

## SUFFOLK LOCAL AUTHORITIES'

### SUFFOLK BUSINESS GRANT SCHEME

**Applications are being considered on a first come first served basis and you will be informed as soon as possible, but please note that it may take up to 28 days for a panel decision to be notified.**

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#### FUNDING AVAILABLE

We are looking to provide support to businesses across Suffolk to grow and become more productive, to encourage innovation and to become more environmentally sustainable.

Businesses can apply for grants between £5,000 and £10,000.

The maximum grant intervention will be for 50% of eligible costs, up to a maximum of £10,000. This means that the minimum project cost we can support is £10,000. **Please note that total project costs of over £75,000 will not be eligible.**

You might need expert consultants who can provide crucial, high-quality (non-routine) advice to help your business take the necessary steps required to move to the next level – whether its accessing new markets, acquiring the right type of finance or developing new products and services – support from specialists could make the difference.

Again, you may need to engage with expert website and digital media specialists to enhance or create your online presence.

If your shop front is visible from the street, you may wish to make improvements such as repainting, new signage, external lighting, repairs or reinstatements (but please note if you are applying within a district / borough area that only have revenue funding available then only painting of your shop front will be eligible).

The cost of purchasing or protecting your Intellectual Property can be expensive and the cost of patents, trademarks, franchises, copyrights and even “goodwill” are eligible for support.

Participation at UK or overseas trade fairs and exhibitions can help you increase your global reach – the grant could support the cost of your participation.

If you're in manufacturing or engineering, you might be thinking of investing in productivity or efficiency programmes or purchasing capital equipment. (East Suffolk Council only)

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#### BACKGROUND

In April 2022, the Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to support its Levelling Up agenda. The primary goal of the UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK.

For a summary of the Fund please see: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/business/uk-shared-prosperity-fund/>

Funded by the UKSPF, the Suffolk Business Grant Scheme is delivered by Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and West Suffolk Council.

This grant scheme meets the 'Supporting Local Business' investment priority of the UKSPF by increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium- sized businesses.

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## LOCATION OF THE PROJECT

Please note that it is imperative that all grant applicants check their location and district council area they are in as the following funding restrictions apply, depending on the location of your proposed project:

- Businesses located in East Suffolk Council can apply for capital and revenue costs.
  - Businesses located in Babergh District Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and West Suffolk Council can **only** apply for revenue costs.
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## HOW DO I APPLY FOR FUNDING?

Businesses wishing to apply or for further guidance and support should first contact the New Anglia Growth Hub to discuss their project ideas by visiting: <https://www.newangliagrowthhub.co.uk/contact-us/> or call: 0300 333 6536

The specialist Business Growth Advisers will work with you to ensure your project is suitable for the grant scheme (or advise you of other potential more suitable grant schemes) and support you in developing your application as required. As part of the process, an initial in-depth diagnostic exercise will be undertaken by New Anglia Growth Hub Business Advisers to determine eligibility of your business and identify what type of support you require.

The services of the Growth Hub are free and impartial, but you will need to register your details with them to access support.

**Please note, grants are awarded on a discretionary basis and are subject to eligibility checks and approval. You should read the following to check your eligibility for support and for information on the process.**

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## AM I ELIGIBLE?

We can confirm this quickly, but if you are a UK registered enterprise and you are an SME (employ no more than 250 people, turnover is no more than £36m and total assets no more than £18m) and your business is growing and expanding or has good growth potential, you may well be eligible. We will also accept applications from sole traders.

This funding will support businesses in any sector, except for primary agriculture (including processing and marketing of agricultural products).

We are unable to offer grant support if your business is ailing or insolvent, or you have received rescue funding which has not yet been repaid. Financial checks will be undertaken.

## **IS MY PROPOSAL ELIGIBLE?**

Your investment project must be based in Suffolk and you must be able to implement your proposals as soon as you have been successful with your grant application. We are looking for short to medium term projects and they must be fully completed within 12 months from the date of the panel decision.

All required permissions, licences, such as a planning and landlord permission, for example, must be in place before submission of an application.

To find out more about how to gain planning permission, please visit (depending on your businesses location):

Babergh: <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/planning/>

East Suffolk: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/>

Ipswich: <https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-control>

Mid Suffolk: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/>

West Suffolk: <https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/>

You will be asked on the application form to declare any other permissions or licences that are required for your project and that they are in place.

## **WHAT KIND OF REASONS JUSTIFY MY GRANT PROPOSAL?**

You will need to convince your relevant local authority there is a case for using grant funding to support your project, for example by:

- Demonstrating that the investment project would not proceed without our help;
- Showing the assistance will enable the project to be undertaken in a shorter timescale or it can go ahead earlier;
- Illustrating the financing will enable you to do additional things;
- Showing that without funding the proposals would proceed on a lesser scale;
- Demonstrating help is needed because of the risks involved;
- The project is doing something innovative and support would help;
- Illustrating financial assistance would help you do something different from your current plans;
- Showing funding would prove a catalyst - for example by providing confidence to lenders or investors.

Your submitted project must indicate how you will meet at least one of the following outcomes:

- Jobs created as a result of the grant support
- Increased business sustainability as a result of the support
- Introducing new products to the market as a result of the support
- Adapting to new to the firm technology as a result of the support

- Improved business productivity as a result of the support
- Engagement in new markets as a result of the support

## IS MY PROJECT VALUE FOR MONEY?

To ensure we support value for money projects, you will need to provide evidence of your proposed project costs. You must use a third-party supplier and must not use a linked or connected business to provide the services or goods.

What you need to provide depends on the amount you plan to spend per contract or supplier. The following table outlines the minimum procedures.

(The minimum invoice we would support is £250).

Value of purchase (excluding VAT)	Minimum procedure to be followed per contract or supplier
£250 - £4,999	At least one quote
£5,000 - £74,999	3 written quotes or prices sought from relevant suppliers of goods, works and / or services
£75,000 and over	Applications over the total project cost of £75,000 will not be considered for this grant scheme.

## WHAT WE CANNOT FUND:

- Do not include VAT in your project costs if you are able to claim it back. *If you are a business located in Babergh or Mid Suffolk District Council areas, then all grants are exclusive of VAT.*
- Routine organisation running costs, stock purchases and staffing costs
- Items or services that are not essential to the success of your project
- Projects unable to start within 6 months of the grant award date
- Projects that fail to be completed within 12 months of award date
- Activities promoting political or religious beliefs
- Payments towards endowment funds, deficit funding or loans
- Overseas travel for individuals/groups unless for participation in trade fairs.
- Sponsored or fundraising events
- Funding for trips abroad or hospitality to other organisations
- Repeat funding – i.e., if your local council, or other body has previously provided a grant for the same activity
- Items or projects which only benefit an individual
- Retrospective costs e.g. costs incurred prior to grant approval confirmation
- Projects that will displace existing provision
- Activities that are to meet statutory obligations

Before applying, please note that this funding cannot be used to replace lost income / profits / hardship experienced as a result of the pandemic, although it can be used help you to resume activities suspended due to Covid-19.

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## SUBSIDY CONTROL

The UKSPF Grant support will be delivered through Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA).

The maximum support through MFA is £315,000 and this is a cumulative total of all support received over the current, and the last two complete financial years through MFA, EU *de minimis* and Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance.

If you are offered support through MFA, you will need to make a declaration that, 1) you have not already exceeded the £315,000, and 2) with award of the requested support, you will not exceed the £315,000 threshold.

You will be required to make a declaration of the subsidies that your business has been awarded on the application form.

## WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

The experienced New Anglia Growth Hub Advisers will provide access to an application form or you can access this directly through your local authority website however the New Anglia Growth Hub Advisers will be able to support you through the application process and be on hand to provide guidance.

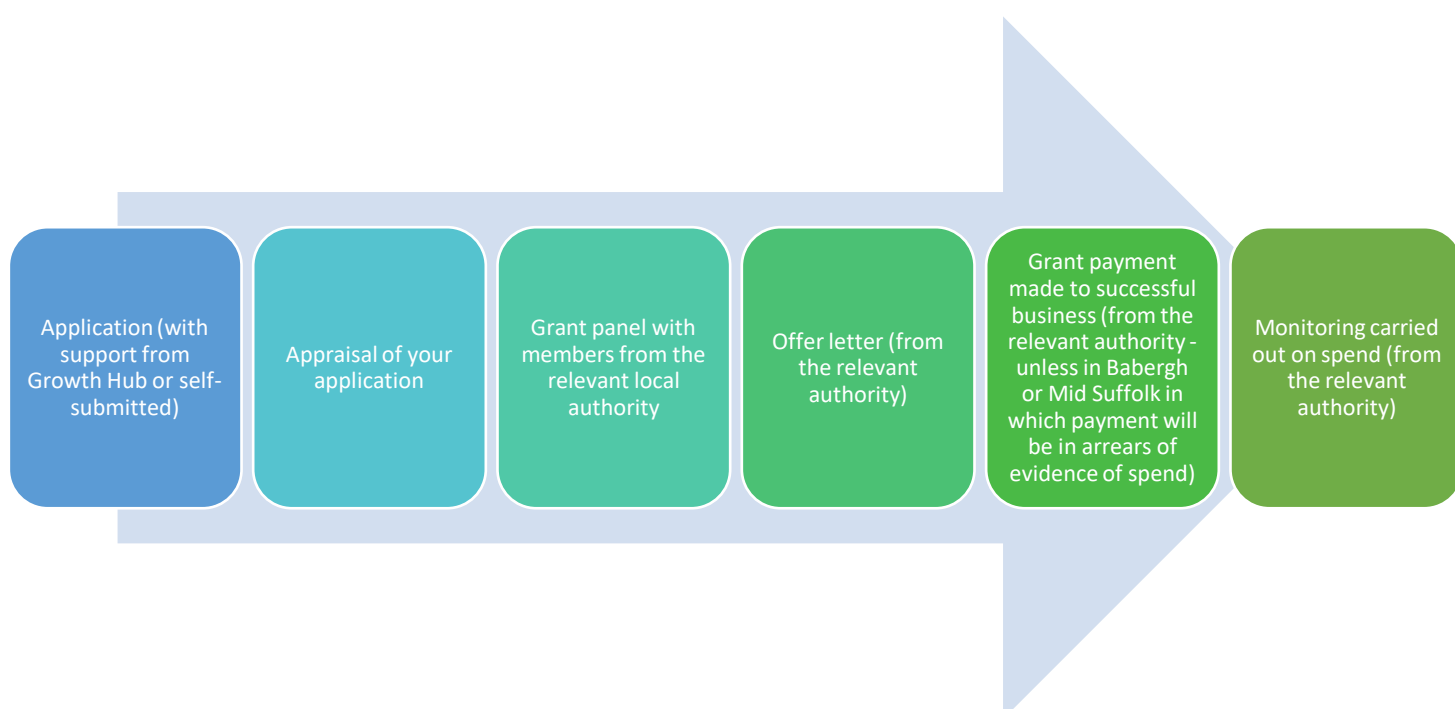
You will be required to provide routine documents in support of your application as follows:

- **Application Form**, fully completed, e-signed and dated
- **Relevant permission(s)/licence(s)** for the proposed project (if applicable), e.g., a copy of planning permission/landlord's permission/business change of use

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## HOW ARE GRANT APPLICATIONS ASSESSED?

These are the grant application stages:



Once you submit your completed application, we will start processing it. We will undertake a detailed assessment of your proposal based on the Application Form and the supporting information that you provide. You may also be asked for additional information during this process in support of your application.

Once assessment of your grant application has been completed, the document along with a relevant report will be submitted to the Grant Panel who will take a final decision on your proposed project. Once your application has been sent to the panel it can take up to 28 days from that date before a final decision is reached.

The grant decision will be relayed to you at the earliest opportunity. Please be aware, full compliance with the eligibility criteria does not guarantee that your application will be successful, as grants are discretionary, and there is no right of appeal against the grant decision. If your grant application is declined, an explanation will be provided.

Please note that this grant is being provided on a first come, first served basis meaning the grant scheme may close before the end of the financial year if all funds are allocated.

### **HOW DO I PAY FOR THE PROJECT COSTS**

Please note that all project expenditure must be seen to be paid from your business bank account directly to your supplier or contractor.

We are unable to pay grants against project costs that will be paid using cash, credit card, mortgages, asset finance, in kind or other methods.

You must not commence your project, or enter into any legal contracts, including ordering, payment of deposits or incurring any costs on any supplies, services or works before the formal approval of your grant funding and you have signed the Offer Letter Acceptance and the Minimum Financial Assistance (MFA) confirmation.

### **HOW DO I CLAIM THE GRANT?**

If your grant is approved, the relevant local authority (depending on your location), will send you a **formal Offer Letter** that will include information about your grant and eligible project costs, any conditions of the offer and information on how to claim the grant.

Once you have formally accepted a grant offer and returned the signed grant acceptance and the Minimum Financial Assistance confirmation, you will be paid upfront by the local authority (if there are no outstanding conditions to be confirmed) unless you are located in Babergh District or Mid Suffolk District in which case you will be paid in arrears upon proof of completion of the agreed project including evidence of spend such as through invoices and payment from your business bank account (full guidance will be provided from your local authority area).

At the end of your project, the relevant local authority will send you a monitoring form to complete, in which you will also have to provide evidence of spend against your original agreed grant costs. This will include evidence of spend through copies of invoices and your business bank statements.

### **WHAT SHALL I DO IF MY APPROVED PROJECT COSTS CHANGE?**

If your approved project costs are going to change in any way and you will now be expecting to pay more/less than the approved amount, please contact your funding officer at the relevant local authority as soon as possible to discuss steps forward to ensure your current/revised grant offer is/will still be available to you.

### **MAY I APPLY FOR ANOTHER GRANT?**

If you have already been successful with the Suffolk Business Grant Scheme, funded by the UKSPF, priority will be given to new applicants; however, we may be able to support a new project via this scheme so please stay in touch with your Adviser or contact the Growth Hub directly. If you cannot re-apply, we might refer you to an alternative programme or business support organisation.

