



**Funded by
UK Government**



**Nottingham
City Council**

Nottingham City Council

Bulwell Business Growth Grant 2026-2028

Applicant Guidance Notes

May 2026

1. Introduction

This guidance is intended to provide information to applicants to the Bulwell Business Growth Grant.

The aim of the grant is to support businesses in the Nottingham City Council wards of Bulwell and Bulwell Forest (see the map at Appendix 1) to grow through the provision of capital grants.

The project will provide up to 50% grant funding for investments. The maximum amount of grant that can be awarded per application is £5,000. The balance of the investment must be provided by the applicant.

Priority will be given to those applicants that can best demonstrate how the investment will have a positive impact on business growth, productivity and the creation of new employment in Bulwell.

Funded through the Levelling Up Fund the grant operates over two stages – an expression of interest followed by a full application. Projects will be invited to the full application stage if they pass eligibility checks. The scheme will remain open to applications until all funding has been committed.

2. Background

The Bulwell Business Growth Grant forms part of Nottingham City Council's support for local businesses, which aims to help businesses find the support they need to grow and evolve. The grant allows Nottingham City Council to offer direct support to businesses to achieve their aspirations for growth.

This grant aims to support businesses to grow, improve competitiveness, productivity and their ability to take advantage of commercial opportunities.

3. Grant Amount and Match Funding

The minimum grant available is £1,000

The maximum grant available is £5,000.

Grants are available to fund 50% of the total project cost (excluding VAT). See below for examples of eligible projects.

You will be expected to fund and evidence 100% of the project cost upfront from your own resources, 50% will then be reimbursed to you by way of a grant award. Ultimately, you will have match funded 50% of the total project cost, excluding VAT.

There is no maximum project cost, but the maximum grant will be capped at £5,000.

All grants are made at the discretion of Nottingham City Council and are subject to availability.

4. How Will the Project Work?

A Business Advisor from the Nottingham City Growth Hub team will be available to work with you to review your business and support you in applying for the grant.

The grant is competitive, inviting businesses to apply for capital grants of between £1,000 and £5,000 to support capital investment projects that will lead to clearly evidenced growth and productivity improvements.

Businesses must have been trading for more than 12 months to apply for the grant. Grants are available only towards capital investment such as machinery, equipment, technology and software. Revenue funding is not available through this grant.

The grant will remain open until all of the funding has been allocated.

5. Eligible Projects

The Bulwell Business Growth Grant can support projects that deliver some, or all, of the following outcomes:

- Improved business productivity
- New jobs created or safeguarded
- Increased digital adoption
- Bringing new products or services to the market
- Adopting new technologies or processes in the business
- Engaging with new markets

6. Examples of Projects

Growth projects will differ from sector to sector and business to business. Below are a number of examples of the types of projects that could be supported. If you are unsure if your project would be suitable for this grant, please contact the Project Manager at econdev.grants@nottinghamcity.gov.uk who will be able to provide clarification.

- research and development work e.g., product development, including production of prototypes and research of new marketing opportunities.
- purchasing machinery, if that machinery creates a 'step change' in your commercial operations which lead to increasing efficiency and productivity levels whilst also being an innovative approach for your business.
- digital marketing costs, such as web design and development, e-commerce development, (Costs for printed marketing materials and content production are not eligible)

7. General Eligibility Criteria

Grants are available for capital projects and the purchase of capital equipment which meet the eligibility criteria.

Capital funding relating to land acquisition; building acquisition; site investigation; site preparation; building and construction, the installation of permanent fixtures or electrical wiring are **not** eligible for funding.

Grants are not available for items or services which would be considered part of normal business operations e.g. ongoing maintenance or repair costs, new for old purchases, etc.

To be eligible to receive a grant your business must:

- Be located within the Nottingham City Council wards of Bulwell and Bulwell Forest
- Have been trading for at least 12 months at the time of application.
- Be registered at Companies House OR have a Unique Tax Reference number from HMRC if you are a sole trader or partnership.
- Be able to fund and evidence 100% of the project cost upfront from their own resources, ultimately providing 50% of the project cost.
- Not make any project purchases using Paypal, personal credit cards, cash or cheques as these are not eligible payment methods
- Not have any outstanding arrears or debts with Nottingham City Council

8. Procurement

For purchases of single items or services costing £24,999 or less net, applicants need to provide one written quote.

For purchases of single items or services costing £25,000 or more net we require applicants to have obtained three quotes.

All supplier quotes must clearly specify if VAT is applicable, and state the price including and excluding VAT.

If your chosen supplier is not VAT registered, we will require an email verification from them to confirm this.

You will need to detail all proposed purchases in question 3 of the full application form.

You need to be able to explain how you will ensure value for money from your proposed purchases e.g. explain why you think your preferred supplier represents the best choice for price and quality. You should provide your answer in Appendix A of the full application form for each item.

You must avoid conflicts of interest with suppliers. You cannot purchase goods or services from a supplier to which the applicant business, its Directors or agents have a connection and/or an interest in the awarding of contracts/purchasing of goods and services from the supplier.

9. Ineligible Project Costs

Below is a list of excluded costs. This isn't an exhaustive list and Nottingham City Council has the discretion to omit costs if they are deemed ineligible and/or not within the scope of the project:

- Reimbursement of goods / services already purchased prior to the date of a grant agreement

- Repayment of existing loans or debts
- Recurring revenue costs such as salaries, pensions, stock, rent, utility charges, service charges subscriptions, insurance, tax, recruitment fees.
- Line rental and on-going maintenance costs associated with implementing a superfast broadband product
- Updating/adding content to existing websites
- Repairs and maintenance to existing ICT equipment
- Like-for-like replacement of existing items
- Mobile phones
- Accredited training or the development or implementation of accredited training materials
- Purchase, building, and renovation of property
- Financial charges, such as bank charges and interest
- Enterprises subject to an outstanding order for the recovery of illegal State Aid
- Fines
- Activities that may bring Nottingham City Council into disrepute
- Costs associated with gaining statutory permissions or consents
- VAT
- Printed marketing costs
- Vehicles

This list is not exhaustive and specific items and project ideas can be checked for eligibility by emailing econdev.grants@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or by asking your Business Advisor from the Nottingham City Business Growth Hub Team.

10. Geographic Areas Covered

Applications will **ONLY** be considered from businesses located within the City of Nottingham wards of Bulwell and Bulwell Forest

11. Ineligible businesses

The following businesses are ineligible for grant support:

- retail business who are pawn brokers/money shops
- adult/private shops
- betting shops
- vape shops
- national chain stores

12. UK subsidy control regime

This grant scheme will be administered under Minimal Financial Assistance rules. You are allowed up to £315,000 in Minimal Financial Assistance over any rolling period of 3 financial years. Information on the scheme can be found at the Gov.UK Subsidy Control Website.

Any aid awarded to you under the Bulwell Business Growth Grant will have to be declared if you apply, or have applied, for any other public funding. Therefore, if successful, the offer

letter must be retained and shown to any other public body to which you apply for funding for the three years following the offer.

False declarations will lead to the recovery of the value of the assistance provided plus interest.

Note that where a business is part of a group, the £315,000 limit applies to the group as a whole for public sector support within the United Kingdom.

13. Timeframe

The Bulwell Business Growth Grant will remain open to applications until all funding has been committed.

Projects awarded funding will be required to claim their grant award by the date or timeframe stated within the Grant Offer Letter and Grant Agreement.

However, all projects funded through the Scheme must be fully completed and all grant funding claimed by applicants by 10th March 2028

14. Application Process

The grant has a 2-stage application process

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest

The first step is to submit an Expression of Interest Form. This can be downloaded from www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/transport-parking-and-streets/bulwell-town-centre-regeneration or you can request a copy by emailing econdev.grants@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Once submitted a project and item eligibility check will be undertaken.

If your business or project is not eligible at this stage of the process you will be advised accordingly.

Stage 2 – Full application

If your project is eligible for support, you will be invited to submit a full application. You will also be connected to a Business Advisor from the Nottingham City Business Growth Hub who will advise you on completing the full application.

Alongside the application form you must submit your supplier quote(s), up to date full financial accounts for the last two years and your most recent management accounts.

On receipt of the completed full application and supporting documentation, Nottingham City Council will conduct due diligence and compliance checks on the application.

Any issues or queries including requests for missing / additional information will be raised with you.

Applications passing the due diligence check will undergo an appraisal.

All grant applications will then be considered by a grant panel and the applicant informed of the outcome in writing. The decision of the panel on all full applications for funding is final and there is no process of appeal.

NB You must not enter into any financial or contractual arrangement with any supplier prior to a project being approved, and not before the date that the grant agreement is signed by Nottingham City Council. To be clear, any expenditure prior to the date that the grant agreement is signed, dated and returned cannot be claimed.

Nottingham City Council reserves the right to withhold, vary or reclaim funding if any information supplied through the application and approval process proves to be inaccurate, misleading or incomplete.

15. Help and Support

If you would like to discuss the general eligibility of your proposal prior to submitting an Expression of Interest, please contact the Nottingham City Council at econdev.grants@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Support to develop your proposal and to complete your application is available from the Nottingham City Business Growth Hub Team.

However, please note, applications must be received from the applicant organisation directly and while help and support in completing your application is entirely acceptable, we would encourage you to write the full application in your own words and to have a full understanding of the application if any clarification is requested.

Completing the Expression of Interest and Full Application Forms

Please use the information in this section to answer each question in the application forms as fully as possible.

Expression of Interest Form

Section 1 - Business Details

Please provide details of your business, including details of the primary contact for the project. This should be the person the grant team will contact with any questions regarding the application.

All sections should be completed fully.

Section 2 – Your Project

Please provide brief details of the project that will be funded with the grant, the estimated costs of the project and the anticipated benefit/impact to your business. If the address where the project will be undertaken is different to your registered/trading address, please confirm the project location. This grant will only fund projects that are located in the wards of Bulwell and Bulwell Forest.

Full Application Form

Section 1 - Business Details

Please provide the name, address and contact details of your business.

Section 2 – Financial information and forecast

Please provide the headline financial information for your business for the last and the current fiscal years, and forecasts for the next fiscal year with and without the support of the grant.

Section 3 – Project details

Please provide anticipated start and finish dates for the investment being supported by the grant.

Please state the total project cost and the amount of funding being requested. Please provide a brief overview of your business and a brief project description. This should include an explanation of the challenges your business is facing and provide an overview of what the grant will be funding.

Projects can only be capital.

Section 4 - Application questions

Q1. About the project

In this section you need to:

- outline your business's growth/productivity challenges
- outline the need for the grant and how the investment is aligned to the companies overarching growth strategy and/or productivity plan
- explain what you will purchase with the grant and why grant funding is needed, with reference to the viability of the project with or without grant funding.
- Demonstrate the demand or market need for the proposed projects that will result in the development of a new product or service or expansion into new markets
- Demonstrate how the project delivers value for money to the business

Examples of the types of growth/productivity challenges and opportunities you have may include:

- a requirement to introduce new products / processes / services to access new markets.
- a requirement to invest in new machinery to increase capacity and / or bring new capability.

Within the application you will need to explain why grant funding is needed, with reference to the viability of the project with or without grant funding. Grant support will only be provided to projects that demonstrate that:

- the project will not proceed without grant support; or,
- grant support will allow a project to proceed within a shortened timescale; or
- grant support will enable a project to proceed on a larger scale, at a higher level of quality and/or with greater impact.

Grant is only payable for costs incurred after the application is formally approved. Grant is only payable to the applicant business and upon production of evidence that costs have been incurred by the same business (not another business in a group structure for example). Grants will not be awarded to applicants who are linked enterprises of the supplier(s).

Any costs which have not been incurred by the applicant business will be ineligible.

Any expenditure which is deemed ineligible will not be paid and any offer of grant will be withdrawn.

Q2. What are the main outputs and outcomes the project will achieve?

You will need detail the outputs/outcomes resulting from the proposed grant investment. The answer must clearly show how the activity will support growth and improve productivity of the business.

Please summarise the outcomes in the tables.

Q3. Details of items to be purchased

Provide a summary of each item or service you wish to purchase in the table and complete Appendix A to provide further details about the supplier(s) you wish to use.

Q4. Supplier comparison for project purchases of £25,000 net and over.

Only to be completed for projects with proposed purchases of individual items costing £25,000 net and over

If any of the items you wish to purchase have a net cost of £25,000 or over, you are required to follow the Public Procurement Regulations in line with the threshold value of your total project cost.

You must provide details of any conflict of interest with the suppliers you have chosen.

You need to attach a copy of the quotation(s) from your preferred supplier(s) to the application form.

Q5. Previous grants

Tell us about any previous Business Growth Grant you have received from Nottingham City Council and how your new project differs, particularly that the outputs and outcomes offered are not the same as those offered in the previous grant.

Section 5 Payment of grant

Please provide your bank details

Section 6 - Subsidy Allowance

If you have received a Subsidy or State Aid of more than £315,000 over the last 3 financial years please provide details

Section 7 – Declarations

Please sign and date the form

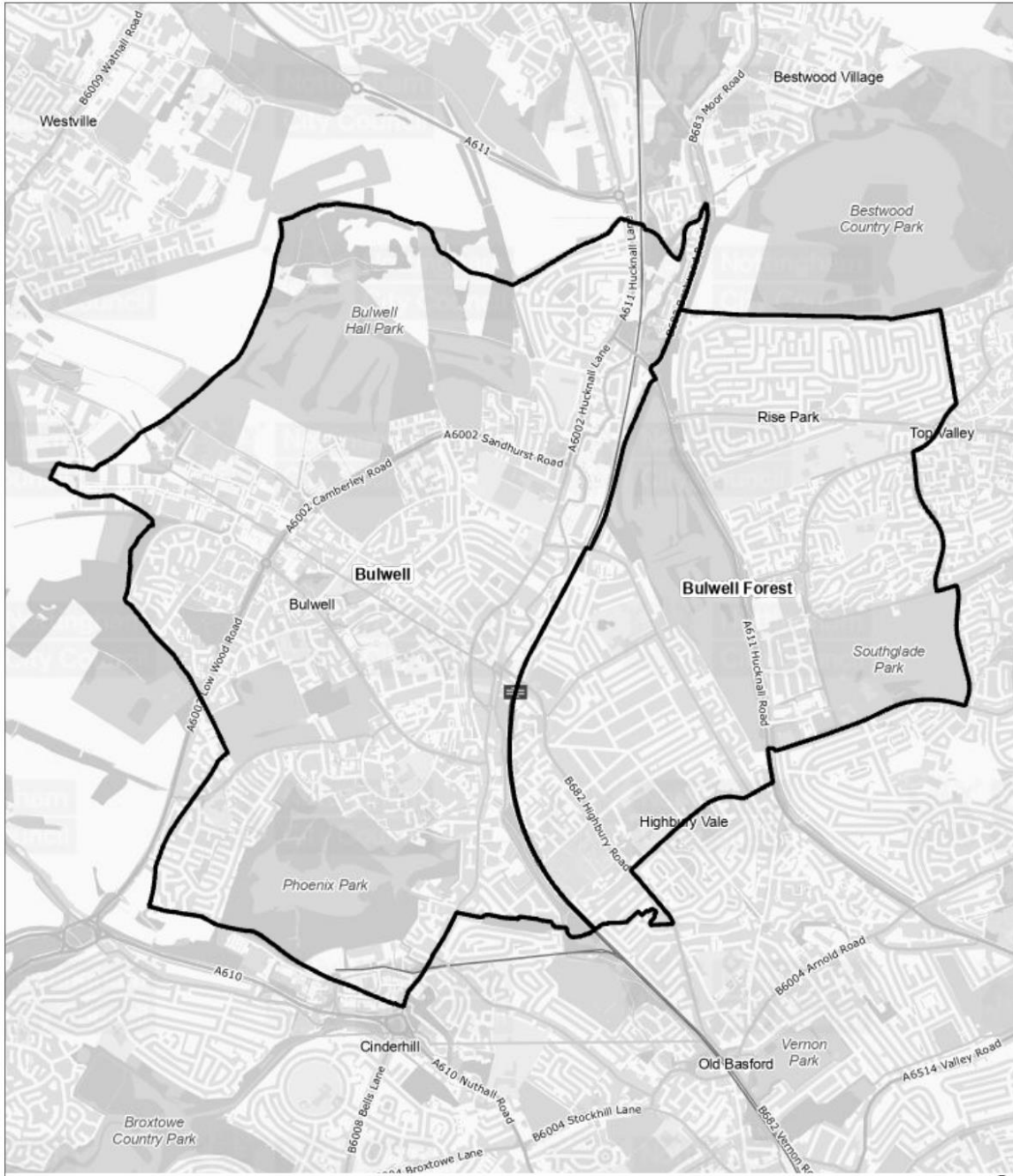
Timescales

If your application is successful you will receive a formal grant offer letter. This will inform you how to proceed and what documents you need to keep to claim the grant. It is estimated to take up to 10 days to process a grant offer letter after the panel decision. Once you have purchased the goods/services in line with your grant offer letter, you will submit a grant claim to evidence the purchase including an invoice and bank statements.

It can take up to 1 month to process your claim and pay the grant to you, and any missing information can delay the payment of grant.

You must not place an order with your chosen provider, commission or purchase any goods/services prior to receiving the offer letter, as grant payments cannot be made retrospectively against activity that has already occurred.

Appendix 1: Eligible area



Nottingham City Council, Crown Copyright and Database Rights 2025. OS AC0000822898. 0 0,5 1 km

Printed map generated by a NoMad user on . This map is not suitable for publishing, for high quality maps please contact g@nottinghamcity.gov.uk.

Key		Description	
Wards (City)	Railway Stations 50k	National Roads 50k	Sites 50k
Watermark	NET Line 50k	Minor Roads 50k	MasterMap Greenspace 50k
Extent	Railway Lines 50k	Regional Roads 50k	Zoomstack Greenspace 50k
Park Names 50k	Multi Track	A Road	General Surface 50k
Place Names 50k	Single Track	B Road	Background
		Buildings 50k	
		Woodland 50k	
		Waterlines 50k	

