

## GUIDANCE NOTES

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This is a discretionary grant provided by Welsh Government to provide financial assistance for individuals who have barriers to starting up a business in Wales.

## PURPOSE OF THE GRANT

The purpose of the grant is to enable economically inactive and unemployed individuals to start up a business in Wales and will particularly target individuals that are facing barriers to business start-up and the employment market. This grant will be in addition to other business start-up support offered through Business Wales.

## 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 <https://businesswales.gov.wales/starting-up/>

## WHO CAN APPLY?

A grant of **up to £2,000** is available to help individuals overcome barriers to starting a business. Applications are open to individuals who are economically inactive and unemployed.

In allocating funding, priority will be given to those individuals that are facing barriers to business start-up and are furthest away from the employment market.

### Eligibility Criteria

To apply you should be:

- Economically inactive or unemployed
- Looking to start up a self-employed business in Wales

We are encouraging applications from individuals who identify as:

- Disabled work limiting health condition
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicity
- Women
- Young people not in education or training (NEETS) aged 18-24 or a College and University leaver since 2019 who are contracted for less than 20 hours per week.

Applicants may be asked to evidence that they are not in work, economically inactive, unemployed or not in education or training.

## Associated Information on the Grant

This grant and associated business support is intended to help those individuals that are facing barriers to business start-up and are furthest away from the employment market.

- Applicants will need to complete an expression of interest (EOI) document. This can be accessed from the Barriers to Start-up Grant webpage (<https://businesswales.gov.wales/barriers-start-grant>) once completed the expression of interest document must be returned to [BarriersSUG@BusinessWales.org](mailto:BarriersSUG@BusinessWales.org)
- Once the EOI has been received applicants will be contacted by the Business Wales administration team and registered with the Business Wales Advisory Service.
- Applicants can access pre-start support through the Business Wales family such as Business Wales / Big Ideas Wales / Regional Enterprise Hubs.
- Applicants will be offered pre-start additional 1-to-1 support and confidence building webinars to reduce barriers to entry for those furthest from the start-up and employment market.
- Applicants will then be assigned a Business Wales advisor who will assist with completion of application form and accessing further start-up support.
- 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.
- Full application and supporting business case must be submitted at least two weeks **before** starting the business. Grants cannot be awarded once the business has started trading.
- The grant is intended to assist individuals at the pre-start phase of setting up a business by contributing towards the essential costs of starting the business (details of costs must be 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 applicant intends to make or is working towards making the business their main source of income and / or employment.

- Applicants will be required to provide evidence that the company has started trading, e.g. copy of the first invoice and has taken steps to register the business for its chosen entity (eg. limited company status / self-employment with HMRC). This is gathered post-start date.
- Only one application will be accepted per business.
- Applications must be submitted by the individual applying for the grant and not agents acting on their behalf.
- Applicants will need to declare any other and current financial support from Government or Local Authorities over the last 3 fiscal years. Those individuals who have been in receipt of the Town Centre Entrepreneurship Fund are ineligible for the Barriers to Start-up grant.
- As recipients of public investment, applicants will be asked to review their business practices regarding sustainability and equality. Details of this can be found on the [Green Growth Pledge](#) and [Equality Pledge](#).

## **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** £2,000 is available per business (only one application per business is permitted).

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

Business Wales will apply discretion for grant awards based on the evidence of need outlined within the business case and application. If application is approved payment will be made to support revenue costs before the business begins to trade (pre-start).

We do not anticipate all applicants will apply for the maximum value. Applicants should only apply for the amount of funding needed to start their business. This will allow us to support as many individuals as possible to start a business through this grant.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

- Applicants must complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) and submit via the mailbox [BarriersSUG@BusinessWales.org](mailto:BarriersSUG@BusinessWales.org). Once we have received and verified the EOI you will be contacted by a Business Wales administrator to register onto the Business Wales programme.
- All applicants are expected to participate in the pre-start preparatory support and complete a business case with your business advisor. Once you have completed the pre-start preparatory support you will be issued the grant application form.

- The completed application form together with a business case must be emailed to [BarriersSUG@BusinessWales.org](mailto:BarriersSUG@BusinessWales.org) for assessment and due diligence checks to be undertaken.
- We aim to reply and acknowledge receipt within 5 working days.
- The Barriers to Start-up Grant is open to EOI from 13 December 2021. Application forms will be available to access from 03 January 2022 and deadline for submitted applications is the 24 March 2022. 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:

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

### Section 2 – Your Barriers

Please indicate which demographic group you consider represents you and also outline your current circumstances and any challenges you may have faced on your journey so far. Please complete this section in as much detail as possible so that we can understand why you need assistance from this fund.

### Section 3 – 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 case with your completed application form.

### Section 4 - 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. If there are more than 5 items, please group appropriately.

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 5 – 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 6 –Small Amounts of Financial Assistance (SAFA) scheme

The Barriers to Start-up Grant is awarded under Small Amounts of Financial Assistance (SAFA) scheme, and we therefore require you to provide information on any de minimis aid you may have received in the current and previous two fiscal years.

In addition, you must also provide information of any funding you have received under “Small Amounts of Financial Assistance (SAFA)” during the current and previous 2 fiscal years.

If you haven't received any – please include the word NONE. It is important this section is not left blank.

Information, on UK Gov Subsidy Control Guidance (including SAFA) can be found at [Guidance on the UK's international subsidy control commitments - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-international-subsidy-control-commitments)

## Section 7 - 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 to the following address [BarriersSUG@BusinessWales.org](mailto:BarriersSUG@BusinessWales.org).

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE APPLICATION IS RECEIVED?

Once we receive your application form, our team will acknowledge receipt of your application and undertake due diligence checks.

All applications must be endorsed by a Business Wales advisor (to confirm preparatory pre-start engagement has been undertaken, the business idea is viable and sustainable and all revenue costs are appropriate and eligible for the business idea)

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 (business case/breakdown of revenue costs and advisor endorsements) and further due diligence checks.

If approved, you will receive a grant approval letter by email notifying you of the award of the grant and a link to the terms and conditions for your review. 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. Once received and acknowledged we aim to pay into the nominated bank account within 10 working days.

As part of your application terms and conditions you will agree to continue to receive post start-up support. There will be 2 post-start interactions where we will seek evidence that the company has started trading, e.g. copy of the first invoice, evidence of business bank account

statement and that you have taken steps to register the business for its chosen entity (eg. limited company status / self employment with HMRC)

If your application is unsuccessful, you will receive an email outlining the reason[s] for rejection and your business advisor will discuss other support options available to you in starting a business. This is a discretionary grant and there is no appeals process.

## **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 or terms and conditions are not met. 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 and/or UK Government Subsidy Control Guidance. Further details of the specific State aid rules applicable may be found [here](#). Further details of the specific UK Government Subsidy Control Guidance can 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.
- 5a. 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.
- 5b. Support provided under 'Small Amounts of Financial Assistance' (SAFA) as defined by Article 364 paragraph 4 of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. This allows the provision of up to 325,000 Special Drawing Rights, or approximately £330,000 to a single economic actor over any period of three fiscal years. This threshold includes any SAFA support or EU de minimis support received during the relevant period, from all sources.
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 1.
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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
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.

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.

## **Business Wales – Barriers to Start-up Grant – Privacy Notice**

In order to be considered for the Barriers to Start-up 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 are facing barriers to business start-up and the employment market.

### **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, personal financial information (Business bank details) and information about your business. To receive Business Wales Barriers to Start-up Grant support, we require also to process Special Category information regarding your ethnicity or disability in order to assess your eligibility for the scheme. The personal data relate to details of the individual applicant only.

### **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](http://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](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales)