

Funded by UK Government  Wedi ei ariannu gan Llywodraeth y DU

CONWY SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS KEY FUND – Town Centre Property Grant

Criteria and Guidance

Mae'r ffurflen 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 is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. For more information, visit

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus>

The fund would support our local (commercial or social) businesses by offering grants to support improvement to the external appearance of commercial properties, regeneration and the overall visual impact of the town centre.

Projects will be considered under UK Government defined Business Intervention W16

- Investment in open markets and improvements to town centre retail and service sector infrastructure, with wrap around support for small businesses.

And deliver the following outcomes and outputs

Outcomes

- Increased amount of investment

Outputs

- Number of commercial buildings completed or improved
- Amount of commercial space completed or improved

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 80% on eligible expenditure for projects with awards offered from £3,000 up to £15,000

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

This enhanced 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 timeframe.

All offers of funding will be subject to approval of applications by a Grants Review Panel. This is a discretionary grant and the decision of the Grant Review Panel is final. There is no appeals process.

The grant will close to applications in September 2024 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 1st November 2024.

There will be no extension to this deadline. 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.

The Grant offers support for retail and commercial building occupiers and owners to enhance building frontages.

Leaseholders will be required to provide evidence of the landlord's written consent for the works.

Eligible Works:

Projects including (but not limited to)

- Shopfronts including cosmetic and minor structural improvements
- Improved Display Windows
- Signage
- Windows & Doors
- External Lighting
- Rainwater goods
- Rendering, stone cleaning and re pointing

Ineligible Works

- Internal works
- Works on premises which offer overnight accommodation e.g. Flats, hotels, Airbnb, bed and breakfast accommodation, etc.
- Works to provide/improve property for residential properties are ineligible
- Works on premises to be used for premises in the Gambling, Tobacco, Production of Weapons and Ammunition sectors or any sectors that give rise to significant environmental impact or are ethically or morally controversial.
- Activities which have already started (items cannot be purchased or ordered until grant approval has been given)
- Works or projects to satisfy statutory requirements
- Materials only applications where work is being undertaken by owner / occupier, unless they are established in the relevant trade.

Due to the short timescales of the grant, in cases where planning permissions / building regulations / Conservation approval are in process but not yet confirmed applications can be considered but any offer of funding would be conditional on the receipt of the relevant approvals / permission being received.

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 project items/works costing in excess of £10,000 or more)

It is expected that any work completed be carried out by a suitable, established tradesperson or company.

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.

Cash Purchases

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

Credit Card Purchases

Where payments are made by credit card, you will need to submit evidence that full payments have been made to the credit card company.

Retrospection

No funding will be paid on any expenditure incurred before the date of approval.

All of 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.

SECTION B – GRANT PROCESS

Making an Application

Full Application

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:

- Most recent annual accounts
- Confirmation of Match funding, either by way of the above, savings account statements, or loan agreement
- Confirmation of Planning Permission, Conservation and / or Building Regulations (if applicable)
- Proof of Ownership or lease along with landlord consent
- Original estimates / quotes for project
- All Statutory Legal Requirements for the Business (if applicable)
- Confirmation of registration with HMRC
- Photographs of relevant areas of the property prior works being undertaken

** 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*

Decisions on applications will be made based on the information provided in the application form, associated evidence and information checks.

Additional evidence may be requested to support application.

If any data is incomplete or incorrect or the evidence provided is insufficient we will contact you.

Failure to comply could delay a decision, as incomplete applications will not be processed.

You are reminded at this stage not to undertake any works or expenditure on the

grant funded project until a formal decision has been reached on the bid and written confirmation of this has been received.

Where asked to do so please provide as much information as possible to explain the project and what works you intend to undertake.

In particular you should be aware that:

- **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 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 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.

Processing Your Application

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

- Check that you have provided all the required information, and that all the details provided are in order and if not inform you of what further information is required.

- CCBC reserve the right to carry out a site visit as part of the application process.
- 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, and shall be dependent upon the availability of funding.*

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 letter will be the 'Terms & Conditions' contract that you must adhere to. This has to be *signed and returned within 28 days* as acceptance of the funding offer.

Making a Claim

Claims will not be processed until such time as all supporting documentation is received e.g. Signed terms and conditions, evidence of Planning, Building or Conservation permissions etc.

We would usually do this in 1 instalment depending on the project and its spend profile.

Following confirmation of award all offers will need to have been accepted and have drawn down funds no later than 1st November 2024.

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

When submitting a claim, proof of expenditure will be required. This must include

- 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. If payments are made by credit card, you will need to submit evidence that full payments have been made to the credit card company.

No cash transactions will be accepted as part of a claim.

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.

Conwy County Borough Council or its officers or its agents acting on its behalf are not liable for any poor workmanship nor do they provide any guarantee. Funding cannot be released until such a time as the Council is satisfied the required standards have been achieved.

When all the above is completed the Council will release the funding to your Business Bank Account by means of BACS payment.

Post Award Monitoring

During the 3 year funding compliance period the Council, or its agents, may visit your premises in order to carry out a monitoring inspection of the premises.

The applicant is required for a period of 3 years from the date the grant is paid to keep the property and the works which are grant aided in a good and substantial state of repair and condition

All successful applicants will be required to participate in a monitoring review as requested

The local authority or the UK Government reserves the right to display on the property, in a location to be agreed between the local authority and the applicant, a temporary and/or permanent sign declaring their assistance in the works. The sign/banner will be provided by CCBC at its own cost.

CONTACT DETAILS

 <p>CONWY CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</p>	<p>Conwy Business Support business@conwy.gov.uk 01492 574574</p>