

# Innovation Support for Business Go-Create Grants Competition

## Guidance for applicants

### 1. Introduction

Go-Create Grants are available to any existing small to medium-sized enterprise (SME) based anywhere in England but must demonstrate an economic benefit within Oxfordshire, as long as the applicant fulfils the necessary criteria and conditions that appear later in this document. The aim of the fund is to provide flexible revenue grants designed to assist SMEs to implement innovation projects, to develop prototypes and prove concepts to assist with early stage development work and the exploitation of intellectual property; or to promote the use of innovation to bring new products, processes or services to the market.

**It is mandatory to have engaged with a member of the ISfB team to discuss your application prior to its submission in order to be deemed eligible.** This can be in the form of a one to one meeting (in person or by phone) with the ISfB Innovation Advisor, or a full discussion with the ISfB programme team.

The ISfB team is on hand to provide support and guidance throughout the process but will not be able to write your application for you. To receive an application pack, please contact the ISfB team on [innovation@oxfordshirelep.com](mailto:innovation@oxfordshirelep.com).

Grants are funded through European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) program and will be allocated via a competitive grant competition across the length of the programme, unless funding has been fully committed prior to that date.

**Please note that this is a competitive grant process and that submitting an application does not guarantee the awarding of funds.**

The grants are run on a rolling programme, and applications can be submitted at any time. We aim to review applications once per month, based on a cut-off date at midday on the third Friday of the month Applications received after that will be held and considered after the next cut-off date. We aim to let applicants know within 21 days of the cut-off date on whether or not their application has been successful. You will be advised as early as possible if there is likely to be a delay.

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Timetable for applications:

Cut-off date	Notified by
16 <sup>th</sup> April 2021, 12 midday	7 <sup>th</sup> May 2021
21 <sup>st</sup> May 2021, 12 midday	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
18 <sup>th</sup> June 2021, 12 midday	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2021
16 <sup>th</sup> July 2021, 12 midday	6 <sup>th</sup> August 2021

Please contact the ISfB team on 01865 897181 or [innovation@oxfordshirelep.com](mailto:innovation@oxfordshirelep.com) with queries or for more information.

### 2. What's available?

Revenue grants of at least £1,000 are available. We anticipate that the maximum value of any individual grant will be £50,000.

Applications must be matched on at least a 3:1 basis.

For example: In order to receive a grant of £1,000 you must spend a total of £4,000.

Applications may be viewed more favourably if they offer the following outcomes:

- New co-operation with research institutions
- Introduction of new to the market products
- Introduction of new to the firm products
- Employment increase in the applicant enterprise

Applicants should only offer these outcomes where they are **possible and realistic**.

Revenue expenditure can include assets up to a value of £4,999 each (mobile assets) which are still classed as revenue items. Any items above £1,000 will need to be entered onto the ISfB project asset register and details such as their serial number, value, depreciation, etc., will need to be provided. These mobile assets cannot be disposed of until they have depreciated and must be used for the purpose for which they were purchased up to that point. Assets above £5,000 are fixed assets and are not revenue costs. Applications consisting solely of assets are strongly discouraged and are unlikely to be recommended for funding by the selection panel.

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Please note that evidence of match funding will need to be included with the application. Grant projects will be paid in arrears, so applicants must be comfortable that they can cash flow the innovation project pending reimbursement. We will accept two claims from grant projects lasting more than five months. No more than one claim per quarter can be made. There is no set length for Go-Create Grant innovation projects. However, we anticipate that most projects will be complete within six months of the grant award and all activity, expenditure should be achieved, reported and evidenced by December 2021. If you believe your project will last longer than six months, please contact the ISfB team prior to submitting your application to discuss.

All Go-Create grant are awarded on the basis of *De Minimis* State Aid and are subject to your *De Minimis* limit not being exceeded. **If** a company has already received €200,000 of State Aid within a three-year fiscal period, it is ineligible to receive further financial support within that three-year period.

There is no upper limit for grants, however we consider it unlikely that any grants will exceed £50,000. In any case, the *De Minimis* State Aid thresholds described above must be complied with.

### 3. **Eligibility**

Please refer to the Eligibility Scope Matrix below for full details of eligible and non-eligible projects.

#### **Eligible projects**

Examples of what the grant **can** support

#### **Revenue projects**

Specialist consultancy, projects, equipment and/or support related to:

#### **Investment in product and service development**

- Implementing findings of the planning process, such as in areas of new product/service development, manufacturing and design
- Accessing expert services for Intellectual Property registration, including patents, designs and trademarks (not the registration fees themselves)
- Developing alternative uses and markets for waste products
- Implementing the results of industrial research, including the creation of pre-production prototypes

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### Technological and applied research

- Research and development, including specialised consultancy
- Collaborating with universities and colleges, and sourcing facilities, equipment and expertise to solve technical problems and develop further innovation
- Researching the development of new products or technologies, or significant improvements to existing ones

### Developing pilot lines

- Implementing findings of the planning process, such as in areas of new product development, manufacturing and design
- Investigating the technological and commercial viability of transforming innovative ideas into new products, processes and technologies

### Early product validation actions

- Assisting with the exploitation costs of new products or processes, including marketing, publicity and attendance at trade fairs

### Supporting advanced manufacturing capabilities

- Accessing equipment or services that support a technology 'step-change' for the business

### First production

- Services to provide additional production capacity to exploit innovation

### Ineligible projects

Examples of what the grant **cannot** support:

- VAT payments (other than project costs where VAT cannot be recovered from HMRC or for non-VAT registered businesses)
- Paying off debts or refinancing
- Purchase of land or buildings or financial investments
- Repairs to equipment or buildings
- Preventative and remedial maintenance of assets or equipment
- Training, including in the use of assets and equipment
- Purchasing of vehicles
- The revenue grant cannot support the purchase of assets or equipment in excess of £4,999
- Salaries and travel and subsistence costs
- Any statutory or legislative obligations, duties or requirements

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- Hire purchases and/or asset finance arrangements
- Routine expenditure relating to new employees (e.g. office furniture, ICT and training)
- “Like-for-like” replacement of obsolete equipment with little or no added value
- Duplication of existing provision or activity which would contradict, duplicate or undermine HM Government domestic initiatives

### **Ineligible sectors**

A number of sectors are ineligible for grant support under *De Minimis*. These are:

- Fishery and aquaculture sectors
- Primary production, processing and marketing of agricultural products
- Road Freight
- Services of general economic interest
- Export related activities and activities favouring domestic over imported goods

A number of additional sectors are ineligible for grant support under ERDF. These are:

- Coal, steel and shipbuilding sectors
- The synthetic fibres sector
- Generalised (school age) education
- Banking and insurance companies
- Retail businesses (ineligible for capital expenditure only)
- Social Care Services & Social Welfare (hospitals, housing associations, sports facilities)
- Child-minding facilities

### **4. VAT**

VAT is potentially an eligible cost for Go-Create grant projects, however this will vary on a case by case basis and OxLEP cannot give VAT advice to applicants.

Your total project costs can include VAT if you are not VAT registered or if you are unable to recover VAT from HMRC; however if you are VAT registered and can recover VAT from HMRC, you will not be able to also recover the VAT through the grant.

We recommended that you seek VAT advice if you are unsure of the treatment of VAT in your grant application as it is your responsibility to ensure that VAT is treated correctly. Incorrect VAT treatment could lead to penalties from HMRC and you having to repay the VAT element of the grant that should not have been claimed.

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If you do not include eligible VAT at the time of applying, the grant will be awarded based on net costs and VAT cannot be claimed.

### 5. Procurement

**Please read this section carefully.**

A condition of ERDF is that you are required to demonstrate that you are procuring products or services for your innovation project in line with EU Procurement regulations as follows:

- For individual purchases/procurement activities of up to £24,999 (total value excluding VAT), you must provide 3 written quotations per individual item to be purchased. You are not obliged to accept the lowest quotation received, but a written explanation of the rationale behind any such decision will be required which demonstrates the supplier's experience and/or value for money.
- For smaller or generic goods/services, it is acceptable to use print-outs from websites. Please complete the Procurements table in Section D: Planned Expenditure in the application form with the details of any quotations obtained.
- For goods and services costing over £25,000 (total value excluding VAT), you must undertake an open procurement exercise and provide evidence to demonstrate that you have done so. This would include a specification document, open advertisement of the opportunity (e.g. through Contracts Finder) and evidence of scoring and selection process. We would advise grant applicants to avoid goods and services costing £25,000 or more each, however if you do want to include them you must have a conversation with the ISfB team before submitting your application.

The evidence that you need to provide for all procurement is:

- For individual purchases up to £24,999 copies of all quotations/screenshots. These must be clearly identifiable to the supplier and include the supplier name, a date, price per item to be purchased/procured, if the amount is inclusive or exclusive of VAT and (where possible) the supplier letterhead/logo.
- For goods and services costing over £25,000, copies of the advertised procurement opportunities you have published on the portal(s) (such as Contract Finder), together with a specification documents, details of the assessment criteria used for each purchase and how you selected the winning bidder based on these criteria (e.g. scoresheet). It is not expected you include this evidence as part of your application as you will not know at this point if a grant offer has been made. You will instead be asked to submit to the ISfB team an evidence pack for your complete procurement process as soon as you have signed a contract with your supplier for the ISfB team to review.

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- For goods and services costing over £189,330 which will need to be advertised on OJEU as well as other portals (e.g. Contracts Finder) and for which the same requirements apply as above, please contact the OxLEP Business team to discuss.

All applicants must submit a completed Procurement Checklist as part of their application.

**If you cannot demonstrate that you will assess the quotations or tenders received in accordance with EU Procurement regulations as outlined above, we will not be able to consider your grant application.**

**We do not anticipate that any individual procurement under a Go-Create Grant project will exceed £24,999. If you think that one might, you MUST contact the ISfB team prior to submitting your application.**

**We STRONGLY advise you to speak with a member of the ISfB team for help in completing this section.**

### **Decision-making process**

The grants are run on a rolling programme, and applications can be submitted at any time. We aim to review applications once per month, based on a cut-off date at **midday on the third Friday of the month**. Late applications will be held and considered after the next cut-off date. We aim to let applicants know within 21 days of the cut-off date on whether or not the application has been successful. Applicants will be advised as early as possible if there is likely to be a delay.

As soon as your application is received the ISfB team will send an email to confirm that the documentation has been received.

Please note that in the current exceptional circumstances (COVID-19) we can accept **email applications only** together with any supporting documentation. Applicants are asked to retain a hard copy to provide to OxLEP on a later date when contacted to do so by the ISfB team.

There will be an initial basic eligibility check on all applications, e.g. whether quotes, accounts, etc., have been provided.

All eligible applications will be assessed by the Go-Create grant review panel, which will assess your grant application against the grant criteria and the other applications received.

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The panel has the right to refuse grant assistance or decide on the percentage of grant awarded against eligible expenditure, and this decision is final

Membership of the grant review panel is drawn from across the business support architecture of the OxLEP area. Membership is kept confidential to avoid the risk of applicants attempting to contact the members to influence their decision, either before or after a panel meeting. Any applicant found to have attempted to unduly influence a panel member by contacting them to discuss an application will be disqualified from the process. It is crucial to ensure that grants are given in a fair and transparent way and that no applicant has an advantage over any other.

The final grant award decision is made by a senior member of the ISfB team and considers the panel's recommendations. This decision is final.

You will receive email confirmation of the decision from the ISfB team within 21 days of the Friday closing date to which you submitted your application form. You will be advised as early as possible if there is likely to be a delay. You will be invited to attend a meeting with the ISfB team within two weeks of this confirmation to discuss your grant offer and answer any additional questions you may have. We will not issue a formal Grant Offer Letter until this meeting has taken place. **Any expenditure incurred before receipt of the formal offer letter is deemed to be ineligible expenditure for grant assistance.**

The details of Go-Create Grant awards will be outlined in the Grant Offer Letter to successful applicants and will include any grant conditions. You may not be awarded the full Go-Create grant you have requested in your application and/or you may need to satisfy certain conditions to unlock the all the grant funding you have been provisionally allocated. All unsuccessful Go-Create Grant applicants will be given feedback and are welcome to submit a revised or new application to the Go-Create programme subject to available funding. You may only receive one Go-Create grant under Phase 2 of the ISfB programme.

The Go-Create Grants have limited availability and applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

Gateway criteria (which will be reviewed as per your ISfB application form):

- Eligible to receive ERDF grant as an SME?
- Compliant with *De Minimis* requirements?
- Compliant with procurement rules?
- Proposing an innovation project?

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Scoring criteria (out of 100):

Criteria	Description	Scoring	
Level of innovation	How innovative is the proposed innovation?	High	20
		Medium	10
		Low	1
Impact on the applicant SME	Potential impact of innovation on the applicant SME	High	20
		Medium	10
		Low	1
Impact on the economy	Potential impact of innovation on the economy	High	20
		Medium	10
		Low	1
Likelihood of achieving outcomes	Potential likelihood of achieving outcomes proposed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-operation with research institutions</li> <li>• Introduction of new to the market products</li> <li>• Introduction of new to the firm products</li> <li>• Employment increase in the applicant enterprise</li> </ul>	All four deliverables with strong chance of them being delivered	10
		Three	8
		Two	6
		One	3
		None	0
Likelihood of commercialisation	Likelihood of the technology being commercialised (even if too late to count against an ERDF outcome)	High	20
		Medium	10
		Low	1
Value for money	Capacity to deliver with good value for money? Robustness of match funds?	VfM	
		High	5
		Medium	3
		Low	1
		Match funds	
		High	5
		Medium	3
		Low	1

### 6. Nature of grant offer

Go-Create Grants cannot contribute to projects that are already underway. Any grant offer will be invalid if work commences prior to the date of the ISfB Grant Offer Letter.

Retrospective grant applications are not permitted.

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An offer of a Go-Create grant is time limited and will expire 14 days after the date the Grant Offer Letter is issued. Although the ISfB team will endeavour to follow up Grant Offer Letter which have not been returned by applicants, it is your responsibility to ensure that the Grant Offer Letter is signed and returned to the ISfB team within the deadline.

If you are able to do so please sign and scan your Grant Offer Letter for email, however if you do not have access to a scanner, an e-signature or typed signature is acceptable with a statement confirming your authority to sign on the company's behalf.

Signed letters must be received by email within 14 days of the Grant Offer Letter issue date.

Please note that in the current exceptional circumstances (COVID-19) we can accept returned Grant Offer Letters **by email only**. Applicants are asked to retain a hard copy to provide to OxLEP on a later date when contacted to do so by the ISfB team.

### 7. Making your grant claim

Any Go-Create grant that is approved is only for the purpose stated in the Grant Offer Letter.

Should the circumstances on which a grant application was based change, **you must contact the ISfB team to discuss before committing to making any payments**. This may include, but is not limited to, a change of expected completion date, change of supplier, change to the project value, expected project outcomes, or cancellation of the project. If you are in any doubt, please contact the ISfB team to discuss.

Grants should be claimed in line with the dates set out in Section D: Planned Expenditure - 'Spend Profile' with in your application form and no more frequently than at quarterly milestones. Please contact the ISfB team at the earliest opportunity if your project is delayed and you are unlikely to claim within the timescale of the grant offer. All extensions to grant claims will need to be agreed by the ISfB team and it must not be assumed that funds will be available if the deadline is missed.

For all expenditure on your innovation project (regardless of whether this is grant or match funding) you will need to meet the ERDF audit trail requirements including evidence of defrayal (monies leaving your bank account).

Please note that staff costs cannot be included in your application.

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- For other expenditure:
  - Invoices/receipts
  - Evidence of defrayal of expenditure

To claim the grant, you must provide the ISfB team with a signed Claim Form (which we will provide with your Grant Offer Letter), along with evidence of defrayal of the costs. This would include a copy of any supplier invoice(s) and proof of payment, namely a redacted business bank statement showing the relevant payment(s). If a credit card has been used, the minimum payment paid, must be at least the value of the item being claimed and we need to see evidence of this via bank statement etc. Payment of supplier invoices cannot be made by cash or contra arrangements. All bank statements and payment evidence will need to be signed, dated and labelled with the statement:

‘All documents are true copies of originals’.

If you are unable to sign and scan your certified documents, electronic copies are acceptable in the current circumstances (COVID-19) together with a statement confirming your authority to certify documents on the company’s behalf.

**If you cannot provide this evidence, we will not be able to process your grant claim.**

Funding cannot be awarded as retrospective payment for goods or services procured before a formal offer of grant has been received and accepted.

VAT should be treated in line with the Section 4 (above).

You should submit your grant claim to the ISfB team as soon as possible, however please note that claims received by the 10<sup>th</sup> will be paid at the end of the month, subject to compliance checks.

Your grant claim is time limited, and you will only be able to reclaim your grant within 30 days of the grant claim date that you specify in your application and which is set out in the Grant Offer Letter. Any extension to the grant claim date must be agreed with the ISfB team in advance. Although the ISfB team will endeavour to follow up a grant claim which has not been submitted, it is your responsibility to ensure that the grant claim is returned to the ISfB team within the deadline.

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### 8. Impact deliverables

In Section C: Costs and Deliverables of the grant application form, you will need to provide details of any Impact Deliverables (i.e. new co-operations with research institutions, new products to market or new products to the firm, employment increase) to be achieved. Once you have claimed your grant, ISfB will provide you with 'Form ISfB-04B Impact Declaration' which you must use to confirm the details of the impacts achieved. A member of the ISfB team will follow up with you if you have indicated that you will be able to achieve an impact deliverable from the support of the grant.

As you will see from the scoring matrix, applications which offer impact deliverables will score more highly than those which do not. However, you must ensure that any deliverables promised are realistic as these are commitments not aspirations and we reserve the right to claim the grant funding back from you if you do not achieve the impact deliverables.

If you experience difficulties in creating the impact deliverables as outlined in the Grant Offer Letter, please contact us at your earliest convenience so that we can understand and discuss the options in relation to the grant payment. Please note that we reserve the right to claim the grant funding back from you if you do not achieve the impact deliverables.

#### **Co-operation with research institutions**

A new co-operation with a research institution undertaken, as a result of your support from ISfB.

The co-operation:

- must have been created as a result of the activity supported by the grant
- cannot have been in place before the grant was awarded
- focuses on collaborations which are about transferring good ideas, research results and skills between the knowledge base and business to enable innovative new products and services to be developed and includes:
  - Research collaborations and free dissemination of research
  - Joint and long-term development of new business or services
  - Formation of joint ventures and spin-out companies
- is intended to be long-term and sustained, and is distinct from enterprise support
- benefit must be conditional on some form of formal co-operation

Please note that you will be asked to provide a copy of the letter or other form of agreement (e.g. a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or a contract), which explains

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what each party's role is in the collaboration, including shared objective and aims, along with evidence of outcomes during the operation.

You will also need to provide basic evidence about the research entity: i.e. name, address, including post code, evidence of primary research activity, i.e. charter. A research entity is an organisation whose primary activity is research and development (R&D).

### **New to market products**

A new to the market product that you develop, as a result of your support from ISfB.

Support must be for an enterprise to introduce one of the following:

- Product - when it is either at pre-launch or launched to the market
- Process - when it has been introduced into the business
- Service - when it has been introduced to the market

The indicator measures if an enterprise receives support to develop a 'new to the market' product in any of its markets. It includes process innovation, as long as the process contributes to the development of the product.

A product is new to the market if there is no other product available on a market that offers the same functionality, or the design or technology that the new product uses is fundamentally different from the design or technology of already existing products. Products can be tangible or intangible (incl. services and processes).

Supported operations that aimed to introduce new to the markets products, but did not succeed are still counted.

If a product is new both to the market and to the firm, you should also be counted as supported to introduce new to the market products as well as supported to introduce new to the firm products.

Please note that you will be asked to provide a self-declaration to confirm the product/process or service is new. This should confirm the date the new product was launched and should provide further documentation to confirm details of product, which could include marketing information or literature. If product has not progressed to market, the enterprise should provide information on the status of the product.

### **New to firm products**

A new to the firm product that you develop, as a result of your support from ISfB.

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The indicator measures if an enterprise is supported to develop a “new to the firm” product, including:

- Product - when it is either at pre-launch or launched to the market
- Process - when it has been introduced into the business
- Service - when it has been introduced to the market

It includes process innovation, as long as the process contributes to the development of the product. Projects without the aim of actually developing a product are excluded. If you introduce several products or receive support for several operations, you are still counted as one enterprise. If you are in any doubt, please contact a member of the ISfB team.

A product is new to the firm if you did not produce a product with the same functionality or the production technology is fundamentally different from the technology of already produced products. Products can be tangible or intangible (including services).

Supported projects that aimed to introduce new to the firm products but did not succeed are still counted.

If a product is new both to the market and to the firm, you should be counted in both indicators.

Please note that you will be asked to provide a self-declaration to confirm the product/process or service is new. Evidence might include the date a new or improved process became operational or the date the new product or service was launched from market information or marketing literature. If product has not progressed to market, the enterprise should provide information on the status of the product.

### **Employment Increase**

A new full time equivalent (FTE) job that you create as a result of your support from ISfB.

The job(s):

- must have been created as a result of the activity supported by the grant
- cannot have been in place before the grant was awarded
- should have an intended life expectancy of at least 12 months and be for at least 36 hours per week (part-time jobs should be reported on a pro rata basis, based on 36 hours per week full time)

Please note that you will be asked to provide a copy of the contract of employment demonstrating these criteria for audit purposes.

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You will also need to provide basic information about the gender, age, disability status and ethnicity of the job holder on the 'Form ISfB-04B Impact Declaration. This information will be treated in strict confidence.

### 9. Further Information

Applications must be made on the official 'Form ISfB-02B Go-Create Grant Application'. In line with EU State Aid regulations, you must sign a *De Minimis* State Aid Declaration covering the last 3 years. This will need to include all previous aid received from all sources. This may take the form of other grants or innovation and business support received in the past. If in doubt please talk to an appropriate member of your organisation to check the *De Minimis* State Aid your company has received to date before submitting your grant application form.

You should have already completed a *De Minimis* State Aid Form as part of your initial ISfB application form. If you have applied for or had approved any aid since your ISfB application form, you must contact the ISfB team and provide updated information to ensure that you can still qualify for a grant. Please contact the ISfB team with any queries.

You must inform us if you receive other public funding towards your project as this will have an impact of the level of grant funding that we can offer.

ISfB reserves the right to visit you to ensure the grant has been used for the purpose it was intended as stated in the application form and to inspect records to show costs have been incurred by you.

Your grant activity may also be subject to auditors from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, ERDF and the European Court of Auditors.

### Notes to assist with completing the Grant Application Form

**All applications must be completed electronically and sent by email with supporting documentation to the ISfB team at [innovation@oxfordshirelep.com](mailto:innovation@oxfordshirelep.com).** We aim to review applications once per month, based on a cut-off date at **midday on the third Friday of the month**. Late applications will be held and considered after the next cut-off date. We aim to let applicants know within 21 days of the cut-off date on whether or not their application has been successful. You will be advised as early as possible if there is likely to be a delay.

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As soon as your application is received the ISfB team will send an e-mail to confirm that the documentation has been received.

Please note that in the current exceptional circumstances (COVID-19) we can accept **email applications only** together with any supporting documentation. Applicants are asked to retain a hard copy to provide to OxLEP on a later date when contacted to do so by the ISfB team.

### Section A:

**Key Information:** Please provide basic information about you and your company.

**Executive Summary:** Please provide a brief overview of the contents of your Go-Create Grant Application which highlights key points in your application.

**Public Summary:** Please provide a description of your proposed innovation project in laymen's terms. This will facilitate the application review process for assessors and panel members who are not experts in your field. The description of your proposed innovation project could be published in the public domain and used for marketing purposes.

### Section B: Your Business and Innovation

Tell us about your business and innovation project, the history and your aims and aspirations for the future including what is the potential impact of your innovation project on your business (this might include viability, sustainability, future growth, increase in employment, new areas of investment or research activity), what is the potential impact of your innovation project on the economy and any key challenges that you have /need and any market research you have conducted.

Please quantify the results wherever possible, for example, an estimated % increase in sales, improvements in profitability or productivity or anticipated annual cost savings. Also list any other benefits.

Please explain the innovation, what it does, how it works, how it is innovative and what work has been done to date. Include comparisons to existing competing solutions and the advantages your innovation offers.

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### Your Innovation Project:

Please provide us with an overview of the project that you are planning and how the grant will help to develop your innovation towards a commercial product or service. Please describe how you intend to use the grant money and how you will develop your innovation towards a marketable product, service or process including an indication of the likelihood of commercialisation.

Don't be too brief. Be really clear with what you intend to use the grant funding for i.e. "to purchase research consultancy" would be deemed insufficient detail for the grant panel to seriously consider. A much better response would be to include details of how the consultancy will contribute to develop the innovation, why you need it, how it will be used in the business and how it may complement other activities that you are already conducting.

### Section C: Costs and Deliverables

C1: Please provide the estimated cost of the project to which the grant will contribute (excluding VAT). Please ensure that you follow the European Union procurement requirements set out in Section 4 of the above Guidance Notes. State the value of the grant you are applying for. Applications in which grants are one third or less of the total eligible expenditure will be viewed more favourably.

C2: If you are not VAT registered or are unable to recover the VAT from HMRC, you can claim VAT back. Please include VAT in the spend profile and note "INC VAT". Grants cannot be increased following award to take into account VAT.

C3: Please provide the total project cost.

C4: Please state the value of the grant for which you are applying.

C5: Please state the date on which the project is due for completion.

C6: Please confirm that you have provided evidence of the match funding needed for the project, i.e. covering the non-grant element of the total project costs

C7a: Please confirm whether you have explored any alternative sources of funding other than a Go-Create grant.

C7b: If you have then please explain what these were.

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Please tell us about any jobs that you intend to create as a result of this project. If you are awarded a grant, we will ask you to provide confirmation that these jobs have been created. We will also ask you to provide some basic equality and diversity data about the post holders once the jobs have been created. This data will be treated as strictly confidential and submitted anonymously to the government for the project for monitoring purposes. The definition of a job is a role that is at least 36 hours per week for a minimum of 12 months. FTE jobs can be accepted (i.e. part-time jobs that add up to at least 36 hours per week can be counted). Part-time jobs should be reported on a pro rata basis, based on 36 hours per week full time. Jobs are created as a result of the grant project and do not include freelancers, subcontractors or volunteers.

Please tell us about any new co-operations with research institutions that you intend to create / undertake as a result of this project. If you are awarded a grant, we will ask you to provide confirmation that these co-operations have been created.

Please tell us about any new products / services that you intend to introduce to the market as a result of this project. If you are awarded a grant, we will ask you to provide confirmation that these products / services have been created.

Please tell us about any new products / services that you intend to introduce to your firm as a result of this project. If you are awarded a grant, we will ask you to provide confirmation that these products / services have been introduced.

You must provide a copy of your business plan and financial forecasts to support your business idea/creation. You will also need to provide a copy of your most recent full-year profit and loss accounts and balance sheet.

Please confirm the main point of contact for the application.

### **Section D: Planned Expenditure**

A condition of the ERDF grant is that you are required to demonstrate that you have procured the product or service for which the grant is being sought in line with EU Procurement regulations, as described in section 5 (above).

If you cannot demonstrate that you will have procured the product or service for which the grant is being sought in line with EU Procurement regulations as outlined above, we will not be able to consider your grant application.

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We do not anticipate that any individual procurement under a Go-Create Grant project will exceed £24,999. If you think that one might, you MUST contact the ISfB team prior to submitting your application.

We STRONGLY advise you to speak with a member of the ISfB team for help in completing this section.

Please set out the spend profile for your grant claims, setting out the anticipated claim date, the progress you will have achieved by the point of claim, the total costs for that claim and the grant claimed. A single grant claim is strongly preferred at the end of your innovation project however multiple claims (maximum one claim per quarter) are acceptable should this be required.

### Section E: Declarations

You should have already completed a *De Minimis* State Aid Form as part of your initial ISfB application form. If you have applied for or had approved any aid since your ISfB application form, you must contact the ISfB team and provide updated information to ensure that you can still qualify for a grant. Please contact the ISfB team with any queries on how to complete this section of your form.

By answering yes to the questions in this section you are signing to confirm that the following elements are unchanged from your initial ISfB application form:

- SME status
- *De Minimis* State Aid position (excluding any aid awarded or received by the ISfB project)
- Undertaking in Difficulty test status (i.e. that you continue not to be an undertaking in difficulty)

### 10. Submission

When you have signed the application form this must be submitted to the ISfB team by email together with your **business plan, cash flow/financial forecast, last full-year profit and loss accounts, balance sheet and supplier quotations/evidence of tendering and evidence of match funding.**

Applications should be submitted by email with supporting documentation to the ISfB team at [innovation@oxfordshirelep.com](mailto:innovation@oxfordshirelep.com). Applications can be submitted at any time. We aim to review applications once per month, based on a cut-off date at **midday on the third Friday of the month**. Late applications will be held and considered after the next cut-off

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date. We aim to let applicants know within 21 days of the cut-off date on whether or not their application has been successful. You will be advised as early as possible if there is likely to be a delay.

Applications should be signed and then scanned if you are able to do so, or if you do not have access to a scanner, an e-signature or typed signature is acceptable with a statement confirming your authority to sign on the company's behalf.

Whilst we are not specific as to the form of your business plan we do require enough detail to enable us to assess your project and application. For guidance on a summary business plan template see: <http://oxonbe.co.uk/resources/>

Please note that in the current exceptional circumstances (COVID-19) we can accept **email applications only** together with any supporting documentation. Applicants are asked to retain a hard copy to provide to OxLEP on a later date when contacted to do so by the ISfB team.

### **You will be expected to:**

- Provide all evidence required to process and verify the grant application
- Provide all evidence as set out on the Form ISfB-04B Impact Declaration, which will ask details of jobs created and outcomes as a result of the funding
- Co-operate, if requested, with ISfB to promote and publicise success stories in the form of press releases, case studies, Freedom of Information Act requests or other communications unless there are clear reasons not to (for example, confidentiality around commercial issues, intellectual property or patents etc.)
- Participate in any evaluation activities by ISfB, the funding body and the external evaluator

### **11. Contact Us**

Please send any supporting documentation, such as copies of quotations/procurement evidence, your accounts or current business plan to the email address below. If you have any queries, please contact the ISfB team on 01865 897 181 or email [innovation@oxfordshirelep.com](mailto:innovation@oxfordshirelep.com)

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# Annex: Go-Create Grants Eligibility Matrix

- Grants are only available to **small and medium size enterprises (SME)** providing B2B or B2C type activity – some sector exclusions apply and are listed at the back of this document
- The SME can be based anywhere in England but must demonstrate an economic benefit within **Oxfordshire**
- All grants are paid **less** VAT unless business **is not** registered for VAT
- Minimum grant value £1,000
- Grants **cannot** be paid retrospectively
- All grants should be claimed, submitted and paid **as set out in the agreed claim schedule, which applicants will submit**
- If goods/services have been paid by credit card - **proof** that the full amount of the expenditure has been **paid** against the credit card has to be submitted
- Purchase of vehicles and land **are not permitted** – other exclusions apply
- **All training** is ineligible for ERDF funding applications
- **Packages of support are allowable** e.g. £x amount of website support, £x design consultancy & £x on print

**See below for examples of projects that are in scope and are out of scope. Please note this list is not exhaustive, but should be used to give an idea of what might be acceptable. Each application will be viewed on an individual basis.**

Project Type	In Scope	Out of Scope
Investment in product and service development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early stage development work</li> <li>• Exploitation of intellectual property</li> <li>• Implementing findings of the planning process, such as in areas of new product development, manufacturing and design</li> <li>• Accessing expert services for Intellectual Property registration, including patents, designs and trademarks</li> <li>• Developing alternative uses and markets for waste products</li> <li>• Implementing the results of industrial research, including the creation of pre-production prototypes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor incremental changes to existing products and/or services</li> <li>• Innovations for or at the behest of a specific customer</li> <li>• Training for staff</li> </ul>

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Project Type	In Scope	Out of Scope
Technological and applied research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative and contract research and development</li> <li>• Creation of productive innovation partnerships</li> <li>• Applied research</li> <li>• Research and development, including specialised consultancy</li> <li>• Collaborating with universities and colleges, and sourcing facilities, equipment and expertise to solve technical problems and develop further innovation</li> <li>• Researching the development of new products or technologies, or significant improvements to existing ones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research funded by other sources, e.g. Research Councils</li> <li>• Research which does not have a specific commercial application</li> </ul>
Developing pilot lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing findings of the planning process, such as in areas of new product development, manufacturing and design</li> <li>• Investigating the technological and commercial viability of transforming innovative ideas into new products, processes and technologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial lines</li> <li>• Minor incremental changes to existing products and/or services</li> <li>• Innovations for or at the behest of a specific customer</li> </ul>
Early product validation actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology demonstrator projects</li> <li>• IP searches and protection</li> <li>• External testing / validation of products</li> <li>• Assisting with the exploitation costs of new products or processes, including marketing, publicity and attendance at trade fairs</li> </ul>	
Supporting advanced manufacturing capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing equipment or services that support a technology 'step-change' for the business</li> </ul>	

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Project Type	In Scope	Out of Scope
First production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercialisation of new products and business processes and initiatives</li> <li>• Use of social innovation to bring new products and processes to the market</li> <li>• Activities to support / facilitate first production / commercialisation</li> <li>• Services to provide additional production capacity to exploit innovation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial scale ongoing production activities</li> </ul>

Ineligible Sectors: Please be aware ERDF change these regularly so may be subject to change.

- Fishery and aquaculture sectors
- Primary production, processing and marketing of agricultural products
- Coal, steel and shipbuilding sectors
- The synthetic fibres sector
- Generalised (school age) education
- Banking and insurance companies
- Retail businesses (ineligible for capital expenditure only)
- Social Care Services & Social Welfare (hospitals, housing associations, sports facilities)
- Child-minding facilities