

Ashfield

Business start-up grant scheme



Guidance and information notes

What is the Business Start-Up Grant Scheme?

This scheme is available to start-up businesses in the district of Ashfield. It is hoped that these grants will help in supporting the development of a vibrant entrepreneurial business sector as well as increase the overall number of business start-ups across the two districts.

Am I eligible to apply for a grant?

This scheme is available to:

- Individuals looking to start a business in the district of Ashfield
- Businesses already located in the district that have been registered as trading for less than six months (e.g. with HMRC or Companies House)

Eligible businesses can take the legal form of Sole Trader, Partnership, Limited Company or Social Enterprise/Community Interest Company (CIC).

Certain businesses are excluded from applying for this grant and these include pawn brokers, adult/private shops, betting shops, charity shops, vaping shops, licenced premises (where the consumption of alcohol is permitted), national and international chain stores.

How much grant could I receive?

A maximum of £1,000 grant to contribute towards up to 50% of the total eligible cost of the project (excluding VAT).

How do I apply?

Applicants will need to submit:

- An application form
- A business plan
- A 12-month cash flow forecast and profit & loss
- Three written quotes for any single item costing over £2,000
- Confirmation of any necessary approvals, if required, e.g. planning permission, building regulations¹

We strongly recommend that applicants seek support to undergo an appropriate course of business advice that leads to the production of the business plan demonstrating the viability of the business idea.

As the grant is paid in arrears applicants will initially need to pay for the total project. For example, to obtain the maximum grant of £1,000 applicants will need to spend at least £2,000 (excluding VAT).

All applications will be subject to an assessment by a Panel and the amount offered will be at the discretion of the Panel and only whilst funds are available. The Panel's decision is final.

In all cases applicants need to apply for the grant by submitting their full application and obtain a written approval of the application, **before** any work is undertaken or items/equipment purchased. The grant will not be paid towards the cost of transactions that have occurred before the date of the approval.

If the grant application is successful the applicant agrees to remain trading within the district for at least 12 months. The Council reserves the right to seek repayment of part/all of the grant if this condition is not met.

What can I use the grant for?

The grant can contribute towards expenditure including the following:

- Capital assets such as plant, equipment or machinery – the grant will not contribute towards costs associated with leased or rented equipment (vehicles, stock and consumables are excluded)
- Office equipment and furniture including purchase of computer systems
- Shop fittings and refurbishment
- Security equipment and installation
- Business stationery
- Advertising and other marketing costs including web design
- The grant will only contribute towards 12 months of on-going costs, e.g. web hosting, licences etc.

When is the grant paid?

If a grant application is approved, applicants will have up to four months to submit copies of relevant invoices and bank statements showing that eligible expenditure has been made. All invoices and bank statements must be dated **after** the grant application approval date. **Items purchased using cash will not be eligible for grant payment.**

The grant amount paid will be the lesser of the agreed amount or half of the eligible expenditure (excluding VAT).

To draw down the maximum grant of £1,000 applicants will need to provide evidence of expenditure on the agreed items of at least £2,000 (excluding VAT).

The grant payment will be made directly into the applicant's *business bank account via BACS.

***Business bank account** definition: A business bank account is a trading commercial account in the name of the applying business. All purchases must be made via the business account and all claim payments will be made to the same business account. Personal or current accounts are NOT eligible.

Important notes

The amount of funding a business can apply for is restricted to £2,500 in a 12 month period. This can be made up from multiple eligible grants that total up to a maximum of £2,500.

Any applicant who is offered and claims up to the scheme's maximum amount (in this case £1,000) will not be eligible to apply to the same scheme again, even after a 12 month period has passed.

Applications submitted by Agents or Consultants **will not** be accepted. All applications must be submitted by the applicant.

If your project includes shop front improvements, only items and work recommended by the Council will be eligible for grant payment. Applicants within the Ashfield district will need to contact Forward Planning on 01623 457383 to discuss their proposals

Next steps

If you believe you have a project that meets the criteria of the scheme and would like to apply then please contact the Business Support Team on 01623 457 383 and by email on business.support@ashfield.gov.uk

¹ Businesses will need to evidence that all required permissions have been obtained, or produce written confirmation from their District Council that no permissions are required before a grant can be paid