

INTRODUCTION

During these difficult times, many individuals and businesses in Herefordshire are becoming increasingly concerned about how they will cope. Support is available.

Whether you're a business looking for advice on how best to manage your debts or you're an individual looking for new employment – this interactive signposting tool is designed to point you in the right direction.

There are numerous organisations out there that offer business support services, including a number of schemes that have been created recently in reaction to the current recession. In addition to new schemes the criteria for some existing schemes have been eased to make them available to a wider range of businesses and individuals.

To give you an idea about what may be on offer, this signposting tool gives details about a range of services and support offered by various agencies and organisations, but note that there may be applicability constraints that are not noted here. These organisations offer general and tailored advice and guidance to businesses and workers in Herefordshire, so for specific information on a scheme or on how a particular organisation can help please contact them. Follow the links listed under [Business/Worker Support Organisations](#) (CLICK HERE) to navigate to their website, and to access contact information.

A number of schemes detailed in this document are part of the Governments 'Solutions for business' package. This package is aimed at providing business support to help companies start, grow and succeed. These schemes are usually accessed via Business Link.

While some businesses are suffering as a result of the recession there are many that are still doing well. Many of the products and schemes in here will help businesses to expand and develop, and become more productive as well as keeping going during a downturn. All businesses need to keep in mind that the downturn will end and they need to be ready for the new opportunities as they arise.

This document is updated on a regular basis and therefore if you would like the updated versions please can you register at the email address below.

There is also a spotlight section within the Contents List which highlights the changes between versions, showing which schemes have been added and which ones have been amended.

(Please note that some versions of Microsoft Word will require you to press and hold the Control key in order to navigate this document using the Hyperlinks.)

This document has been put together by Herefordshire Council, Economic Development Service. If you require any further information or have any problems using this interactive tool please do not hesitate to contact Lyndsay McCron, Economic Development Officer – Business Support & Funding on Tel: 01432 383633 or email economicinvestment@herefordshire.gov.uk.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES & EMPLOYEES IN HEREFORDSHIRE CONTENTS LIST

LIST OF SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

SPOTLIGHT

New Schemes

[Director Development Programme](#)

[Small Business Rates Relief](#)

Amended Schemes

Environmental Land Management Funding replaced with [Environmental Stewardship Grant for Research and Development](#)

Added Contacts

[Rural Shops Alliance](#)

LIST OF SUPPORT

BUSINESS SUPPORT - EMPLOYERS

[Business Health Check](#)

[Action for Business](#)

[Help managing your Cashflow](#)

[Business Payment Support Service](#)

[Jobcentre Plus – Training and Recruitment](#)

[Jobcentre Plus – Business Support through Redundancies](#)

[Jobcentre Plus – Employee support through Redundancies](#)

[Real Help for Businesses – Enterprise Finance Guarantee](#)

[Real Help for Businesses – Working Capital Scheme](#)

[Real Help for Businesses – Capital for Enterprise Fund](#)

SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESS

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463>

The Solutions for Business portfolio comprises new and simplified publicly-funded support services for businesses in England. The portfolio currently includes:

Starting Up

[Starting a Business](#)

[Intensive Start-up Support](#)

[Starting a High-Growth Business](#)

Finance & Grants

[Understanding Finance for Business](#)

[Finance for Business](#)

[Grant for Business Investment](#)

[Small Loans for Business](#)

[Enterprise Finance Guarantee](#)

[Grant for Research & Development](#)

**Solutions
for Business**

Funded by
government

Employing People

Train to Gain

Grow your own business

Coaching for high growth

Business Collaboration Networks

Manufacturing Advisory Service

Business Premises

Exploit your ideas

Innovation advice and guidance

Designing Demand

Business Growth – Specialist Facilities and Environments

International Trade

Maximising Foreign Direct Investment

Developing Your International Trade Potential

Accessing International Markets

Other support

Improving your Resource Efficiency

Environmental Land Management Advice

Collaborative Research & Development

Networking for Innovation

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships











Innovation Vouchers











Low Carbon Energy Demonstration

SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES & INDIVIDUALS

Find out about Training, Recruitment and dealing with Redundancy

BUSINESS/WORKER SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

<p>Business Link Business Link is the first stop for impartial and expert information, support and advice needed to help businesses develop and make them more successful. www.businesslinkwm.gov.uk Tel: 0845 113 1234 Credit Crunch Hotline: 0845 002 0900</p> 	<p>Chamber of Commerce Hereford & Worcester The Chamber of Commerce helps businesses by providing access to help, advice, support and growth opportunities. <small>easy</small> http://www.hwchamber.co.uk/ Tel: 0845 641 1641 email: enquiries@hwchamber.co.uk</p> 	<p>Advantage West Midlands (AWM) AWM's role is to lead the economic development of the West Midlands, working alongside a wide range of public, private and voluntary sectors partners to help the region to prosper. http://www.advantagemw.co.uk/ Tel: 0121 380 3500</p> 
<p>Jobcentre Plus Jobcentre Plus is a government agency supporting people of working age from welfare into work, advising on benefits, and helping employers to fill their vacancies. www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk Tel: 01432 363636</p> 	<p>Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) BERR - the Department for Business - is here to help ensure business success in an increasingly competitive world. Their role is to boost productivity and keep the UK competitive and an attractive place to do business, especially in challenging economic times, as well as to help companies succeed overseas and to bring foreign investment to the UK. http://www.berr.gov.uk/ Tel: 020 7215 5000</p>	<p>Directgov Directgov is the website of the UK government providing information and online services for the public. http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/index.htm</p> 
<p>Learning Skills Council The Learning and Skills Council exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. The LSC has a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to ensure we have a workforce of world-class standard. http://www.lsc.gov.uk/ 0845 019 4188 HWinfo@lsc.gov.uk</p> 	<p>Advisory, Conciliation & Arbitration Service (ACAS) ACAS aims to improve organisations and working life through better employment relations. Help with employment relations by supplying up-to-date information, independent advice and high quality training, and working with employers and employees to solve problems and improve performance. http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1461</p> 	<p>Citizens Advice Bureau The Citizens Advice service helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free information and advice from over 3,200 locations, and by influencing policymakers. http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index.htm Tel: 0844 826 9685 Email: info@herefordshirecab.org.uk</p> 
<p>Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) The Federation of Small Businesses is a member organisation promoting and protecting the interests of the self-employed and owners of small firms within the UK. http://www.fsb.org.uk/default.aspx?loc=general&id=0 Tel: 01386 750032</p> 	<p>Princes Trust Around one in five young people in UK are not in work, education or training. offer is practical and financial support to young people (generally under 30), and help to develop key skills, confidence and motivation, enabling young people to move into work, education or training. http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/</p> 	<p>Natural England Natural England is an independent public body whose purpose is to protect and improve England's natural environment and encourage people to enjoy and get involved in their surroundings. http://www.naturalengland.org.uk Tel: 01905 362970</p>

<p>DEFRA DEFRA (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) is a Government Department in the UK. The overarching challenge for Defra is to secure a healthy environment in which we and future generations can prosper.</p>  <p>http://www.defra.gov.uk/</p>	<p>WiRE Women in Rural Enterprise provides a range of general support and business services to woman engaged in rural businesses. WiRE also encourages links with local and national government bodies and large companies in order to enhance the overall range of business services available to women in rural business.</p> <p>http://www.wireuk.org/</p>	<p>HEART of ENGLAND Fine Foods (HEFF) (HEFF) is the regional food group for the West Midlands representing local producers.</p>  <p>HEFF builds relationships with food retailers, wholesalers and food-service companies. With these links and their knowledge of the food industry they provide a range of schemes to support food and drink producers in the West Midlands, eg. introducing them to new markets and helping them develop their businesses.</p> <p>http://www.heff.co.uk/</p>
<p>Groundwork Groundwork is a federation of Trusts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland each working with their partners to improve the quality of the local environment, the lives of local people and the success of local businesses in areas in need of investment and support. Groundworks run the Herefordshire Business Environment Association and can advise on most environmental matters affecting your business.</p> <p>Tel: 0121 236 8565 http://www.groundworkswm.org.uk</p> 	<p>Economic Development Service Herefordshire Council</p>  <p>The Economic Development Team is the local contact for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting in business • Signposting to funding and general advice • Commercial property searches • Business directory • Redundant building grant • Infrastructure and workspace projects. <p>Tel: 01432 383633</p>	<p>Train to Gain</p>  <p>Train to Gain is the national skills Service that support employers of all sizes and in all sectors, to improve the skills of their employees as a route to improving business performance. The Service offers skills advice on everything from Investors in People, basic skills through to leadership and management training.</p> <p>http://www.traintogain.gov.uk Tel: 0800 015 55 45</p>
<p>Riverside Training Riverside Training is an independent training provider based in Hereford. They offer work-based learning through nationally accredited qualifications to meet the needs of individuals and business.</p> <p>http://www.riverside-training.co.uk Tel: 01432 359244</p> 	<p>UKTI UK Trade & Investment works with UK-based businesses to ensure their success in international markets.</p>  <p>http://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk Tel: 020 7215 8000</p>	<p>HM Revenue & Customs HM Revenue & Customs collects the bulk of UK tax & revenue and also helps to support families and workers through the benefits & credits they administer.</p>  <p>http://www.hmrc.gov.uk HMRC has a number of contact numbers dependant on the area you would like to discuss, please see the website for these numbers.</p>
<p>Evans Easyspace The Rural Enterprise Centre at Rotherwas, Hereford is an exciting new development offering fully serviced offices & workshops on flexible terms.</p> <p>http://www.evanseasyspace.com Tel: 0800 039 3900</p> 	<p>MAS The Manufacturing Advisory Service aims to address the practical needs of British Manufacturers by delivering hands-on advice and assistance from experts in a wide range of manufacturing disciplines.</p> <p>http://www.mas-wm.org Tel: 0845 245 0845</p>	<p>Rural Shops Alliance</p>  <p>The Rural Shops Alliance is a national trade association working to support the owners of independent rural shops.</p> <p>http://www.rural-shops-alliance.co.uk Tel: 01305 752044</p>

BUSINESS HEALTH CHECK

A business health check tool that can help identify areas that could help improve performance and chances of survival – alternatively contact Business Link.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
This interactive tool helps you analyse key areas of your business' finance and administration with the aim of avoiding failure. It can help you work out whether your business could be in trouble, and shows how external business advisers can provide help and expertise.	This tool can only highlight where your business could encounter difficulties. Its conclusion should be used as an indicator only and should be discussed with professional business advisers.	This interactive tool is available to all individuals & businesses.	Business Link	http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&itemId=1080678461&r.l1=1073858783&r.lc=e&n&r.t=CAMPAIGN&site=131&r.i=1081750153&r.s=e

ACTION FOR BUSINESS

Action for Business is a programme run through BERR (Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform) focused on getting UK business through the global economic downturn and emerging stronger on the other side.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
Action for Business is a programme focused on helping UK business overcome current financial and economic challenges so it is stronger when the upturn does arrive.	<p>Real Help for Businesses Now In order to help businesses identify their financial needs, the Government has launched a 'One Stop Shop' Web portal.</p> <p>Real Help with Finances The government has introduced a new package of financial measures, as part of its Solutions for Business Portfolio, to provide real help to firms through the economic downturn. If you have short-term working capital constraints or are looking to invest to grow your business these schemes could help you.</p>	<p>The 'One Stop Shop' web portal is available to all.</p> <p>To find out if your business is eligible for Real Help with Finances through this product please contact the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform to discuss your individual circumstances.</p>	<p>Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR)</p> <p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.berr.gov.uk/aboutus/corporate/performance/actionforbusiness/index.html</p> <p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=CAMPAIGN&itemId=1081831680&r.li=1081837802&r.l1=1075193191&r.lc=en&r.pp=11&r.s=p</p>

HELP MANAGING YOUR CASHFLOW

A series of guides offered through Credit Management Matters - An online portal designed to help you get paid with tips from the UK centre of excellence and links to resources brought to you by leading industry professionals.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
Cashflow is critical to business survival but all too often the day to day challenge of running a business, particularly a smaller business, can mean losing sight of some of the skills for successful cashflow management.	This series of guides, developed in partnership with the Institute of Credit Management, is part of a series of initiatives providing practical support to help businesses help themselves through these difficult times.	These guides are available to all	Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR)	<p>http://www.creditmanagement.org.uk/berrguides.htm</p> <p>http://www.creditmanagement.org.uk</p>

BUSINESS PAYMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

A new dedicated Business Support Service designed to meet the needs of the businesses affected by the current economic conditions.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
If you are worried about being able to meet tax, National Insurance or other payments owed to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), or you anticipate that payments coming due will cause you problems, you can get in touch with them to discuss payment options to help you deal with temporary cashflow difficulties.	HMRC staff will review your circumstances and discuss temporary options tailored to your business needs, such as arranging for businesses to make payments over a longer period. They will not change additional late payment surcharges on payments included in the arrangement, although interest will continue to be payable on those taxes where it applies.	Businesses will need to discuss individual circumstances with a payment support adviser at HM Revenue & Customs.	HM Revenue & Customs	http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&itemId=1081597957&r.l1=1073858783&r.lc=e&n&r.t=CAMPAIGN&site=131&r.i=1081750153&r.s=e

JOBCENTRE PLUS – TRAINING & RECRUITMENT

Find your way . . . to help for your business with training, recruitment and redundancies.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>Jobcentre Plus can help businesses in the current economic climate, so you can be ready to take advantage of tomorrow's opportunities.</p> <p>Jobcentre Plus may be able to help businesses to develop the skills of the current workforce or recruit new talent by providing support and advice for the business and employees.</p>	<p>Employers who retain their staff and develop their workforce are best placed to respond to economic recovery because they have the talent to innovate and the expertise to maintain successful customer relationships.</p> <p>Businesses can invest in training and development for their employees now and draw on the wide range of services available, often at no direct cost. Jobcentre Plus can help access the right help and support.</p>	Businesses will need to discuss individual circumstances with an adviser at Jobcentre Plus.	Jobcentre Plus	www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk www.traintogain.gov.uk

JOBCENTRE PLUS – BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR REDUNDANCIES

Find your way . . . to help for your business with training, recruitment and redundancies.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>Redundancies are challenging for everyone involved. Jobcentre Plus along with their range of partners can provide tailored solutions to suit each business' circumstances, to minimise the impact and provide help and advice when redundancies are taking place.</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus provides a Rapid Response Service when businesses need to make 20 people or more redundant, but can also provide support when smaller redundancy levels are being considered. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A skills analysis to help identify transferable skills and training needs relevant to the local labour market. • Job-focused training to help individuals develop vocational skills needed within the local labour market. • An action fund to overcome individual more short-term barriers to taking up a specific job offer, e.g. travel to work expenses. 	<p>Businesses will need to discuss individual circumstances with an adviser at Jobcentre Plus.</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus</p> <p>Business Link should be contacted in the first instance for advice on alternatives to redundancies.</p>	<p>http://www.jobcentrepplus.gov.uk/JCP/Employers/redundancies/index.html</p>

JOBCENTRE PLUS – EMPLOYEE SUPPORT FOR REDUNDANCIES

Find your way . . . back to work.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>Jobcentre Plus along with their range of partners can help people make the journey back to work or develop training and redeployment plans for groups of employers from specific industries.</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus and their partners can support employees through an online and telephone-based service by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information about alternative jobs within the labour market • Matching them to known vacancies • Helping them draw up CVs • Helping them enhance their job search skills • Providing general information about benefits and taking claims. 	<p>Businesses will need to discuss individual circumstances with an adviser at Jobcentre Plus.</p>	<p>Jobcentre Plus</p>	<p>http://www.jobcentrepplus.gov.uk/JCP/Employers/redundancies/index.html</p>

REAL HELP FOR BUSINESSES – ENTERPRISE FINANCE GUARANTEE

This guarantee can be used to support new loans, refinance existing loans or convert part or all of an existing overdraft into a loan to release capacity to meet working capital needs.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The £1bn Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme will support up to £1.3bn of new lending by banks to viable SMEs with working capital or investment needs.</p> <p>THIS SCHEME WILL RUN UNTIL MARCH 2010</p>	<p>The guarantee can be used to support new loans, refinance existing loans or convert part or all of an existing overdraft into a loan to release capacity to meet working capital needs.</p> <p>Government will guarantee 75% of the loan. The EFG is available now through 26 lenders.</p>	<p>The Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme is open to businesses with an annual turnover of up to £25m, seeking loans of £1,000 to £1m, repayable over a period of 10 years.</p> <p>Most businesses in most sectors will be eligible for the scheme. However, state aid rules exclude businesses in the agriculture, coal and steel sectors.</p>	<p>Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform</p>	<p>http://www.berr.gov.uk</p>

REAL HELP FOR BUSINESSES – WORKING CAPITAL SCHEME

Government will provide banks with guarantees covering 50% of the risk on existing and new working capital portfolios worth up to £20bn.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>Government will provide banks with guarantees covering 50% of the risk on existing and new working capital portfolios with up to £20bn.</p> <p>FIRST £1BN TRANCHE OF THE SCHEME SHOULD BE OPERATIONAL BY 1ST MARCH 2009.</p>	<p>The guarantee is provided to a bank on a portfolio of loans to sound, creditworthy companies, which the bank has chosen to include in a portfolio which it has put forward to the Government and has been assessed by Government.</p>	<p>Business will benefit in two ways:</p> <p>The guarantee will secure £20bn worth of working capital credit lines for companies – ensuring they are safe from reduction or withdrawal.</p> <p>In addition, the guarantee will free up capital which the banks must use for new lending as a condition of this scheme. This is lending that would otherwise not have been provided.</p>	<p>Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform</p>	<p>http://www.berr.gov.uk</p>

REAL HELP FOR BUSINESSES – CAPITAL FOR ENTERPRISE FUND

This scheme will provide longer term capital to companies who have exhausted their traditional borrowing capacity.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The scheme was going to be run by professional fund managers. They will invest in the company and businesses will be able to use the capital injection to finance business development and take advantage of future opportunities.</p> <p>THIS SCHEME SHOULD BE IN PLACE AND READY TO BEGIN INVESTING BY THE END OF JANUARY 2009.</p>	<p>The Capital for Enterprise Fund is a new £75m equity fund, bringing together £50m of government money with £25m from major banks. It provides longer term capital to companies who have exhausted.</p>	<p>The Capital for Enterprise Fund is open to UK SMEs who are economically viable in the long term. The fund will enable them to raise new long-term finance, using equity finance to restructure their balance sheets and continue their growth.</p> <p>State aid rules currently prohibit agriculture and coal sectors.</p>	<p>Department for Business Enterprise & Regulatory Reform</p>	<p>http://www.berr.gov.uk</p>

EXPORT CREDIT INSURANCE

Helping UK exporters secure overseas contracts and invest overseas, by providing guarantees, insurance and re-insurance.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>To benefit the UK economy by helping exporters of UK goods and services win business, and UK firms to invest overseas, by providing Government-backed guarantees, insurance and re-insurance against the risk of non-payment when such support is unavailable from the commercial market.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Helps UK exporters to compete against foreign competitors by:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insuring export contracts for the supply of capital goods and services. • Providing loan guarantees to financial institutions so that they can finance exports • Insuring investments in overseas projects 	<p>Any person operating in the UK, who is exporting capital goods and services or is investing overseas, is eligible to apply for cover.</p> <p>Acceptance is subject to rigorous risk assessment of the exporter and buyer.</p>	<p>Business Link</p> <p>British Insurance Brokers Association (BIBA)</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=RESOURCES&itemId=1074298633</p> <p>http://www.biba.org.uk/ConsumerHome.aspx</p>

GRANT FOR BUSINESS INVESTMENT

GBI provides a grant to a business to support investment or job creation projects by a business that help it expand, rationalise, modernise or diversify.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>GBI is designed for businesses that are looking at the possibility of investing in a deprived area, but need financial help to go ahead.</p> <p>GBI has the aim of embedding sustainable improvements in the economies of the English regions by supporting investments projects by businesses currently operating in disadvantaged areas and by encouraging businesses to set up new establishments in these areas.</p> <p>Typically, a grant is offered to support the acquisition of key assets, such as buildings, plant and machinery and to support the creation of new jobs or to safeguard existing ones. Financial support is also available in some cases to meet the costs of running a new small enterprise in its early years.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Successful applicants typically receive around 10-15% of a project's total eligible capital expenditure but support can vary depending on the need and quality of the project, its location and size and the size of the applicant.</p> <p>There is a minimum application threshold of £10,000 assistance.</p> <p>Grant is normally calculated as a proportion of eligible capital investment or the cost of the jobs directly created by the project.</p>	<p>A project will be considered for GBI if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is located in an Assisted Area (note that the whole of Herefordshire is an Assisted Area for SMEs) • The project requires GBI to make it happen, or without GBI the project would only go ahead on a smaller scale, or within a longer timeframe. • It involves capital expenditure • It creates new jobs or safeguards existing ones which would otherwise be put at risk • A majority of the jobs created or safeguarded require qualifications or level 2 NVQ (or equivalent) or above. • It will secure increased productivity. • The business is viable and can become self sustaining within a reasonable timeframe (for example three years) • It generates regional and national benefits, in line with the West Midlands Economic Strategy • The bulk of the finance for the project will come from private sources (such as bank finance or retained earnings). 	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/gsdDetail?type=GSD&site=131&itemId=1081275434</p>

ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

Tailored information and other help in specific markets, for individual companies and for sectors or other groups of UK business for collective benefit

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The purpose of this product is to strengthen UK productivity growth and future economic prosperity by overcoming barriers faced by UK businesses and sectors in specific overseas markets, which would otherwise limit the benefits gained from international trade.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Most companies will either be brokered to or contact an International Trade Team (ITT) operating in each of the English regions or an individual International Trade Adviser (ITA) working in the ITT. For sector-based activity they are likely to approach UK Trade and Investment via a trade association or other multiplier.</p> <p>Suitability for participation will be checked by UKTI, usually an ITA or UKTI sector team. Company will be told terms of participation including information on conforming to de minimus regulations for state aid purposes.</p> <p>Company will participate in activity, which will help them break into new overseas markets, provide initial feedback and be paid grant where relevant.</p> <p>Company details and service delivery will be placed on UKTI's CRM system.</p>	<p>Eligibility is dependant on the tailored support being sought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for market introductions is open to all UK registered companies • Support for market visits or for exhibiting at overseas trade shows is open to businesses falling within the EU definition of an SME and which are working with one of UKTI's International Trade Advisors, or equivalent, and which are engaged in a trade development activity. • Support for sector events and for group delegations to overseas exhibitions is prioritised in accordance with high level strategic priorities identified, and in accordance with strategic marketing plans for individual sectors. 	<p>Business Link</p> <p>UK Trade & Investment (UKTI)</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/gsdDetail?type=GSD&page=76&category=4&itemId=1081275462&refpage=3</p> <p>https://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk/ukti/appmanager/ukti/our-services?genericSummary_23navigationContentPath=/BEA+Repository/328/423286&_pageLabel=ourservices</p>

DEVELOPING YOUR INTERNATIONAL TRADE POTENTIAL

Information and advice to businesses who are considering exporting or entering new overseas markets, or who have limited experience in exporting or other aspects of international business development.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The scheme seeks to strengthen UK productivity growth and future economic prosperity by ensuring that UK businesses, especially high productivity, innovative, and research and development intensive businesses are able to identify and exploit opportunities in overseas markets successfully, and to respond rapidly and effectively to changing international opportunities.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Companies will either be brokered to or contact an International Trade Team (ITT) or an individual International Trade Adviser (ITA) working in the ITT.</p> <p>Suitability for participation will be checked by an ITA. Company will be told terms of participation including information on conforming to de minimis regulations for state aids purposes.</p> <p>Company will participate in the activity which will provide advice tailored to individual needs including review, to support the company in understanding its export capabilities, or its export readiness if not yet exporting and to identify priorities for further support and potential business development.</p> <p>Company details and service delivery will be placed on UK Trade and Investment's CRM system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK registered companies of all sizes can receive information and advice on beginning to export or seeking to do business in new overseas markets. • Small-medium sized enterprises seeking to enter new markets can access co-funding for agreed export capability development projects. • Small-medium sized enterprises who are either 'new to export' or innovative and between 1 and 5 years old can access support for general export capability. 	<p>Business Link</p> <p>UK Trade & Investment (UKTI)</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=RESOURCES&itemId=1075078368</p> <p>https://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk/ukti/appmanager/ukti/our-services?genericSummary_23navigationContentPath=/BEA+Repository/328/423285&_pageLabel=ourservices</p>

TRAIN TO GAIN

Train to Gain supports employers of all sizes and in all sectors to improve the skills of their employees as a route to improving their business performance.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The purpose of this scheme is to improve productivity, business performance and individual achievement through investment in the skills and competencies of the workforce and potential entrepreneurs, helping the UK to become a world leader in skills by 2020.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Train to Gain is the national skills service that support employers of all sizes and in all sectors to improve the skills of their employees as a route to improving their business performance. The service offers skills advice on everything from Investors in People, basic skills through to leadership and management training. This solution will include access to any public funding or subsidies available to the business. Public funding and subsidies are available for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low skilled employees to help them gain their first full basic skills qualification, first full level 2 qualification (equivalent of 5 GCSEs at A-C) and, depending on sector and geographical location of organisation and chosen provider subsidies for subsequent level 2 qualifications • Fully-subsidised level 3 qualification (equivalent to 2 A-levels) if a level 2 qualification is not held. Depending on sector and geographical location of organisation and chosen provider, subsidies for subsequent qualifications to update skills or gain a more technical and organisation qualification, including first level of management • Employees needing higher level skills organisation support to achieve first full level 4 (equivalent to first degree), depending on sectoral and geographical location of business and chosen provider • Subsidies for apprenticeships which includes key skills, technical skills, and level 2 and level 3 qualifications depending on sector and geographical 	<p>All employers, including the self-employed.</p>	<p>Train to Gain</p> <p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.traintogain.gov.uk/</p>

	location of business and chosen provider; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses with 10 to 250 employees, organisation support for owners/managers to develop their leadership and management skills at various levels. 			
--	--	--	--	--

BUSINESS PREMISES

Provision, via intermediaries, or cost-effective, managed workspaces and business parks in priority localities to help new & existing businesses grow.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>This scheme allows provision for, via intermediaries, of cost-effective, managed workspaces and business parks in priority localities to help new & existing businesses grow.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Provision of smaller, more flexible workspace in Enterprise Centres or Incubation Units, with access to business support. Centres are available in Hereford at Rotherwas, and on the Leominster Enterprise Park. Rents include services and rates and can include broadband, telephone service and furniture.</p>	<p>The target customers for business premises are potentially wide and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New businesses looking to start-up within the local area • Small and medium sized firms looking for smaller or more flexible accommodation, or looking to rationalise their accommodation costs. 	<p>Evans Easyspace</p>	<p>http://www.evansspace.com/properties_list.php?map_region=14</p>

BUSINESS COLLABORATION NETWORKS

Bringing businesses together to address business/commercial opportunities or challenges, which they could not address alone.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>Business Collaboration Networks will bring businesses together to address business/commercial opportunities or challenges which they could not address alone and which are essential for developing and strengthening regional economies.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Intermediaries will be appointed to establish and operate business collaboration networks. The intermediaries will facilitate access to a range of collaborative support activities. The exact range of support provided via the intermediaries to the businesses participating in the networks will depend on the focus of the collaboration network and the size and attractiveness of the opportunity but may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness campaigns about the direct and non-direct economic benefits of collaboration; • Collaborative work groups and consortia working on developing and exploiting specific opportunities such as: Market exploitation; supply chain development; commercial exploitation of processes, technologies and products; sharing of best practice; marketing and distribution channels; image; environmental impact and sustainability; encouraging start-ups, spin-outs and other means of strengthening the network; and bespoke higher level, technician, leaderships and specialist skills needs and challenges. <p>These opportunities need to be effectively linked together to produce solutions which meet the needs of businesses in the network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting based discussion forums on specific topics such as future proofing the businesses within the network • Disseminating the discussions and 	<p>Network participants will primarily centre around small and medium sized firms. The definition of a small and medium sized firm adopted is the European definition of a firm having <250 employees, a turnover of up to €50 million or balance sheet total of €43 million.</p> <p>For businesses to participate in a business collaboration network they must also meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in a priority sector, market, technology or other area identified as critical to the successful delivery of the relevant regional or local economic strategy; • Looking to diversify into a priority sector market, technology or other area identified as critical to the successful delivery of the relevant regional or local economic strategy; • Face opportunities that are more effectively addressed through collaboration • Be willing and able to collaborate with related businesses <p>The exact composition of the network will depend upon the sector(s) it is representing. Some business collaboration networks will have more large firm participants than others.</p>	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/gsdDetail?r.lc=en&type=GSD&searchQueryId=359&searchTerm=business+collaboration&page=1&category=4&itemId=1081583967&searchId=8&refpage=5</p>

	<p>conclusions of the forum and other network specific information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating inter-linking of similar collaborative groups in other parts of Europe; and • Facilitating cross-sector collaborations by inter-linking with collaborative groups in related sectors within the same region or elsewhere in Europe. 			
--	--	--	--	--

MANUFACTURING ADVISORY SERVICE

The Manufacturing Advisory Service aims to address the practical needs of British manufacturers by delivering hands-on advice and assistance from experts in a wide range of manufacturing disciplines.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The aim of MAS is to deliver a service that results in increased productivity and competitiveness for manufacturing businesses, particularly SMEs, using a modern definition of manufacturing. The definition is that used by the Institute for Manufacturing, Cambridge University, it covers the full cycle of activities from research, design and development, production, logistics, and service provision to end of life management.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>The product is the provision of specialist manufacturing advice provided by an external person or organisation.</p> <p>This offer is designed to respond to individual business circumstances, e.g. businesses may have specific manufacturing problems, be facing a declining market share or be experiencing difficulties in maximising their potential to grow. Evidence suggests that there are a number of recurring business issues which businesses will need to address (in particular in order to achieve growth) and these are addressed by support focusing on the kinds of business support comprising the elements under this product.</p>	<p>This product is available to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturers who are primarily SMEs • Large businesses (employing over 250 people) may apply, but are expected to pay the full cost of the service • Businesses owned or controlled by people from groups who are under-represented in business ownership • Social enterprises <p>RDAs may decide to support businesses with lower growth potential in some instances.</p>	<p>Manufacturing Advisory Service</p>	<p>http://www.mas.dti.gov.uk/</p> <p>http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/sectors/manufacturing/advisoryservice/page26291.html</p>

BUSINESS GROWTH: SPECIALIST FACILITIES AND ENVIRONMENTS

Provision, via intermediaries, of cost-effective, supportive shared premises (with specialist facilities e.g. specialist knowledge, equipment and technologies) to help new & existing businesses grow.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>This product is designed to facilitate growth for businesses in priority sectors by providing supportive physical environments with appropriate specialist knowledge and facilities to help new and existing businesses prosper and grow.</p> <p>This scheme differs from the property based shared business support environment in that it offers access to specialized support, knowledge and equipment as well as a physical environment for businesses to operate.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Funding will be provided to intermediaries to establish and operate cost-effective, supportive shared premises, which include a range of specialist facilities such as access to specialised knowledge, equipment and technologies.</p>	<p>Premises will be targeted at businesses from within the priority sectors as set out in the regional and local economic strategies.</p> <p>To be eligible for support by a shared business support environment or to access specialist equipment businesses must display entrepreneurial and growth potential and match the purpose and entry criteria of the facility. The target customers for specialist business growth facilities are potentially wide and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New businesses looking to start-up in a local area which have specialist needs or display growth potential • Small and medium sized firms. The definition of a small and medium sized firm adopted is the European definition of a firm having less than 250 employees, a turn-over of up to €50 million or a balance sheet of up to €43 million • Large companies will be able to act as an anchor tenant on a large business/science park but these companies within limitations determined when the project is initially approved • Inward investors which are likely to be existing firms of various sizes looking to enter a particular local market and must be a priority business for the regional and/or local economic strategy • Spin-outs or spin-in businesses needing specialist help. 	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/gsdDetail?type=GSD&page=1&itemId=1081583983&gsp=17&refpage=2</p>

STARTING A BUSINESS

Free access to clear information and advice for anyone thinking about starting a business in England.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
To achieve an increase in enterprise activity leading to a higher rate of business start-up and survival and an increase in new business PAYE (Pay as you Earn) and VAT (Value Added Tax) registrations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Web based information – the www.BusinessLink.gov.uk website (2) Telephone information and support – Business Link (3) Self help materials-guides, diagnostic tools and skills development (from the website and from Business Link providers) (4) One-to-many workshop programmes (5) In certain, limited, circumstances, one-to-one diagnostic support from Business Link (managed or sub-contracted by Business Link). The Information and expertise can cover: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Compliance and regulatory reform b) Business strategy and business planning c) Finance – including getting paid d) Business idea development, market research and market understanding e) Employing people f) Managing and running a small business g) Advice on premises and Health & Safety and h) Information Communication Technology (ICT). 	<p>Anyone at the point of starting a business in England can access this product.</p> <p>Clients should possess entrepreneurial aspirations and be committed to active exploration of starting a business.</p> <p>Support is available to all types and sizes of new business and those interested in starting a business regardless of sector. (One-to-one diagnostic support is available in some limited circumstances where SAB has already been accessed but next steps or eligibility for further support remains unclear or where client confidentiality means that effective diagnosis can only be achieved with a one-to-one discussion).</p>	<p>Business Link</p> <p>HM Revenue & Customs</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1073858805</p> <p>http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/startingup/index.htm</p> <p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463</p>

AVAILABLE NOW

FINANCE FOR BUSINESS

The provision of debt, equity and mezzanine support to small and medium sized businesses unable to raise finance on the commercial market but having viable business plans.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
Bridging the gap for businesses seeking finance.	Loans up to £250,000, equity investment up to £2 million (two-thirds public supplemented by a minimum one third private investment) and mezzanine arrangements across the spectrum.	<p>Funding is available to businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with less than 250 employees and a turn-over of up to €50 million or a balance sheet of up to €43 million (EU definition of a medium sized company) • demonstrating failure to secure finance in the commercial sector • with viable business plans. 	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463</p>

AVAILABLE FROM JAN 09

UNDERSTANDING FINANCE FOR BUSINESS

Support on understanding ways of financing business start-up and growth, acquiring the skills to become “investor ready” and effecting introductions to potential investors.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
Encouraging economic growth by providing an environment where businesses are aware of the potential that finance can have upon their business and can readily access potential investors.	A five-stage programme supporting entrepreneurs from a basic understanding of finance options through to facilitated introductions to potential investors.	Support will be available to businesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in England • with less than 250 employees and a turn-over of up to €50 million or a balance sheet of up to €43 million (EU definition of a medium sized company) • seeking guidance on finance options • seeking guidance/up-skilling to refine their approach to finance providers (lenders and fund managers). 	DETAILS TO FOLLOW	http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463
AVAILABLE FROM JAN 09				

INTENSIVE START-UP SUPPORT

Free advice and mentoring (in addition to that offered by Starting a Business) – and optional small grants/loans to overcome specific barriers – for individuals and groups actively exploring starting businesses in England who are targeted by their RDA as underrepresented in self-employment and business ownership.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
This product should lead to the creation of additional businesses and improved survival rates. The additional support provided is intended to overcome specific barriers and address current inequities.	This product builds on the ‘Starting A Business’ product through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops covering the range of business issues encountered at start-up – these may be delivered in appropriate settings and with suitable methodologies to meet the needs of the client group. • Personalised support from an adviser, coach or mentor who can work with the individual or business to overcome particular barriers. • Support from up to 6 months before start-up to 18-36 months after start-up and continuity from any pre-start support through the coaches delivering the Enterprise Coaching product. 	This product is targeted at individuals and groups – such as women, people with disabilities and certain ethnic groups – who are thinking of starting a business in England. Within an annually negotiated cash cap, each Regional Development Agency (RDA) will determine – using its Regional Economic Strategy (RES) – which individuals or groups to assist through this product.	Business Link HM Revenue & Customs	http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1073858805 http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/startingup/index.htm http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463
AVAILABLE NOW				

STARTING A HIGH GROWTH BUSINESS

Extra help for new businesses (and people developing a business concept) identified as having high-growth potential.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>This product gives businesses with high-growth potential access to sophisticated, multi-faceted support packages to enable them to navigate their above average lead-in time to profitability and the increased complexity of business issues they experience – e.g., through supporting businesses to create capacity for high growth. Without this support, some of these businesses will not be created, and others will achieve sub-optimal growth rates.</p>	<p>In addition to the information and advice offered by Starting A Business, a dedicated person will provide free mentoring, coaching and/or advice and work with the business to bring together a package of support – from business concept to launch and for 18-36 months after trading starts. The free package of support includes mentoring, coaching and/or advice on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appropriate business model • Identifying the funding requirements and funding sources • Raising finance for getting the business started and thriving • Putting together the business plan • Customers and supplier contacts • Putting a team together with complimentary skills • Managing the growth of the business • Intellectual property and protection • Maximising international opportunities • Access to external expertise. 	<p>The product is aimed at start-up businesses with high growth potential in England; specifically, firms with the potential to achieve turnover of £500k – £1m or higher within 3 years of starting trading will be targeted. No business sectors are excluded. The criteria to identify businesses (designed to spot growth potential and not “pick winners”) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspiration and ambition for the business • Capacity and capability of the owner/manager or start-up team • information on markets and on products and services • Financial projections and indicators. 	<p>Business Lnk</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=5000499926&site=131</p> <p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463</p>
<p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>				

DESIGNING DEMAND

Designing Demand is a national support programme developed by the Design Council to help businesses use design to improve performance.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The aim of Designing Demand is to improve the performance of UK businesses by helping them to use design as a key driver of growth and competitiveness. The programme helps businesses to become more competitive, increase their profits and boost their performance through the strategic, effective use of design.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>The programme consists of a selection of one-day workshops for businesses, followed by a set of intensive growth services offering practical support in using design to improve business performance. Workshops for Business Advisors and Intermediaries are also run a part of raising awareness and understanding of design-related business issues. This supports effective channel management and recruitment of appropriate clients onto the programme.</p> <p>Workshops – fast paced and practical one-day workshops showing businesses what design investment could do for them.</p> <p>Designing Demand Generate – a service to help businesses identify one design project to overcome specific business challenges and get it moving.</p> <p>Designing Demand Immerse – the most intensive service, aimed at mature businesses with the appetite for strategic change. Services provide a mixture of workshops and on-to-one mentoring from Design Associates experienced in managing design and tackling business issues.</p> <p>Designing Demand Innovate – the product also contains service for technology ventures, providing intensive support for technology start-ups, helping them use design to reduce time to market and attract investment.</p>	<p>Designing Demand is for businesses with ambition to grow, appetite for change and the resources and management time to invest in running strategic design projects. Businesses range from micro through to 249 employees.</p>	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/gsdDetail?type=GSD&site=131&itemId=1081677626</p> <p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463</p>

INNOVATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

This product is the provision of innovation advice and guidance.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The purpose of this product is to provide businesses with expert knowledge and highly specialised technical and advanced skills enabling them to innovate and hence improve the performance of the business.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>This offer is demand led. It is designed to respond to individual business circumstances. The aim of the intervention is to open up the thinking within the business and use innovation in its broad sense as a platform for continuing growth. Through the offer, firms will be able to access support focusing on issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help with testing new ideas/viability • Looking for analogies in other business sectors • Information concerning new technologies and processes • Information on new markets • How to source particular technical expertise • Investigating innovative marketing strategies and methods • Identifying funding requirements and funding sources to bring new ideas to market • Introduction to other support under the Business Support Simplification programme portfolio. • Use of tools to encourage new ways of problem solving or ideas generation • Intellectual property and know-hoe protection/legal advice • Where to access other external expertise including regulatory compliance; sectorally specific expertise • Accessing the knowledge base • Help with collaborative ventures under Open Innovation arrangements • Specialised technical help to assist the introduction and take up of new technologies, techniques and processes <p>is also included in the product.</p>	<p>The produce is targeted at businesses (including social enterprises) experiencing challenges that are holding back the potential to grow significantly and which are open to seeking innovative approaches to surmounting these. Large business (employing over 250 people) may apply, but are expected to pay the full cost of the service.</p>	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/gsdSearch?searchTerm=innovation+advice+and+guidance&go.x=7&go.y=5</p> <p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463</p>

COACHING FOR HIGH GROWTH

To assists firms to build their inherent capabilities and achieve accelerated growth through a structured coaching programme, meeting short and medium term business goals within a strategic context.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The aim is to increase the stock of strongly growing SMEs in each region through the provision of a structured programme of intensive coaching and assistance. An independent coach or mentor will support organisation development and management capability with the objective of enhancing the business readiness for growth.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Coaching for High Growth includes three stages – goal orientated action planning (developing a strategic growth plan), coaching and leadership development.</p> <p>Coaching for High Growth involves the coach or mentor helping businesses to assess their performance against and then set action plans on 7 core themes as part of the growth process. These core themes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Benchmarking • Market Understanding • Innovation • Intellectual Property • Investment Readiness • Skills of the workforce • Leadership and Management <p>This offer is demand led. It is designed to respond to individual business circumstances. The range of expertise needed will vary but will be advanced business management input related to managing the totality of the business in a drive for high growth.</p>	<p>The product is targeted at businesses with the potential to achieve high growth that would not achieve such growth without intervention. Large businesses (employing over 250 people) may apply, but are expected to pay the full cost of the service.</p>	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463</p> <p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/gsdDetail?type=GSD&searchQueryId=3673&searchTerm=coaching+for+high+growth&page=1&itemId=1081677628&searchId=3&efpage=4</p>

SMALL LOANS FOR BUSINESS

The provision of loan finance up to £50,000 to entrepreneurs from disadvantaged groups or communities excluded from raising all the finance they need from commercial sources.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>Tackling inequality in start-up and business ownership.</p> <p>AVAILABLE FROM JAN 09</p>	<p>Providing enterprise funding of up to £50,000 to entrepreneurs from disadvantaged groups or communities for viable business propositions where the business is unable to secure all their finance needs from mainstream sources.</p>	<p>The loan can be offered by the lender to businesses (including social enterprises):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In England • With less than 250 employees and a turn-over of up to €50 million or a balance sheet of up to €43 million (EU definition of a medium sized company) • Up to a maximum value of £50,000 for individual businesses (and up to a total cumulative loan value of £50,000 at any time – that is, no business can have a total outstanding loan value of more than £50,000 at any time) • For the sole purpose of business creation, development or expansion – thereby excluding the provision of loans to clear existing debts and/or existing loans from the lender (as a mechanism for managing bad debt on the part of the lender) • For a maximum duration of 5 years • targeted at women, under represented black and minority ethnic groups identified in the SR2004 PSA10 and businesses operating in the 15% most deprived wards in England according to IMD 2000 thinking of starting a business in the next 3 years (as per the “Intensive Start-up Support” product). 	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463</p> <p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/gsdDetail?type=GSD&searchQueryId=4465&searchTerm=%22small+loans+for+business+%22&page=1&category=3&itemId=1081914763&searchId=1&refpage=5</p>

IMPROVING YOUR RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

The Improving Your Resource Efficiency product is aimed at helping business to adopt low-carbon, resource efficient products, processes, services and business models.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The product is designed to enable businesses to contribute to a low carbon resource efficient economy whilst achieving cost savings.</p>	<p>A range of support services identify practical cost-effective actions that business can take to be more energy efficient, reduce, reuse and recycle materials, to cut waste, waster use, discharges and pollution. Advice is provided freely via websites, publications, guides, case studies and online tools. Support also includes, for example, interest free loans of between £5,000 and £100,000 for small or medium-sized enterprises for energy efficiency and support for those in the recycling/reprocessing business, also mostly for SMEs though with some financial services also available for larger businesses.</p>	<p>Most of the services, especially at initial level, are available to all businesses in England to help reduce their high collective environmental impact. Specialist support will be targeted at businesses with significant potential to reduce their environmental impacts or those who have made public commitments through voluntary agreements or via sector initiatives (e.g. Courtauld Commitment (retailers) and Federation House Commitment (food and drink).</p>	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&itemId=1082105198&site=131</p>
AVAILABLE NOW				

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

As part of the Environmental Land Management Advice scheme

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>The scheme provides funding to farmers and other land managers in England who deliver effective environmental management. The primary objectives of the programme are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conserve wildlife (biodiversity) • maintain and enhance landscape quality and character • protect the historic environment and natural resources • promote public access and understanding of the countryside. • Protect natural resources 	<p>Payment levels vary for each of the elements of the scheme.</p>	<p>The scheme is open to farmers and land managers throughout England. Each element of the scheme has different qualifying requirements. Please contact Natural England for further information.</p>	<p>Natural England</p>	<p>http://www.naturengland.org.uk/ourwork/farming/landmanagementadvice/default.aspx</p>
AVAILABLE NOW				

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND MANAGEMENT ADVICE

The product offers advice and guidance to improve environmental land management

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>We aim to provide a cohesive and effective service that meets the needs of land managers and helps to deliver Natural England's strategic outcomes. We work closely with other organisations that provide advice programmes, and we ensure that our advice reflects the most recent research and ideas, and is practical and commercially realistic.</p>	<p>The service is provided mainly through land management advice events such as farm walks, workshops, clinics and farm visits. It is co-ordinated and supported by national specialists and project managers, and is largely delivered by regional staff, who are led by Natural England's regional Project Managers for Farm Advice.</p>	<p>Please contact Natural England for any Eligibility Criteria.</p>	<p>Natural England</p>	<p>http://www.natureland.org.uk/ourwork/farming/landmanagementadvice/default.aspx</p>
<p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>				

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Grant to businesses working together and with the knowledge base to develop and exploit new ideas.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>Grant to businesses working together and with the knowledge base to develop and exploit new ideas.</p> <p>This scheme is aimed at measures to increase knowledge exchange, business spend on R&D and encourage technological diffusion between businesses and knowledge base institutions through collaborative research and development activities - thereby encouraging a cultural change where businesses share the risks and costs associated with innovation collaborations.</p>	<p>Grants will be available to businesses and knowledge base institutions to undertake collaborative pre-competitive research and development of enabling technologies and large-scale demonstrator projects for innovative products, processes or services. Only commercially driven projects are eligible. The following elements may be offered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Research – experimental or theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge without particular application or use in view, but likely to form the background to the solution of recognised or expected current or future problems challenges or possibilities. • Applied research – original investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge directed primarily towards a specific practical aim or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business from all sectors across England that have the willingness and potential to collaborate on developing innovative products, processes or services. • Knowledge based institutions in England who are willing to engage in an innovation collaboration activities with the primary purpose of assisting businesses to exploit knowledge through new products, services and processes. • Businesses based in England seeking to join pan-European R&D projects. 	<p>Please follow link ></p>	<p>http://www.innovateuk.org/deliveringinnovation/collaborativeresearchanddevelopment.ashx</p>
<p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>				

	<p>objective, which may include a simple prototype of a novel or innovative product or process to test or validate an idea or concept.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In depth experimental development – systematic work, drawing on existing knowledge gained from research and practical experience, directed to producing new materials, products and devises; or to installing new processes, systems and services; or to improving substantially those already produced or installed. • Large-scale collaborative demonstrator projects that promote the potential of key technologies to a regional or national business audience. 			
--	---	--	--	--

NETWORKING FOR INNOVATION

Support to help business contact and build relationships with the knowledge base to develop and exploit new ideas.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>This solutions for business product helps businesses build relationships with universities and/or colleges in order to develop and exploit new ideas.</p> <p>AVAILABLE FROM NOW</p>	<p>It is aimed at businesses with specific technical or scientific research and development requirements, which may be eligible for a grant to establish a network through which to share information. The wider business community benefits by being able to access all the knowledge, information and contacts that the network gathers.</p>	<p>Businesses from all sectors across England that have the willingness and potential to develop innovative products, processes and services.</p>	<p>Please follow link ></p>	<p>http://ktn.globalwatchesonline.com/epicentric_portal/site/KTN/menuitem.6f2444cd1e02ed3be1c7a210eb3e8a0c?mode=0</p>

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PARTNERSHIPS

Businesses and enterprises of all sizes, with the potential to grow, can participate in a Solutions for Business Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP)

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
Businesses can benefit from the expertise of higher education academics, tutors in further education colleges or researchers in a research-based organisation (the knowledge base partner) to develop a new capability in the business.	<p>Government makes a contribution towards the project cost via a grant paid to the knowledge base partner with the balance paid by the business. The business contribution is dependent on the cost of the project but it can expect to pay at least £18,000 per year.</p> <p>Projects can last between one and three years and businesses, through exploiting the project outputs, experience contributions to profitability, improved efficiency, business processes and quality entry to new markets.</p>	<p>Joint applications involving a higher or further education institution, public or private research organisations in partnership with business are considered for approval (please see website).</p> <p>Organisations in most sectors can participate as the business partner, including those in the third sector.</p>	Please follow link >	http://www.ktponline.org.uk/
AVAILABLE NOW				

INNOVATION VOUCHERS

Voucher to enable a business to buy support from a knowledge base institution to explore potential opportunities for further collaboration to develop and exploit new ideas.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
This scheme supports small innovation projects aimed at increasing knowledge exchange between businesses and knowledge base institutions (e.g. universities and research institutes) through collaborative activity - thereby encouraging a cultural change where businesses share the risks and costs associated with innovation collaborations.	Vouchers will be available as part of a 'pilot scheme' to promote and enable an individual business (mainly SMEs) to build its innovation capabilities and buy support from a knowledge base institution chosen by the business, to explore potential opportunities for future collaborative innovation activity. Support in the form of a demand led research project lasting no longer than six months, around a well-defined knowledge question is likely to include the development or continued development or testing of a technology, product or service as part of a wider innovation within the business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small and medium sized businesses from all sectors based in England that have the willingness and potential to collaborate on developing innovative products, processes or services. Knowledge base institutions in England who are willing to engage in an innovation project with the primary purpose of assisting businesses to exploit knowledge through new products, services and processes. 	DETAILS TO FOLLOW	http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463
AVAILABLE FROM JULY 09				

LOW CARBON ENERGY DEMONSTRATION

Finance to assist a business in a range of energy demonstration activity to commercially exploit Research & Development in low carbon technology.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>This scheme is aimed at measures to increase single business involvement in a range of demonstration activities to commercially exploit R&D in low carbon energy technologies where the high risk and uncertainty around the expected results is seen as a barrier - thereby encouraging a cultural change where businesses innovate more and in turn generate more spill-over opportunities through large scale low carbon energy demonstrator projects.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Capital grants/loans will be available to a business to develop technology based produce (including components), process, or service innovations, to assist with the more expensive longer-term costs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration at scale in commercial/industrial setting • Test of design and construction process and of construction and operating costs. • Early adoption of new technologies with a potentially significant environmental benefit. 	<p>Businesses based in England engaging in low carbon energy demonstration projects that will reduce energy demand and carbon intensity of energy production.</p>	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=ONEOFFPAGE&site=131&itemId=1081397463</p>

GRANT FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

This Solutions for Business product provides grants to help SMEs carry out research or development work that will lead to technologically innovative products or processes.

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>Individuals planning to start a business, new start ups or established businesses with an innovative proposal to either develop a pre-production prototype or conduct research that moves a concept closer to commercial realisation.</p>	<p>There are five types of grant available:</p> <p>Proof of Market Grant to test the commercial potential of an innovative idea or new technology. Projects to last up to 9 months and available to any SME (having less than 250 employees and either less than €50m sales or less than €43m of asset value). Grants are 60 per cent of actual project costs and the maximum grant is £20,000. Within this region and only until March 2010, applicants may consider that an application to the Advantage Proof of Concept fund may give them an improved level of support.</p> <p>Micro Development Grant Small scale development projects lasting up to 12 months in Micro enterprises (those having less than 10 employees and either less than €2m sales or less than €2m of asset value. Grants are 45 per cent of actual project costs and the maximum grant is £20,000.</p> <p>Research Grant To develop new scientific or technical knowledge, projects lasting 6 – 18 months In Micro or Small Businesses (those having less than 50 employees and either less than €10m sales or less than €10m of asset value). Grants are 60 per cent of project costs. The minimum grant is £20,000 and the maximum £100,000.</p> <p>Development Grant to develop a pre-production product or process prototype, projects lasting 6-36 months in an SME (those having less than</p>	<p>The enterprise must be an SME and within any size limits for one of the types of grant specified below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of technological innovation, project risk and the IPR position. • The project must be carried out primarily within the West Midlands region. • It must be demonstrated that grant is necessary for the project to proceed. • Applications must show how the balance of funding will be provided. • Management abilities and the skills of the project team should be evidenced. • Market need and commercial exploitation prospects should be demonstrated. • Wider issues such as environmental and social benefits will be considered. 	<p>Advantage West Midlands</p>	<p>http://www.advantagewm.co.uk/workin-g-with-us/grants-for-research-and-development.aspx</p> <p>www.advantageconcepts.co.uk/</p>

	<p>250 employees and either less than €50m sales or less than €43 of asset value). Grants are 40 per cent of project costs in Micro or small businesses, and 35 per cent in larger (medium) SMEs. The minimum grant is £20,000 and the maximum is £250,000.</p> <p>Exceptional Grants In strategically important sectors such as biotechnology and low carbon energy technologies, the research and development grants as otherwise described above, may have extended grant limits of £250,000 and £500,000 respectively. Potential applicants should contact us before commencing the preparation of an exceptional grant bid.</p>			
--	---	--	--	--

DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Increase your Momentum with Leadership & Management Training

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
<p>As a principal decision maker Directors, leadership and management skills have a direct impact on the successful performance of a business. However, having the time or being able to access the training and development needed is not always easy.</p> <p>Business Link in the West Midlands understands the challenges and demands of day-to-day business and recognises the importance of skill development at a senior level, and have introduced a dedicated programme of support for West Midlands Directors.</p> <p>The programme is designed to be flexible, ensuring access to the right training that meets both personal development needs and the needs of the business.</p> <p>To ensure they have the expert support required, we have teamed up with experienced skills development advisors to provide one-to-one coaching throughout the programme. The development advisor will provide impartial advice and guidance to help identify, plan and evaluate the development needed to achieve business goals.</p> <p>AVAILABLE NOW</p>	<p>Business Link will help the Director to identify the right training that meets personal and business requirements. The programme is flexible and recognises both formal and informal training including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2-1 coaching and mentoring • Professional qualifications such as MBA or IoD • Entrepreneurship • Innovation and creativity • Leadership development • Personal impact and communication • Functional management skills <p>Business Link has developed the following programme of support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free Training Needs Assessment • Free Personal Development Plan • Help finding the right training provider • Up to £1000 towards the cost of training • Free Evaluation 	<p>This is a dedicated programme aimed at principal decision makers of West Midlands businesses who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ 5-249 staff and are not part of a larger parent company or group. This can include part-time employees and volunteers • Can be from any sector <p>Please note that the Director Development Programme is limited to £1000 per organisation.</p>	<p>Business Link</p>	<p>http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=5001206437&atom_id=131.PR381525&site=131</p>

SMALL BUSINESS RATES RELIEF

PURPOSE	WHAT WILL BE OFFERED	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	CONTACT	LINKS
Some ratepayers may be eligible to claim relief on the grounds that they are a small business.	<p>Properties with a rateable value of less than £10,000 will receive additional relief depending on the rateable value of the property as shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50% Relief for rateable values between £1 to £4,999.• 50% to 0.01% Relief for rateable values of between £5,000 to £9,999 (1% for every £100 above £5,000).• Reduced Multiplier only for rateable values of between £10,000 and £14,999.	Please contact the Business Rates Section, Herefordshire Council for details on Eligibility Criteria but please note that Ratepayers who receive any other mandatory relief, such as charitable relief or rural rate relief, may not apply for Small Business Rate Relief.	Herefordshire Council – Business Rates 01432 260373	http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/business_finance/96.asp