



East Lothian Council

Local Authority COVID-19 Economic Recovery Fund (LA-CER) 2022/23

New Business Support Grant

Guidance Notes

East Lothian Council recognises the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its business base. The Council has committed grant funding within 2022/23 to support business growth and sustainability.

This fund forms part of the Scottish Government's Local Authority COVID-19 Economic Recovery Fund (LACER) 2022/23. As such this funding will not be available in subsequent years. The aim of the Fund is to address local economic recovery and cost of living impacts on low-income households by supporting:

- Interventions that support local economic recovery and contribute to businesses being able to move from surviving the period of trading restrictions towards recovery, growth, adaptation and building resilience.
- Projects that can rebuild consumer confidence and stimulate demand and economic activity.
- Low-income households, that are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and the current cost of living crisis, become more economically active.

Priority consideration for the New Business Support Grant funding will be given to applicants who can demonstrate the need and benefit to starting up their business.

We recommend that all applicants read this Guidance Note in full before they start and refer to the guidance notes while filling out the application.

New Business Support Grant 2022/23

THE AIM

To provide for and encourage newly self-employed and newly incorporated companies in East Lothian to support economic recovery from COVID-19 and East Lothian Council's Economic Development Strategy 2012-2022. The key elements of the strategy are:

- To provide high quality employment pathways for East Lothian's workforce, and;
- To become Scotland's most sustainable local economy.

East Lothian Council supports and encourages Fair Work Practices, including Effective Voice, Opportunities, Security, Fulfilment, and Respect, and expects businesses in receipt of public funds to take a positive approach to fair work practices, more information can be found here <https://www.fairworkconvention.scot/the-fair-work-framework>

THE OBJECTIVES

To provide financial support to purchase equipment, goods or services that provides a boost to new start-up businesses.

THE GRANT

All grants are discretionary and there is a maximum grant of £1,000. Grants of £250 and £500 may be awarded. Grants will be paid on approval.

ELIGIBILITY

- The applicant must be located in the East Lothian Council area.
- Applicants must meet all legal requirements and regulations which relate to the operation of the business.
- Applicants must not be in debt to East Lothian Council, e.g. for outstanding business rates or other charges.
- Applicants must clearly demonstrate the need for the funding and the benefit to the business.

WHAT WE CAN AND CAN'T FUND

The grant is for the purposes of new business start-ups.

Examples of eligible expenditure include:

- New machinery or equipment
- Upgrade or refurbishment of facilities
- IT software or systems
- Marketing initiatives
- Insurance

The grant cannot be used for:

- Buying company shares or buying out members of a partnership
- Repaying or replacing existing loan and overdraft facilities
- Repaying debts, including taxes owed
- Paying interest on existing loan(s) / borrowing facilities
- Illegal or political activities

GENERAL TERMS

Applicants must:

1. Apply in writing using the relevant East Lothian Council grant application.
2. Provide evidence of trading – social media, website, business plan, bank statement or other evidence accepted by your business advisor.
3. Have at least one meeting with a nominated representative of the Economic Development Department to discuss their application.
4. Agree to and sign the grant award and retain and submit invoices as proof of purchase for items should they be requested for audit purposes.
5. Have a follow up meeting with a nominated representative of the Economic Development Department to review ongoing business needs and support available.

HOW WE ASSESS APPLICATIONS

All newly established businesses are eligible for funding provided they meet the terms and conditions above. Our funding decision will be final, there is no appeal process.

MONITORING YOUR GRANT

Any grant awarded will be subject to monitoring through a follow on meeting the purpose of which is to consider future support needs.

DATA PROTECTION

East Lothian Council takes your privacy seriously. As we collect and process personal information about you we are registered as a 'data controller' under the Data Protection Act (ICO registration Z5759571). Under the Data Protection Act, you have a right to know how we collect, use and share your personal data. You can find information on the kinds of personal data we collect, and how we might use it here <https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/>

DEADLINE

All funds must be claimed by 31st March 2023.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Completed application forms should be returned to your Business Advisor.