relating to interventions, as detailed in our prospectus. This is for funds that have not already been allocated.
- The council developed an investment plan for each 'pillar' of intervention: supporting local business; communities and place; and people and skills.
- South Staffordshire Council has made £780k capital and £420k revenue available for projects and schemes in the district.
- The award values for this fund have been set. The maximum request is £70,000*. The minimum request is £2,000 for organisations and £7,000 for businesses. Funding will typically be limited to a maximum of 70% of the project's total eligible costs for organisations or 60% for businesses with 50% of the cost for low/zero carbon energy infrastructure.
- Medium-sized business extension, additional investment to increase useable sustainable floorspace for sales and new employees.
- <https://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/uk-shared-prosperity-funding/ukspf-residual-fund>



South Staffordshire Council

Rural England Prosperity Fund

- South Staffordshire Council has received a funding allocation of £489,384 specifically for rural areas.
- Funding is for new, small registered organisations and businesses with a postcode or a project site in a South Staffordshire rural area.
- The following examples give an idea of what type of projects this capital funding could be suitable for and the expected outputs and outcomes:-
 - Small business growth - efficient production equipment with job creation
 - Community run centre - the addition of energy saving heating and lighting, accessible equipment and facilities for inclusive use by all age groups and abilities
 - Farming - changing from just milk production into cheese and ice cream, an ecological shed conversion for processing plant use, saving and creating jobs
- Businesses may apply for a value of £5,000 up to £70,000 or 60% of the total project cost, whichever is lower.
- <https://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/south-staffordshire-business-hub/uk-shared-prosperity-funding/rural-england-prosperity-fund>

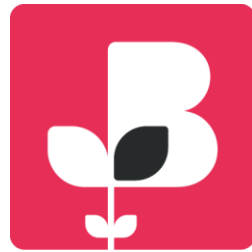


South Staffordshire Council

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Funding Snapshot: Tamworth

Get Started and Grow

- Get Started and Grow offers all business in Staffordshire (up to five years old) the help they need to not start-up or stay up.
- Choose from fully-funded:
 - Accountancy, financial planning and funding applications
 - Free HR advice and support
 - Free legal advice and legally-informed growth support
 - Website development (up to seven pages) optimisation of current website to increase sales, traffic and support.
 - Branding and logo design or improvement
 - Free social media and digital marketing consultancy and support – depending on your business' needs.
- There's no catch. Working with local experts, you'll be supported with a fully-funded back office support package that as unique as you and your business. There are no "off-the-shelf" packages here.
- The scheme supports businesses that:
 - are based in Staffordshire. Unfortunately, we cannot support businesses in Stoke on Trent at this time.
 - are up to five years old

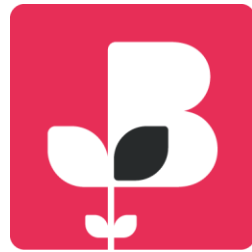
<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Business/Staffordshire-means-Business/Fully-funded-support-to-start-up-and-grow-your-business.aspx>



Staffordshire 0% Start-up Loans

- Now is your time to start-up - unsecured loans of up to £5,000 are now available.
- If you've a brand-new business or your business is less than Five years old, you could be eligible for an interest-free loan of between £3,000 to £5,000, which can be used for most purposes to allow you to fund those key purchases to get your business off the ground.
- The loan is unsecured, so there's no need to put forward any assets or guarantors to support an application.
 - Interest free loans of £3,000 to £5,000
 - No set-up fee
 - No requirement for match-funding
 - Unsecured
 - Repaid in full after 12 months with no repayments prior to this. If the loan is not repaid in full after 12 months interest will be added.
- More information can be found here - <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Business/Staffordshire-means-Business/0-Start-up-loans.aspx>





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Funding Snapshot:
Staffordshire Moorlands

Skills and Apprenticeship Hub (Staffordshire Moorlands)

- The Hub will provide impartial skills advice and brokerage support to SMEs, social enterprises, and early-stage start-ups across the Staffordshire Moorlands to help to upskill their workforce and support their economic growth.
- The Hub aims to deliver the following main initiatives:
 - Training Needs Analysis (TNA) for businesses of all sizes to understand their skills challenges and issues.
 - Skills brokerage services, where businesses will be directed to training courses (accredited and non-accredited).
 - A Skills Grant (up to £3,000) will also be available for businesses to access to cover the costs of any non-accredited training courses to support the upskilling of their workforce.
 - Fully funded digital skills courses delivered by Axia Solutions
 - Fully funded green skills courses delivered by Keele University.
- For further information on the Skills and Apprenticeship Hub programme, please contact the skillshub@staffordshirechambers.co.uk



Skills Hub
APPRENTICESHIP

Innovation SME Innovation Grant

- The objective of this grant is to increase private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities.
- Through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses this grant aims to help them undertake new-to-firm innovation; adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques; and start or grow their exports.
- Minimum grant £1,000. Maximum grant £15,000.
- A larger grant may be considered in exceptional cases where grant funding is necessary for the project to proceed and deliverables are substantial.
- The grant rate will be up to 80% of total eligible project cost.
- Expected deliverables may include:
 - Enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes
 - Number of enterprises adopting new or improved products or services
 - Jobs created
 - Jobs safeguarded
- Closes 10th November 2024.
- <https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/7687/Staffordshire-Moorlands-SME-Growth-and-Innovation-grant>



Rural Business Development Grant

- Funding (capital grants) for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.
- Funding may be used for projects looking to: undertake innovation, adopt new technologies, improve carbon footprint, diversify into new markets, develop and promote the visitor economy, develop local tourist attractions and/or enhance local visitor experiences.
- They would expect projects to deliver outcomes such as job creation, increased turnover/growth, improved productivity and the adoption of new to firm technologies or processes.
- Capital Equipment Grants of up to £15,000* are offered to established Rural Businesses located within Staffordshire Moorlands who are looking to grow or diversify their businesses.
- Grants are available at a maximum of 80% of the total project costs i.e to achieve a maximum £15,000 grant, project costs would need to be in excess of £18,750 exclusive of VAT.
- The grant will now re-open for applications until 10th November 2024.
- Due to the timescales involved, all applications submitted must be for capital equipment only that can be purchased by 31 January 2025.
- <https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/7912/Staffordshire-Moorlands-Rural-Business-Development-Grant>



Staffordshire Succeed and Grow Programme

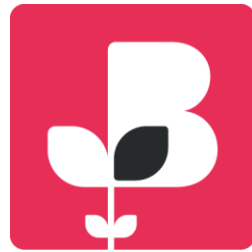
- Are you a rural business in East Staffs or Moorlands?
- Succeed and Grow is a fully funded Marketing, Legal and Financial support scheme for rural microbusinesses trading in Staffordshire Moorlands and East Staffordshire.
- Rural Marketing
 - Website Design
 - Logo and Branding
 - Social Media Support
 - Graphic Design
 - Content Creation
- Rural Financial & Legal Support
 - Taxation
 - HR legislation
 - Employment law
 - Budgeting
 - Employment rights and responsibilities
 - Business planning
 - Personal development
 - Accounting
 - Communication and teamwork
 - Investment.
- More information can be found here –
<https://stokestaffsgrowthhub.co.uk/projects/succeed-and-grow/>



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 - No requirement for match-funding
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 - Repaid in full after 12 months with no repayments prior to this. If the loan is not repaid in full after 12 months interest will be added.
- More information can be found here - <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Business/Staffordshire-means-Business/0-Start-up-loans.aspx>





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Funding Snapshot:
Wider Support

UKRI & Innovate UK

UKRI (Research and Innovation) is a non-departmental body of the UK Govt. Its function is to boost and raise the profile of UK-based research and innovation, via funding, networking & best practice. Regarding businesses specifically, it does this via the following sister agencies;

Innovate UK – Innovate UK is traditionally the competitive source of funding within UKRI for businesses. It functions to steadily generate funding competitions for businesses, and to closely monitor its portfolio of funded projects.

Innovate Edge – Innovate Edge is the growth-focused arm, working with small to medium-sized businesses to 'grow and scale'. It does this by directly appointing advisors who work with any participating companies seen as eligible for support.

Innovate KTN – This is Innovate's Knowledge Transfer network, or essentially, its mechanisms for joining innovators together, whether that's in sector, regionally or globally.



**UK Research
and Innovation**



**Innovate
UK
EDGE**

Innovate UK
Knowledge Transfer Network

Why is Innovate Funding so crucial to the UK Landscape?

Innovate UK Funding, particularly its quarterly 'Smart Grants' programme, is a cornerstone of the UK Funding environment for several reasons;

- ❑ *Funding Amounts* – Depending on size, definition or type of request, solo applicant or consortium bid, or other factor, Innovate offers eligible project values from £500,000 – £2,000,000, at varying intervention rates. The scale of this is not matched by other grant funding bodies.
- ❑ *Open Calls* – One of the simple reasons behind Innovate's uniqueness in the funding world is the fact that its biggest calls such as the Smart Grant are completely open in terms of topic. Comparatively, other bodies such as the EIC are much more aligned with themes adjacent to hard science or academic research.
- ❑ *Frequency* – Innovate is essentially always publishing new competitions throughout the calendar year. Other funding options typically occur on an annual basis, or semi-annual.
- ❑ *Exclusivity* – These items in combination are essentially why Innovate is such a focus for funding, and why it is so well subscribed to.



**UK Research
and Innovation**



**Innovate
UK
EDGE**

Innovate UK
Knowledge Transfer Network

UnLtd

- UnLtd combine funding and support to help business, who are delivering a social venture to get started or grow. Depending on your stage of development we can offer up to £18,000.
- **Starting up** – You have an idea or have started to make a difference to people's lives, your community, or have ambitions to create change at a national level. **Up to £8,000**
- **Scaling up** – You are already running a social venture that is making a positive difference and you have compelling evidence of your impact. **Up to £18,000**
- They also offer:-
 - Dedicated support manager
 - Expert mentors
 - Workshops and learning
- Current applications open with decision made in 2024.
- They are committed to using their resources to drive change. At least 50% of our Awards will support social entrepreneurs who come from a disabled and/or Black, Asian or minority ethnic background.
- For more information visit – <https://www.unltd.org.uk/awards>



What other sources of funding alternative to grants exist?

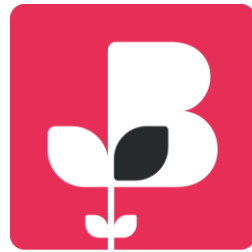
- **Innovation Loans** – It's a competitive, innovation focused and usually handled by the same agencies. Essentially, you would still develop a highly detailed application, but instead of quarterly claims and a match-funded reimbursement i.e a grant, you would receive 100% of the requested funds up front, with a very low interest rate and some T&Cs. Principally, this is still non-equity funding.

The below are examples of specifically equity funding options (X funding agreed in exchange for X shares/portion of the business);

- **Angel Investors** – The solo ones working outside of a network, tend to be focussed on companies with an incredibly high potential for growth, as opposed to safer options, with steady growth. The appeal here is the power of the angel's network, advice and other benefits. Usually more interested in start-ups.
- **Angel Investment Networks** – Networks approach the above with a bit more structure. They increase the chances of your idea being invested in, by publicly declaring their areas of interest, usually with regularly occurring pitch days that you can apply to. Usually more interested in start-ups.
- **Private Equity** – This an option usually more focused on small to mid-range SMEs, looking to extract value from a 'portfolio' approach of shares across companies they partially own.
- **Venture Capital** – Similar in scope to Angel Investors, again with a preference to high-speed, long-term growth start-ups with potential, but with different focuses.



Anyone seeking more information on equity funding routes, angel investors or Investments could consider accessing the Barclays Eagle Labs Funding Readiness Programme.



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Grants and Funding: Hints and Tips

Finding Grants & Horizon Scanning

Horizon Scanning is a term often used in various fields for detecting important developments at an early and beneficial stage.

This can be applied to funding as well. This doesn't need to be time intensive, or arduous if we look at some easy ways to approach this;

- ☐ Set reminders for regular searches (perhaps Monthly, or bi-Monthly)
- ☐ Set google alerts (or similar) to deliver headlines on particular searches straight to your email. 'Grant Funding UK', 'Grant Funding for Digital', 'Additive Manufacturing Grants', etc. Try a variety and see what the returns are.
- ☐ Main reasonable contact and try to engage with typical grant giving organizations I.E – your local council/authority, university, business organizations, Innovate, sector-led grant bodies, etc.
- ☐ Networking/Word of Mouth – If there are organizations with similar or adjacent focuses that you have a relationship with, it's likely you'll want to share information about funding sources, or even consider collaborative bids.
- ☐ Support organizations – consider more formally seeking support with grant funding, potentially with Innovate Edge, the University, or via fully-funded training programmes like Barclays EagleLabs.

Regional Grants & Funding

Equity and Loan Funding

Sector-specific grants & opportunities

National Grants & Funding

Risks;
Will you miss the window on an ideal grant?
Will you miss your wider market opportunity as a result?
Will this mean your organization needs to self-fund?

How to prepare for Grants, Funding & Investment?

Where we're talking small grants, large grants, equity funding or investors, any potential funder will naturally want to ask questions about your business.

Financials & Forecasts – A company's accounts will usually always be questioned before an award is made. This could vary from 3 years of filed accounts, 12 months of management accounts, and a 2-year forecast, all the way to relatively light guidance, asking for 3 months of bank statements and a written confirmation that you have match funding.

Job Creation & Job Safeguarding – This is very much a newer item on the agenda and is growing in importance in the funding world as a measure of what outwards investment grant funds are causing in communities. Having a forecast for the next year, potential job descriptions and an idea of salaries and anything indicative of forward planning would ideal.

Rationale for Public Funding – Generally, funders will want to know why you require funding. For example, why you might be unable to find this within your organisation, what are the risks, why you might make an argument that this investment would cause greater outwards benefit for the public. For example, this could be in the form of a new technology being developed that might be beneficial for public use, it might be because it could cause a certain industry to grow in the UK, or cause job creation.

Business Status, Forward Direction & Market Research – Similarly, whatever the grant is for, funders will want to know where your business is prior to this, and where you predict it going if funded. You will want to provide a clear, detailed planning documents that can demonstrate this. For the more competitive funds focused specifically on innovation, R&D or development activities, how you justify the development is key. What is the market demand? How do you place yourself above competitors? How would you verify any of this with research or data? How does this differ from your current interactions with the market? Is this a disruptive activity?

Timescales & Project Teams – If this is more of a project orientated activity, it is likely that funders could expect clear timescales especially where the funding window is quite long. They may also want to try and measure the competency of your project team.

The important thing to note is, the amount of detail needed here tends to scale with the level of funding, or the importance of the investment.

How to write a grant application

Grant application writing isn't a fine science, but there are clear principles that can help you. How to write;

Do your research – Be clear as to what the funder wants, read the guidance, what other sources say about this, and read into examples of best practice if they can be found.

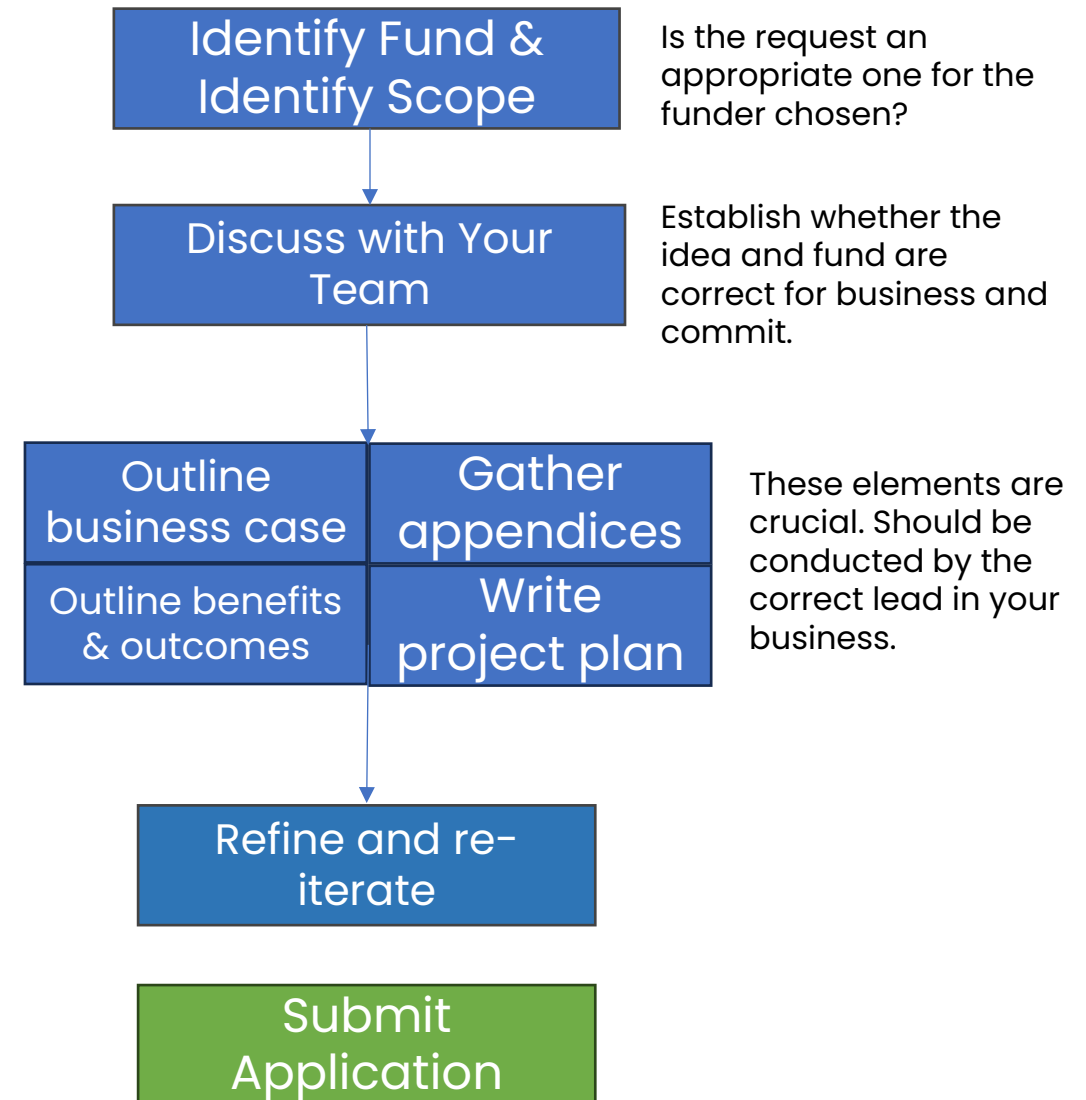
Be specific – If the how, when, what and why is not explicit you may be penalized. Vagueness or ambiguity is not your friend.

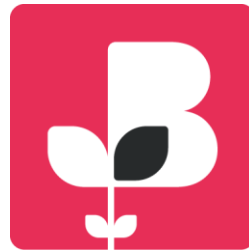
Achievable and Realistic – A pitfall I have experienced with grant writers is that competitive grants can sometimes compel writers to overembellish what you can realistically achieve. If you are claiming that a new funded project would lead to a 100% increase in turnover in your business in year 1, this will almost certainly ring alarm bells for the assessors. A measured and realistic goal will trump blind ambition here.

Provide a Narrative – Grant writing should often like a narrative story. For example, your reasons for undertaking the project, how you'll handle that, how you'll measure it, and how you'll benefit from it should flow from one point to the other.

Evidence – At higher levels, for anything you would state, the need for your project, the market it sits in, the expected outcomes, be prepared to provide sources, evidence or data on why you believe this is so.

The Process





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Any Questions?

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