

Funded by UK Government  Wedi ei ariannu gan Llywodraeth y DU

# CONWY SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS KEY FUND

Transitional Fund 2025/26

## Criteria and Guidance



# Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Section A - Key Factors  |    |
| • <u>Introduction</u>  | 3  |
| • <u>Eligibility Factors</u>   | 4  |
| • <u>Ineligible Sectors</u>  | 4  |
| • <u>Eligible Projects</u>   | 4  |
| • <u>Ineligible Projects</u>   | 5  |
| • <u>Critical Factors to Note</u>  | 5  |
| Section B – Grant Process  |    |
| • <u>Making an application</u>   | 6  |
| • <u>State Aid / Subsidy Control</u>   | 7  |
| • <u>Processing Applications</u>   | 8  |
| • <u>Advising of the Decision</u>  | 8  |
| • <u>Making a Claim</u>  | 8  |
| • <u>Post Award Monitoring</u>   | 9  |
| • <u>Publicity</u>   | 10 |
| Supporting Information   |    |
| - <u><a href="#">Business Key Fund Outputs and Outcomes</a></u>  |    |
| - <u><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus</a></u> |    |
| - <u><a href="#">Subsidy control   GOV.WALES</a></u>   |    |
| - <u><a href="#">UK Shared Prosperity Fund: branding and publicity (6) - GOV.UK</a></u>  |    |

Contact Information  
Conwy Business Support  
[business@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:business@conwy.gov.uk)  
01492 574574

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd

# SECTION A – KEY FACTORS

## Introduction

This project is funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) proactively supports delivery of the UK-government's five national missions: pushing power out to communities everywhere, with a specific focus to help kick-start economic growth and promoting opportunities in all parts of the UK. For more information, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>

The Supporting Local Key fund is a business development grant scheme to support our local commercial or social (where they are commercial active) businesses to thrive innovate and grow.

The key fund will enable the provision of grants to support economic growth and sustainability through the delivery of a range of business development projects in line with the supporting local business investment priority objectives.

- Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions
  - Promoting networking and collaboration, through interventions that bring together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth.
  - Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to undertake new-to-firm innovation, adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques, and start or grow their exports.
- ❖ The scheme is targeted at small and medium sized enterprises (employing up to 250 people) with either a turnover at less than €50 million or a balance sheet at less than €43 million.
  - ❖ The scheme offers funding of UP TO 70% on eligible capital and/or revenue expenditure for projects with awards offered from £5,000 up to £50,000
- Grants outside of the defined amounts may be considered in exceptional circumstances i.e. those delivering significant job creation or exemplar low carbon or decarbonisation infrastructure projects.*
- ❖ This grant scheme is discretionary and will be operated on a first come first serve basis dependent upon availability of funds and completion of the project within the detailed period.
  - ❖ The fund is not currently open to applications from recipients of grants through the previous round of UK SPF Business Key Fund
- In exceptional circumstances applications from previously funded Businesses may be considered where the project will directly deliver job creation*
- ❖ All offers of funding will be subject to approval of applications by a Grants Review Panel

- ❖ The grant will close to applications in November 2025 or at such time as the funds have been fully committed, if earlier
- ❖ Following confirmation of award all offers will need to have been accepted and have drawn down funds no later than December 2025 whichever is earlier.
- ❖ As a limited time fund all grants offers (in whole or in part) not drawn down in line with the above will automatically expire.

## **Eligibility Factors**

The scheme is targeted at small and medium sized enterprises (employing up to 250 people) with *either* a turnover at less than €50 million *or* a balance sheet at less than €43 million.

**To be eligible to receive investment support, businesses must be located and operating in the County of Conwy, have been actively trading over 6 months and registered with HMRC.**

To be considered, your project must deliver one or more of both the outputs and outcome



Business Key Fund  
Outputs and Outco

## **Ineligible Sectors**

- Coal/Steel
- Shipbuilding
- Synthetic fibres production
- Banks
- Insurance companies
- Housing
- Statutory education
- Statutory Health services
- Commercial & Residential Property Development
- Fisheries/aquaculture/agriculture and Annex 1 food production/milk substitutes/export related activities
- Gambling, Tobacco, Production of Weapons and Ammunition or any sectors that give rise to significant environmental impact or are ethically or morally controversial.

## **Eligible Projects / items**

Capital and revenue projects including (but not limited to)

- Capital equipment including tools
- New web / ecommerce sites

- Specialist training of business owner or staff (Standard training i.e. H&S, First Aid, Driving Lessons etc. will **not** be considered). Only short-term courses can be considered i.e. Courses completed within less than 6 months
- Specialist professional fees to achieve a tangible outcome (e.g. ISO, IIP)
- Installation/Labour costs for equipment/development works
- Carbon reduction projects i.e. solar panels/low energy lighting
- Digitalisation upgrade i.e. improving/initialising digital approaches

### **Ineligible Projects/Items**

Including (but not limited to)

- Activities which have already started (items cannot be purchased or ordered until grant approval has been given)
- Projects to satisfy statutory requirements
- Renewals i.e. replacement of old for new, upgrades of IT equipment & software, Maintenance and/or Running Costs
- Projects detrimental to the environment
- Projects without relevant statutory consents (if applicable)
- On road vehicles
- Items which are not essential for or that do not directly contribute to the success of the project
- Items (excluding machinery) which would not be considered fixtures e.g. removable furniture, decorative items, curtains and or blinds and certain types of flooring
- Purchase of Land and/or Property
- Operating / Normal business costs – e.g. Staff Costs, stock purchases
- Recoverable VAT
- Acquisition of assets under Hire Purchase (HP), Extended Credit Agreements or Lease

***It should also be noted that the minimum individual item cost is set at £100.***

### **Critical Factors to Note**

#### Quotations

- Original estimates/quotes for project items/works (2 itemised quotes for items/works costing up to £10,000, 3 itemised quotes for any item/works costing in excess of £10,000 or more)
- The quotes should follow the same template and where applicable be broken down into parts to show the costs of individual elements of work e.g. equipment cost /labour/installation costs.
- Quotes based on the applicant completing the works themselves will not be considered
- We will seek to ensure that all suppliers used by grant recipients work sustainably and where possible (balanced with Value for Money) would encourage the use of local supply and the positive impacts that supports.
- You are expected to secure best value by using your normal commercial procurement practices such as obtaining competitive quotes from suppliers. Copies of quotes you have selected should be supplied with your application to demonstrate the reasonableness of your expected costs. If you propose to use an associated company to undertake any of the project works, you must declare this to us. In this instance, you will be

required to ensure that the cost of works undertaken by the associated company exclude any profit element for either material costs or labour charges and at claim stage you will need to provide evidence that these costs have been verified by an independent Quantity Surveyor

### Cash Purchases

No funding will be paid where cash transactions have been undertaken.

### Retrospection

No funding will be paid on any retrospective expenditure.

## **SECTION B – GRANT PROCESS**

---

### **Making an Application**

#### Full Application

1. Prior to submitting an application, it is requested that you speak to a member of the Conwy Business Support team.
2. Please read carefully all the information and guidance provided and in particular note and understand all aspects of the application form and guidelines relating to the awarding of the Supporting Local Business Key Fund Grant.
3. Applications must be submitted via the online application form.
4. Where asked to provide commentary please include as much information as possible, including the sections to explain the project, its benefits, impact and how it will deliver the required outputs and outcomes. Commentary should clarify why grant funding is required for the project to proceed.
5. It is important to ensure that your application form is fully completed and that all supporting documentation is included at the time of submitting. This includes:
  - Up to date Business Plan
  - Most recent annual accounts  
*In some circumstances more than one year's financial information may be requested.*
  - If the business has not been trading long enough for accounts to be available a minimum of 3 months bank statements will be required to evidence trading
  - Projected Cash Flow & Profit & Loss Statement
  - Confirmation of Match funding
  - Confirmation of \*Planning Permission and / or Building Regulations (If applicable) including 'Change of Use'.
  - Proof of Ownership / lease if applicable (*As standard a minimum of 5 years remaining lease is required*)
  - Original estimates / quotes for project

- All Statutory Legal Requirements for the Business (if applicable)
- Confirmation of registration with HMRC
- Evidence of landlord approval (if applicable)

\* in cases where planning permissions are in process but not yet received applications can be considered but any offer of funding would be conditional on the receipt of the relevant approvals/permission being received.

If not available at the time of offer evidence of the submission of any planning application will be required within 28 days of the date of the funding offer. Failure to do so could result if the offer of funding being withdrawn

Subject to the nature of the project if the relevant permission is not received within a period that we consider reasonable to ensure the project can be completed by Dec 2025, we reserve the right to withdraw the offer of funding

*Please note*

- Decisions on applications will be made based on the information provided in the application form, associated evidence and information checks that are conducted from other sources.
- Consideration will be given to the financial information such as turnover, in relation the amount of funding being requested.
- Additional evidence may be requested to support applications.
- If any data is incomplete or incorrect or the evidence provided is insufficient, we will contact, you.
- Failure to comply could delay a decision. Please note that the approval timescale does not commence until such time as all the documentation and information required is received by the Local Authority.

*You are reminded at this stage not to undertake any expenditure on the grant funded project until a formal decision has been reached on the bid and written confirmation of this has been received.*

- **No funding will be paid on retrospective expenditure**
- **No funding will be paid where cash transactions have been undertaken**

## **STATE AID / SUBSIDY CONTROL**

The grants will be awarded under Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA)  
Minimal financial assistance (MFA) allows public authorities to award low-value subsidies (up to £315,000)

Additional MFA cannot be given to a beneficiary that has already reached their MFA threshold.

As part of the application process, you will be required to:

- Declare your understanding the funding is offered as a subsidy under MFA
- Declare the MFA threshold specified in section 36(1) of the Act will not be exceeded by the enterprise receiving the proposed assistance

When making your declaration you should take into consideration all subsidy support (including grants) received through but not limited to the following schemes during the previous 3 fiscal years

De Minimis, 'Special Drawing Rights' (SDR), UK de minimis, 'Small Amounts of Financial Assistance' (SAFA, the current name), 'Small Amounts of Funding Exemption' (SAFE) and 'Minimal Financial Assistance' (MFA).

Examples could include Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) linked grants Economic Resilience Fund, Start-up Grant, Freelancer Fund, and Local Authority Discretionary Fund, Conwy Business Support Grant.

Further guidance on subsidy control can be found here [Subsidy control | GOV.WALES](#)

## **Processing Your Application**

On receipt of your full application form the Council will: -

- Check that all the details provided are in order and if not inform you of what further information is required.
- Undertake consultation which may include:
  - A bank reference
  - A search with a credit reference agency in relation to your business. *The agency will keep a record of that search and may share that information with other agencies.*
  - Make enquiries with respect to company director(s) with a credit reference agency.
  - Local searches e.g. Council tax and/or non-domestic rates
- Refer the application to the Grants Panel for a decision. *Each application shall be considered on merit and in accordance with the scheme's aims and objectives*

*Please note that processing of a complete application can take up to 40 working days*

## **Advising of the decision**

You will be informed of the decision by email. If successful you will be advised of the amount of funding offered and any specific conditions relating to the award.

Attached to the email / letter will be the 'Terms & Conditions' contract that you must adhere to. This must be *signed and returned within 14 days* as acceptance of the funding offer.

Failure to return the signed Terms and Conditions could result in the offer of funding being withdrawn

## **Making a Claim**

All our funding is on a defrayed basis

- i.e. the claimant must spend the money first and they then claim the agreed amount back as stated in the grant offer letter.
- Project works must be complete i.e. items delivered & installed, building works completed

With prior agreement and where project has distinct separate elements, we may consider interim claim - we would usually do this in 1 / 2 instalments depending on the project and it's spend profile.

- Example 1 - Installation of solar panels and new production machinery could be two separate elements and instalments could be requested
- Example 2 – purchase of materials and completion of related works would not be considered separate elements instalments cannot be considered

Following confirmation of award all offers will need to have been accepted and have drawn down funds no later than December 2025

As a limited time fund all grants offers (in whole or in part) not drawn down in line with the above will automatically expire.

When submitting a claim, this must include

- A completed claim form including the required information and supporting evidence for the outputs and outcomes achieved
- All relevant receipted accounts/invoices (*invoices must not pre-date the signed and returned offer letter/contract*).
- Copies of corresponding bank statements showing payments going out of the company's accounts will also be required.
- Photographs where applicable
- Where payments have been made by Credit card you will need to submit that full payments have been made to the credit card company.
- Evidence of serial numbers for any capital equipment (if applicable)

The Council will satisfy itself that the activity for which the funding was awarded (works undertaken or purchases made) has been carried out fully in accordance with the proposal made within the application and any conditions attached to the approval. This may be by inspection or such other means as the Council determines. When all the above is completed, the Council will release the funding to your Business Bank Account by means of BACS payment.

Please note that it could take up to 20 working days for payments to be processed and reached your account.

## **Post Award Monitoring**

Monitoring of agreed outputs will be undertaken post completion of the project. Businesses are required to participate and complete any / all monitoring and evaluation undertaken by the council or companies acting on behalf of the council.

During the 3-year funding compliance period the Council, or its agents, may undertake further monitoring and review this may include visiting your premises to carry out a monitoring inspection of the business and Supporting Local Business Key Fund Grant funded aided assets.

All successful applicants will be required to provide evidence that the outputs and outcomes have been achieved. Details of the acceptable forms of evidence can be found in the Supporting Local Business Key Fund Outputs and Outcomes



Business Key Fund  
Outputs and Outcomes

On projects that have stated job creation as an output, the Council will require evidence of the employment factors.

For all other projects evidence of how the Support Local Business Key Fund Grant award has impacted the business must be demonstrated by the applicant.

### **PUBLICITY**

Conwy Council and UK Government shall be entitled to make public in such a manner as they may require details of the grant offered/paid to the Grant Recipient for the purposes of publicity should it so require.

It is also expected that any Grant Recipient if requested, will take part in any marketing campaigns relating to the Conwy Business Support and/or Conwy Shared Prosperity Fund programmes.

If you are successful in receiving support through Conwy Business Support and the Conwy Shared Prosperity Fund, there is a requirement for you to acknowledge this financial support, please refer to the [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: branding and publicity \(6\) - GOV.UK](#)

---

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

---



Conwy Business Support  
[business@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:business@conwy.gov.uk)  
01492 574574