

# Enterprising North West Leicestershire

## Frequently asked questions

The following frequently asked questions provide information to those interested in applying for an Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant.

### **Will my business be eligible to apply for an Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant?**

Your business must be a small or medium-sized enterprise i.e. you must employ less than 250 staff, and be based in North West Leicestershire i.e. you must pay business rates to North West Leicestershire District Council.

We are targeting the grants towards businesses, sectors and priorities that we believe to be important to the future economic prosperity of North West Leicestershire. Please read our [Eligibility criteria](#) document (create link).

### **Who can apply?**

The applicant must be authorised to apply on behalf of the business. If the grant application is successful, the applicant will have to sign a legal agreement which will set out specific and general terms and conditions relating to the Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant. This agreement will be between the business and North West Leicestershire District Council.

### **How can I use the money?**

Enterprising North West Leicestershire grants are intended to fund investment projects involving the following:

- Machinery acquisition
- Property improvement
- Building expansions
- Infrastructure improvement
- IT and telecommunications
- Innovation (to be defined by each applicant).

The application process will require the applicant to explain the nature of the proposed investment project and how this will lead to new jobs in North West Leicestershire and other priority outcomes explained in the [Eligibility criteria](#) (create link).

### **How much money can I ask for?**

Enterprising North West Leicestershire grants are for a minimum of £5,000 and a maximum of £25,000.

The grant will make up a maximum of one third (33%) of the total cost of the investment project. Your business is expected to contribute a minimum of two thirds (66%) of the total costs of the investment project.

Because of the level of grants available, this means the total project cost will need to be a minimum of £15,000 and could exceed £75,000.

.

## **Can the Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant help pay for a project that has already started?**

No. The application process will require you to describe the nature of the investment project that you are planning.

Once we have reviewed your Expression of Interest, you will be invited to complete a Full Application which will require you to submit **three** quotes for costs related to your project.

You will need to be able to show that the project could not go ahead without the financial support from North West Leicestershire District Council and that the investment will enable the business to grow and lead to the recruitment of local people into new jobs.

## **What will the application process involve?**

Application for an Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant will be in two stages. You can see the [Expression of Interest](#) and [Full Application](#) here.

Once you've submitted your Expression of Interest, we will review your project outline to make sure what you are proposing meets the agreed [Eligibility criteria](#) (create link). If we are interested in supporting what is proposed, you will be invited to complete the [Full Application](#) (create link).

The [Expression of Interest](#) will ask you to provide some details of your business and the nature of the investment project that you are proposing. You will also need to provide a breakdown of the costs involved in the project, the sources of finance for the investment and what economic benefits your project will achieve.

We will ask you whether you've received financial support from any public sector organisation within the last three years. There are limits to the financial support that can be offered to individual private sector organisations, and we need to make sure that you and the council stay within the law.

The [Full Application](#) will ask you to outline a plan for the investment project, such as:

- Stages in the project and dates
- How many new jobs will be created and when
- How the project will support growth in your business
- Your marketing and sales strategy
- The key people involved in your business and in the investment project.

You will be asked to provide copies of a number of documents that will be important during the review of your application such as:

- Financial and management accounts
- Cashflows
- Profit and loss forecasts

- Balance sheet
- Three quotes
- Confirmation of other sources of finance.

We will also ask to see copies of documents related to your business premises, such as your lease agreement or title document.

### **How do I submit my application?**

Please send your completed Expression of Interest or Full Application (once invited) to [businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk).

Alternatively, you can post your complete form to the following address:

Business Focus  
North West Leicestershire District Council  
Council Offices,  
Whitwick Road,  
Coalville,  
Leicestershire, LE67 3FJ

### **How will North West Leicestershire District Council decide whether my application is successful?**

Once your Expression of Interest has been submitted, we will check to make sure your business meets the agreed eligibility criteria and that your investment project is in line with the intended purpose of the grant scheme.

If we are satisfied with your Expression of Interest, you will be invited to submit a Full Application. If not, you will be given feedback. We aim to give responses to your Expression of Interest **within a week (ten working days)** of submission.

Once you have submitted your Full Application and all of the necessary supporting documentation, we will review the information that has been provided.

Your Full Application will be considered by a panel of reviewers. Each panel will consist of a minimum of three people, at least two of whom should be external to the Council (i.e. not directly employed by or elected to the Council) including representatives of North West Leicestershire District Council, local businesses, and other organisations involved in the economic development of North West Leicestershire.

There will be frequent panel meetings. We aim to give you a decision on your application **within six weeks (thirty working days)** of submission of your Full Application and all necessary supporting documents.

The decision of the panel will be final. There is no opportunity to appeal against the panel's decision. If your application is not successful, we will give you feedback on the reasons behind the panel's decision. We may invite you to submit a revised application.

### **When will the grant be paid?**

The grant will be paid once you have submitted receipted invoices for the expenditure detailed in your Full Application proposal. .

We will then pay the amount that has been agreed, or less, if the actual cost of the project is lower than the estimate.

### **Is there a deadline?**

We currently plan to close the Enterprising North West Leicestershire business grant scheme to new applications at the end of December 2017, or when all funding is fully allocated. Applications will be considered on a 'first come first served' basis.

We will provide up-to-date information about this deadline at [www.nwleics.gov.uk/businessgrants](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/businessgrants).

### **Is there a risk of clawback?**

Yes. During the application process, you will be asked to explain how many and when new jobs will be created.

New employees are required to start within twelve months of the grant being paid, and the job must be sustained for a minimum of 12 months after the employee has started.

We will monitor the number of jobs created and all other conditions of the grant scheme.

We will consider whether to seek to recover some or all of the grant paid if you do not meet the conditions agreed with you when the grant was approved.

### **Are there any other restrictions?**

We've already explained that you'll be asked to confirm that the grant applied for will not result in breaking the laws about organisations receiving public money.

We will require your business and your investment proposal to comply with all regulations that apply to your business and the project for which the grant is requested.

If your project involves work on a property, in addition to planning permission, you will be expected to comply with all other usual legislation such as Building Regulations.

### **What if I sell the property, or my business?**

We will ask you to let us know if you have plans to sell the property or the business that has received a grant, for a period of three years after the grant was paid.

We will consider whether to seek to recover some or all of the grant paid if you sell your property or business.

**What about publicity?**

We are very keen to generate good news stories about businesses that receive North West Leicestershire grants and the new jobs that will be created, so may require you to participate in publicity, ranging from press releases and social media activity to media interviews and filming.

We will encourage you to do your own publicity so that the Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant does help your business to grow.

We will ask you to mention your receipt of an Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant from North West Leicestershire District Council.

**What if I change my mind?**

You will be free to withdraw from the application process at any stage. Once your Full Application has been reviewed and approved by the panel, you will be asked to sign to confirm your acceptance of the conditions that will apply to the Enterprising North West Leicestershire grant.

Once you have received the grant you will be expected to comply with all conditions set out in the agreement between your business and North West Leicestershire District Council. As mentioned above, there will be a risk of clawback in certain situations (such as your failure to recruit and sustain local people in new jobs).

**How much money is available?**

North West Leicestershire District Council has allocated £100,000 towards the Enterprising North West Leicestershire business grant scheme, to be spent before December 2017.

**Who should I contact?**

Please contact Business Focus on 01530 454609 or email [businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:businessfocus@nwleicestershire.gov.uk) if you any remaining questions.