

Business Growth and Adaption Grants

Grant Claim Guidance



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Introduction

This guidance is intended to help inform you about the process of accepting a West of England Combined Authority Business Growth and Adaptions Grant (BGAG) and the steps you will need to take to claim the monies.

Accepting a grant

If your application to the BGAG has been successful, we will email you to let you know the outcome. This email will be accompanied by a Grant Offer Letter and a Subsidy Declaration letter. You will also now be asked to provide your bank details; these must be your business bank details and the same ones you will use to make your purchase(s).

To accept the grant, you must ensure you fully understand your obligations in claiming the grant, as set out in the Grant Offer Letter, then sign and return the letter in full. You must return your signed Grant Offer Letter within 14 calendar days of the date the letter was issued. Failure to return an acceptable copy of the Grant Offer Letter will result in your grant offer being withdrawn.

You must also complete and return the Subsidy Control Declaration letter included in your Grant Offer Letter. Please see [Appendix 1](#) for Subsidy Declaration guidance.

The BGAG is provided by the West of England Combined Authority as Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) in accordance with section 36(1) of the Subsidy Control Act (2022). You must not have or will not exceed the limit of £315,000 of publicly funded financial subsidy over the relevant three-year physical period.

The Subsidy Declaration is part of the conditions of your grant award from the West of England Combined Authority and failure to submit a completed and signed Subsidy Control Declaration Letter with your Grant Offer Letter, within 14 calendar days of them being issued, will result in your grant offer being withdrawn.

All documents must be submitted in a legible format, this means the copy must be of good quality and all information on it is readable. Photos will not be accepted. The Subsidy Control Declaration must be submitted with the letter that accompanies it. Any documents that have not been submitted in accordance with these requirements will be rejected.

If you are unable to provide these documents in a legible format, please contact Enterprisegrants@westofengland-ca.gov.uk as soon as possible.

After you have submitted your Grant Offer Letter and Subsidy Control Declaration, they will be checked by the assessment team. Once checked, you will receive an email from us to approve your documents and provide details of next steps. You must wait for this email before making any purchases, to ensure that we have accepted the Grant Offer Letter and Subsidy Control Declaration.

How to submit your Grant Offer Letter and Subsidy Control Declaration

In your grant award email, you will have been given a link to use to upload your Grant Offer Letter and Subsidy Control Declaration and a second link to submit your bank details.

To submit your documents, you must login to the portal using your account details, these must be the same as those used when submitting your application. Once logged in, you will need to enter your application reference number. This number can be found in the subject line of our emails.

You will be asked to check the reference number is correct, and this should be the same number entered on the previous page. It is important you enter the correct reference.

Making a claim

If you are awarded a grant, you will have three (3) calendar months from the date of your Grant Offer Letter to start your project, purchase the eligible items identified in your application, and submit your claim. Items will be marked as eligible at the start of your Grant Offer Letter.

If you do not submit your claim within three (3) calendar months, we will withdraw your grant offer. Only full and complete claims will be accepted. You can only claim the grant once your project has completed. **Claims cannot be paid in instalments.**

Before you submit your claim, you must ensure you comply with and are aware of the following:

- You may only purchase the items that were stated in your application and marked as eligible in your Grant Offer Letter.
- You can only claim the maximum level of grant funding we have awarded you and confirmed in your Grant Offer Letter.
- You can claim for a smaller grant than you originally applied for, if you are still claiming for the same products with lower costs, so long as this does not go below the minimum amount of the grant fund. Please inform us if costs are significantly lower than in your application.
- The grant can only reimburse defrayed costs. These are costs that you have actually incurred.
- Costs must be incurred from a business bank account. Personal bank statements and credit cards will not be accepted. See [Appendix 2](#) for further details.
- You need to return the signed claim letter included in your Grant Offer Letter and the Annex B schedule of costs, with evidence of expenditure, within three (3) months of the date of the Grant Offer Letter.
- At a minimum, you will need to submit an invoice or receipt for each purchase, accompanied by a bank statement identifying each purchase, all other expenditure can be redacted.

Please see [Appendix 2](#) for full details on evidence requirements.

- If you are not VAT registered, we will pay claims Gross of VAT. If you are VAT registered, we will pay claims Net of VAT.
- If you change your mind or your business circumstances change and you no longer wish (or are not in a position) to spend the grant offered to you, please inform us in writing as soon as possible.
- You are required to participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the grant scheme, 12 months after being awarded the funds. This will be via an online questionnaire and a sample number of businesses will undertake a telephone interview. You will be asked to report on your progress in meeting the outcomes you stated in your application.
- If you have not met these outcomes and can demonstrate that this is not due to mismanagement of the grant funds, we will not seek to take back these funds.
- You must also comply with the marketing and communications, detailed in your Grant Offer Letter.

How to submit your claim

Once you have received your confirmation email that states your Grant Offer Letter and State Subsidy Declaration have been approved you may start making purchases.

To submit your claim, you will need to use the link provided in the confirmation email mentioned above. This link will work in the same way the Grant Offer Letter and Subsidy Control Declaration process.

We will not accept costs that were incurred before the date of your Grant Offer Letter. If a claim is submitted with costs dated before your Grant Offer Letter these will be deemed ineligible and will not be included in your claim.

To submit your documents, you must login to the portal using your account details, these will be the same as those used when submitting your application. Once logged in, you will need to enter your application reference number. This number can be found in the subject line of our emails.

You will be asked to check the reference number is correct, only one option should show up here, and this should be the same number entered on the previous page. It is important you enter the correct reference; incorrect entry may result in your documents being uploaded to the wrong account.

When submitting your claim please ensure you:

- Label your documents with an easy to identify name. E.g., Invoice - Company Name - Date. Claims that are not labelled take longer to assess and could delay payment of your grant.
- Upload all claim documents at the same time
- Complete and submit the claim letter provided in your Grant Offer Letter
- Complete and submit the Annex B Schedule of Costs

Fully complete and valid claims will be paid within 30 days of receipt. Once payment has been confirmed we will provide remittance advice via email. Please ensure you regularly check your junk/spam folder for our emails.

Further information

For more information on the Business Growth and Adaption Grants, please e-mail Enterprisegrants@westofengland-ca.gov.uk, we aim to respond to your enquiry within 2 working days. If you can't email us, please call 0117 456 6955 and leave a message with the Growth Hub team

Appendix 1 - Subsidy Declaration guidance

Submitting your Subsidy Declaration

You must return the Subsidy Control Declaration letter with any other state funding you have received in the last three financial years. There is a maximum amount of funding that a company can receive as Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA), specified in section 36(1) of the Subsidy Control Act (2022). This is measured over the last three consecutive financial years. For these purposes, we mean the period from 1 April to 31 March in the relevant years, irrespective of your actual company financial year. This limit is £315,000 across certain types of funding.

If you have received public sector support your company should have been told what type of grant you received. This would normally be in writing, in a grant offer letter. Free business support services that your company has received might also be classed as 'grant' so please do consider this.

If there is an error with your declaration, we will send this back to you to amend. We can't change or correct a signed declaration that has been submitted to us. We also can't provide advice on if specific support should or should not be included in your declaration.

What needs to be declared

Before December 31st 2019 anything awarded under 'de minimis' needs to be declared. From 01st January 2020 this will be called UK Subsidy Scheme Small Amounts of Financial Assistance or Minimal Financial Assistance.

How to find out what support you've had

There are a few ways you can check if you have received state subsidy:

1. Contact with the grant giver
2. Check your offer letter
3. If you received a covid grant, visit the governments [Reporting coronavirus \(COVID-19\) grants and support payments page](#)

If you are not certain you can make a correct declaration you may want to seek independent legal advice.

Appendix 2 - Evidence requirements

Invoices

All invoices will need to comply with the [Companies Act criteria](#), which can be found [on the government website](#). The invoice will need to include the following -

- Company name, address, registration number, contact details on letter head
- Invoice date and invoice number
- Specific description, unit quantity
- If VAT registered to include VAT registration number

Receipts

These must be legible, and items must be easily identifiable. If this cannot be accomplished, you must provide full details of the expenditure in the Annex B Schedule of Costs.

If VAT was charged you should provide a VAT receipt. If a VAT receipt is not provided please identify this on the Annex B.

Bank Statements

Statements should clearly state the name of the bank and grant beneficiary name, sort code and account number. These should be submitted as a copy and not a screen shot. You can redact items that are not included in the claim, but the claim transactions need to be clearly visible.

Grant beneficiary credit card statements are acceptable if the bank name, beneficiary name, dates, and item description is visible as evidence of defrayment.

Personal bank statements and personal credit card statements are not acceptable as this does not evidence company defrayment. If you are a sole trader or partnership without a company bank account, this must be the account you use to manage your business. If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).

Salary costs

We require a payroll report that states the job title, payroll number and amount together with a bank statement confirming defrayal. On costs (NI) are eligible and any overheads should be confirmed in the Annex B schedule of cost, we will pay no more than 15%.

Claims must be for PAYE rates; corporate day rates are ineligible. You must not submit payslips as evidence due to GDPR regulations. Payment in kind arrangements will not be accepted.

You must clearly demonstrate in your claim how salary costs have been calculated.