

SWEF – Business Grants for Young Entrepreneurs: Start-Up and Established Business Support

Are you a young entrepreneur in Wiltshire or Swindon looking for financial support to launch or grow your business? Wiltshire Community Foundation, in partnership with **SWEF**, offers two targeted grant programmes to help you take your business to the next level, whether you're just starting out or already trading.

Start-Up Grant – up to £500

For those in the **start-up or pre-revenue phase**, this grant provides up to £500 to cover essential costs as you turn your business idea into reality. The funding to cover initial costs such as essential equipment, materials, stock, website building, product development and training

Eligibility:

- Aged 18 to 30
- Live in Wiltshire or Swindon
- Planning to start a business within the next couple of months
- At the very early stages of development or has yet to generate income from the business
- From a low-income household or facing financial challenges

Established Business Grant – up to £2,000

If your business has already started trading and is less than 2 years old, you can apply for up to £2,000 to support growth and development. This funding can be used for expanding operations, upgrading equipment, or other business needs that will help increase your revenues.

Eligibility:

- Aged 18 to 30
- Live in Wiltshire or Swindon
- Running a business that has been trading for less than 2 years and has already generated income
- From a low-income household or facing financial challenges

Whether you're just getting started or looking to grow your business, we're here to help. **Apply today** and take your next step toward entrepreneurial success!

What the Grant Won't Cover:

While the grants are designed to support many areas of your business, there are a few things it doesn't cover which includes:

- Salaries
- Repaying debts
- Software businesses or app development
- Rent and utility bills
- Purchasing stock for an existing product line
- Invasive beauty treatments
- Ongoing software subscriptions
- New computers, phones, or tablets

However, we do make an exception when it comes to **refurbished technology**. If you need a refurbished laptop, tablet, or phone for your business, SWEF may consider this on a match-funded basis. In your application you'll need to explain how this technology will **transform your business** and provide a link to the specific refurbished item you need.

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Completing the online application form

You do not have to complete the application form in one go. If you wish to leave the form and come back to it later, press the **'Save my progress and resume later'** button at the bottom of the form. You will be asked to enter your email and a password so you can login at another time, this will also be emailed to you as well.

If you would like to apply in a different format i.e., filmed presentation, a podcast that showcases your business and answers the application form questions, please contact us.

If you find anything unclear or confusing or would like to talk to us, call us on 01380 738985 or email info@wiltshirecf.org.uk

Section 1 - Applicant details

This section will collect your contact details and allows you to tell us about yourself, help us understand your circumstances and any challenges you may have faced e.g. if you or someone in your home has a disability or additional need, or you come from a low income family claiming benefits etc.

- **Please tell us about yourself** - provide a brief paragraph which includes where you grew up, what have you done since you left school, what qualifications you hold, are you currently claiming any benefits e.g. DLA, PIP, Universal Credit
- **What are you currently doing** - provide a brief paragraph to tell us what you are currently doing; if you are in paid employment - where and how many hours you work each week. If you are in education - what are you studying including length course and level. If you are working on your business how many hours you spend working on this each week

Section 2 - Business and grant request

This section allows you to tell us about your business and how a grant would help you to make it more successful or support start-up costs. There are no "right" answers or the "right" sort of words to use in the application. If a question has several parts, use bullet points to answer each part. If this section, you will need to tell us:

- Name of Business
- If you have already set them up provide website links to the business social media accounts or website pages
- What business you are looking to start or have started – you will need to provide a brief paragraph which tells us:
 - If you are already established how long your business has been trading
 - The products you hope to make or sell, or the services you will provide
 - How much you charge for your products or services
 - How the business is structured – are you a sole trader or limited company

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- If you are already established in your best month how many clients you have and how are you acquire these clients
- Research and training – you will need to provide a brief paragraph which tells us:
 - What training you have undertaken to hopefully succeed with your business
 - What research you have undertaken to see if your product or service is wanted or needed e.g. have you tested your product and service with anyone?
 - If you are already established - who your customers are and where are they based and who your competitors are and where are they based
 - How much you expect your business to grow in the next 12 months?
- Business Finance – you will need to provide a brief paragraph which tells us:
 - How much of your own funds have you put into the business and what this was for?
 - What % of your income comes from the business
 - Does your business have any debts – how much and who are these with
 - What are your monthly sales?
 - What are your monthly costs?
 - What was the total income/salary that the business has paid you?

Section 3 - Grant Request & Budget Breakdown

Whatever you would like to use the grant for, you will need to provide a breakdown of how you would use the grant, with specific costs and including weblinks or quotes. Avoid general terms like 'marketing' that do not provide enough detail about how you will spend the grant. Applications for 'match funding' are particularly welcome – this means that you already have some funding but need an additional contribution.

- How much grant are you applying for
- How will the grant help you get your business to the next stage? For example: how much more revenue are you hoping to make?
- If you are not successful with the SWEF grant, how else will you fund these items?

Supporting evidence

As well as completing the form, we also need you to provide supporting documents to confirm you are eligible to apply. The below documents can be uploaded at the end of the form on page 9 'Supporting Documents'.

1. Proof of identity - driving licence, passport, birth certificate
2. Proof of Wiltshire address - driving licence, bank statement, bill
3. Evidence of your current income - benefit statement, recent payslip
4. Evidence of your business – a business plan or if you have already started your business - evidence of trading e.g. premises rental agreement, recent invoice, accounts if trading for 1yr +

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Top Tips for a Successful Grant Application

Before you start your application, keep in mind that **applications solely based on business ideas** won't be considered. You'll need to show that you've already taken some steps to get your business off the ground, even if it's just in the early stages.

Taking the time to carefully think through your business idea and showing why your product or service is needed will make your application stronger. The more groundwork you've done, the better your chances of success!

Here are a few tips to help strengthen your application:

- **Market Research:** Have you explored whether there's demand for your product or service? You don't need to overcomplicate this—ask friends, family, or local businesses for feedback or advice. It's a great way to gauge interest and gather helpful insights.
- **Cost Planning:** Have you thought about your monthly expenses? Consider things like staff wages, rent, utilities, taxes, insurance, and any other costs that may come up as you build or grow your business.
- **Income Projection:** How much do you expect to earn each month from sales or services? Estimating your potential income will give you a clearer picture of your business's financial health.

By addressing these points, you'll demonstrate that you're serious about your business and ready to make the most of the grant!

What Happens After I Submit My Application

1. **Initial Review** - within five working days, we'll confirm that we've received your application. We'll check that it's complete and eligible. If anything is missing, we'll contact you, usually by email to ask for the additional documents.
2. **Meeting** - you may be invited to a meeting where you can tell us more about your business. This will typically be an online meeting with a staff member from Wiltshire Community Foundation and someone from SWEF. We aim to make a decision on your application within six weeks.
3. **Grant Award** - if you're successful, you'll need to accept the grant's terms and conditions. The funds will be transferred directly to your business bank account via BACS. If you don't have a business bank account yet, you'll need to set one up. Payments will usually be made a month after accepting the terms, and the grant should be used within one month of receiving it.
4. **After the Award** - we'll check in with you around 12 months after you receive the grant to see how your business is progressing. You'll also be invited to join a network with other grant recipients, providing a great space to share ideas and experiences.

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Sources of Support

You may find the below websites useful they include tools, templates and other sources of funding

Business Tools & Templates

- Princes Trust Business Support
 - www.princes-trust.org.uk/help-for-young-people/tools-resources/business-tools
 - www.princes-trust.org.uk/help-for-young-people/support-starting-business
 - www.princes-trust.org.uk/how-we-can-help/tools-resources/business-tools/business-plans
- Prospects - How to Start a Business / How to Write a Business Plan
 - www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/self-employment/how-to-start-a-business
 - www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/self-employment/writing-a-successful-business-plan

Business Support in Wiltshire & Swindon

- Business West - www.businesswest.co.uk/start
- Wiltshire's Enterprise Network - www.theenterprisenetwork.co.uk
- Future Smiths - www.thefuturesmiths.co.uk
- School Social Entrepreneurs - www.the-sse.org.uk
- Digital Boost - www.digitalboost.org.uk

Business Funding

- www.businesswest.funderfinder.co.uk
- www.gov.uk/business-finance-support
- www.british-business-bank.co.uk/finance-hub/grants-finance
- www.swigfinance.co.uk

Grantee Network

If you are successful with a grant, you will also have the opportunity to take part in a business forum with other businesses that have been awarded a grant. The forum offers a space to share, exchange ideas, experiences and learn and **meet other like-minded business founders and hear their stories and insights.**