

# HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

## UKSPF BUSINESS GRANTS FUND: GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS



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### 1. Introduction

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is the replacement of the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF). The UKSPF funding is given directly to local authorities to invest in three local priorities: communities and place, support for local businesses and people and skills.

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

Harborough District Council has agreed to set up this business grants scheme funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund under intervention number E23.

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow, and innovate, including through local networks.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-interventions-outputs-and-indicators/interventions-list-for-england>

### 2. Primary Outcomes

This scheme will support Harborough district businesses to invest in projects that will support them to grow. Applicants must apply under one of the following streams:

### 2.1 UKSPF – Go Digital

Supports digital technology solutions which improve business performance and encourage wider/online access to customers, (e.g., Digital marketing, Software & hardware, Mobile Apps, digital training/ courses, digital signage, cyber security etc.)

### 2.2 UKSPF – Go Green

Helps businesses to reduce their carbon footprints, increase energy efficiency and reduce operating costs (e.g., adopting green transport solutions, including Bikes, E-bikes, E-Vehicles, LED lighting, solar panels, insulation, and heating pumps etc.)

### 2.3 UKSPF – Go Innovate

Support for new products or methods within your business to help improve efficiencies and create business growth.

## 3. Eligibility Criteria

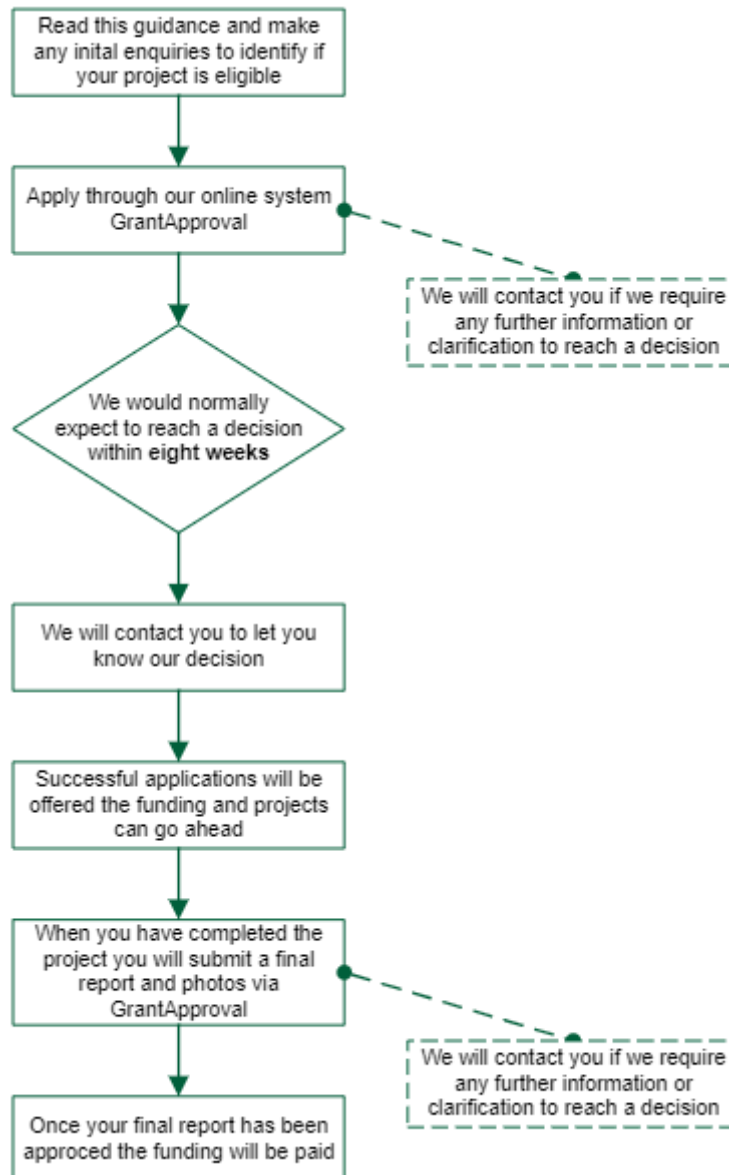
- 3.1 Organisations that are in administration, insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made, are not eligible for funding under this scheme.
- 3.2 Applicants must have worked with the Leicestershire Business Advice Service to identify a project that will support the business to grow to apply for this grant.
- 3.3 The application must be for a grant of between £500 and £2000.
- 3.4 The project and business must be based in the Harborough District.
- 3.5 Businesses must have been trading for a minimum of 12 months to qualify for grant funding.
- 3.6 As part of their application process for the scheme, all businesses will be required to self-certify that they meet all eligibility criteria.
- 3.7 The grant amounts given to individual businesses will be subject to subsidy allowances.
- 3.8 Any business type can apply, sole traders, partnerships, limited companies, CIC's, and social enterprises etc. although not charities.
- 3.9 For the purposes of this grant scheme, a business is trading if it is engaged in business activity. This should be interpreted as carrying on a trade/ profession or buying and selling goods or services in order to generate turnover. Fully constituted businesses in liquidation, dissolved, struck off or subject to a striking-off notice are not eligible under these conditions.

- 3.10 Only one grant per business is permitted across all three schemes, within one financial year.
- 3.11 Organisations that received a grant in 2023 under the 'Go Digital', 'Go Green' or 'Go Innovate' schemes can apply, however, organisation that did not will take priority.
- 3.12 Match funding is not an absolute requirement, because the Council recognises that businesses are committed by paying for the good/services upfront. However, applications which demonstrate that they have match funding are more likely to be supported, as they demonstrate that the business or other funders are contributing towards overall costs.
- 3.13 The council requires the following information for all applicants:
- A. Name of business
  - B. Business Trading Address including postcode
  - C. Unique identifier (preferably Company Reference Number (CRN)) if applicable. If not applicable, VAT Registration Number, Self-assessment/Partnership Number, National Insurance Number, Unique Taxpayer Reference, Registered Charity Number will also be acceptable)
  - D. Nature of Business
  - E. Date business established
  - F. Number of employees
  - G. Business rate account number (if applicable)
- 3.14 In accepting the grant, the business confirms is eligible and where they no longer meet the eligibility criteria, they will be required to contact the Council.
- 3.15 Where relevant, the project must have any permissions or licences needed before a grant can be approved. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Planning permission.
  - Buildings regulations approval.
  - Conservation area consent.
  - Listed building consent.
  - Appropriate ecclesiastical permission.
  - Consent of landlord where the applicant is a tenant or leases the building/land.
  - Waste carrier's licence.
  - Relevant health and safety and insurance requirements including risk assessments where relevant.
  - Photo permission forms.

3.16 This funding may only be used for new projects. Projects must not start before the grant is approved.

## 4. Application Process

4.1 A diagram of the funding process:



4.2 The council will only accept online applications, and these must be made via the [www.grantapproval.co.uk](http://www.grantapproval.co.uk) website, please see Section 5.1 for further information.

4.3 If you have any initial enquiries about the grant scheme you can email us at [business@harborough.gov.uk](mailto:business@harborough.gov.uk). You should discuss an application that you have submitted or an ongoing grant with us using the 'Comments' tab in the online system.

## 5. Application Form

5.1 The council will only accept online applications, and these must be made via the [www.grantapproval.co.uk](http://www.grantapproval.co.uk) website. If you have not used this system before, you will need to register for an account. Once you are registered and logged onto the system, select 'Harborough' as your local authority and click 'find schemes'. The title of the fund in the online system is 'Go Digital, Go Green or Go Innovate'. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they provide the correct and accurate information the first time.

### 5.2 Application – Questions

You should complete the following information within the online application form:

<p>Go Digital questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Please describe the product or service you wish to purchase with this grant and explicitly mention the supplier you wish to go for (you will be asked to upload two quotes later on in the application).</li><li>2. Please outline the need for these purchases and why this is the most appropriate purchase for the business.</li><li>3. Please explain how this digital project will make your business more efficient or enable you to grow.</li><li>4. When are you looking to purchase these items/services?</li></ol>
<p>Go Green questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Please describe the product or service you wish to purchase with this grant and explicitly mention the supplier you wish to go for (you will be asked to upload two quotes later on in the application).</li><li>2. Please outline the need for these purchases and why this is the most appropriate purchase for the business.</li><li>3. Please explain how this grant will help your business to reduce it's carbon footprint.</li><li>4. When are you looking to purchase these items/services?</li></ol>
<p>Go Innovate questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Please describe the product or service you wish to purchase with this grant and explicitly mention the supplier you wish to go for (you will be asked to upload two quotes later on in the application).</li><li>2. Please outline the need for these purchases and why this is the most appropriate purchase for the business?</li><li>3. Please explain how this project will help to innovate your business and the impact this will have.</li><li>4. When are you looking to purchase these items/services</li></ol>

### 5.3 Application - Required Documents

You should upload the following documents to your online application:

- **Bank Statement (Mandatory)**

Please provide a bank statement to match the bank details provided on the application. This needs to clearly show the bank account name, sort code and account number. Please note this grant can't be paid into an individual account. The bank account name must correspond with the name of the organisation applying for funding.

- **Leicestershire Business Advice Service (LBAS) Action Plan**  
The applicant must be referred to the programme through the Leicestershire Business Advice Service. Please upload your action plan developed with a LBAS Business Adviser, where your grant project has been identified.
- **Quotations (Mandatory)**  
Please provide at least two quotations for any assets, products, equipment, or services that will be made from this grant. These quotations should be from different suppliers.
- **Permissions (If Applicable)**  
Please provide evidence of relevant permissions or licences obtained. Further information is available in Section 3.15.
- **Ownership or lease (If Applicable)**  
If any alterations/works are proposed to a building or land, please provide proof of ownership, or the lease agreement in place. If the property is leased, please also provide a letter of permission from the landlord.

## 6. Disclaimers

- 6.1 Harborough District Council reserves the right to vary the terms of the UKSPF Business Grant Scheme. Every effort would be made to inform organisations that have registered their interest with the Council of any such changes.
- 6.2 Harborough District Council reserves the right to pause applications to the UKSPF Business Grant Scheme to evaluate the programme and implement any necessary changes. Every effort would be made to inform organisations that have registered their interest with the Council of any such changes.
- 6.3 FINANCES – Any grant awarded will normally be paid in arrears. If the outcomes have not been achieved to the satisfaction of the grants team, the Council reserves the right to re-consider the final amount of funding to be awarded, based on the outcomes achieved by the project.
- 6.4 TAX - Any grant received may be subject to tax and organisations may wish to consult HM Revenue and Customs or a qualified, independent financial advisor.

- 6.5 PUBLICITY - Any organisation receiving a grant must agree to publicly acknowledge receipt of the grant, display relevant logos, and agree to participate in any publicity or promotional activities associated with the funding. In addition, they must agree to participate in any monitoring and reporting required by the Council, whether specifically noted in the grant approval notification or not. Such reporting, monitoring and publicity may help inform whether similar funding is offered in future.
- 6.6 INFORMATION - Personal data supplied on the application form and any supporting documentation will be held on our systems and will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and Freedom of Information Act 2000. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management planning and the provision of services by the Council. You can find further information about our relevant policies on our website here: <https://www.harborough.gov.uk/information>
- 6.7 FRAUD - The online application system will undertake anti-fraud checks and various checks will be made on each application and grant awarded. Any applicant caught falsifying their records to gain grant money will face prosecution and any funding issued will be recovered, as will any grants paid in error.