

Innovation Support for Business Go-Create and eScalate Grant Q&As

Last updated: 7th April 20A

1. Can grants be used for marketing, e.g. Facebook advertising campaigns?

Yes, in certain cases. eScalate Social Enterprise grants can be used for advertising campaigns. Although an eligible activity, it is hard to see how it would be a good fit to an eScalate Access to Finance grant. For an ISfB Go-Create grant, marketing would have to be shown to be an important part of the innovation project; marketing cannot form an entire Go-Create grant project.

2. What if we do not have accounts for a previous year as we are in our first year of trading?

You should provide a forecast for your first year of trading in place of accounts.

3. Do technical specifications have to be submitted or will a product summary suffice?

We do not require technical specifications. A summary or description of your product will be sufficient, provided it gives enough information for grant assessors/Panel members to understand it.

4. Do suppliers have to be paid before the grant can be paid? What if supplier payment terms are 90 days?

Yes. We can only pay the grant based on defrayed expenditure, i.e. costs you have paid out of your bank account. Until this happens the costs cannot be claimed. This means that if your payment terms are 90 days you cannot submit a claim until after the 90 days have elapsed, i.e. once the supplier has been paid.

5. We will be looking for a grant of less than £25,000, do we still need to get three quotes for the project?

Yes. You should provide three quotes for each item of expenditure in your application. As we have accelerated the process, we accept that this may not always be possible, but we cannot issue a Grant Offer Letter until you have received all three quotes.

If you are purchasing anything that costs more than £25,000 you do not have to seek written quotes, but you must run an open procurement process, as described in the guidance notes.

6. Can we apply for a grant for two distinct projects, i.e. £25,000 each, total cost £50,000?

You cannot receive two grants under the same programme. In other words, you could potentially receive a Go-Create grant from ISfB and an eScalate grant, but you cannot receive two Go-Create grants or two eScalate grants. If you apply under both programmes, the grant projects must be clearly and quantifiably different and cannot include the same activities or quotes.

In theory you could apply more than once to each programme, however we strongly recommend that you do not do this as the assessors and grant panel have no way to know which application is your priority. If you have more than one potential project under one of our programmes, you would be better to apply with your preferred project and, if that is unsuccessful, to then submit your second application.

7. Can we start working on the project before we are notified, providing we do not pay any subcontractors or third parties?

No. Activity, including signing contracts and starting work, cannot commence before the grant is awarded. If you are willing to start working without the grant, it is questionable whether the grant is needed for the activity. From the point at which we notify you that you have been awarded the grant and with our approval, you can commence working. However, this will be at your own risk until the Grant Offer Letter is issued and signed.

8. We are a business based outside Oxfordshire, are we still able to apply?

Any eligible SME based in the England ERDF Operational Programme area can apply. However, we are looking to prioritise projects that deliver an economic benefit to Oxfordshire.