SUFFOLK ECONOMY GRANTS
Think big, grow bigger

Suffolk Economy Grant

Grant Programme Criteria for Applicants

This programme is aimed at micro, small and medium sized businesses based in Suffolk that wish to achieve clean growth, e.g., job creation, business growth, external investment.

The grant will help Suffolk businesses grow productively, inclusively, and sustainably. It supports companies focused on innovation, digital technology adoption, carbon footprint reduction, and sustainable practices.

Projects should lead to measurable improvements in productivity, carbon reduction, job creation, and innovation.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is available?

Suffolk County Council has grants available as follows:

- Micro business: £2,500 - £10,000 grant at 50% intervention rate
- Small business: £5,000 - £50,000 grant at 30% intervention rate
- Medium business: £10,000 - £100,000 grant at 20% intervention rate

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How do I know what size my business is?

Size	No. of Employees	Turnover or Balance Sheet
Micro	Fewer than 10	Turnover up to £1m and total assets (balance sheet) up to £500,000
Small	10 – 49	Turnover up to £15m and total assets (balance sheet) up to £7.5m
Medium	50 – 249	Turnover up to £54m and total assets (balance sheet) up to £27m

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Is my business eligible?

To apply for this grant, your business must be:

- located within the boundaries of Suffolk County Council (business and project)
- trading for at least two years (must provide 2 years' full accounts)
- micro, small or medium enterprise (includes businesses, CICs, charities (where set up as a business), LLPs)

- registered with Companies House or Charity Commission and have a business bank account.
- a going concern and not an ailing or insolvent or dormant business.

There are some business sectors which are not eligible for grant funding, and there are additional eligibility criteria, both of which your business adviser will help you with.

Timeframe
Your project must be ready to proceed as soon as your application has been approved and be fully completed by 31/03/2027 and you must check with your proposed suppliers that this is achievable.

You should note that all planning permissions, licenses and agreements must be in place before you can submit an application.

Is my project eligible?
Our priority areas for grant funding are as follows:

- Digital transformation and technology convergence
- Innovation and R&D which includes product and service development
- Decarbonisation and sustainability

Projects can include:

- Energy efficient plant and machinery
- On-shoring of product manufacturing and supply chains to increase efficiencies
- Development of new technology or innovation and productivity improvements
- Reducing methane, nitrogen oxide and other greenhouse gases/particulate emissions
- Innovative R&D projects, where the innovation is new to the business.

Following investment, we would expect to see at least one of the following outcomes:

- Improved productivity
- Measurable increase in energy efficiency
- measurable reduction in emissions
- the introduction of new products and services,
- the adopting of technologies which are new to your business
- accessing new markets
- increasing export capability
- creation of new jobs
- increased growth

What business sectors are not eligible for support?

- Banking and insurance
- Public funded bodies and statutory services
- Healthcare and care homes
- Schools, nurseries and childcare facilities
- Religious or political organisations
- Estate and employment agencies
- Education
- Sole traders (any sector)
- Ailing or insolvent business or a dormant business (any sector)

Expenditure not eligible for support

- Property and/or land purchase
- Vehicles (of any type)
- Solar panels (supply and/or installation)
- Core running or staff costs
- Any costs incurred before a grant offer is made
- Items that are not directly needed to deliver the proposed project
- The direct, like-for-like replacement of equipment, items and consumables including laptops and software
- VAT (unless this cannot be recovered)
- Any projects that can be funded from other grant schemes
- Repeat applications, including from linked enterprises
- Working capital or stock items for selling
- Marketing costs (including websites) and items for a trade fair
- Statutory requirements
- Professional fees
- Recruitment costs
- LED lighting;
- Insulation;
- Air conditioning or heating systems
- Windows and doors;
- Website creation
- WMS/CRM platforms or equivalent

How do I apply for funding?

Businesses wishing to apply for support should contact us via the Business Grants and Funding page on the Suffolk Economy website: [Business Grants and Funding - Suffolk Economy]

Our expert Business Advisers will work with you to help you develop your application. As part of the process, an initial in-depth diagnostic exercise will be undertaken to determine eligibility of your business and identify what type of support you require.

The application will be submitted via a portal (your Business Adviser will provide a link) and you will need to upload the supporting documentation.

What is the EPIC Framework?

You must explain, in your application, how your project will address the EPIC framework, which underpins the Suffolk Economic Strategy and provides a structured approach for evaluating applications. It helps the panel assess each application against four core principles: Economic Wellbeing, Productivity, Inclusivity and Clean Growth.

Economic Wellbeing: Assesses the project's overall contribution to Suffolk's economy by considering both its economic impact (e.g. job creation, business growth, external investment) and the value for money offered by the grant.

Productivity: Evaluates how the project strengthens the business's productivity through improved supply chain integration, innovation, and the creation of high-quality, sustainable jobs with opportunities for development.

Inclusive: Assesses how the project supports inclusive economic growth by distributing benefits fairly across communities, sectors and geographies – particularly improving access for underrepresented or disadvantaged groups.

Clean Growth: Evaluates how the project supports Suffolk's clean growth ambitions by reducing environmental impact and improving resource efficiency – particularly through innovation and alignment with circular economy principles.

As part of your application, you will need to provide quotes for each item you wish to purchase

Value of contract*	Minimum procurement procedure for proposed goods/supplies or services to be delivered by one supplier.
£0 to £499	Does not apply as minimum quote is £500
£500 to £2,499	Direct award but evidenced by at least one quote, email, or screenshot
£2,500 to £24,999	A minimum of three quotes, screenshots, price comparisons or emails from proposed suppliers
Over £25,000	A minimum of three detailed quotes on headed paper.

The minimum quote we will accept is £500.

Subsidy Control
If a grant is awarded, it will constitute a subsidy and will initially be available through Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA).

The maximum support through MFA is £315,000 and this is a cumulative total of all support received over the current, and the last two complete financial years through MFA, EU de minimis and Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance.

If you are offered support through MFA, you will need to make a declaration that you have not already exceeded the £315,000, and/or with approval of the requested support, you will not exceed the £315,000 threshold.

If relevant, a grant award could be considered through one of the Streamlined Routes, and your business adviser will explain this.

Match Funding

You should only apply for the gap you have in funding your project and you will be required to provide evidence of the match funding. This can be any form of asset finance, loan, etc., but cannot be paid in cash or by a personal credit card. You will need to show how much funding you can provide, by one of these means, and then your grant application will be for the shortfall (up to the maximum you would be allowed).

Things you should know

- There are limited funds available, and each application will be considered on how well it addresses the EPIC framework.
- You must be an established SME and be able to provide accounts covering at least two years.
- We are unable to support ailing or insolvent businesses with a negative balance sheet and financial checks are undertaken.
- This discretionary grant is awarded by an independent panel and it may take up to 30 working days from receipt of your full, complete application for you to be notified of a decision
- All planning permissions or other dependencies must be evidenced as in place at time of application
- To support your application, you will be required to provide routine business documents such as quotes, business accounts and bank statements.

- All projects will need to demonstrate value for money and there will be a requirement to provide quotes for each category of expenditure. The minimum quote we can accept is £500.
- You will receive advice and support as required during the application process.

Please note, grants are awarded on a discretionary basis and are subject to eligibility checks and approval.