

## Advice Voucher Guidance

### *The scheme*

This voucher scheme supports any SME in the Cumberland area to access advice to help:

- overcome the challenges facing them and respond positively to opportunities, for example through cost reductions, productivity enhancements and growth

Vouchers are available, at a maximum of £500 each through to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025.

It is a discretionary scheme, with vouchers approved on a first come first served basis, subject to availability.

No match is required from applicants, however you can choose to use the voucher towards a larger package of advice.

We can only fund one application per business.

The scheme cannot support an activity that has already been started, completed, invoiced or paid for.

### *How to apply*

As the applicant you must:

- Obtain one written quote for the work, including a recent date and/or a current validity period, if the package of advice being sought totals less than £2,000 including VAT. If the package of advice totals more than £2,000 then you need to provide two written quotes.
- Select the supplier based on your own criteria e.g. price, reputation, experience, value for money.
- Complete the Advice Voucher Application, attach the quote(s) and sign the declaration where indicated. Your application must include a summary of the activity to be carried out, timescales and what you hope to achieve through the advice.
- Email the signed off application and supporting document(s) to Paul Maddison, Growth Hub Facilitator, [paulm@cumbriachamber.co.uk](mailto:paulm@cumbriachamber.co.uk). An electronic signature is acceptable but it must be an actual signature (e.g. scanned), not a typed name.
- Await written confirmation from the Growth Hub that the proposed consultant has been agreed as appropriate, the application has been approved and confirmation of the amount of funding agreed (usually within 5 working days).

For any queries relating to the scheme or an application please contact Paul Maddison, Growth Hub Facilitator, [paulm@cumbriachamber.co.uk](mailto:paulm@cumbriachamber.co.uk)

### *How to claim*

You can claim the voucher amount once the work being funded by the voucher has been completed and you have an invoice from your supplier. Payment will be made directly to you. It is your responsibility to pay the supplier.



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To make your claim you must email to Paula Martyn-Jones, Growth Hub Finance & Compliance Facilitator, [paula@cumbriachamber.co.uk](mailto:paula@cumbriachamber.co.uk):

- Confirming you are happy with work undertaken and that the element being funded by the voucher has been completed.
- Attaching a certified copy of your original invoice from the supplier for the amount due. You must certify by writing on the invoice “I certify that this is a true copy of the original document”, then sign, date, add in your position within the company and the company name. (Again, an electronic signature is acceptable as above).
- Providing your bank details for payment.

Payment will usually be within 10 working days unless there are issues with submitted evidence which needs to be addressed.

If you are VAT registered then you must pay any VAT yourself and reclaim it through your VAT return in the usual way.

Before agreeing any payment arrangements which do not comply with the above you must agree this with the Growth Hub. You should not assume that other arrangements will be agreed.

Your claim for payment, including all supporting documentation, must be received by us by the final claim date specified in your approval email. Any claims received after this date may not be paid.

For claim queries please contact Paula Martyn-Jones, Growth Hub Finance & Compliance Facilitator, [paula@cumbriachamber.co.uk](mailto:paula@cumbriachamber.co.uk).

All documentation supplied will be retained by the Growth Hub and may be shared with Cumberland Council.

Please note:

- If the cost of the finished project is higher, the voucher payment will only be based upon the original approved cost. If the finished project cost is lower, the voucher award will be adjusted downwards to a maximum of the amount originally approved.
- Failure to comply with claim instructions may result in your voucher payment being delayed or the funding withdrawn.

