



GUIDELINES

Dorset Growth Hub – Digital Capability Grants

- The Digital Capability Grants are available to any SME in Dorset who is implementing a step change in their business with digital playing a key role in supporting this progression. Evidence and research suggests that increased digital capability can make a business more competitive. The digital grants are available to help SME competitiveness via digital development.
- Digital Capability Grants are match funded by your organisation (1:1) up to a **maximum of £4,000 and a minimum of £1,000**. Eg: a maximum contribution of 50% of the total cost of the project is required from your organisation. So for example if the total project costs £3,000, your contribution would be £1,500.
- Only one grant can be applied for and issued per business as part of the Dorset Business Growth Partnership Project. Other grants include Start-Up Grants and Growth Grants.
- Application is by Expression of Interest only and the business must have received a minimum of x3 hours support from the Dorset Growth Hub (as part of the Dorset Business Growth Partnership). Once the EOI is complete please email it to grants@dorsetgrowthhub.co.uk
- Businesses who have been trading for less than one year will not be eligible for a Digital Capability Grant. If trading as a Sole Trader, proof of trading with UTR code and start date will be required. Please look at Start-Up Grants as an alternative if you do not fit this criteria.
- Applications will be forwarded to the Dorset Growth Hub team for assessment and then reviewed by a panel (usually held once a month). Applicants will be notified within 4-6 weeks as to whether or not the application has been successful. Grant monies will be paid on submission of relevant receipts unless otherwise agreed by Dorset Growth Hub with the applicant.
- Any claims for project costs must be in the future following the contractual signed agreement date. No retrospective claiming will be eligible. Items not described in the original agreement will not be accepted, unless prior approval has been obtained from the panel.
- Grants must be claimed in full within a three month agreement period. This starts from the contractual start date agreed by both parties.
- If your application is rejected, you may submit another application but only after a 3 month period from the date of rejection. However you can still access Digital Support from our Digital Specialists. Simply make contact with the Dorset Growth Hub team via the contact details on the website.



The Digital Capability grant can be used for:

- IT infrastructure costs
- Cloud based technology
- Digital marketing costs (eg: consultancy costs / website development/design, App development, online content production, social media support and planning, e-marketing)
- Software / disruptive technologies (e.g. software to improve efficiency and competitiveness)

The Digital Capability grant cannot be used for:

- Business as usual items (e.g. mobile phone)
- Refurbishment costs
- Training courses / CPD / Qualifications
- Travel expenses
- Patenting
- Intellectual property
- Property redecoration alone
- Legal or statutory fees/charges
- Working capital
- Wage subsidy
- Debt repayment
- Stock and consumables
- General running costs of the business.
- Previously incurred expenses, including such things as tax arrears.

We have kept this guidance and the application process as simple as possible and have not attempted to answer every question which might arise. Specific questions on what can be funded, the application process or anything else, can be addressed to a Digital Specialist who will help you ensure your application is robust and ready to be submitted.

Please note that **some sectors are not eligible for support** on this programme due to Central Government Legislation. These sectors include:

- Fishery & Aquaculture
- Primary production, processing and marketing of agricultural products
- Coal, Steel and shipbuilding sectors
- Synthetic Fibres
- Generalised School Age Education
- Banking and Insurance Companies.
- Nuclear related activity

(please follow the link for full eligibility guidelines)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/760264/ESIF-GN-1-003_ERDF_Eligibility_Guidance_v9.pdf



Some Retail activities are also subject the eligibility guidelines above. If you require more information or are unsure if you are eligible for the support we offer, you can call us on 01202 607533 and a member of the Dorset Growth hub team will be happy to help.