BUSINESS GROWTH FUND 2024-2025
EXAMPLE GRANT APPLICATION FORM

AIMS OF THE FUND

Rugby Borough Council's Business Growth Fund aims to support the development of start-ups and established SMEs. We are keen that successful projects support our wider themes of creating a better, fairer and greener economy. It offers grants to SMEs for projects that deliver business growth through the purchase of capital items, the development of a digital presence, or access to professional services. It is funded by government.

We are looking for projects that can be delivered by December 2025.

AVAILABLE FUNDING

Total Fund Value: £136,000

Grants will range from:

   a. up to £2,000 for start-up micro and small businesses
   b. up to £5,000 for established micro and small businesses
   Up to £7,500 for projects that would give wider benefit for residents and other businesses in the borough.

Section A - Headline Information

1. Project title:	Write the title of your proposed activity here e.g. 'Business Growth through gaining independent Marketing Expertise'
2. Total project value,	£ Put the total amount the whole project will cost here (**including** your match funding)
of which: Grant amount requested:	£ Put the amount you are requesting from the Council – this should be the total above **MINUS** your match contribution
If applicable, match amount pledged:	£ Put the amount you are putting toward the project as match funding here
3. Main contact person (These details will be used for correspondence purposes) Name: Position within business: Email: Telephone/ Mobile phone number:	Enter your contact details here. Please use details you regularly check.

Section B - Your Business

1. Name of business applying:	
Type of business:	Sole trader / Limited Company / Other (please specify) Delete the non applicable business types, leaving just the one relevant to your registration type
Organisation address:	Enter your registered business address
Organisation email address:	Enter your business email address
Organisation phone number:	Enter your business phone number
Is your business a start-up or an established SMEs?	☐ Start-up ☐ Established SMEs (tick the appropriate box)
Is your business registered and/or trading in the Borough of Rugby?	☐ Yes ☐ No (N.B. If the answer to this is 'no' then you will not be eligible for a grant)
If yes, please provide your Rugby address if different from above	

	Company Registration Number **or** UTR number:	Enter your Companies House certificate number (if Ltd) **or** your UTR (unique taxpayer reference) if registered as a Sole Trader or Partnership. (Your UTR is a 10-digit number provided to you when you register for self-employment and used to file your Self Assessment tax return.)
2.	When was your business registered?	Date of business registration
	How many employees (FTE) does your business have?	How many people work for your company, including full and part time or casual staff
	What is your turnover for the previous financial year?	Your last tax return will have this information
	What is the total value of your assets for the previous financial year?	Enter total assets value – will be on your last tax return
	Are you owned or do you own shares in other companies? If yes, please describe the set-up and include percentages.	
	Is your business required to register with the Information Commission Office (ICO)? If yes, please provide your ICO reference number:	☐ Yes ☐ No Most businesses storing any kind of customer data need to register with the ICO. All businesses should receive a letter from the ICO at point of formation whether sole trader or Ltd. Registration with ICO currently costs about £45 per year for cover against data breaches, cybercrime etc. If you are unsure and what to check if your business is exempt, you can do a quick check on the ICO website: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-fee/self-assessment/

Section C - Project Information

1. Project Description
How will the project support your business?

In this section it is important to be specific about how this grant will support your business. These applications have to be equitably scored, and high scoring projects will be those which

For start-ups (businesses up to 24months old):
- With a clear understanding of their target market and business strategy
- Demonstrating a clear purpose of the project to help deliver your business strategy
- That demonstrate potential for long-term sustainability and scalability
- That can articulate a clear competitive advantage

For Established SMEs (over 2 years old – Government definition of an SME):
- That demonstrate potential for long-term sustainability and scalability
- That can articulate a clear competitive advantage and demonstrate an understanding of their competitive landscape (e.g. IP protection, strategic partnership, unique feature or niche service)
- Where the applicant pledges match funding

Here are a couple of example eligible project descriptions to give you an idea of the level of detail need to score highly:

☐ **Social Media Marketing for an insurance brokerage:**
My business intends to utilise a social media marketing company to significantly increase our customer base. As a UK life insurance brokerage involves a strategic approach tailored to our specific goals, audience, and market. Here's how we intend to leverage their expertise:
1. Targeted Advertising Campaigns
- Identify Ideal Customers: The marketing company can help us define and target specific demographics such as age, income level, family status, and geographic location. For example, targeting young families, newlyweds, or individuals in their 30s and 40s who are likely to be considering life insurance.
- Platform Selection: Depending on the identified target audience, platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube may be particularly effective and we would expect the agency to create tailored ads, including lead generation forms directly within these platforms.
- Lookalike Audiences: The agency will also utilise data from our existing customer base to create lookalike audiences. These are users who share characteristics with our best customers and are more likely to convert to sales.

☐ **A UK-based micro manufacturer of handmade skincare**
We would like to optimise our showroom fittings to significantly enhance customer experience and increase conversion rates. Here's how we intend to leverage our requested new showroom fittings to achieve this:
- Sensory Experience: Skincare is a sensory product. We will use our fittings to create an inviting environment where customers can see, touch, smell, and even try your products. Display units will be designed to allow easy access to testers, with mirrors and sinks for sampling products like cleansers or masks.
- Ambient Lighting: We will buy and utilise warm, soft lighting to create a cozy atmosphere. Proper lighting should highlight the textures and colours of our products, making them more appealing.

- **Natural Materials:** We will incorporate natural materials into our fittings, like wood or stone, to reflect the handmade and organic nature of our products. This reinforces our brand's identity and creates a cohesive aesthetic.

2. Project Timeline

What is the planned timetable for the project, including, the expected start date, dates of key activities (such as purchase of key items, holding an event, reporting), and when the grant will be spent by? Add as many rows as you need. Include any other details below the table.

ACTIVITY	DATE
Project Start	Cannot start before 01.10.24
Add more rows if needed	
Project End	Must end before 31.12.24

3. Business Description and Project Impact

Provide a brief description of your activity

This section is focussed on the impact the project will make either for your business alone (up to £5000) or, if you are applying for up to £7'500, a demonstration of the wider benefit for Rugby residents or other businesses in the borough.

For up to £5000 - explain how your project will contribute to one or more of the following: creating jobs | safeguarding jobs | creating new businesses | Increasing customers | Increasing visitor numbers to Rugby | Reducing vacancy rates | Increasing your business's sustainability

For up to £7'500, you need to additionally demonstrate how would it improve one or more of the following:
1. the profile or range of services of the town or borough (**Better**);
2. accessibility and inclusivity of your services or employment (**Fairer**);
3. the natural environment or sustainability (**Greener**).

4. Project Finances

4a. Budget

Please provide a breakdown of how the grant will be spent.
For all the purchases you intend to make, *provide written or screenshot quotes* to show you have done market research and achieved value for money with your selected product/service.
- *Please note the list of eligible costs in the 'Guidelines for Applicants' document*
- *Add as many rows as you need to – one item per row*
- *Add any further details below the table*
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BUDGET LINE/PURCHASE	COST (excl. VAT)	COST (incl. VAT)
TOTAL:		

4b. Total cost of project

What is the total cost of the project? If it is more than you are applying to this fund for, please give details of how you will find the balance stating details of any other grants you have applied for or use of your own resources.

Total cost of project: £ Must be the same as you entered in section A2

Match funding provided: £ Must be the same as you entered in section A2

Other funds applied for/secured (including amount): Additional monies you have applied for from other funders or investors for the same project

Funding Source (e.g. grant, own reserves)	Amount (e.g. £5,000)	Status (e.g. awaiting decision, confirmed)
Grant from RBC	Put amount of grant requested here e.g. £5000	Awaiting decision
e.g. Own Reserves or Investor monies	Put match funding amount here e.g. for a £5000 project 0% = £0 / 10% = £500 / 20% = £1000	Confirmed

Please state what any additional funding will be used to for: This only needs to be completed if there are access funds for what is outlined earlier in the application.

5. Risks to the success of the project

What factors might delay the project or otherwise prevent you delivering your aims and objectives? (for example: lack of staff to deliver activities, failure to attract sufficient visitors through website, etc.) How will you minimise or deal with these risks?

Here's two examples of projects that recognised issues and how they try to mitigate and minimise risks.

Project: Construction of new office space

Identified issues/risk: Delays in Construction Timeline

Mitigation: We will be developing contracts with suppliers and subcontractors that include penalty clauses for delays. This will ensure that the project will be delivered in a timely manner.

Identified issues/risk: Budget overruns – Costs exceeding initial estimates due to changes in material prices, additional labour, or design changes.

Mitigation: We negotiated fixed-price contracts with suppliers and contractors . If material prices exceeded expected costs then we will draw from our contingency fund in order to cover the extra costs.

Project: E-commerce Platform Development

Identified issues/risk: Vulnerabilities in the platform could lead to data breaches or unauthorized access to sensitive customer information.

Mitigation: We will be implementing strong encryption protocols for data transmission and storage as well as regularly updates and patch the software to address security vulnerabilities. This will ensure that the data and sensitive customer information will not get intercepted or leaked during transmission or storage.

Identified issues/risk: Payment processing errors or downtime with third-party gateways could lead to loss of sales and customer trust.

Mitigation: We will be offering a variety of payment options (e.g., credit cards, PayPal, mobile wallets) to accommodate user preferences and monitoring payment system performance in real-time to detect issues early and respond promptly.

6. Success metrics

What metrics will you use to measure the success of your project? Please provide a summary of how you will measure success. This section is about measurement – how will you prove the impacts you have outlined in section 3

Outcomes	
Jobs created	e.g. I currently have 1 person employed, me. So when I employ an assistant I will have doubled the staff in my business.
Jobs safeguarded	e.g. I currently have 3 staff but due to lowered sales I am at the point where I will probably have to let one person go. The success metric will be that all three staff remain employed.
Number of new businesses created	I currently own one business but this project will allow me to start another. Success metric will be evidence of new company registration
Increased footfall	I currently have 100 visits to my business per week (online or physically). Success metric will be proof of a 10% increase in visits
Increased visitor numbers	This is for physical visitors to Rugby. If you start an attraction which would bring visitors in who do not normally visit Rugby those would be numbers to count.
Reduced vacancy rates	Success metric – grant allows your business to move into a currently vacant business premise in Rugby.
Improved perception of markets	This relates to market stall improvements
Increased business sustainability	e.g. due to lowered sales I am at the point where I will probably have to close my business. The success

	==metric will be that my business remains trading sustainably due to increased customers.==	
	For grants over £5000: Also answer one or more of the following:	
	Improved profile or range of services of the town or borough (*Better*);	
	Improved accessibility and inclusivity of your services or employment (*Fairer*);	
	improved natural environment or sustainability (*Greener*).	

7. Sustainability

What do you expect to happen once you have spent your grant? How will your project provide lasting benefit to your business?

==Explain the longer lasting benefits== of the improvements/services/products you have invested in

These questions will help us gather the necessary information to evaluate the project and ensure the grants are used effectively.

Section D - Financial details

1. **Your business bank details** Name on bank account: Account number: Sort code: Branch address:	
2. **Financial Reserves** Please confirm your business's financial reserves	

Restricted reserves:	£
Unrestricted reserves:	£
Please provide a statement as to why you hold this level of reserves:	

3.   **VAT**

Is your business able to recover VAT?	☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please provide your VAT reference number	

4.   **Total bank balance**

Please confirm the total balance of all bank and building society accounts at the date of application:	£

5. Minimal Financial Assistance / De Minimis (Money you have had from Government or Europe via an intermediary)

Please declare <u>all</u> the De Minimis / Minimal Financial Assistance subsidies you have received as a business in the three consecutive fiscal (financial) years (the current year and the two previous ones) prior to application:

Grant providers should have issued you with de minimis certification which will hold these details.

PROVIDER NAME	AMOUNT (GBP)	DATE OF RECEIPT (mm/yyyy)
Add as many columns as you need to		

Section E - Additional Comments

You can **optionally** add anything extra to support your application here.

Section F – Supporting Documents

Please tick to confirm you have attached copies of the following documents to this application form:

☐ VAT Certificate (if registered for VAT)
☐ Company Registration / Certificate of Incorporation or HMRC registration letter
☐ Proof of Rugby trading address (if not registered in the Borough of Rugby).

☐ Annual accounts/financial records or a statement that shows your business's balance of funds, income and expenditure, as per the requirements in the Guidance for Applicants document, Section 6. How to apply for a grant?

☐ A bank statement / loan letter / grant letter (if you are required or wish to pledge match funding for the project)

☐ A bank statement from the current or previous month in your business's registered name.

☐ <mark>Two quotes for the project activities</mark>

Declaration

<mark>Please tick **ALL** the boxes below to confirm the following:</mark>

☐ I accept and confirm that all information provided in this application is a true representation of the position of the individual, group or organisation and its intention for the grant if successful.

☐ I understand that if we want to introduce any changes after the grant has been awarded then prior approval must be sought from Rugby Borough Council, in writing.

☐ I understand and accept that the name of my business, the title of this project, the amount of grant requested and/or awarded, and the result of the appraisal of my project will be made public on Rugby Borough Council's website.

☐ I agree to comply with the Procurement, Publicity and Reporting requirements as laid out in Sections 10, 11 and 12 of the Guidelines for Applicants document.

Applicant Name: _Name of person applying for this grant_

Applicant Position: _Job title of person applying for this grant__

Signature: _ of person applying for this grant (screen sign, e-sign or hard copy)__

Date: _Date of signing this application__

Data Protection Act Notice

The information contained on this form will be held by the council and will be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act. The Act requires the council to safeguard this information and the use made of it.

The information given on this form may also be used for data matching exercises to assist in the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption.