

Support for Northwest Businesses



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One of the Northwest Regional Development Agency's (NWDA) most important roles is to support the region's businesses. In the current economic climate we are increasing our support to businesses. This leaflet summarises how we can help your business through the current economic conditions.

All of these services are available to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) which employ less than 250 staff. Some services are also available to individuals* and large businesses*.

All of the support can be accessed through Business Link Northwest, an NWDA service that provides individuals and businesses with access to all public and private sector business support.

Business Link Northwest

0845 00 66 888

www.businesslink.gov.uk/northwest

Product Name	Description
BUSINESS FINANCE	
"Small Loans for Business" *	To help individuals, small business owners and social enterprises to start up and expand. To be eligible individuals and businesses must have been unable to secure commercial finance and have a viable business plan. Loans range between £3,000 - £50,000.
"Grant for Business Investment" *	To support the acquisition of key assets such as buildings, plant and machinery and to support the creation of new jobs or to safeguard existing ones. The level of grant ranges from 10-35% of the total project cost depending on the location and size of the business. The minimum project size is £100,000. Also available to large companies in 'Assisted Areas' (parts of Merseyside, North Manchester, Lancashire and West Cumbria).
Venture Capital and Loan Funding	A combination of loan, equity and mezzanine funding to support business growth for companies who have been unable to secure commercial finance and have a viable business plan. Loans range between £50,000 - £250,000. Equity and Mezzanine finance is up to £2 million.
"Northwest Business Angels" *	A network of private equity investors who invest in new or expanding businesses. The level of investment ranges between £10,000 - £500,000. Available to individuals starting up a business, as well as SMEs.

Product Name	Description
ADVICE FOR NEW AND HIGH GROWTH BUSINESSES	
Start-Up *	Free advice to help people start a business. Provides advice and mentoring on all aspects of setting up and running a successful business, from an assessment of a business idea to advice on business planning and finance. Also includes post start-up guidance.
High Growth Coaching *	Free support to create and develop new and existing businesses with high growth potential. Provides intensive individual coaching through workshops, networks and online resources to help businesses achieve rapid growth. Available to new businesses with a potential to create a turnover of £500k within three years and SMEs capable of achieving at least 20% growth per annum.
INNOVATION & EFFICIENCY	
“Knowledge to Innovate”	Free support to introduce new or improved products, processes or services. Provides specialist advice and practical assistance to implement innovation including the development of leadership skills, organisational change and supply chain improvement.
“Grant for Research & Development”	To assist businesses to introduce innovative products and processes including research trials, product testing and demonstration of low carbon technologies. Grants range between £20,000 - £500,000.
“Innovation Vouchers”	To enable businesses to fund research and development from universities, colleges or private sector research establishments in the region. Up to £3,000 is available, which can be ‘pooled’ with other businesses to create a larger research project.
Knowledge Transfer Partnership *	Placement of a graduate for up to 3 years to help deliver a new product, process or service using expertise from a university or college.
“Manufacturing Advisory Service”	Advice and funding to reduce costs and improve productivity. Up to 50% funding for a maximum of 30 days on-site consultancy and training support to implement improvements such as LEAN and Six Sigma. Available to manufacturing SMEs across the Northwest.
Resource Efficiency *	Advice to reduce resource costs and manage environmental risks. On-site support to make costs savings associated with resource efficiency (energy, water and waste). It can also provide a grant of up to 50% of project costs (to a maximum award of £160,000) for the implementation of low carbon technologies.

Product Name	Description
TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT	
Train to Gain: People Development *	Funding of accredited employee training and development. Includes full or partial funding of vocational qualifications up to NVQ Level 4, subject to specific eligibility criteria and existing skills of the employee.
Train to Gain: Leadership & Management *	Funding of training and development for leaders and managers. Up to six managers and leaders per business can receive a grant of up to £1,000 each (matched by £500 from the business) to pay for training.
INTERNATIONAL TRADE	
International Trade Services *	Advice and funding to support preparation, entry and expansion into overseas markets. Provides individual coaching, workshops and networks, and online resources to help businesses prepare to trade internationally. Financial support for SMEs is available towards the cost of overseas trade fairs and missions, international travel and market reports.
Export Credit Insurance *	Insurance policies for contracts involving the export of capital equipment and project related goods and services. Insurance is provided to UK exporters against risks such as non-payment by overseas buyers.
SECTOR DEVELOPMENT	
Sector Development	<p>Sector information, networking, supply chain and business development opportunities for companies in the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aerospace www.aerospace.co.uk • Automotive www.nwautoalliance.com • Advanced Flexible Materials www.nwtexnet.co.uk • Chemicals www.chemicalsnorthwest.org.uk • Food & Drink www.foodnw.co.uk • Bio, Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare www.bionow.co.uk • Energy & Environmental Technologies www.envirolinknorthwest.co.uk • Digital & Creative www.visionandmedia.co.uk • Financial & Professional www.pro-manchester.co.uk www.professionalliverpool.com

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