

**Cumberland Council –  
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)  
E30 Rural Business Grants (Revenue)**



**Guidance Notes**

**Overview**

This scheme supports business growth, employment (particularly in areas of higher unemployment), productivity and sustainability by providing revenue grants. 50% of the total cost up to a maximum of £7,500 grant per business is available.

This grant scheme may offer discretionary grants, on a first-come first-served basis to businesses which fulfil the criteria set out in these guidelines. Grants may be offered to projects that:

- Offer good value for money
- Make a clear and reasonable case for needing grant support
- Have adequate funding towards the balance of the project
- Can complete within the required timescales
- Demonstrate alignment to objectives and requirements of SPF

Grants are discretionary and competitive. There is no obligation on the grants panel to offer grants even where all of the above criteria appear to have been met.

All documentation supplied by you will be retained in your Growth Hub client record, within our Data Protection policy guidelines and SPF document retention requirements.

**Eligible businesses**

Small and microbusinesses in all sectors are eligible to apply, as defined below.

A small enterprise means an enterprise that meets two or more of the qualifying criteria for a small enterprise, as set out in section 382 of the Companies Act 2006:

- Turnover not more than £10.2m
- Balance sheet total not more than £5.1m
- Number of employees not more than 50 More detail is available here <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/46/section/382>.

A micro enterprise means an enterprise that meets two or more of the qualifying criteria for a micro enterprise, as set out in section 384A of the Companies Act 2006:

- Turnover not more than £632,000
- Balance sheet total not more than £316,000
- Number of employees not more than 10 More information is available here <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/46/section/384A>.

Grants can be awarded to companies, partnerships or sole traders. In these Guidelines the term “company” includes all legal vehicles for carrying on business (including partnerships, limited liability partnerships, sole traders, companies limited by guarantee and companies registered in other jurisdictions as well as limited liability companies registered in Great Britain) unless the context dictates otherwise.



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Pre-start businesses and early stage start-ups are not eligible to apply (and will be signposted to other relevant support). Applicants must be able to demonstrate sufficient trading record to enable meaningful assessment of proposed outputs and outcomes and of financial viability, and the ability to fund and cash flow the proposed spend.

Public sector organisations are not eligible. Grants can only be awarded to commercial organisations. To qualify as a commercial activity at least 50% of income or profits must be derived from business trading.

Support is not expected to include social enterprises (and any applicants will be signposted to the SPF/REPF support delivered by CSEP/Cumbria Community Foundation), however these may be included where other support is agreed to be unavailable or unsuitable (following discussion with the Funder).

**Eligible locations**

Small and micro businesses in the area covered by Cumberland Council are eligible to apply.

**No Prior Start**

Activity must not have commenced or been committed to prior to grant approval. If work on a project has started, then it is ineligible for support.

**Eligible costs**

Revenue spend only is eligible, but funding can be aligned with the Cumberland REPF capital grants.

Only irrecoverable VAT can be considered an eligible cost. If the applicant is VAT registered, costs will be considered exclusive of VAT.

**Eligible amounts**

The grant available is 50% of the total cost excluding reclaimable VAT up to a maximum of £7,500 grant. To access £7,500 you would need to spend at least £15,000, excluding VAT if you are VAT registered.

We will not normally approve a grant of less than £1,000.

**Eligible match**

This grant cannot be matched with other public funding.

**Subsidy Control**

Applicants must demonstrate that any grant awarded would be compliant with Subsidy Control Regulations. All applicants are therefore required to complete and submit a Subsidy Control Declaration.

Subsidy Control allows small amounts of public assistance (up to £315,000 over three rolling years or over a three year fiscal period) to be given to an enterprise as Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA). This ceiling takes into account all public assistance (aid) given within the qualifying period as either De Minimis Aid



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(under the previous EU State Aid regulations) or as MFA under the UK Subsidy Control Regulations. Public assistance can take various forms (grants, loans, guarantees, subsidised contracts, etc). The UK Government webpage setting out the principles of Subsidy Control can be accessed through this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime>

Businesses are advised to seek advice to ensure that their application is compliant.

**Project timescales**

Activity must be completed and final claims submitted by 31.1.25 at the latest. No claims for grant payments can be accepted after that date. Individual final claim dates will be specified in each offer. Claims which do not include all the required and correct information and evidence may not be accepted.

**How to apply (including procurement)**

- You must also complete the Cumberland REPF/SPF Registration Form 001 and Subsidy Control Declaration 002.1.
- As the applicant you must follow these procurement requirements:

<b>Estimated Total Contract Value (inclusive of VAT)</b>	<b>Minimum Process</b>	<b>Method of Invitation</b>
Up to £2,000	Must use of process which obtains best value for money	1 oral quotation (confirmed in writing where the quotation exceeds £500)
£2,001 - £50,000	2 written quotations	Invitation to submit a quotation in writing to at least 2 candidates
£50,001 - £100,000	3 written quotations	Invitation to submit a quotation in writing to at least 3 candidates
Exceeding £100,000 but below the threshold set out in the Public Contracts Regulations - <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/102/contents/made">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/102/contents/made</a>	Written tender	Open advertisement of contract appropriate to the market

Quotes must include a recent date and/or a current validity period. Your adviser can help with this if you wish.

- Select the supplier based on your own criteria (e.g. price, reputation, experience, value for money). Please use the scoring matrix below for guidance.



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	Price	Reputation	Experience	Value for money	Total
Supplier 1					
Supplier 2					
Supplier 3					

Suggested scoring: 1= Not appropriate, 2= Some concerns, 3= Acceptable, 4= Good, 5= Excellent  
You may wish to apply a weighting

- Complete the Grant application form, attach the quote(s) and sign the declaration at Section 6.
- Forward the signed form and the supporting documents to Cumbria Business Growth Hub, [info@cumbriagrowthhub.co.uk](mailto:info@cumbriagrowthhub.co.uk). Where documents require a signature these can be electronic but must be an actual scanned or written signature, typed “signatures” are not acceptable.
- Await written confirmation from the Growth Hub that the application has been approved and the amount by the Project or Programme Manager (typically within 10 days).
- On completion of the activity by your chosen supplier(s), and provided that you are happy that the purchase was good value for money that your supplier(s) has fulfilled their brief, pay the total amount plus VAT and submit your claim. (See How to Claim below).

**How to claim**

To make your claim, send an email or letter to the Growth Hub Projects Finance Facilitator confirming they you are happy with the support provided and any other feedback you feel relevant, along with the following documents:

- A certified copy of the receipted invoice from the supplier stating the amount paid and the date on which the payment was received.
- A certified copy of your bank statement showing the payment the supplier (non relevant data can be blanked out). This must clearly show the date it left your account and the amount being paid (if it is not the exact agreed amount, please explain why). You should include the invoice number as your payment reference when making the payment.

You must write on both documents above “I certify that this is a true copy of the original document”, that then has to be signed and dated and state your position within the company and the company name. Both these documents with signatures must be emailed (preferably) to [paula@cumbriachamber.co.uk](mailto:paula@cumbriachamber.co.uk) or



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posted to the Projects Finance & Compliance Facilitator (Cumbria Business Growth Hub, Broadacre House, 16-20 Lowther Street, Carlisle, CA3 8DA) so that your claim can be processed. The grant amount will be paid to you, normally within 30 days of receiving the correctly completed documents.

Before agreeing any payment arrangements that do not comply with the above you must agree this with the Project Manager.

NB: Please ensure that you provide full documentation and information as requested. We cannot process any claim until these requirements have been satisfied.

Full claims for payment, must be received by us by final claim date specified in your approval. Any claims received after this date or missing information may not be paid.

Please note there is no requirement on us to issue reminders or chasing missing claims or information.

**Projects reduced in scale**

Where the scale of the project has been reduced the level of assistance will normally be reduced pro rata with the reduction in the scale of the project (maintaining the grant percentage and ensuring that it does not exceed the maximum allowable).

**Queries**

Any queries contact the Project Manager/Head of Business Support Lesley Robinson, [lesleyr@cumbriachamber.co.uk](mailto:lesleyr@cumbriachamber.co.uk), 07876 861266/0844 257 8450.

For claims queries contact the Project Finance & Compliance Facilitator Paula Martyn Jones [paula@cumbriachamber.co.uk](mailto:paula@cumbriachamber.co.uk) 07951 596428/0844 257 8450.

