# Chichester District Council

Enabling Grant Guidance Notes

## Growth Projects and Start-up Projects

The Enabling Grant is designed to help improve the efficiency of independent local businesses, to maximise the potential for growth and to assist new businesses with start-up costs.

Applicants can only apply for **one** of the two grants available and must meet the eligibility criteria detailed further below.

We particularly welcome applications from businesses in the ‘green’ sector or applications for projects to reduce a business’s environmental impact and these applications will be prioritised during the evaluation process.

We strongly recommend that applicants read these guidance notes carefully before submitting an application.

The online applications link will open on Monday 9 September at 9am and applicants will have until **1.00pm 30 September 2024** to submit their application. Applications must be submitted online and with all relevant information attached.

Please note that there will be mandatory fields on the application form and some of the questions will require a minimum number of words. If these sections are not completed, you will not be able to progress with the application.

Any applications received after the above date will not be considered.

Once the deadline has passed all valid applications will go to our Economic Development Officers to review and evaluate. A decision will then be made as to whether or not the application will move onto the next approval stage. Please note there is no right of appeal against applications which are not successful.

Once an application has been formally validated, the overall grant process may take up to six weeks, from the closing date, before a final decision is made. Applicants will be notified of the Council’s decision by email.

**Grants**

Growth Projects Grant – up to a maximum of 50% match funded and a contribution of no more than £2000.

To enable small businesses to purchase, for example: -

* items of capital equipment. This does not include mobile phones or tablets.
* training packages
* additional marketing advice
* developing digital content/digital marketing presence
* fixtures and fittings to improve premises

**Or**

Start-up Grant Award – a maximum contribution of £500 from the Council (non-match funded)

To enable a new start–up business, for example: -

* to purchase items of capital equipment. This does not include mobile phones or tablets
* to purchase training packages
* to improve premises, fixture and fittings
* to develop their digital presence

Applications should demonstrate one or more of the following criteria:

1. Contribution to the local economy
   1. Local supply chain - the use of local suppliers
   2. Protecting local jobs/creating local jobs
2. Reducing Environmental impact
   1. Protecting the environment
   2. Reducing carbon footprint
3. Innovation
   1. Improving productivity
   2. New ways of working or offering your goods or services to your customer
4. Commercial viability – e.g. the proposed expenditure will help to sustain the longer-term prospects for the business.

Minimising your project’s climate impact is a key requirement and all applications will be assessed against these criteria and are expected to identify the project’s impact.

Most business activity results in carbon emissions so you will need to explain how you have designed the project to minimise the impact on the climate (e.g., reusing resources, – you might include reference to buildings, supply chain, travel.). Your answer is expected to be proportionate to your organisation’s and your project’s scale. There is a separate detailed guidance note available on this website titled Guidance: ‘’Climate Change, the potential environmental impact of your project or service, and how you might address’’.

A more detailed list of considerations is provided in that guidance note and links to sector specific advice are also provided in the note.

#### Eligibility Criteria

* Businesses who have received an enabling grant payment within the last 3 years will not be eligible to apply for this round of funding.
* Businesses applying for the start-up grant award must have only been trading for a maximum of 18 months. Evidence of this must be provided with the application form.
* Businesses must be based in the Chichester District and employ at least 1 paid member of staff (full-time equivalent) and no more than 15 paid employees (full time equivalents).
* Businesses that are registered separately at differing premises but share the same directors and are managed together will only be eligible to make one application and will also be subject to a maximum of two enabling grants within the last five-year period, from date of grant payment i.e., a group of businesses, managed by the same Director(s), will be seen as one business.
* A grant cannot be sought for retrospective projects or expenditure or for ongoing costs.
* A completed Grant Agreement must be signed and returned prior to any work being undertaken or expenditure being incurred.

**Mandatory Requirements**

All applicants must ensure they take note of the following requirements or applications will not be validated.

* Applications must be completed online, with all sections completed and all relevant quotes attached.
* Complete applications must be submitted by **1.00pm 30 September 2024**. Incomplete or late applications will not be validated and will not move forward in the process.
* A minimum of two independent quotes must be provided for digital and social media development activities. All other applications require at least one quote and should clearly state the cost of equipment or service being requested. Quotes should be valid for at least 3 Months.
* Quotes must be on formal letter headed paper. Quotes for capital equipment can be a screenshot but the supplier details and product description and cost must be clearly stated.
* **The supplier/provider must be based in the Chichester District** as we wish to encourage use of local supply chains. If you are unable to use a supplier/provider in the district, then a West Sussex supplier is acceptable if you explain why a district based supplier cannot be used. Applicants will need to provide compelling reasons for using suppliers beyond West Sussex.

If you are not sure whether or not the supplier is in the district, please use this postcode checker to see which local authority they are located in [Find your local council - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council).

* If the supplier/provider is a family member or has an interest in your business, this must be stated on the application form and a further quote must be provided by another supplier/provider.
* An applicant/business must have no disputes with the Council.
* If a project includes any upgrades to an existing website, the website must be at least one year old.
* Businesses who are VAT registered will not be able to claim for the VAT element, for project costs incurred, as this can be claimed back by the business at a later date. Businesses who are not VAT registered will be able to include the VAT when calculating the cost of the project costs incurred, and this will be included in the calculation of the grant contribution from the Council.
* **All successful applicants will be required to submit their BAC’s details on the Chichester District Council website in order to receive grant payment. Details of this will be given in the grant agreement issued to successful applicants.**
* On completion of projects, we will require evidence of work carried out and submission of paid invoices/receipts. We will need to see proof that the invoice(s) have been paid.
* **BAC’s payment will be made to the organisation that has made the grant application and on receipt of paid invoices.**
* The Council’s Economic Development Officers may visit/contact to verify details of the project.
* Though the Council will consider a variety of applications, they must meet the criteria as above and the Council reserves the right to reject any application.
* Applicants must provide feedback on the effectiveness of the project, as and when requested.

#### Grant Procedure

**Stages:**

* 1. The applicant must submit a fully completed online application with formal quotes (as per above) for the business proposal attached. **An incomplete application will not be formally registered and validated and will be sent back to the applicant.**
  2. Checks are carried out with other Council services to ensure that the applicant/business does not have any disputes with the Council.
  3. The Council may arrange a visit/contact with the business and/or gather current evidence to check against future changes and developments of project.
  4. After 30 September 2024 valid applications will go to our Economic Development Officers to decide which applications go on to the next stage of approval
  5. The Council will inform the applicant of the Council’s decision by email – the overall decision process may take up to six weeks from the application closing date.
  6. A grant agreement will be sent out to successful applicants and must be checked, completed and signed by the applicant and returned to the Council **within 3 weeks of** **issue**. **If a signed grant agreement is not received within 3 weeks of issue, we will assume the applicant does not wish to continue with the project and re-allocate the funds**.
  7. Applicants must input their BAC’s details onto the Councils website to receive grant payment on completion of the project.
  8. The Applicant should commence the project as outlined in the application form.
  9. The Applicant should inform the Council of the completion of the project by providing a copy of final invoice(s) and proof of payment.
  10. The Council may arrange a further visit/contact with the business prior to payment of grant.
  11. Payment of the grant will be sent to the applicant via BACs. We are unable to make payments in instalments.
  12. Applicant are required to provide feedback on the impact of their project on their business and the Council will conduct evaluation through follow up contact.