

Wolverhampton
Making it happen

Wolverhampton Business Grants Suite

Wolverhampton
City Council



www.findit.inwolverhampton.co.uk



Guidance Notes and Conditions of The Wolverhampton Business Grants Suite

Please read these notes before completing the application form.

The Scheme

The Wolverhampton City Council (WCC) Business Grants Suite aims to support the economic regeneration of the City by providing funding to assist in starting and developing local businesses, particularly where this will stimulate local job creation. It also aims to encourage the take-up of vacant business premises within the City.

The Scheme is administered by The City Council's Economic Development team, with funding provided from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF).

Grants available

There are several different grants available through the Grants Suite:

1) City Wide Start-Up Grants

These grants will be available to businesses that are starting up in Wolverhampton (less than 12 months old), taking on premises with business rates payable to Wolverhampton City Council. Grants of up to £5,000 matched investment are available to help towards the cost of capital equipment for the business that will help it to develop and grow.

2) City Wide Business Support Grants

These grants are available for existing businesses (trading for longer than 12 months) operating from commercial premises within Wolverhampton, with business rates payable to Wolverhampton City Council. Grants of up to £5,000 matched investment are available to help businesses purchase equipment and support that will help the business to develop and grow.

Please note that applicants may only apply for one of the two grants above. If you are also applying for a Security Grant, please submit a separate application form.

3) City Wide Security Grants

These grants are available for all businesses which are operating from commercial premises within Wolverhampton, with business rates payable to Wolverhampton City Council. Businesses which are investing in security measures for their premises may be eligible for a grant of up to £3,000 matched investment towards the cost of the measures. A Letter of approval from the Police Crime Reduction Officer is required before the application can be submitted to the appraisal panel. Please contact Ian Jones on 0345 1135000 Extension 78716571 or email i.m.jones@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk to arrange for the Police Crime Reduction Officer to visit the premises.

There is a Southside Business Grant Suite available for all SME businesses, operating from commercial premises (subject to business rates payable to WCC) within all or part of the following streets:

Bell Street; Cleveland Street (part); Snow Hill (part); St John's Street; Summer Row; Temple Street (part); Victoria Street (part) and Worcester Street (part)

Please contact Harmeet.kaur@wolverhampton.gov.uk (01902 554033) to confirm that your address is eligible and to receive a Southside Grant application form. Applicants may only apply through the City Wide Business Grant Suite **or** the Southside Business Grant Suite.

What level of Grant is available?

Grants are available as a contribution towards the business costs of new projects, up to a maximum of 50% of eligible expenditure, **excluding VAT**. The maximum grants available are as follows:

Business Start-Up	£5,000
Business Support	£5,000
Business Security	£3,000

Eligibility

Who is eligible?

All start-up and existing SME businesses which are or will be located within the Wolverhampton Local Authority boundary (with business rates payable to WCC), **who are planning for growth** and require financial assistance to enable this to proceed.

What is an SME business?

- 1) Under 250 employees.
- 2) Annual turnover < €50m, or balance sheet total < €43m.
- 3) Independently owned.

Businesses must be operating from **commercial premises** and must have completed all necessary registrations, including with H.M. Revenue and Customs, and, if appropriate, Companies House. Similarly, leases on commercial premises will also have been signed in start-up situations. Businesses operating from domestic premises will not be eligible for grant assistance.

Funding will **not** be made available to support:

- 1) Trading activities which might bring WCC into disrepute e.g. sale of alcohol; gambling; pornography; holistic therapies; money lending; religious or political ventures.
- 2) Insolvent businesses.

What expenditure is eligible?

All **capital** expenditure made **exclusively** for the use of the business, which is operating from commercial premises with rates payable to Wolverhampton City Council, e.g. production equipment; commercial vehicles; and IT hardware. This does **not** include normal trading expenses.

Ineligible costs include, but are not restricted to:

- 1) Equipment with potential for domestic use; except in exceptional circumstances.
- 2) Purchase of commercial premises.
- 3) Training.
- 4) Lease purchases and monthly instalment payments.

Eligible	Not Eligible
Van*	Saloon car
IT hardware*	Rent / Rates / Insurance
Industrial machinery & tooling	Wages / Tax & N.I. / VAT
Security fencing, CCTV, alarm systems	Security guards

*Contribution restrictions apply for a number of items:

- 1) Vehicles will be eligible for a maximum grant of £1,500.
- 2) Computers, laptops and peripherals will be eligible for a maximum of 30% grant contributions.

Funds cannot be awarded towards contingency sums or cost over-runs. Grant funding through this Scheme will be termed 'de minimis' under European Community State Aid:

'De minimis'

Under EC Regulation 69/2001 ('de minimis' aid regulation) there is a ceiling of Euros 200,000 for all de minimis or other state aid provided to any one firm over a rolling three year period. Any state aid awarded to you under this Scheme, or in the three years prior to application, will be relevant to you if you wish to apply, or have applied, for this or any other state aid. For the purposes of compliance with the de minimis regulation you must retain the approval letter issued to successful applicants under this Scheme for three years and produce it (along with similar documentation confirming other state aid awards) in support of any further application for aid over the next three years or on request by the UK public authorities or the European Commission.

Please note that "aid," as defined under the de minimis rules, not only consists of financial assistance but is also deemed to include Training or Consultancy or Advice that may have been provided free of charge i.e. the cost you would have paid counts as the "value" of the aid. Applicants for this scheme should therefore endeavour to obtain "valuation" documentation from the provider of any aid provided free or at reduced cost. The maximum financial award under this scheme is £8,000 therefore there are no issues or problems for any applicant who has received de minimis or other state aid (including "free" training, consultancy or advice) with a total value of less than euros 190k over the three year period preceding this application.

General conditions of the scheme

The following general conditions apply to all applications for grant assistance:

- 1) All decisions on financial assistance and the amounts offered are at the sole discretion of Wolverhampton City Council.
- 2) Applications will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis. Only fully completed applications, meeting all the eligibility criteria and including all relevant supporting documentation, will be considered.
- 3) The Grant Scheme will open in July 2011 and close to new applications in December 2011; although if the allocated resources have been utilised, the scheme will have to close at an earlier stage.
- 4) Grant assistance is **NOT** payable retrospectively. Projects for which grant support is sought must not commence until **WRITTEN** approval has been received from Wolverhampton City Council. Any work undertaken before written approval is received will not be eligible for Grant assistance.
- 5) Applicants may only apply for a Grant **ONCE**. Applicants who were awarded a grant through the 2010/11 Grant Suite will therefore not be eligible to apply again. Directors of multiple businesses may only apply for a grant for a single business. Applicants may only apply through the City Wide Business Grant Suite **or** the Southside Business Grant Suite.
- 6) Applications will not normally be considered if any of the applicants are un-discharged bankrupts; disqualified directors or have unsatisfied County Court Judgements outstanding.
- 7) The assessment will be conducted by the Wolverhampton City Council's Economic Development team and will focus on the key priorities of local employment creation and how the project proposal will demonstrably improve efficiency and output. There may be, from time to time, areas of business type or expenditure where support is unlikely to be made available because of prioritisation. The final decision will be made by the Wolverhampton City Council Interim Strategic Director of Education and Enterprise.
- 8) Specified timeframes **must** be adhered to. Late submission of information will result in the application being closed or the grant being refused. All projects must, unless agreed with Wolverhampton City Council prior to approval, be completed by the date specified on the approval letter (within 2 months of any grant award).
- 9) If there are any changes of circumstances after the grant has been approved, these must be notified **IN WRITING** and approved by Wolverhampton City Council before giving a commitment to suppliers. Failure to do so may result in the grant payment being refused.
- 10) Grants will normally be paid in one sum in arrears on receipt of both signed contracts and evidence of paid invoices relating to project costs. The evidence of purchase of the **completed approved** works must consist of a receipted invoice for the **approved** work at the approved premises from **one of the three suppliers who provided quotations** and a **full original** bank statement proving that the **full** payment (including deposit payments) came out of the matching business bank account which was submitted as evidence of a business bank account. Cash payments for goods will **NOT** be accepted. Cheque payments must be accompanied by the written declaration enclosed in the approval letter, if a copy of the written cheque is not submitted. Any purchases where payment has not been made **directly** by the company awarded the grant approval will be refused. Any purchases where payments have been made in more than two instalments will be refused; unless this was agreed prior to approval. The evidence of purchase for vehicles must be accompanied by a copy of the vehicle's log book. Any evidence of purchases received after the date specified on the approval letter will be refused. Grants will be refused or reduced where there is a lack of evidence of purchase or where conditions of the grant application have been breached.
- 11) If the approval is subject to a condition, grant funding will not be released until that condition has been satisfied. If the approval is subject to planning permission, for example, funding will not be released until **written** confirmation from Development Control at Wolverhampton City Council has been received which either confirms planning permission has been granted or that it is not required.
- 12) All contact will be made directly with the applicant.
- 13) Wolverhampton City Council reserve the right to inspect the products purchased, both before releasing the grant payment **and** up to 3 years after.
- 14) All applicants will agree to provide the monitoring information required by Wolverhampton City Council in respect of the project; normally 3 to 6 months after completion, but this could be up to 3 years.
- 15) Applicants will be expected to comply with any reasonable request of Wolverhampton City Council in relation to publicity concerning the grant.
- 16) The grant must be repaid to Wolverhampton City Council in any of the following events:

- a) Relocation of the business outside the Wolverhampton local authority boundary;
- b) Closure of the business;
- c) Disposal of the items purchased;
- d) Inaccurate information was supplied

in each case within 3 years of grant payment.

- 17) Equipment purchased through the grants scheme will remain property of Wolverhampton City Council should the applicant enter liquidation within 3 years of the grant award.
- 18) All necessary statutory approvals and legislations for the work and business must be obtained. This includes but is not restricted to planning permission and building regulation.
- 19) Grant recipients may be required to provide evidence of the new recruitment specified in the application.
- 20) Applicants may be required to produce evidence of suitable policies operating within the workplace e.g. Health & Safety, Equalities & Diversity.

Guidance on the required supporting checklist information (please tick):

Although you are welcome to complete the application on your own, we recommend that you seek advice from the **Wolverhampton Business Solutions Centre**. If an application is not supported by **ALL** the relevant checklist documents, it will cause a delay in the application process. The Wolverhampton Business Solutions Centre can be contacted on 01902 321272 or enquiries@wolverhamptonbsc.com.

- **Business plan** (required for all applications from business *under* 12 months old):

Applicable:		Completed:	
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- **Business résumé** (required for all applications from business *over* 12 months old):

Applicable:		Completed:	
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- **Three competitive quotations** (required for *all* applications):

Three like for like quotations (i.e. the same model) from three **independent** suppliers must be submitted for **all** relevant expenditure. The quotations must include a full set of contact details for the suppliers and detail whether VAT is included. New quotations will be requested if it is not possible to verify the suppliers.

Here is an example of the table we recommend that you use for your like for like quotations:

	Supplier 1 (Name)	Supplier 2 (Name)	Supplier 3 (Name)	Lowest Quotation
Laptop (Brand and model) *	£425.52	£449.99	£472.03	£425.52
Black and White printer (Brand and model)	£63.82	£74.99	£47.29	£47.29
Memory Stick (8GB Flash) x2	£19.57 x2	£11.50 x2	£15.75 x2	£11.50 x 2

* Laptop specification for - 2.13 GHz, 3072 MB, Hard drive: 320 Gb, DVD-RW rewriter, Blue shell, 15.6 Widescreen

Completed:	
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- **Evidence of a business bank account** (required for *all* applications):

Completed:	
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- **Management Accounts** (required for all applications from business *over* 12 months old):
The most recent full set of audited accounts must be submitted.

Applicable:		Completed:	
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- **Cash flow forecast for the next 12 months** (required for *all* applications):

A template cash flow forecast is available upon request.

Completed:	
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- **Proof of tenancy** (required for *all* applications):

A tenancy agreement or a business rates demand notice are acceptable forms of proof of tenancy

Completed:	
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- **Crime Reduction Officer's Report** (required for *Security Grant* applications):

A Letter of approval from the Police Crime Reduction Officer is required before the application can be submitted to the appraisal panel. Please contact Ian Jones on 0345 1135000 Extension 78716571 or email i.m.jones@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk to arrange for the Police Crime Reduction Officer to visit the premises.

Applicable:		Completed:	
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Details of the application process

- 1) Once a fully completed application form, including all relevant supporting documentation, is submitted, the request will be processed by the City Council's Economic Development Team. If any of the supporting checklist documents are not submitted, these will be requested before your application can be submitted to the appraisal panel. If this information is not supplied in the specified time, the application will be withdrawn and further submissions will not be allowed.
- 2) The team will produce a summary document to be submitted along with the other application documents to an appraisal panel, consisting of public and private sector members.
- 3) The panel will review the applications in strict confidence, meeting once every 2 weeks.
- 4) A decision will be made to either refuse the application, to raise queries about the application that must be addressed before the application can be approved, or to approve the application. Businesses will be informed of the panel's decision in writing within 5 working days of the panel.
- 5) Those businesses that are refused will be contacted to inform them of the decision and the reason behind the decision. They will be given ten working days to respond to the panel's decision; if new information is provided, the application will be submitted to the panel for a final review; after which, the applicant will not be allowed to re-apply.
- 6) Those who have queries raised will be contacted with those queries. It will then be up to the business to provide reasons or evidence in response; within ten working days. Upon receipt of this information, the applications will be re-submitted to the panel for appraisal.
- 7) Successful applicants will be sent written confirmation that their grant has been approved (and the value of the approved grant) along with two contracts which provide details of the equipment or services being purchased through the grant scheme and specify that the business **must** purchase the equipment from **one** of the suppliers who provided a quotation for the application (this may be an addendum to the contract consisting of a summary of the quotations supplied in the original application). The approval letter will also be accompanied by a covering letter reiterating the conditions of the scheme. Any applications which breach the conditions will not receive the grant funding. Both copies of the contract must be signed and returned.
- 8) Purchases can be made **ONLY** from the date on the approval letter.
- 9) If there are any changes of circumstances after the grant has been approved, these must be notified **IN WRITING** and approved by Wolverhampton City Council before giving a commitment to suppliers. Failure to do so may result in the grant payment being refused.
- 10) Evidence of all the purchases must be sent to Grants Suite, Economic Development, Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1RP. Details of the required evidence of purchase are included in the General Conditions of the scheme section above and they are also clearly stated in the covering letter accompanying the approval letter.
- 11) A member of the Economic Development team will visit the premises at some point during the application process, prior to grant funding being released.
- 12) Payment of the grant will then be made. If expenditure is lower than agreed, the grant will be adjusted accordingly to reflect actual payments made. If, however, the expenditure is higher than the agreed amount, no additional funding will be provided. A letter confirming payment will then be issued along with one counter-signed contract.

If you have any queries regarding the scheme, please contact:
The Wolverhampton Business Solutions Centre
Tel: 01902 321272 email: enquiries@wolverhamptonbsc.com

or Kathryn Selmes
Economic Development, Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, WV1 1RP
Tel : 01902 555850 email: kathryn.selmes@wolverhampton.gov.uk

For Southside Grant applications please contact
Harmeet Kaur
Economic Development, Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, WV1 1RP
Tel : 01902 554033 email: harmeet.kaur@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Wolverhampton Business Grants Suite: Application Form

Please read the Guidance Notes and Conditions of the Grant before completing this form.

Please answer all parts of this form as fully and accurately as you can, and include all relevant supporting information; so that your application may be assessed and processed as quickly as possible. All applicants must read, sign and date the declaration at the end of this application form. All information contained in this application will be treated in confidence. If you have any problem with the completion of the form please contact us.

All applications must be made on the correct application form. Separate applications will need to be submitted for Start-Up or Support Grants and Security Grants.

Applicant details:

Business name:	
Applicant name:	
Position: (e.g. Partner)	
Home address:	
Postcode:	
Business address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone:	
Mobile:	
e-mail:	
Website:	

Legal status (e.g. Sole Trader; Ltd Co.)

Limited Company Number	
VAT Registration Number	
Tax Reference Number	

Description of main business activities:

Date company began trading:

Size of premises:

Type of business unit e.g. offices, light industrial:

Does the business supply or use local businesses? If so, which companies:

Job information:

How many people does your business currently employ?

Full-time Part-time Full-time equivalent

How many additional staff will be recruited as a result of this project?

Full-time Part-time Full-time equivalent

How many existing jobs will be **directly** protected by this project?

Full-time Part-time Full-time equivalent

Ethnicity: How many of the people employed by your business belong to an ethnic minority group or are registered disabled?

Ethnic minority Registered disabled

Ethnicity of the owner of the business: Completion of this information will enable us to monitor our Equal Opportunities Policy.

<p>Asian</p> <p>.... Bangladeshi</p> <p>.... Indian</p> <p>.... Pakistani</p> <p>.... Other (please state)</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Black</p> <p>.... African</p> <p>.... British</p> <p>.... Caribbean</p> <p>.... Other (please state)</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Far Eastern</p> <p>.... Chinese</p> <p>.... Other (please state)</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Mixed</p> <p>.... White/Asian</p> <p>.... White/Black African</p> <p>.... White/Black Caribbean</p> <p>.... Other (please state)</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>White</p> <p>.... British</p> <p>.... Irish</p> <p>.... Other (please state)</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Other Ethnic Group</p> <p>.... Other (please state)</p> <p>_____</p>

Project details:

This section needs to be completed for all grant applications. Please provide as much detail as possible to assist you application. If more space is required, please attach additional sheets.

Equipment required: Please list the items you intend to purchase.

Related equipment: Please detail the related equipment currently used by the business and explain why additional equipment is required.

Timescale: Are you confident that the project can be completed within 2 months of the grant approval letter?

Yes:		No:	
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If you have answered 'No', please indicate below how long you expect the project to take to complete and the main reason for this:

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Statutory Consents:

Does your project require any statutory consents to be obtained (such as, but not limited to, planning permission and building regulations)?

Yes:		No:	
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If 'Yes', please detail which statutory consents are required

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If 'Yes', have these been received?

Yes:		No:	
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Project costs and funding:

Type of grant requested (please tick **only** one):

Business Start-Up Grant:		Business Support Grant:		Business Security Grant:	
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Total project cost (**excluding** VAT) £

Total grant requested: £

(The Grant requested should be 50% of the project cost, excluding VAT, up to the maximum grant allowance (£5,000 for Business Start-Up and Business Support Grants and £3,000 for Business Security Grants). Please note that vehicles are eligible for a maximum of £1,500 and computers, laptops and peripherals are eligible for a maximum of 30%).

Project Funding: Your business must initially cover the **FULL** cost of the project. Please indicate how you intend to fund your purchases and the proposed method of payment.

Have you applied/are you applying for any other type of grant through this project?

Business Start-Up Grant	
Business Support Grant	
Business Security Grant	

De minimis: In the last three years, has your company received de minimis aid regulation (this includes but is not restricted to financial assistance, training, consultancy and advice)?

Yes:		No:	
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If 'Yes', please provide details:

Date received	Name of provider	Amount (£)	Project description

Declaration:

I/we confirm that I/we have read and agree to be bound by Wolverhampton City Council's conditions of grant assistance contained in the guidance notes and conditions of the grant.

I/we confirm that the information provided on the application form is true to the best of the applicant's knowledge. I/we have provided all of the supporting information required in the checklist below.

I/we confirm that the applicant is eligible to apply for this Grant under the 'de minimis' rules for State Aid, as detailed in the Guidance notes.

I/we agree to let Wolverhampton City Council share the information provided in this application form with other partner agencies for the purposes of project monitoring.

I/we agree to provide Wolverhampton City Council with any information as deemed necessary to assist with monitoring the project to enable all project expenditure and outputs to be accounted for.

I/we confirm that I am/we are not personally related to or have any ownership of the company(s) proposing to supply the goods or work for which funding assistance is requested.

I/we confirm that I/we hold all the necessary permissions and licences to operate (including current Employers and Public Liability Insurances, if appropriate) and ensure that I/we fully observe relevant regulations and legislation (including Equal Rights and Opportunities legislation).

Name (Please print):	
Signature:	
Date:	

Supporting information checklist:

Please note that applications will not be processed until ALL of the supporting checklist information has been fully provided. Therefore, please ensure the following information is included with your application form. (Please tick)

Letter of approval from the Police Crime Reduction Officer (security grants only).	
Business plan (businesses less than 12 months old) / business résumé (businesses greater than 12 months old)	
3 competitive quotations for all relevant expenditure	
Evidence of a business bank account	
Recent trading/management accounts (businesses greater than 12 months old)	
Cash flow forecast for next 12 months	
Proof of tenancy	

The completed form and supporting documents must be submitted to:

Grants Suite, Economic Development, Wolverhampton City Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1RP

(Please submit applications by hand, where possible, to avoid the possibility of loss in the post. If posted, we suggest that recorded delivery is used.)