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# Scale Up 4 Growth

# Guidance for Applicants

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## 1.0 About Scale Up for Growth (S4G)

The S4G programme is delivered by UWE Bristol and offers to fund 50% of total project values between £20,000 and £30,000. These projects will support ambitious SMEs in the region to address barriers to business growth.

The aim of the S4G programme is to accelerate growth in small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The grant funding scheme is aimed at ambitious SMEs who can demonstrate 'high growth potential' - the potential to generate growth by job creation or turnover in order to achieve their growth ambitions. The key measures for S4G are match funding and job creation. There is additional emphasis on creation of new products and services.

Grant funding represents state subsidy (minimal financial assistance subsidies):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subsidy-control-a-guide-for-beneficiaries/subsidy-control-a-guide-for-beneficiaries>.

## 2.0 S4G Grants

Grants are available to SMEs in the BANES; Bristol; Gloucestershire; North Somerset; Somerset; South Gloucestershire; South Wales and Swindon & Wiltshire regions for projects that address their barriers to business growth.

Eligible businesses can apply for grants of between £10,000 and £15,000, which will fund 50% of project costs. Businesses will need to demonstrate their potential and ability to generate new jobs in the region or increase turnover to achieve their growth ambitions.

**The deadline for project spend is 30 June 2024. All costs must be defrayed by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at the latest.**

### 2.1 Am I eligible to apply for an S4G grant?

The grant scheme is aimed at SMEs who can demonstrate 'high growth potential': the potential to generate growth in job creation or turnover in order to achieve their growth ambitions. This includes social enterprises as well as established companies.

The project activity and outcomes should be based in the following regions: BANES; Bristol; Gloucestershire; North Somerset; Somerset; South Gloucestershire; South Wales and Swindon & Wiltshire.

The business should have between 5 and 249 employees and a turnover of less than or equal to €50 million or a balance sheet total less than or equal to €43 million.

If your business does not meet the above criteria, but you still think the business is a good fit for the programme, please email the team at [s4g@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:s4g@uwe.ac.uk) to have an informal discussion. Please note, we are unable to provide support for businesses that are above the upper limits of staff, turnover or balance sheet value.

You will need to consider whether your enterprise is autonomous – by far the most common category – a partner enterprise, or a linked enterprise. To do this, you must take account of any legal relationships you have with other enterprises. Depending on the category in which your enterprise fits you may then need to add some, or all, of the headcount, turnover or balance sheet data from those enterprises to your own. (For example, if an individual owns over 25% of the business, and also has similar or higher level of ownership of other businesses,

the other businesses may be considered 'linked'.)

## 2.2 What types of project will be supported by the S4G grant scheme?

The grants aim to support growth activity for SMEs from ALL sectors. We are looking to receive applications for a broad range of projects from across the region outlined in Section 2.0.

The S4G grant scheme aims to support projects that will help high growth potential SMEs address barriers to business growth. We will look to support projects and business initiatives where there is a clear ambition to expand from all sectors. Proposals will also ideally link to at least one of the five growth challenges facing scale-up and high growth enterprises:



We may, under certain circumstances and where appropriate, be able to support projects that fall outside of these requirements; however, we would encourage applicants to discuss these projects with us before submitting an application. Please register and then email [S4G@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:S4G@uwe.ac.uk) and we will arrange for one of the S4G team to contact you.

## 3.0 Further information for S4G grant applicants

### 3.1 Intervention rates & subsidy control

We will offer grants of up to 50% of the total project cost to SMEs.

Spend must be made, and all costs defrayed by 30 June 2024 at the latest.

#### Subsidy Control

Following the UK's departure from Europe, the government has introduced the Subsidy Control Act. This replaces previous state aid frameworks.

This grant funding is considered a 'minimal financial assistance' (MFA) subsidy. In the application form we will ask for details of previous state aid/subsidies you have been awarded. Over a three year period, you cannot receive more than £315,000 of MFA support. You must provide this information and confirm that on the receipt of the grant you will not have exceeded the £315,000 limit. This must include any 'state aid' received prior to the UK's withdrawal from Europe.

If you are successful with your grant application, we will provide you with an MFA Confirmation – this will confirm how much funding you will be due to receive from the programme. At the end of the project we will send you a follow up confirming how much you actually received. You must keep a record of this for 3 years and you will need to declare this when asked for future activity.

#### Ineligible projects under MFA:

Issuing grants under MFA means we cannot support projects in the following area:

- Projects that relate to goods for export performance – this means we cannot give support to a company who agrees to increase its level of exports to customers abroad as a result of this intervention.

For more information on subsidy control for beneficiaries, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/subsidy-control-a-guide-for-beneficiaries/subsidy-control-a-guide-for-beneficiaries>.

Please note, the information we have provided is from the government website and is not specialist knowledge related to your business. We strongly recommend you seek advice from an expert should you require it.

## 3.2 Eligible costs

### Direct costs:

#### Materials used

Materials used are those you have bought from other organisations.

The purchase of mobile assets such as mobile phones, computers, laptops, tablets and motor vehicles can be included as an eligible (growth related) project cost. This is on the basis that they are used in delivering an approved project and that depreciation is taken into account.

#### External costs

External costs such as consultancy, or sub-contract charges and fees for trials and testing, are eligible. However, you must explain why the work on the project cannot be carried out more effectively and cheaply in-house.

#### Market assessment

External costs such as consultancy, or sub-contract charges and fees for market and feasibility analysis as well as business, product and service design and development are eligible. However, you must explain why the work on the project cannot be carried out more effectively and cheaply in-house.

#### Capital equipment and tooling costs

Capital equipment and tooling costs are only eligible if they are needed for the project. Capital expenditure that cannot be clearly demonstrated as directly related to the delivery of an activity may not be included within the eligible costs of a Scale Up 4 Growth project.

The costs of tools and equipment **should be depreciated** for the period of the funded project activity. If such tools and equipment retain ongoing financial value after the lifetime of the S4G project, grant monies will only be paid against the 'depreciated' value (the original purchase value, minus any retained/ongoing value after the S4G project ends). Please provide a breakdown of equipment required for your S4G project using the Residual Value Calculator tab in the Budget template and transfer these values into Non-Payroll (Capital) section.

#### Training

Training costs are eligible if they are necessary for the project work.

#### Trials and Testing

These are eligible activities as part of a project, but do not constitute a project in their own right.

#### Intellectual Property

Intellectual property costs are capped at 5% of the total S4G project budget.

#### UWE Bristol subcontracts

Costs relating to any subcontracts with the University (such as consultancy, internships or professional development) can be included as long as they fall within the timescales of the project. Please discuss this further with us to ensure we can complete the activity within the deadlines.

### VAT (Value Added Tax)

If your business is VAT registered you will already be reclaiming any VAT paid on S4G related purchases through your standard HMRC VAT return. As a result, we will only pay grant monies against the net (ex. VAT) value of your quarterly claims. If, however, your business is not VAT registered, we will pay grant monies against the full gross (inc. VAT) value of your claims.

### Evidencing direct costs:

All expenditure must be evidenced in line with UWE requirements. This evidence includes, but is not limited to:

- Invoices
- Bank statements
- Order documentation

In line with UWE Bristol procurement rules you are required to comply with the guidelines in the table below for all project related expenditure. Please note, the values given are cumulative per supplier – therefore, the stated Minimum Procedure must be undertaken at the point when the total value of contracts with a single supplier reaches the relevant threshold (whether this happens as the result of a single purchase, or cumulatively as the result of multiple purchases over time).

Cost (excluding VAT)	What to do
£2,500–£10,000	One quotation is sufficient but you should be confident you are getting good value. You should check if there is a contracted supplier.
£10,000–£100,000	Three quotations must be obtained from different suppliers and a summary of quotations submitted to the S4G team, giving details of the quotes and an explanation of why you selected your chosen supplier.
£100,000+	If spend is likely to exceed £100,000 within the project, please contact the S4G Team at application stage.

Grant recipients must ensure that contracts procured through the above processes are valued accurately and are not artificially split in order to fall below certain thresholds. The route followed must be based on the full value of the contract and not linked to the value of the S4G grant or the project intervention rate. Direct awards to linked organisations are not acceptable.

The process you follow must be recorded and the relevant procurement documentation retained and made available to us as part of the **mandatory monthly claims process** and the project audit trail.

### 3.3 Non-eligible costs

The following are examples of non-eligible costs:

- Internal staff costs
- 'In kind' contributions
- Interest charges
- Input VAT (if it is reclaimable from HM Customs and Excise)
- Dividends and bonuses
- Hire-purchase interest and any associated service charges
- Profit earned by a subsidiary or related business in providing materials, subcontracting, consultancy or trials and testing
- Buying land and buildings
- The cost of any consultancy used in applying for the grant
- Contingency costs

### 3.4 The S4G grant application process

In order to apply you need to register your interest through our Expression of Interest form providing a 100 word summary of your proposed project. We will send you a unique reference number and an application pack in Word (.docx) and Excel (.xlsx). You will then be given the opportunity to book a 1:1 with one of our business development managers, firstly for an initial discussion about the project you are proposing and then again to discuss a draft application prior to submission should you so wish.

Please carefully follow the guidance provided when filling in the application form and budget and complete the pack in full.

You will need to submit the following due diligence documents with your application:

- Current year's management accounts (P&L budget, forecast and year to date results)
- Profit & Loss (P&L) account and Balance Sheet for the last two financial years (if only abridged accounts filed with Companies House)
- Current year's cash flow forecast
- Profit & Loss (P&L) financial forecasts/estimates for the next two years (including Balance Sheet forecast/estimates)
- Evidence of confirmed private match funds or, if not yet confirmed, evidence of eventual source of these funds

Completed application packs and due diligence documents should be emailed to [s4g@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:s4g@uwe.ac.uk) using your unique reference number in the subject line e.g S4GXXXX Grant application.

**The deadline date for applications is midday on Thursday, 29 February 2024.**

### 3.5 How will my S4G grant application be assessed?

Applications will be first checked for eligibility and then passed to at least two assessors who will review your application.

Final decisions on which grants are successful will be made by the recommendation panel appointed by UWE Bristol and informed by the assessor reports. The panel will comprise of individuals who have relevant experience/knowledge of enabling business to achieve their

growth potential and addressing barriers to growth. Following the deadline date for applications please be advised that it can take up to 6 weeks for the S4G team to respond with the final decision, we will, however, aim to inform you as early as possible.

The following will be considered at panel meetings:

<b>Growth potential</b>	The panel will carefully consider how the proposed project will help to expand the grant applicant's business and what barriers to growth have been identified by the grant applicant. They will consider how the proposed project addresses these challenges and how it will enable the applicant to realise its potential to generate growth in job creation or turnover and achieve their growth ambitions.
<b>Work plan</b>	<p>The panel will carefully consider how realistic the work plan is; whether the risks have been mitigated as far as possible; and the likelihood that it will be completed by the deadline, consideration of the ability of the business to deliver the project this will include a review of the business premises, the commitment and drive of the business owners and management team, the culture for growth within the organisation and the track record of delivery.</p> <p>The project work plan will need to be detailed with measurable targets and outputs at a minimum of a quarterly period.</p>
<b>Business proposition</b>	These considerations include whether there is a market for the business offer, the size of the market, and how the SME plans to introduce or expand their product or service. How close to market is the business product/service and are the skills within the organisation to realise the opportunity.
<b>Applicant and business</b>	These considerations include the SME's experience and skills, whether the project and their business is viable, their track record, and whether they have a good business case for support. Assessment of the cash flow position of the business and the financial security or plans in place to realise the growth ambitions beyond the S4G grant.
<b>Added Value</b>	Grants will only be given if there is a good justification that the funding is essential for the project to go ahead, or if they will significantly enhance the speed or scope of delivery/potential outcomes.
<b>Links to the University</b>	It is expected that projects will have a link to other University business during, or after, their project. Please consider how the University can support your business activity. Links to the University is not compulsory, however this is a scored section and applications are awarded based on how they score at assessment. More information about working with the University can be found in section 3.7.
<b>Jobs created</b>	The panel will consider the likelihood for proposed figure for job creation in the region and the likelihood that this is achievable.
<b>New to market products</b>	The panel will consider the proposed figure for new product/service creation and the likelihood that this is achievable.
<b>Justification of costs</b>	The panel will consider whether the project costing is clear and reasonable, and whether subcontract costs are justified.
<b>Value for money</b>	The panel will consider whether the project looks good value for public funding.
<b>Location/nature of proposed project</b>	The panel will consider the location and nature of the proposed project. This may become important particularly if overall funds are limited. The S4G Programme may look at local need for private sector growth.

### 3.6 Job Creation

A Job Created is a new, job in the region, created as a direct result of the funded S4G project. These are measured by the additional number of full time equivalents (FTEs) employed by your company as a result of the S4G project.

**Full Time Equivalent (FTE)** - Equal to one full-time job or two part-time jobs:

Full-time job = minimum of 35 hours per week

Part-time job = minimum of 17.5 hours per week

A new job created can be permanent or fixed term (for a minimum of 12 months).

Seasonal jobs may be counted where this is normal practice for an industry. In this instance, the job must exist for a minimum of 4 weeks per annum and should be counted on a pro-rata basis.

Eligible jobs must be created by 31 March 2025 at the very latest.

You will be asked to report on the jobs created on a regular basis from the date of your Project End Date, up to one year after the last job was created.

**It is expected that, on average, one new job will be created per £7,500 of grant issued. The offer letter will include details of the target for jobs created and these will be monitored regularly for the duration of the period specified in the same document.**

### 3.7 Other project outcomes

Products or services that are new to the market or to the business will be measured throughout the life of the project. The offer letter will include details of the relevant targets.

Increase in turnover will be measured at the project end and up to 31 March 2025.

#### Links into the University

How your project accesses other University support will be scored as part of the application assessment. There are a wide number of options for engaging with the University, including:

- Student internships (short term)
- Student placements (long term)
- UWE graduate recruitment
- Consultancy projects (delivered by UWE academics/postgraduate students)
- Collaborative R&D
- Accessing professional development courses and training
- Providing expert advice and guidance to taught courses including guest lectures

This activity can take place during the timeframes of your project - in which case costs are eligible for funding - or after the project has finished. Whilst engagement with the University that happens after your funded window is not eligible for funding, it will still be scored highly. Please ensure you consider appropriate activity and timescales for this.

We also advise you seek advice and guidance from our team through 1:1 conversations and support with your application. Details of this are available in your application pack.

### 3.8 Private match funding

Before your project starts, we will ask for evidence that you have the funding mechanisms in place to manage your cash flow across the life of your project, as claims are made retrospectively after project expenditure has been incurred by you. Funding should be in your bank, or imminently due, with documentation which evidences this. If you do not complete your project due to cash flow problems that you could have anticipated and managed, we may request repayment of any grant already issued.

Match funding should ideally be in place before due diligence is completed. However, we recognise that some projects will need to use the offer of a grant to leverage private investment in the project. The match funding will need to be secured or, in some cases, a realistic forecast of match funding provided, before the project can start. If this is likely to be the case with your situation, please state this within the application form.

### 3.9 The Grant Offer Letter

Your Grant Offer Letter will re-confirm the following information, taken from your application form:

- Financial Forecast showing the anticipated spend of the Project broken down into monthly periods ("Months") throughout the life of the Project, commencing at Month 1 (from the start date of the Project).
- Project Plan breaking down the original proposal for delivery of the Project into individual packages of work, with assigned estimates of the resources and timescales needed to achieve each.
- A milestone register showing key milestones with an assessment of the cost associated with reaching each milestone.
- An Exploitation Plan for the Project, containing further information, including the market and business opportunities, from that provided in the original application, setting out how the applicant will exploit the project.

Once your Grant Offer Letter has been issued you will need to:

- Accept the offer by signing the Grant offer Letter (Director or other authorised signatory) and returning one copy to us, retaining the other copy for your records.
- Complete a UWE Bristol 'New Supplier Form' issued to you by the S4G Project Officer.

### 3.10 Claims

Claims for grant monies must be submitted by you to UWE Bristol **monthly in arrears**. Each submitted claim form will require you to report briefly on project progress and provide evidence that you have incurred those costs that you are claiming (i.e. that payments have gone out, not simply that you have been invoiced).

If you are successful, we will allow you to claim any costs incurred from the date you submitted your application form. Please note, any funds spent before you have signed your Grant offer Letter are entirely at your own risk.

**The deadline for project spend is 30 June 2024.** All costs must be defrayed and your final invoice submitted to us by 30 June 2024 at the latest.

Further support and training around the claims procedure, and evidencing will be provided for successful applicants.

## 4.0 Data protection

By registering to take part in the S4G programme you agree to the UWE data privacy notice. After the closure of the S4G programme your application data will only be accessed or the purposes of reporting or audits and will not be used to contact you.

The personal information collected in your application and claims will be processed by UWE Bristol, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

UWE Bristol will hold your data securely and will not make it available to any third party unless permitted or required to do so by law. Specifically, the requested information will be used as follows:

1. The information will be used to administer your engagement with the Scale Up 4 Growth programme.
2. The information will be disclosed to administrative staff working for UWE Bristol for the purposes of administering points 1 above.
3. The information will be stored on UWE Bristol's secure servers, in secure physical storage or through our secure Customer Relationship Management database.

For any data protection queries please write to the Data Protection Officer, UWE Bristol, Frenchay Campus, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol, BS16 1QY, or [dataprotection@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@uwe.ac.uk)