

The Blaenau Gwent Business Start Up Grant is funded by UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund and the Waterloo Foundation, managed by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. The Business Start Up Grant aims to support the growth and development of new full-time businesses in the Borough.

WHO CAN APPLY

- Blaenau Gwent new businesses and businesses relocating to the area.
- Small and Medium Sized Businesses e.g., those employing less than 249 people.
- Sole traders, Partnerships, Limited Companies, Co-operatives, Limited Liability Partnerships
- Businesses that operate on a full-time basis (minimum 35hrs per week) and main source of applicant's income.
- The business must operate from premises within the Blaenau Gwent Council area, for which they either own or there is an occupational agreement in place.
- Businesses with projects that meet at least one of the below key project deliverables.

WHO CANNOT APPLY

- Due to market saturation mobile hairdressers and beauticians are not eligible for support via this grant scheme along with those planning to operate from commercial premises.

KEY PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Applications will be assessed against the following key outputs of the scheme (at least one priority must be met in order to meet the minimum score, for projects requiring maximum grant, at least half of the priorities must be met, including job creation).

1. Jobs created.
2. Growth, Increase in turnover, future proofing.
3. Use of Innovation & Technology to improve productivity or service.
4. Economic Impact i.e., local supply chain opportunities.
5. Green Energy & Decarbonisation.

PROJECT EXPENDITURE

- **Examples of eligible capital costs include** - Machinery & equipment; Factory vehicles such as forklifts which are green energy; IT hardware – laptops, screens, PDA; upgrade of existing lighting /heating systems to green options; Marketing materials, internal fixtures & fittings, Website & ecommerce site.

- **Examples of eligible revenue expenditure include** Training – face to face or online, consultancy fees, purchase of advertising, licences, Marketing Support, Social Media support including optimisation of existing, Development of Apps
 - **Examples of ineligible expenditure include** staff costs, vehicles, hire/lease purchases, extended credit agreements/finance leases; repair, internal or external building works, maintenance, and decoration costs etc.; contingency fees, working capital costs such as rent, rates, admin, stock; costs of works being carried out as a legal statutory requirement.
- No expenditure should be incurred before grant approval, as the grant cannot be awarded retrospectively.**

GRANT SUPPORT

- 80% of eligible and reasonable costs up to a maximum of £2,500 (total project spend at least £3130.00).
- Applications for both revenue and capital costs will be accepted.
Minimum grant £250.00

- **APPLICATION PROCESS**

- Initial expression of interest form providing an outline of project, if accepted then: -
- Application form accompanied by:
 - Business Plan.
 - 2 comparable quotations for each item included in application.
 - 12-month cash flow forecast.
 - Evidence of match funding i.e., business bank statement.
 - ID – Driving Licence/Passport & Home Utility Bill
 - Evidence of lease agreement on business premises if applicable
- The application guidance notes should be **read and understood in full** before application is submitted.

OUTCOME OF APPLICATION

- Applicants will be notified within 4 weeks of submission of **all** application documentation.
- Successful applicants must accept the grant offer letter of the grant by signing and returning the agreement within 14 days of the date of the offer letter.
- Grant will not be offered or paid if the business is in arrears with any payment to the Local Authority

The Blaenau Gwent Business Start Up Grant is discretionary and dependent on the availability of funds. It is not a statutory function and there is no right of appeal. The Council is not obliged to enter any further discussions for the reason for refusal.

PAYMENT OF GRANT

- All items listed in the application must be **purchased within 8 weeks of grant approval.**
- Confirmation that all statutory procedures (e.g., building regulations, planning consent, food hygiene, etc.) must be in place before grant is awarded to the business.
- 50% of the grant approved will be paid direct into the bank account of the applicant once the signed grant agreement has been received, then the final 50% is paid after receipt of original invoices, bank statements to confirm payment and the applicants HMRC UTR number.
- Please note cash payment are not accepted.

MONITORING

- Blaenau Gwent CBC will continue to monitor the outputs of awarded grants and will contact you to request updated information as and when required.
- Successful applications may be included in follow up marketing and case studies.
- Successful applicants will also be required to meet with an Enterprise Facilitator from BGCBC on a monthly basis to help with their business start-up journey.