



Pride in Place Business Activation Grant Programme

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Who can apply?

The programme is open to businesses that have successfully passed the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage and have been invited to submit a full application. The business should be new, early-stage or expanding into a vacant commercial property within Rawtenstall, Crawshawbooth or Waterfoot.

2. How much funding can I apply for?

Applicants can apply for a grant of up to £10,000, subject to eligible project costs and assessment.

3. What can the grant be used for?

Examples include:

- Internal fit-out works
- Shopfront improvements
- Equipment purchases
- Capital start-up costs
- Other costs directly associated with occupying and opening a vacant commercial property.

4. What can't the grant be used for?

The grant cannot be used for costs that are unrelated to occupying and activating the vacant premises.

Revenue costs, ongoing operating expenses or expenditure incurred before grant approval may not be eligible (please refer to the grant guidance).

5. Do I need to have signed a lease?

Not necessarily. Applications may be submitted where lease negotiations are underway, Heads of Terms have been agreed or landlord consent has been obtained. However, you will need to provide evidence of your proposed occupation arrangements.

6. Can I apply if my business hasn't started trading yet?

Yes. The programme is designed to support new businesses as well as existing businesses that are expanding into vacant premises.

7. Do I need to contribute my own money?

Not necessarily, but applicants are encouraged to contribute towards project costs where possible. If you are providing match funding, you should explain where it comes from and provide evidence.

Applicants may also be asked to provide evidence of wider financial sustainability, including how ongoing business costs will be met.

8. Do I need quotations?

Yes. Wherever possible, quotations should be obtained through a genuine competitive process. You should provide at least one quotation for each item of expenditure and complete the ITT4 Non-Collusion and Non-Canvassing Certificate.

9. What supporting documents do I need?

Typically you should provide:

- Business Plan
- Cashflow Forecast
- Lease, Heads of Terms or Landlord Consent
- Quotations
- Bank Statement
- Companies House registration (if applicable)
- Photographs of the premises
- Evidence of match funding (if applicable)
- Completed ITT4 Certificate.

10. How will my application be assessed?

Applications are assessed against five areas:

- Business viability and sustainability
- Regeneration and town centre impact
- Social value and community benefits
- Project delivery and value for money
- Eligibility and compliance.

11. What makes a strong application?

Successful applications clearly demonstrate:

- A viable business model
- Strong demand for the business
- Clear benefits to the town centre
- Good value for money
- Positive community impact
- Well-prepared financial information.

12. How should I answer the written questions?

Use the suggested word counts as a guide. Wherever possible, support your answers with evidence, figures or examples rather than simply making statements.

13. When will I receive the grant?

Grant funding is paid after eligible expenditure has been incurred and a grant claim with supporting evidence has been submitted and approved. Applicants should therefore ensure they have sufficient cashflow to undertake the project before reimbursement.

14. Does submitting an application guarantee funding?

No. The programme is competitive and funding is discretionary. All eligible applications will be assessed against the published criteria.

15. What happens after I submit my application?

Council officers will assess your application and may contact you if clarification or additional evidence is required. Recommendations are then considered by the Business Activation Grant Panel before applicants are notified of the outcome.

16. Will I have to provide monitoring information?

Yes. Successful applicants will be expected to provide evidence of project delivery and participate in monitoring and evaluation activities.

17. What happens if my project or quotes change?

You should notify Rossendale Borough Council as soon as possible if there are significant changes to your project, costs or delivery timetable before spending the grant.

18. Can I receive other public funding?

Yes, but you must declare any grant or public funding received within the last three years, along with any other funding supporting this project.

19. Can I start work before my grant is approved?

No. Unless specifically agreed in writing by the Council, applicants should not commit to expenditure before receiving a formal grant offer, as these costs may not be eligible.

20. Who can I contact if I need help?

If you are unsure how to complete the application form or what evidence is required, please contact economicdevelopment@rossendalebc.gov.uk before the deadline.

21. Can VAT be claimed as an eligible cost?

Yes. If you are not VAT registered, the grant will cover VAT.

22. Can I buy second-hand equipment?

Yes, upon proof of purchase.

23. Can I purchase equipment from my own company or a family member?

Yes, this may be permitted where a genuine competitive process has been followed. Applicants must provide evidence of purchase, confirm that quotations have been obtained through a fair and competitive process, and declare any connections to suppliers (for example, relatives, associated businesses or related companies).

Applicants will also be required to complete a declaration form confirming any supplier relationships or conflicts of interest.

24. What branding or publicity will be required if I receive a grant?

Successful applicants will be required to acknowledge the support of the Pride in Place Programme and Rossendale Borough Council in any materials that refer to the project and in any written or spoken public presentations about the project and will be expected, to co-operate with promotional activities relating to the project that may be instigated and/or organised by the Council provided reasonable notice is given to the Grantee.

25. Can unsuccessful applicants reapply in future funding rounds?

Yes