

GUIDANCE NOTES

This is a discretionary grant provided by Welsh Government to provide financial assistance for individuals who have barriers to starting up a business and face challenges as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

PURPOSE OF THE GRANT

The purpose of the grant is to enable unemployed or economically inactive individuals, living in Wales to start up in business in Wales this includes a social enterprise. This grant is in addition to other business start-up support offered through Business Wales. The overall support is to specifically address issues of those most affected economically by the Covid 19 outbreak.

BUSINESS WALES

Business Wales provides tailored support to start-up, micro and small and medium sized businesses in Wales. The service can help you understand what your needs are and provide tailored support packages including access to online tools, workshops & webinars, general and specialist advisers, and mentors. In addition to working with you on a business diagnostic and action plan, our advisers can also provide targeted financial advice and access other support that you might benefit from.

To find out more, please visit www.businesswales.gov.wales.

WHO CAN APPLY?

A grant of **up to** £2000 is available to help individuals overcome barriers to starting a business. Applications are open to individuals who are unemployed or economically inactive. In allocating funding, priority will be given to those experiencing most economic impact by the Covid 19 outbreak.

Eligibility Criteria

To apply you should be unemployed, or if a young person considered a College or University Leaver as described below.

In assessing applications and allocating funds, priority will be given to individuals who have been most affected by the Covid 19 outbreak. These are:

- Disabled people
 - Individuals from a BAME community
 - Women
 - Young people not in education or training (NEETS) aged 18-24 **or** a College and University leaver* in 2019 or 2020. For **College or University leavers*** discretion of up to 30 years of age is permissible, if applicants have left College or University in 2019 or 2020 and have no work experience or are currently underemployed (employed in a lower paying job that demands less skills or training than the persons holds).
 - Applicants will be asked to evidence that they are not in work, economically inactive, long-term unemployed or not in education or training.
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- This grant and associated business support is intended to help those who are most disadvantaged.
- Individuals will be required to register with the Business Wales Advisory Service and they can seek start up support from an Adviser, but can also access preparatory support through other business support groups. Details of support organisations can be found on the Business Wales website www.businesswales.gov.wales.
- Applicants need to declare that they have no other (or limited) sources of funds or are unable to access any other start-up funds or can only secure part funding to support the set up or running costs of the business.
- Applications, along with a business plan, must be submitted at least two weeks **before** starting the business.
- The grant is intended to contribute towards the essential costs of starting the business with the details of costs included in the application form.
- The grant is for revenue expenditure only. This means only expenditure that will appear in your Profit & Loss Account is eligible.

Eligible expenditure could include

- Specialist support - consultancy fees, ICT, export, marketing, lean methodology etc.
 - Legal/professional advice
 - Training costs
 - Equipment (up to the value of £1,000) - Where it is not considered capital cost by appearing on the company balance sheet
 - Operating costs - directly related to business activity
 - Please note this list is not exhaustive.
 - **Note:** The grant is not intended to support personal drawings from the business.
- The business is the applicant's main source of income and / or employment.
 - To receive payment, applicants will be required to provide evidence that the company has started trading, e.g. copy of the first invoice, evidence of business bank account statement, limited company status, registration with HMRC for self-employment, advertising or digital presence.
 - The individual applying must reside in Wales.
 - The applicant's proposed business must be registered and operating in Wales.
 - Only one application will be accepted per business.
 - Applications must be submitted by the business owner and not agents acting on their behalf, however, this does not mean that applicants cannot access support to help with completion of the form.

- There are no exclusions for anyone who has previously had financial support from Welsh Government or Local Authorities and meet the other criteria.

Business Categories Not Supported

Businesses which are associated with the promotion of particular religious or political views; gambling; pornography; offering sexual services of any kind; any illegal activities; and other business deemed to be 'novel and contentious' by Welsh Government.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU APPLY FOR?

A grant of **up to** £2000 is available per business, to support with start-up costs. This will be assessed against the business plan.

Applicants need to confirm that without the grant support they have no or limited funding sources to help them start their business.

Grant award is discretionary and based on the evidence of need.

We do not anticipate all applicants will apply for the maximum value. Only apply for the amount you actually need to get started. This will allow us to support as many people as possible through this fund.

PLEASE NOTE - payment of the grant will be released when your business starts, not in advance. Applicants will be required to provide evidence that the company has started trading to draw down the funds.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants can only apply for the grant using the application form, which is available online at <https://businesswales.gov.wales/business-wales-barriers-grant>. Once complete, the application form, together with a business plan or a business model canvas, is to be emailed to barriersgrant@businesswales.org.uk. We aim to reply and acknowledge receipt within 5 working days.

The Barriers Grant is open to applications from 1st December 2020 up to 19th March 2021. However if funds are used up before this date the scheme will close.

If you have any questions before applying or if you have any concerns that you may not be able to participate in the application or business planning process for medical/technical/caring reasons, please contact Business Wales so that we can discuss how we can help.

GUIDANCE ON COMPLETING THE FORM

Section 1 - Information about You

This part asks for information about you 'the applicant'. Please ensure all information is correct.

Evidence Required – we will require 2 forms of identification to verify your identity:

- ✓ Passport/Driving Licence/Photographic ID
- ✓ Proof of your address dated within the last three months.
- ✓ Proof of unemployed status

Please indicate which demographic group you consider represents you.

And, for those of you that fall in the College and University Leavers category, we will need some further information. This relates to your field and level of education, education establishment attended, date left and your current employment information. Please ensure that you include your salary details (either annual salary or hourly wage) and how many hours you work per week (if this is a flexible working pattern, include an average per week over the last month). Please include the evidence required below.

Evidence Required - we will require some information to verify your current status:

- ✓ Qualification Certificates
- ✓ Payslip/pay statement (from the last 3 months covering a four-week period)

Section 2 – Information About Your Proposed New Business

Please provide details of your new business – proposed name, type of business and your anticipated start date. You will also be required to send in your business plan or a business model canvas.

Section 3 - Funding

Please let us know how much funding you are applying for. You can apply for a maximum of £2,000. We need to know what you intend to use the grant for and you will need to breakdown what is required, the costs and why this particular 'item' is needed.

We would also like to know if you intend to employ any staff and if so, the details of the types of roles they will be.

We need to assess what impact this grant will have, and what difference this will make to help you start your business.

Section 4 – Bank Details

This information will be used to make the Grant payment to you. Please ensure correct bank details are provided. Incorrect bank details will result in non-payment of the grant or payment will be delayed.

Section 5 – Statement of De Minimis Aid Received

The Barriers Grant is awarded under [De Minimis Aid](#), and we therefore require you to provide information on any De Minimis aid received during the previous 3 fiscal years (i.e. the current fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years). If you haven't received any – please include the word NONE. It is important this section is not left blank.

Section 6 - Declaration

It is very important that you have read this guidance document carefully and understand the terms and conditions associated with this Grant application.

If you agree to the terms and conditions within this document and you can confirm that the information provided in the application is true and accurate, then you must tick the box, include any signatures and dates and submit your application by email.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE APPLICATION IS RECEIVED?

Once we receive your application form, our team will acknowledge receipt of your application.

We aim to process grant applications within 10 working days of acknowledgment. Decisions on applications will be made based on the information provided in the application form, associated evidence provided and further due diligence checks.

Once approved, you will receive a grant approval by email notifying you of the award of the grant. You must respond to this offer within seven working days, or the grant offer will be withdrawn

Applicants must confirm acceptance of the offer letter by e-mail.

Payment of the grant will be released when your business starts, not in advance. Payments normally take 5 working days from the delivery of a correct claim form and associated documents. Applicants will be required to provide evidence that the company has started trading to draw down the funds. Evidence can include copy of the first invoice, evidence of business bank account statement, limited company status, registration with HMRC for self-employment, advertising.

If your application is successful, you will be contacted in 3-5 months to review complete post award monitoring, assess the impact of the grant and see if you require further assistance

If your application is unsuccessful, you will receive an email outlining the reason[s] for rejection. Please speak to a Business Wales adviser to consider alternate forms of finance to support you in starting a business.

GRANT REPAYMENT

Applicants should note that the Welsh Government or its appointed contractors may require repayment of the grant in full or part if the funds are not used for the purposes stated on the application form. The applicant, is entering into an agreement as such and this may be enforced by requesting proof, post grant award.

TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR APPLICANTS

1. Payment of this grant is at the absolute discretion of the Welsh Government.
2. The Welsh Ministers or its contractors may withhold or recover the funding in certain circumstances.
3. Payment will be made via bank transfer into your nominated bank account after sufficient evidence has been collected.
4. The Company must ensure that, for the purposes of the Project, it complies with the European Commission's State aid rules. Further details of the specific State aid rules applicable may be found [here](#). The Company is responsible for ensuring that the grant is delivered in line with the State aid criteria upon which the funding is awarded.
5. In order to minimise distortion of competition the European Commission sets limits on how much assistance can be given to organisations operating in a competitive market. The support provided by Business Wales is a [De Minimis Aid](#), under de Minimis Regulation 1407/2013 as published in the Official Journal of the European Journal dated 24 December 2013. There is a ceiling of €200,000 (€100,000 for undertakings in the road transport sector) for all de minimis aid provided to any one organisation over a three-fiscal year period (i.e. the current fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years). Any de minimis aid provided to you under this service will be relevant. By agreeing to this funding you are certifying that you will remain within these limits.
6. Please note that information held by the Welsh Ministers is potentially disclosable under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and the Welsh Government's Code of Practice on Public Access to Information. In practice, we will not disclose or release any commercially sensitive information provided to us by you without prior consultation with you but ultimately the decision as to whether to disclose is for the Welsh Ministers to take in light of all the relevant legal requirements.
7. By applying for this grant you are agreeing to accept these terms and conditions. Acceptance is validated by checking the terms and conditions box on the application form and by submitting the application.
8. Please note that no payments will be made by the Welsh Ministers to the Company until you have returned the additional evidence that is required as outlined in section 6.
9. Any funding awarded shall be used only for the purposes approved in application that you have made the and in any documents referred to in it.
10. The funding must be claimed by 31st March 2021.
11. The Company shall provide the Welsh Ministers with all information regarding its activities or proposed activities and as to its use or proposed use of all or any part of the funding, as the Welsh Ministers may from time to time require.
12. The Welsh Ministers require all recipients of funding to ensure that they apply a policy of equal opportunities as employers, as users of volunteers, and as providers of services, regardless of race, gender/gender identification, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age or as far as is practicable, any disability.
13. The Welsh Ministers shall be entitled to vary, withhold or terminate any part of or all of the funding and/or require part or all of the funding already paid to be repaid if:
 - i. the Company fails to comply with any term, condition or provision set out in this Terms and Conditions document, the Guidance notes of the application;
 - ii. any information provided by or on behalf of the Company in respect of procuring this offer of funding or in a claim for payment of funding is found to be incorrect or misleading to an extent to which the Welsh

Ministers consider to be material; iii. the Welsh Ministers suspect that the Company and/or any of its officers is/are involved in fraudulent activity.

14. The Welsh Ministers may vary and/or withhold any or all of the payments of funding and/or require repayment of funding, together with interest from the date of payment if:

i. they are required to do so as a result of a decision by the European Commission or as a result of any obligation under Community Law; or

ii. in their opinion it is necessary to ensure that the funding provided in accordance with this letter taken together with any other funding which has been or is likely to be received towards the Project is lawful State aid.

15. If the Company is wound up or goes into liquidation (including being subject to any administration order), receivership, bankruptcy, enters into any compromise or other arrangement of its debts with its creditors or any event similar or analogous to any of the events described in this paragraph 15 occurs, then the Welsh Ministers shall be entitled to recover on demand from the Company the funding paid and no further monies shall be due or payable by the Welsh Ministers to the Company or to anyone acting for or on its behalf or in its name. Any references to the amount of funding paid or to be paid to the Company shall be deemed to mean and to be limited to the amount of money actually paid to the Company by the Welsh Ministers at the time that any of the events referred to above occurs.

16. The Company shall, without charge, permit any officer or officers of the Welsh Ministers or their representatives, at any reasonable time to visit its premises and/or to inspect any of its activities and/or to inspect the assets or project cost items purchased, in whole or in part, with the funding and/or to examine and take copies of the Company's books of account and such other documents or records as in such officers view may relate in any way to the use of funding by the Company. This condition is without prejudice and subject to any other statutory rights and powers exercisable by the Welsh Ministers or any officer, servant or agent thereof.

17. Under the Government of Wales Act 2006 the Auditor General for Wales has extensive rights of access to documents and information relating to funding provided by the Welsh Ministers. He and his officials have the power to require relevant persons who control or hold documents to give any assistance, information and explanation that they may require and to require those persons to attend before them for such a purpose. The Auditor General and his staff may exercise this right at all reasonable times.

18. The Company shall permit EU auditors access to documents and information relating to funding for the Project. The Company shall ensure that persons who control or hold documents relating to the Project give to the EU auditors any assistance, information and explanation that they may require.

19. If during the financial year, or during the audit of accounts relating to that financial year the Company becomes aware of a material deterioration in its financial circumstances it must inform its Welsh Government Official immediately.

20. The Company must acknowledge, through the inclusion of appropriate wording (on press releases) and branding (on publicity, communication materials and signage), the contribution made to its activities by the Welsh Ministers. The Company should contact its Welsh Government Official for further details.

22. The Welsh Ministers will make reasonable efforts to pay claims promptly, but they do not accept any liability in respect of loss attributable to any delay in the payment of claims or attributable to any suspension, reduction or cancellation of the funding.

23. You must not use the funding provided for party political purposes; (2) the promotion of particular secular, religious or political views; (3) gambling; (4) pornography; (5) offering sexual services; (6) purchasing capital equipment (other than as specified in the Purposes); (7) your legal fees in relation to this letter; (8) Costs Incurred or costs incurred and defrayed by you in the delivery of the Purposes prior to the period referred to in Condition 1 (b); (9) any kind of illegal activities; or (10) any other kind of activity which in our opinion could bring us into disrepute.

24. By signing this application you are certifying that no litigation or arbitration is current or pending or, so far as you are aware, threatened, which has or could have an adverse effect on your ability to perform and comply with any of the Conditions nor your ability to continue to trade as a business in Wales.

25. By signing this application you have disclosed to us all material facts or circumstances which need to be disclosed to enable us to obtain a true and correct view of your business and affairs (both current and prospective) or which ought to be provided to any person who is considering providing funding to you.

26. By signing this application you agree to co-operate fully with the Welsh Government Official and with any other employee of the Welsh Government or consultant appointed by us to monitor your use of the Funding and your compliance with the Conditions.

27. You must maintain complete and accurate accounting records identifying all income and expenditure in relation to the application that you have made and without charge, permit any officer or officers of the Welsh Government, Wales Audit Office or European Commission or its nominated contractors at any reasonable time and on reasonable notice (in exceptional circumstances, such as the prevention or detection of fraud, it may not be practicable to provide you with reasonable notice) being given to you to visit your premises and/or to inspect any of your activities and/or to examine and take copies of your books of account and such other documents or records howsoever stored as in such officer's reasonable view may relate in any way to your use of the Grant Funding. This undertaking is without prejudice and subject to any other statutory rights and powers exercisable by the Welsh Government, Wales Audit Office or the European Commission or any officer, servant or agent of any of the above.

28. Nothing in the Conditions imposes any liability on us in respect of any liability incurred by you to any third party (including, without limit, employees and contractors).

29. You must indemnify us against any liabilities, claims, proceedings, demands, losses, costs and expenses suffered or incurred by us directly or indirectly arising as a result of or in connection with any failure by you to perform fully or in part any obligation you may have to a third party.

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Business Wales – Barriers Grant – Privacy Notice

In order to be considered for the Barriers Grant and receive Business Wales support, the Welsh Government are required to collect information from you. This information will include personal information about you as well as some information about your business. Having this personal information is necessary for us to assess your eligibility for the Grant and, if successful, to access funding, services, advice and information.

Lawful Basis of Processing

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide in relation to your grant application. The information will be processed as part of our public task (i.e. exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government) and will help us assess your eligibility for funding. Special Category data that is processed is done so in the substantial public interest of providing financial support to individuals that face barriers in starting business as a result of COVID-19 pandemic.

Prevention of Fraud

Before we provide grant funding to you, we undertake checks for the purposes of preventing fraud and money laundering, and to verify your identity. These checks require us to process personal data about you to third party fraud prevention agencies.

If we, or a fraud prevention agency, determine that you pose a fraud or money laundering risk, we may refuse to provide the grant funding you applied for, or we may stop providing existing grant funding to you.

A record of any fraud or money laundering risk will be retained by the fraud prevention agencies, and may result in others refusing to provide services, financing or employment to you.

If you are not successful in your application, we will write to you with an outline of the reasons why and how you can re-apply for the funding (Should you wish to).

Types of Personal Information

Information collected includes name, address, contact information and information about your business. To receive Business Wales Barriers Grant support, we also require to process Special Category information regarding your ethnicity or disability in order to assess your eligibility for the scheme.

Who will have access to your data

The collected information will be accessible by the system technical administrators who support the I.T. system. System technical administrators will not use your details in any way.

The information collected for the purpose of Business Wales support is shared with the following organisations for the purposes listed below:

- By contractors delivering the Business Wales service that provide support to beneficiaries;

- By approved social research organisations, to carry out research, analysis or equal opportunities monitoring of the Business Wales service;
- EC (European Commission) and European Funds Audit Team (EFAT) who will take samples of our data to ensure we are following the correct processes.

What we do with it

- To monitor and report on the number of individuals and enterprises taking part in projects and the number of people from different groups being supported (e.g. different ages, genders and ethnicities).
- Please note that research organisations/evaluators will only contact a sample of individuals and/or enterprises. If you are contacted to take part in any research/evaluation about your experience on the project the purpose of the interview or survey will be explained to you and you will be given the option to say yes or no to taking part. Your contact details will only be used for approved research and will be deleted once this approved research is complete.

How long are your details kept

We are required under State aid legislation to keep your personal data for a minimum of 10 years after the project ends after which time it will be securely destroyed. If you are unsuccessful in your application your personal information given in that application will be kept for a period of 12 months in line with Welsh Government's information retention policy.

Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to access the personal data the Welsh Government holds on you;
- require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data;
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing;
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased';
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Customer Contact
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

For help with any of the above rights then please contact our Business Wales Helpline **03000 6 03000** or use the contact us form <https://businesswales.gov.wales/contact-us>

The Freedom of Information Act and your Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by public bodies, including the Welsh Government. The information you provide us may be the subject of a freedom of information request by another member of the public. We would consult with you to seek your views before responding to such a request.

For further information on your information rights

Data Protection Officer

Welsh Government

Cathays Park, CARDIFF

CF10 3NQ

Email address: DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales