

**SHEFFIELD CITY REGION –  
‘SME RESTART & RECOVERY AND  
KICKSTARTING TOURISM PACKAGE’**

# Application Guidance and FAQ's





Funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Sheffield City Region (SCR) Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME) *Restart & Recovery and Kickstarting Tourism Package* will be delivered by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) on behalf of the SCR Growth Hub and its South Yorkshire Local Authority Partners (Doncaster MBC, Rotherham MBC and Sheffield CC).

There is a limited pot of **£1,073,852** ERDF funding available to support SMEs to respond to the immediate COVID-19 crisis for companies across the City Region, so we are looking for companies to bring forward investment projects who have been adversely impacted. The sum of **£273,356** is ring-fenced to support ERDF Eligible SMEs operating in the Visitor Economy.

### What is the recovery Grant?

The Recovery Grant has been created, specifically to help SMEs in the SCR to adapt and diversify following the impact of COVID-19. Funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), eligible SMEs can access 100% grants of **between £1K – £3K**.

### Who is eligible for the Grant?

To be eligible for this grant:

- You must be an SME based in SCR.
- Your business needs to have been negatively impacted by COVID-19.
- Your business must have the ability to survive following the impact of COVID-19.
- Your business staff headcount must be below 250 FTE. Businesses with more than 250 employees will not be eligible.
- Your business must have a balance sheet of below €43million.
- Your business must have a turnover of below €50million.
- If your business has received state aid in the last 3 years, the total should not be in excess of €200,000. Businesses exceeding this level of state aid funding will not be eligible.
- The aim of this grant programme is to provide support to both businesses within the visitor economy and wider economy. Unfortunately, due to state aid restrictions, there are a few sectors which we cannot support. Businesses operating in an excluded sector i.e. nuclear, tobacco, airport infrastructure (see ERDF regulation 1301/2013 Art 3(3)), fishery and aquaculture sector, undertakings involved in the primary production of agricultural products, undertakings active in the sector of processing and marketing of agricultural products will not be eligible.
- Part of the funding is specifically for the Visitor Economy Sector. **Please refer to Annex A** to see the description of activities that we may be able to support. Please note we are unable to support Private Owned Holiday Lets.

### What Expenditure is Eligible?

The grant is available to help SMEs access one-to-one specialist advice to address their immediate needs. The grant must cover 100% of the cost of the service or product and cannot be used to part-fund expenditure.



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Examples of eligible expenditure on professional services, however, the emphasis is on the applicant to demonstrate the impact of COVID-19 and how the purchase(s) would help:

- Review of the business strategy
- Strategic review of business models
- HR, financial and legal advice
- Coaching and mentoring in leadership and management development / Change management
- Innovation strategy to adapt and diversify products/services
- The introduction of new technology
- Developing or revising marketing/digital strategies to reach new markets
- Mitigating the impact of social distancing measures
- Rebuilding a viable business model
- Developing product offerings
- Skills analysis and development plans
- Workforce management
- Employee engagement, welfare and wellbeing

**Please note these are examples only and not an exhaustive list.**

Grants may also be used to purchase minor equipment to adapt or adopt new technology in order to continue to deliver business activity or diversify. For example, a tourism business may need to purchase a second cash register to enable adequate social distancing in its gift shop.

Other examples of potentially eligible expenditure on equipment (where a COVID-19 related impact can be demonstrated) could include:

- IT hardware to support home working
- Software to enable secure remote working
- Online sales/purchasing platforms
- Equipment for remote working
- Cloud based storage

If successful following a formal grant application, grant funding will be paid upon production of an invoice and evidence of defrayment, for the service or item you have procured.

The following are not be eligible:

- Training.
- Bike racks, showering facilities, personal lockers or other core organisation costs.
- Physical changes to implement social distancing (e.g. Perspex screens, minor building works).
- PPE including masks, visors, hand gel (including dispensers).

Please note,

- Your total project cost must equal the amount of grant you are applying for.
- Your total spend must not be less than £1,000.
- Goods or services already purchased cannot be supported. Before proceeding with your project in any way, such as purchasing, ordering, making a deposit etc, you must wait to hear from us regarding a grant decision.



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### How do I apply for the Grant?

From the **25<sup>th</sup> November 2020**, the application form and associated documents will be available on the Enterprising Barnsley website [www.enterprisingbarnsley.co.uk](http://www.enterprisingbarnsley.co.uk) for businesses to view.

Please take the time to review the documents and obtain a formal quote for each item of proposed expenditure. You will need to provide a copy of the quote you have obtained with your application form.

You are not obliged to accept the lowest quotation received, but a written explanation of the rationale behind any such decision will be required which demonstrates the chosen supplier's experience and/or value for money. For smaller or generic goods/services, it is acceptable to use printouts from websites.

From **9am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December** you will be able to complete and submit your application form and associated documents to the email address [SCRBusinessSupportGrants@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:SCRBusinessSupportGrants@barnsley.gov.uk) along with your quote. The applications will be processed in the order they have been received. We anticipate there being high demand for these grants from the interest received so far and also based on experiences within other areas – where in some cases, grant application capacity has been met in under an hour of the application form going live.

In light of this, to manage the expected demand, the application process will now close when 358 applications have been submitted via the dedicated email address **SCRBusinessSupportGrants@barnsley.gov.uk**. The applications will then be appraised in chronological order, in line with the eligibility guidance as outlined in this document and the requirements in the application form within **ten working days** of receipt of the application. Please note that the actual number of grants that can be awarded depends on the specific amounts of grant each eligible applicant is applying for – which will be assessed in the order they are received. Therefore, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to award grants to all of the 358 submitted applicants.

If any unallocated funding remains, applications will open again.

### How are grant applications assessed?

Applications will be considered on a first come first served basis. Once we have received your application, we will undertake an eligibility review of your proposal based on the details and the supporting information that you provide. You may also be asked for additional information during this process, to enable an assessment of, for example, eligibility, financial viability etc.

Your application, along with a relevant report, will then be submitted to an independent assessment panel who will consider each proposal against the aims of the grant scheme and take a final decision.

We aim to issue successful applicants with a Grant Offer letter **within 15 working days** of the closing date – however this may take longer if applicants are required to provide any further clarification / information. The Grant Offer letter will need to be signed and returned to accept the terms of the grant. Please be aware, full compliance with the eligibility criteria does not guarantee that your application will be successful, **as grants are discretionary**.

If the Programme Management team are not fully satisfied that a submission is legitimate, we withhold the right to decline the application.



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## How do I claim the grant?

If your grant is approved, you will be issued with a formal Offer Letter that will include information about your grant offer and eligible project costs, conditions of the offer and information on how to claim the grant.

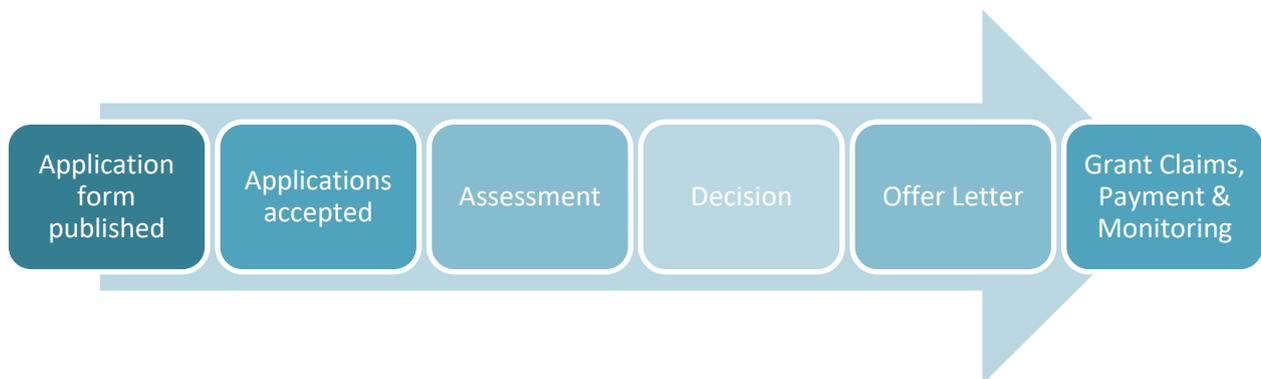
Once you have formally accepted a grant offer, you can begin expenditure on the project. It is important to note that **costs incurred before the acceptance of the offer cannot be supported**. To claim your grant, you will need to submit a short Claim Form and provide supporting documentary evidence:

- Invoice(s) for all items being claimed from the supplier of goods and/or services to the business.
- Copies of invoices and bank statements of the applicant business confirming payment (documents must be certified as true copies of the original documents, dated, and signed).
- If you pay your suppliers using a credit card, a certified redacted business bank statement showing full payment to the credit provider.

Please note, you can make **only one claim for the whole grant value after you have spent all the planned project costs**. This must take place within the timescale as indicated on your grant offer letter and must be no later than **28<sup>th</sup> February 2021**.

Progress on your project will be monitored by BMBC throughout - and possibly beyond the period of its delivery. We reserve the right to visit any grant recipient to ensure the grant has been used for the purpose stated in the Grant Agreement, inspect records to show that costs have been evidenced and make a formal assessment of the impact of the project. Grant recipients are obliged to cooperate with this process.

## Application Process



## Timeframe

- **Application Form Published: Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November**
- **Applications Accepted: From 9am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December until 358 applications have been received**
- **Assessment and Decision: Up to 10 working days from the application being received, unless further information is required from the applicant**
- **Offer Letter Submitted: Up to 15 working days from application submission**



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- **Grant Claims Payment & Monitoring:** Grant claims have to be submitted no later than the **28<sup>th</sup> February 2021**. The applicant must maintain, retain and make available on request all original project documentation until at least **2033** for external audit purposes, which is a condition of accepting the grant.

### Completing the application form

Please use the information in this section to answer each question in the application form as fully as possible.

#### Section A: Applicants Details

- Please provide details of your business, including details of the primary contact for the project. This should be the person the Project Administrators will contact any questions regarding the application.
- Provide details of parent companies (if relevant). If your business is not part of a group, you do not need to complete this section.

#### Section B: Project Details

- Provide the address where the project will be undertaken (if it differs from your current address).
- Provide anticipated start and finish dates for the investment being supported by the grant.
- State the total project cost
- Detail the economic impact that the project will have on your business
- Please provide the number of jobs that the intervention will safeguard.

#### Section C: Project Eligibility

- You are required to demonstrate that the business / project meets all the eligibility criteria. If you do not meet all the eligibility criteria, your application will be rejected.
- Your business must be in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham or Sheffield. Businesses located outside of those areas are precluded from applying.
- Your business must have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 by at least a 20% decline in turnover, from 17 March 2020 to date, when compared with the same period last year.
- The grant can only support businesses that have the ability to survive following the impact of COVID-19, this is to ensure that the economic impact of the investment is maximized.
- Due to ERDF regulations businesses who are operating in the following industries aren't permitted to apply.
  - Businesses that deliver Statutory Services such as a schools / doctors' surgeries / care homes
  - Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and aquaculture, Processing and marketing of agricultural products,
  - Shipbuilding, Insurance/brokerage companies, Primary production, Coal or steel
- To ensure that you do not breach state aid regulations you will not be able to apply if your businesses has received more than 200,000 euros of aid over 3 consecutive fiscal years.





## Section D: About your project

- Q1 – Demonstrate how your business has been adversely impacted by COVID-19, referring to a decline in turnover, from 17 March 2020 to date, when compared with the same period last year. The maximum word count for this section is 500 words.
- Q2 – Highlight what you will purchase with the grant and how it will support your business, making specific reference to how the intervention will provide you with the ability to survive the impact of Covid-19. The maximum word count for this section is 500 words.
- Q3 – To demonstrate you have acquired the most competitive quote for your project, explain the rationale behind your chosen supplier/provider, demonstrating the chosen supplier's experience and/or value for money. For further procurement guidance please see below. The maximum word count for this section is 300 words.

Once the application is complete please attach the documents below and submit to **SCRBusinessSupportGrants@barnsley.gov.uk**

- Data Capture Form BPRR-C-03
- Application Form BPRR-C-04
- Vendor Form BPRR-C-06
- Copy of quotation

## Procurement Guidance

The basis of procurement with regard to products or services supported by grant award from this programme is one of 'business choice'. This means that you as the business decides who your preferred supplier is. You will only be required to provide a copy of the quotation of your preferred supplier for your grant request to be considered. However, as a matter of good business practice we would suggest that you may want to seek alternative quotations to ensure you are going to get best value.

It is both the business, and Programme Management team's responsibility to ensure that best value is being obtained from public funds and the team do reserve the right to seek further information from you to confirm your decision.

The quotation of the preferred supplier must be adequately detailed and fully align with the information on your Grant Application form.

It is not permissible for any arrangement to be made between yourselves and the provider organisation which may be seen as any form of 'payment offset' for example credit notes or related financial transactions which in any way reduces the Gross Cost of the products or services, or in any way reduces the net contribution you are making to these costs.

For successful grant applicants, there is a requirement for them as part of the grant claim process to demonstrate full payment before making their claim. This means that any form of lease or hire purchase agreement will not be acceptable.





## Document Retention

You will be required to retain documentary evidence of the support received, and to provide certified copies of this evidence to the Programme Management Team to claim the ERDF grant and to retain originals which must be made available for inspection by an auditor.

You must retain the original documentation about the grant as per the 14-20 ERDF Document Retention Requirements. Records must be kept for 10 years after the last aid is granted under the scheme. For ERDF projects, the last aid may not be granted until 2023 meaning that documents will need to be retained until 2033. In the event that your business ceases trading within this period, the documentation must be passed to the Programme Management Team to retain as per the 14-20 ERDF Document Retention Requirements.

The evidence to be retained includes:

- The grant offer letter;
- Any agreement between yourself and the service provider detailing the type of support being provided, the timescale for delivery and the total cost, including VAT;
- The original invoice from the service provider;
- The bank statement(s) showing payment of the total cost of the service to the provider;
- Procurement evidence.





## Annex A – Tourism SIC Codes

<b>SIC</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Tourism Sector</b>
49100	Passenger rail transport, interurban	Railway passenger transport services
49320	Taxi operation	Road passenger transport services
49390	Other passenger land transport	Road passenger transport services
50100	Sea and costal passenger water transport	Water passenger transport services
50300	Inland passenger water transport	Water passenger transport services
51101-51102	Passenger air transport	Air passenger transport services
55100	Hotels and similar accommodation	Accommodation services for visitors
55201-5520255209	Holiday centres, villages, Youth hostels, Other holiday, and collection accommodation	Accommodation services for visitors
55300	Recreational vehicle parks, trailer parks and camping grounds	Accommodation services for visitors
55900	Other accommodation	Accommodation services for visitors
56101-5610256103	Licenced and un-licenced restaurants, cafes, takeaway food shops and mobile food stands	Food and beverage serving activities
56210	Event catering activities	Food and beverage serving activities
56290	Other food services	Food and beverage serving activities
56301-56302	Licenced clubs, public houses , and bars	Food and beverage serving activities
68201-68202	Renting and operating of own or leased real estate	Exhibitions & Conferences etc
77110	Renting and leasing of cars and light motor vehicles	Transport equipment rental services
77210	Renting and leasing of recreational and sports goods	Sport and recreation activities
77341-77342	Renting and leasing of water transport equipment	Transport equipment rental services
77351-77352	Renting and leasing of air transport equipment	Transport equipment rental services
79110	Travel agency and tour operator activities	Travel agencies & other reservation services
79120	Tour operator activities	Travel agencies & other reservation services
79901-79909	Activities of tourist guides and other reservation service and related activities	Travel agencies & other reservation services
82301 - 82302	Activities of exhibitions, fair organisers, conference organisers	Exhibitions & Conferences etc
90010	Performing arts	Cultural activities
90020	Support activities to performing arts	Cultural activities
90030	Artistic creation	Cultural activities
90040	Operation of arts facilities	Cultural activities
91020	Museum activities	Cultural activities

If you have any questions please contact [SCRBusinessSupportGrants@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:SCRBusinessSupportGrants@barnsley.gov.uk)



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