

Micro Business Grant Scheme 2022/23

1. Introduction and Background to the Scheme

The **Micro Business Grant Scheme** is a county-wide scheme funded through the West Sussex Local Enterprise and Apprenticeship Platform (LEAP). £71,000 has been allocated to Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) to support micro businesses (businesses with less than 10 employees) across the district.

The objective of the scheme is to support growth of micro businesses by providing grant:

Growth grant: a maximum of £2,000 which can be used to support a new project or initiative which will result in business growth. (50% match funded by the business)

Apprentice Grant: In addition to the Growth Grant, businesses are further eligible to apply for a £1,500 Apprenticeship Grant' to support the recruitment of an apprentice.

2. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the scheme, businesses must meet all the following criteria:

- Your business must be constituted in Mid Sussex and can provide evidence of establishment (such as accounts, VAT registration number, copy of Companies House documentation or evidence of registration as a sole trader). Registered charities are not eligible for this scheme and should refer to the Community and Economic Grant Scheme, details can be found [here](#)
- Your business must have fewer than 10 employees (this includes both part-time and full-time staff)
- Your business must be able to commit a minimum contribution of 50% towards the cost of the project

Priority will be given to new applicants and those who have received only one previous award in any of the previous grant scheme years and MSDC reserves the right to decline returning applicants.

Businesses are not limited on the number of Apprenticeship Grants they can receive, however only one application can be made each financial year.

3. Project Criteria (Growth Grant Only)

Projects must be activities which will contribute towards business growth and not 'business as usual' activities. Applicants are required to demonstrate how their project will achieve growth and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Reach new customers
- Increase the number of employees
- Introduce new products and services
- Improve business premises
- Improve business productivity.

In addition to the criteria above, applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their project aligns with priorities set out in the Council's Sustainable Economy Strategy. This includes:

- Promote or improves sustainability.
- The creation of jobs for local individuals
- Improve the skills of the workforce
- Supporting the local supply chain
- Enhancing the public realm or local amenities

What to include and how to increase your chance of success:

To improve the chances of success, applicants should include following information in their submission:

- A clear statement on how the project meets stated criteria
- The reasons behind the project and key benefits. Where possible, applicants should also look to include supporting evidence, demonstrating need for the project. This information could be in the form of consultation results, research or statistics
- Applications should clearly outline the activities required as part of the project. This includes a detailed cost plan and, supporting quotations and a list of suppliers, using local suppliers wherever possible
- Applicants are also encouraged to provide information on how they will evaluate and measure the success of their project.
- Where projects relate to sustainability, references to business plans / objectives which provide examples of how the business aims to reduce their carbon footprint.

4. Eligible Expenditure

Examples of eligible project expenditure includes:

- New equipment
- Website development
- Marketing activities (including specialist research and consultancy fees)
- Training courses
- IT software improvements
- Business space improvements (including signage, lighting and all aspects of refurbishment)
- Product development.

Non-eligible expenditure includes any on-going revenue costs, examples include:

- Membership/Subscription fees (one-off fees are eligible)
- Rent, bills or travel expenses
- Items considered business as usual (e.g. business stock, labels etc)

5. Apprenticeship Grant Criteria

Businesses interested in applying for the Apprenticeship Grant must meet the basic eligibility criteria as set out in section 2, and demonstrate their application will achieve the following:

- Apprentices must be individuals who live in England, not be in full-time education, and where possible, the apprentice should be recruited from within the Mid Sussex district.
- Applications must detail the type of apprenticeship which will be offered, the training provider (where possible, the provider should be located in West Sussex), the duration of the apprenticeship and the cost of the programme (this will be the salary of the apprentice).
- Should the application be successful, the Council will require a copy of the Apprenticeship Agreement signed by three parties (the learner, the training provider and the employer).

6. Conditions of the Grant

1. Grants will not be given for any expenditure incurred prior to the application submission date. Any works carried out prior to approval or any required permissions are at the applicants risk,
2. Grants are claimed retrospectively i.e. after purchase of eligible items and the submission of proof of spend to the Council in the form of an invoice. Grants will only be paid for items identified

- in the application form and cannot be used to cover any additional or unexpected costs following the application submission.
3. All quotes for works subject to the application must be submitted.
 4. Payments of grants will be for 50% of expenditure incurred up to the maximum amount of grant awarded. (e.g. if applicants are awarded a grant of £500, applicants would need to spend £1000 to claim the £500 grant).
 5. Payment of grants to successful applicants will be made in one sum on the receipt to the Council of evidence that the applicant has incurred the expenditure.
 6. All expenditure must be evidenced. Where payments are made in international currency, businesses are required to evidence their expenditure in GBP.
 7. For applicants who are awarded the Apprenticeship Grant, proof of employment will be required in the form of a signed Apprenticeship Agreement and contract.
 8. Businesses who are VAT registered are unable to claim VAT as part of their expenditure, however if you are not VAT registered, VAT will be included in your project costs.
 9. For applications where physical works are required, applicants must ensure that the project has any necessary permissions in place (for instance planning permission, building regulations, licensing and landlord consent). No payment will be made if the absence of any required permissions. MSDC holds no responsibility for checking that any permissions are required for this grant scheme.
 10. Following the conclusion of a project, applicants are required to complete an end-of-project form and provide feedback on their experience with the scheme. Businesses may possibly feature in publicity campaigns relating to the grant scheme.
 11. All applications are subject to spot checks to ensure that works have been carried out in accordance with the submitted application documentation.

6. Next Steps and Application Process



Step 1: Business submits application



Step 2: Application is reviewed by Officers



Step 3: Application is reviewed by the Cabinet Grants Panel



Step 4: After 10 days, applicant is informed of decision

7. Further Information and Contact Details

For further information on the scheme, please contact the Economic Development Team using the email address: economicdevelopment@midsussex.gov.uk