



Aberdeenshire Business Startup Grant UKSPF 2025/2026 Guidelines & Process

Introduction

Aberdeenshire Council announces a new grant scheme to help support business creation within Aberdeenshire and overcome the barriers of accessing funds to start a business. We hope this will turn ideas into reality and make a lasting regional impact to the economy.

A fund has been made available to provide grants of £1,000 to businesses starting up in Aberdeenshire and £3,000 to businesses starting up and taking on premises in Aberdeenshire

This grant fund will remain open until the 15th February 2026 or until the funds are exhausted.

All applications are required to be sent to startup@aberdeenshire.gov.uk with a completed application form and all required documents.

All businesses should have an allocated business advisor from Business Gateway Aberdeen City & Shire. Prior to making an application you must be receiving support from the Business Gateway service in Aberdeenshire. If you do not have a Business Gateway Advisor, please contact Business Gateway on aberdeenshire@bgateway.com or 01467 535353

The grant will open in September 2025 and will end either by the 15th February 2026 or when funds have been exhausted. Closing date for application is 15th February 2026 or when funds are exhausted. Please note when you submit an application without any supporting information or evidence, this may not be processed. We are unable to hold any grant award for any individual or business. Only a full and complete application with submitted documents will be accepted and reviewed.

Please note we are unable to accept any applications for businesses that have started a business and or registered prior to 1st October 2024

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



Eligibility

- Sole Trader; Partnerships or Limited Companies.
- UK residents and those “granted leave to remain”
- All business sectors, excluding illegal businesses, or those that may bring the Council into disrepute. UKSPF guidance also restrict payments for activities of a party political or exclusively religious nature.
- The business must be based within the Aberdeenshire Council area*.
- Business must be engaged with the Business Gateway service and have a named advisor.
- The business must commence trading as a micro, small or medium enterprise (up to 250 employees)
- The business must not be trading, registered or have sold goods prior to 1st October 2024
- The business must demonstrate a viable and thought-through business idea.
- Business part of a group or franchise are unable to apply unless they have an autonomous cost and profit centre and responsibility in their own day-to-day management and accounts.
- Only one application per business and/or individual will be accepted over the duration of the scheme.
- We are unable to award any grant payment to any organisation where the business owner/director within the business has been disqualified as a director or business owner. We are unable to award any grant payment where the business owner/director within the business that has been on the AIB Register of Insolvencies.

*To be eligible for the £3,000 grant for business start-ups taking on rateable premises or commercial space within the Aberdeenshire boundary, you must provide your Business Rates reference number on the application. If you are not the registered business rates payer for the address (as may be the case in shared spaces), you will not be eligible for the £3,000 award.

**We are unable to award any grant payment to any organisation where the business owner/director has debts outstanding to Aberdeenshire Council

What is required



Applicants will be asked to submit for the £1,000 or £3,000 grant and only one grant per business / person is allowed. Please submit

- Completed application form in full including business, address & contact details, business bank details.
- Explanation of the business and what you plan to use the money for (completed within the application form).
- Evidence of trading – Business Bank statement. Not before 1st October 2024 and must show at least 1 business related item paid in or out. Please note personal bank statements and details may only be accepted in exceptional circumstances for sole-traders.
- Evidence of registration – For limited companies, Companies house number completed on the application form (not registered before 1st October 2024) or attached a copy of HMRC UTR letter for sole traders. (not registered before 1st October 2024, new registrations only)
- The business bank account must link to the name in your application and documentation. Please note this must be a business bank account. Please note personal bank statements may only be accepted in exceptional circumstances for sole-traders only.
- Proof of identity, Photographic driving licence to be accepted and if you do not have a driving licence, then a passport may also be accepted.
- Proof of applicant address (recent council tax bill or utility bill dated within last 3 months)
- All other supporting evidence requested or any additional files the applicant wishes to upload to support their application
- In addition to above to be eligible for the £3,000 grant for taking on property a copy of lease or property purchase for a commercial property is required, please note home businesses do not qualify. If the business has been purchased, proof of ownership must be provided and signed or concluded after 1st October 2024. The business premises must be registered with the business rates team at Aberdeenshire Council.
- 12 months cashflow projections. Template can be provided by your Business Gateway Advisor.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The following outputs and outcomes will be monitored, you will be required to report back on your progress as requested. The applicant will be contacted to gather this information some point after the award within 12 months of the award date. This will form 2 short surveys, 1 around 6 months and 1 around 12 months.



- Numbers of jobs created (in Full Time Equivalent @ 37 hours)
- Numbers of new products / services created
- Turnover of business
- Business premises
- Exporting

Additional information

All applications will be assessed and verified against the grant criteria by Aberdeenshire Council, Business Gateway Aberdeen City & Shire and successful applicants will be informed by letter of offer. All decisions will be made at the discretion of Aberdeenshire Council and are subject to the availability of funds. Details of payments made will be recorded and shared with relevant departments throughout Aberdeenshire Council on a regular basis. The grant payment is 100% and no part funding is required. The grant must be used for intended outlined business purposes otherwise the council has the right to reclaim the grant.

State aid

Any Grants awarded through the Business Start-Up Grant Scheme will be awarded as Minimal Financial Assistance under Article 36 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. There is a ceiling of £315,000 for subsidies provided to any one Enterprise under this Article over a 3-year period. Any Article 36 subsidies (or similar aid, including “de minimis” aid granted prior to 31 December 2020 under Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013) awarded to the Grantee will be relevant if the Grantee wishes to apply, or has applied, for any Article 36 subsidies. Prior to any award being made, a Minimal Financial Assistance notification will be issued and you will need to provide us with written confirmation that the MFA threshold specified in section 36(1) of the Subsidy Control Act will not be exceeded by you receiving the proposed assistance.

Further information on State Aid is available at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/state-aid-guidance/>

Appeals

The applicant can appeal an unsuccessful application up to 4 weeks after the rejection notification by submitting a written request to appeal to startup@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. The application will then be reviewed by a second member of staff at Aberdeenshire Council.

If you require any information, please email startup@aberdeenshire.gov.uk