



West of England

BUSINESS SUPPORT GUIDE



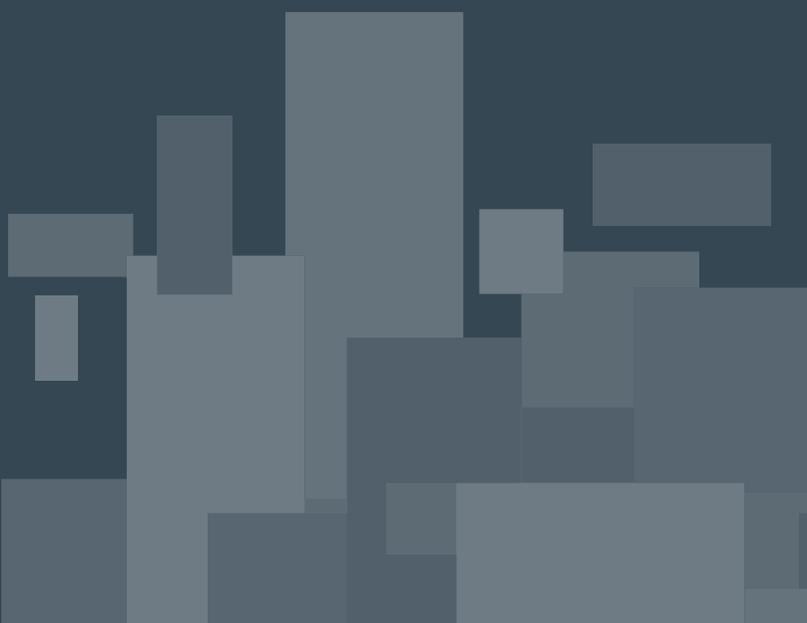
CONTENTS

- 3** The West of England Growth Hub
- 4** Finding the right support for your business
 - 5**  Financial & Business Support
 - 8**  Leadership & Management
 - 10**  Workforce Development
 - 13**  Technology & Innovation
- 16** How to get support

#TogetherWestofEngland

The West of England Combined Authority is committed to enabling regional businesses to thrive and drive sustainable growth. We're here to give you the support your business needs to flourish.

Our business support programmes and vast network of partners offer tailored sector-specific support to accelerate innovation, improve sustainability, develop workforce skills and drive growth.



THE WEST OF ENGLAND GROWTH HUB

The West of England Combined Authority's dedicated business support service, the West of England Growth Hub, provides SMEs with tailored one-to-one advice and access to finance, support programmes and expert guidance.

We offer the same level of free, impartial support to businesses from all sectors.

The Growth Hub offers support for:

- Financial & Business Support
- Leadership & Management
- Workforce Development
- Technology & Innovation

Our team of expert Enterprise Advisors offer free one-to-one business support, and can help you:

- Access development programmes and funding
- Connect to support, advice and guidance from our expert partners
- Identify your business challenges and opportunities
- Benefit from support networks, events and peer support

The Growth Hub provides free support to businesses throughout Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset.



FINDING THE RIGHT SUPPORT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

We're providing increased support to our region's 45,000+ businesses to help you respond and adapt as the world changes rapidly and provide you with the resilience to navigate uncertainty and get set for future success.

This Business Support Pack provides an overview of the support programmes available for your business. If you'd like further help identifying what might benefit your business the most, please contact the West of England Growth Hub.

In addition to the programmes listed, the Growth Hub can connect you to a wide range of online tools, training and services from our expert partners depending on your business needs.

For further information and guidance, please contact the West of England Growth Hub.

To be eligible for the following support, you will be a small - medium sized business based in the West of England (Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire).

Contact the Growth Hub at
wearegrowth@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SUPPORT

WHAT DO I GET?	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	MORE INFO
Effective Digital Entrepreneurship & Business Support for non EU migrants		
<p>This programme provides free business advice, guidance and training for non-EU migrant or refugees.</p> <p>It gives one-to-one business advice to help you become self-employed, start a business or learn new skills. You'll get the professional skills and expertise you need to grow your business, access to business training, and we'll connect you with a professional business mentor.</p> <p>Led by ACH and with partners from Bristol's School for Policy Studies (University of Bristol) and the West of England Combined Authority.</p> <p>This project is supported by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Funding (AMIF) Programme 2014-2020.</p>	To find out more information request a call-back today.	
Cultural And Creative Business Support Programme		
<p>This is a specific business support programme for businesses in the creative sector, designed to build resilience and support change in response to Covid-19.</p> <p>The programme supports individuals and management teams to reformulate and adapt operating and financial models and business plans in response to current challenges.</p>	Open to all sub sectors of the creative industries in summer 2021.	

FINANCIAL & BUSINESS SUPPORT

WHAT DO I GET?	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	MORE INFO
Intellectual Property		
<p>Intellectual property (IP) assets can be integral to the growth and sustainability of a business.</p> <p>When properly managed, the value of your IP can outweigh physical assets, accounting for over 70% of your business' value.</p> <p>It's important to understand there have been changes to UK IP law following the UK's exit from the EU.</p> <p>The West of England Growth Hub can provide 1-1 guidance on managing your IP in partnership with the Intellectual Property Office.</p>	Available to entrepreneurs, startup businesses and established SMEs.	
Universal Business Support		
<p>Training and expert advice for those who are (or are hoping to become) business owners, whether you're self-employed or leading an established small business. We can support businesses in any sector.</p> <p>The universal business support programme can help you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Understand regulations, requirements and best practice when setting up a new business▪ Access free expert advice and guidance to get started with a new business▪ Access training to develop your business▪ Access a range of 1-1 support, workshops and resources to help with everything from digital marketing to accountancy <p>Delivered by the West of England Combined Authority in partnership with Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council and Bath & North East Somerset Council.</p>	Available to residents, entrepreneurs, start-up businesses and established SMEs.	



CASE STUDY

Bailey Balloons - supporting business recovery and resilience

Bailey Balloons is a hot air balloon operator based in Bristol. With a reduction in bookings of 90% in 2020, they got in touch with the Growth Hub who were able to signpost them to grant funding and helped them to tap into local business networks for ongoing support.

Jo Bailey said:

“It’s been a really challenging year. The Growth Hub helped our business at a time when during lockdown I felt that no-one was listening to us.

“I just think they’ve been brilliant in so many ways and supporting so many unsupported companies like us. To other entrepreneurs I would say please do get in touch with the Growth Hub. They’ve been invaluable to us.”

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

WHAT DO I GET?	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	MORE INFO
Peer Networks		
<p>Designed specifically for leaders of small and medium sized businesses, this a free peer-to-peer networking programme complete with one-to-one support to help your business recover and grow.</p> <p>You'll join a diverse group of business leaders ready for you to learn from and work collaboratively to tackle common business issues.</p> <p>From finance and HR to sales, marketing and more, we have expert professional facilitators ready to create a trusted support network bespoke for your needs.</p>	<p>Businesses who have operated for over 1 year, have a turnover of over £100,000 per annum and more than 5 PAYE employees.</p>	
Mentoring for Growth		
<p>Delivered by our partner Be the Business, this programme connects you with business leaders from large multinational companies. You'll access different skills and experiences, learn from different sectors and get fresh perspectives.</p> <p>This fully-funded programme is designed to focus on your needs, and can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Providing an objective sounding board for challenges and new ideas alike▪ Getting your senior management team working together more effectively▪ Improving your company's forward-looking forecasting and modelling▪ Making changes to your business model to suit changing consumer spending habits▪ Improving the performance of your business overall	<p>Small- to medium-sized businesses.</p>	



CASE STUDY

Amanda Challans - mentor support

Adventurer and public speaker Amanda Challans runs an international change management consultancy based in Bristol. Amanda got in touch with the Growth Hub for support to grow her business.

“When you’ve got a lot of pressure and responsibility on yourself it’s really nice to have that feeling that someone else is part of this journey with you, and they’ve been with me every step of the way.”

She also benefited from the vibrant network of local businesses that the Growth Hub connected her to.

“One of the biggest benefits for local businesses is the network the Growth Hub has – I’m aware that they’re speaking to so many other businesses in the area. There’s that feeling that we’re all supporting each other to grow.”

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

WHAT DO I GET?	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	MORE INFO
<p>Workforce for the Future</p> <p>Through this programme you'll receive support over three years from our expert partners to ensure your business can identify ongoing skills needs, unlock opportunities, drive change and invest in your current and future workforce.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to an experienced Skills Adviser who will help you develop your workforce ▪ A Workforce Development Plan and strategy to put into place ▪ Access a suite of online tools, resources and workshops ▪ Funding for skills training programmes ▪ Strategic planning and change management guidance ▪ Support with apprenticeships and student placements ▪ Confidence in safeguarding jobs, reimagining your existing workforce and recruiting sufficiently skilled employees from local pools of talent ▪ The latest approaches to open and inclusive recruitment so you can reduce your skills gaps and improve connectivity with the local skills system <p>Delivered by the West of England Combined Authority in partnership with Adviza, Bath College, Business West, City of Bristol College, University of the West of England, Weston College and Western Training Provider Network.</p> <p>The project has received funding from the European Social Fund (ESF).</p> 	<p>250 employees or less.</p>	

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

WHAT DO I GET?	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	MORE INFO
Thrive at Work West of England		
<p>Thrive at Work West of England provides interactive tools and training resources needed to help you embed good mental health practice in your business and support your employees, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Our free e-Learning, developed by Mind, 'Managing Mental Health at Work' is designed to equip managers with the confidence and skills to have supportive conversations with their staff about mental health and wellbeing, particularly in these challenging times▪ Advice and guidance to implement Mental Health at Work Commitments and Mental Health at Work Standards and Wellness Action Plans▪ Toolkits and research reports▪ Suicide awareness training▪ Psychological first aid <p>Delivered by the West of England Combined Authority in partnership with Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, Mind, North Somerset Council, Public Health England and South Gloucestershire Council.</p>	Open to all businesses.	

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

WHAT DO I GET?	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	MORE INFO
Kickstart Scheme		
<p>£2bn of funding has been allocated to create thousands of 6-month work placements for unemployed people aged 18-25. Employers of all sizes can apply for funding which covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 100% of the National Minimum Wage (or the National Living Wage depending on the age of the participant) for a minimum of 25 hours per week for a total of 6 months▪ Associated employer National Insurance contributions▪ Employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions <p>You can spread the start date of the job placements up until the end of December 2021.</p> <p>The placements help young people develop the skills and experience they need in the workplace after the placement has ended, whilst providing you with the extra resource you need to grow your business.</p> <p>Businesses able to create job placements can apply for the funding directly on the Government website or through an intermediary.</p> <p>The West of England Combined Authority are working with our partners across the region to connect SMEs interested in creating Kickstart placements with the relevant local intermediary.</p>	Open to all businesses.	

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

WHAT DO I GET?	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	MORE INFO
<h2>Business Innovation Fund</h2>		
<p>The Business Innovation Fund awards grants to support eligible businesses to undertake research, development and innovation activities, including research and development, in order to bring new or enhanced products, processes and services to the market. You'll get:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding and support to move from concept to commercialisation ▪ Collaborate with our region's leading research institutions ▪ Advice on IP, testing and development roadmaps ▪ Bespoke research, development and innovation action plan <p>The Business Innovation Fund is supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).</p> 	<p>Able to match fund the cost of your project.</p> <p>Less than 250 employees.</p>	

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

WHAT DO I GET?	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	MORE INFO
<p>Carbon Surveys</p> <p>Get a free Carbon Survey and Decarbonisation Report to understand and improve your business's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ understand current energy use and carbon emissions, and pinpoint carbon hotspots in your business activities▪ identify practical ways to reduce emissions and energy bills, including actions that could require low or no investment to implement▪ discover and find out more about new and emerging technologies in their industry▪ set priorities and budgets for future improvements▪ access sources of funding, including Green Business Grants. <p>To date, over 90 businesses have received a Carbon Survey and Decarbonisation Report, identifying an average saving of 16.5 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions and £3,400 in energy bills per business per year.</p> <p>Carbon Surveys and Green Business Grants are funded from the European Regional Development Fund and West of England Recovery Fund.</p>	<p>Small & medium sized enterprises with business premises in the Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire local authority areas.</p>	





CASE STUDY

Charlie Gardner, CGI Music - Trading Better Online

CGI Music is a music events and artist management business owned by Charlie Gardner.

Having never applied for grant funding before, the Growth Hub worked with Charlie to offer advice on the support available and give him access to the Trading Better Online programme.

Charlie said,

“I’m massively grateful for all the help and support that the Growth Hub has provided at this difficult time. It can be a bit of a lonely world running your own business so having a support system like that [the Growth Hub] is really invaluable.”



HOW TO GET SUPPORT

Contact the West of England Growth Hub for help navigating the range of local, regional and national support available for your business.

Tel: **0117 456 6955**

Email: wearegrowth@westofengland-ca.gov.uk

Website: www.wearegrowth.co.uk

Invest Bristol & Bath is the West of England Combined Authority's inward investment service. It offers sector expertise, relocation support, research, property advice, skills and talent support and networking opportunities to growing companies established in the region as well as those looking to relocate.

In addition to the range of business support from the West of England Combined Authority, our team of Enterprise Advisors can also help you navigate the Government's national and regional support programmes, funding and business advice, including:

EU Transition

National financial support for Covid-19

Export Academy

For further information and support on the employment and skills support available in the West of England, please visit the Employment and Skills Portal on the West of England Combined Authority website

www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/skills/employment-skills-portal

