

GREATER BIRMINGHAM & SOLIHULL

FUNDING BULLETIN JULY 2019



The Final Call for ERDF Project Applications is Now Open:

- £18.5 Million is now available for projects in the Greater Birmingham & Solihull area through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- The call for project applications opened on 30th June & the deadline for outline applications is 30th September.
- Full details can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/european-structural-investment-funds>
- This will be the final opportunity to apply for funds ring-fenced for the Greater Birmingham & Solihull area
- Specialist support is available to help you with your project application. Email: esif@solihull.gov.uk
- The Technical Assistance team are holding a briefing event on 8th July to promote the call. Details here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/myevent?eid=63478931192>

Priorities and Available Funds:

	Priority Axis	Area	Available Funds
1	Strengthening Research, Technological Development & Innovation	Transition Areas	£676,300
		More Developed Areas	£3,060,400
		Total	£3,736,700
3	Enhancing the Competitiveness of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises	Transition Areas	£2,490,900
		More Developed Areas	£6,402,400
		Total	£8,893,300
4	Supporting the Shift Towards A Low Carbon Economy in All Sectors	Transition Areas	£231,000
		More Developed Areas	£4,220,000
		Total	£4,451,000
6	Preserving & Protecting the Environment, & Promoting Resource Efficiency	Transition Areas	£686,200
		More Developed Areas	£822,000
		Total	£1,508,200

Key Considerations:

- The More Developed Areas are: Birmingham, Solihull, Redditch, Bromsgrove, Wyre Forest
- The Transition Areas are: Tamworth, Lichfield, Cannock, East Staffordshire
- ERDF can pay up to 50% of the total project cost in the More Developed Area; 60% in the Transition Area
- The minimum ERDF grant is £500,000 for projects in the More Developed Area; £417,000 in the Transition Area
- Projects must be completed by 30th June 2023

Current projects & Project Extensions

- Over £100 million from the EDRF 2014-20 has been allocated to projects covering the Greater Birmingham & Solihull area. Details of projects are shown below.
- Current projects are invited to apply for an extension
- Where an application is for an extension to an existing project, there is no minimum limit for the ERDF grant.
- It does not matter what the current end date of the project is, or if the project has already been granted an extension, so long as the extension does not take the project beyond June 2023.

Leaving the EU

- Leaving the EU does not affect the availability of this funding. In the event of a 'no deal' exit from the European Union, the UK Government will fund all ERDF projects that would have been funded by the EU under the 2014-2020 programme period.

PRIORITY AXIS 1

Promoting Research & Innovation

Priority Axis 1 aims to improve how small and medium sized enterprises commercialise research and how they collaborate with research institutions.

The Investment Priorities for Priority Axis 1 are:

- Enhancing research and innovation infrastructure; capacity to develop research and innovation excellence; promoting centres of competence
- Promoting business investment in research and innovation
 - developing links with between enterprises, research centres and Higher Education
 - supporting technological and applied research – in particular in key enabling technologies

PA1 Projects in the Greater Birmingham & Solihull area:

Project/Lead Agency	Description	From
Innovation Engine Birmingham Science Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuing challenges to SME businesses from large organisations in the Health, Life Sciences, Digital & Creative, Transport and Low Carbon sectors in order to stimulate demand for new/improved products, services and processes 	01.2016
Knowledge Exchange & Enterprise Network University of Wolverhampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping SMEs to increase profitability and growth through innovation. The programme entails a company employing a graduate, known as an Affiliate, who with an academic mentor, transfers knowledge from the knowledge base to the company - creating economic wealth and ongoing graduate-led employment in participating companies. 	01.2016
Advanced Materials Characterisation and Simulation Hub University of Birmingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated support for SMEs through exploiting a broad range of advanced materials characterisation facilities and simulation expertise 	03.2016
Innovative Product Support Services University of Wolverhampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting businesses through the early stages of innovation – the transition from concept or opportunity into a product development programme. The project provides access to the specialist resources and capabilities available in the partner Universities in the region to overcome technical and development barriers. For businesses with a product innovation of particularly high merit, IPSS will offer extended support through research collaborations aligned with H2020. 	04.2016
BSEEN Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business start-up support to students & recent graduates from Aston University, Birmingham City University, University College Birmingham and Newman University and/or living in the GBSLEP area 	06.2016

Project/Lead Agency	Description	From
EBRI (European Bioenergy Research Institute) Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging SMEs in knowledge exchange, research and innovation - through awareness raising events, business support and business access to demonstration facilities Bringing new products and processes to market in bioenergy and energy systems Increasing investment in research and innovation by SMEs in technologies identified through smart specialisation in the low carbon growth area 	05.2016
Innovation Vouchers Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation Vouchers (up to £2,500) for SMEs in SMART specialisation sectors - to innovate in collaboration with research institutes, to assist them to develop new processes and systems, & to improve their efficiency and bring new products & services to market 	07.2016
STEAMHOUSE Birmingham City University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A demand-led demonstrator showing how the Arts can be combined with Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEAM) to generate innovative products and drive economic growth in the advanced manufacturing, low carbon, health and creative & digital sectors 	09.2016
Digital Birmingham Big Data Corridor: A New Business Economy Birmingham City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating an innovative, connected data marketplace centred on a user led demonstrator in East Birmingham Supporting SMEs to use data to create new services & products, responding to specific challenges to deliver to beneficiaries in East Birmingham, generating social and environmental value alongside hard economic impacts 	10.2016
Centre for Medical Devices Testing and Evaluation (MD-TEC) University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing existing markets and stimulate new ones for Life Sciences businesses by enabling them to bring products to market more quickly and more cheaply by making products easier to use and patient tested 	12.2016
Alternative Raw Materials with Low Impact (ARLI) University of Birmingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting businesses to deliver a low carbon economy 	07.2017
System Analytics for Innovation Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting businesses to make better use of their data, to develop new services and products, to leverage large public datasets and to develop a workforce that is highly skilled in leading-edge analytical tech 	08.2017
DIGI-RAIL University of Birmingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Digital Rail Demand-led Demonstrator bringing together national and international rail industry buyers with the region's businesses and research expertise to solve challenges within the industry and access the increasing number of digital rail commercial/research opportunities that exist in the sector 	07.2018
Enabling Technologies and Innovation Competences Challenge Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the capacity of SMEs to introduce new products to market - focussing on three enabling competencies: i) advanced manufacturing and engineering, ii) digital technologies and iii) data and systems integration 	08.2018

Project/Lead Agency	Description	From
Centre for Innovation in Advanced Measurement in Manufacturing (CIAMM) University of Birmingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An incubation centre to support sensor technologists, systems engineers and SME businesses to develop new businesses, products and services 	09.2018
Promoting Functional Materials in SMEs Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting the use by SMEs of materials with functional properties (i.e. materials that can do something in their own right such as biomedical implants, solar cells or contact lenses). 	09.2018
Smart Factory Hub (SmartFub) University of Birmingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting manufacturing SMEs to innovate, improve productivity & competitiveness by providing them with access to the latest advances in Digital Manufacturing & Smart Factory 	10.2018
Digital Innovation for Manufacturing (DI4M) University of Warwick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping manufacturing SMEs benefit from the latest manufacturing technologies and thinking, including Manufacturing & Materials, Digital Manufacturing, Business Transformation, Connected Autonomous Vehicles and Energy Innovation. 	
CALMERIC Composite & Additive Layer Materials Engineering Research & Innovation Centre University of Wolverhampton		

PRIORITY AXIS 3:

Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs

Priority Axis 3 aims to enhance the competitive of small and medium sized enterprises.

The Investment Priorities for Priority Axis 3 are:

- Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators
- Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for products, services & development
- Supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national & international markets and to engage in innovation

PA3 Projects in the Greater Birmingham & Solihull area:

Project/Lead Agency	Description	From
Investing in Greater Birmingham West Midlands Growth Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and business expansions from UK/EU into 5 priority sectors and a number of key locations. Tackling issues identified in research to address business underperformance. 	01.2016
Transforming SMEs to improve their revenues through the adoption of advanced services. Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering sustainable growth of technology-focused SMEs through capturing untapped value from their customers through adopting advanced services (servitisation). In-depth support for 50 SMEs to deliver business model innovation, organisational transformation and new technology adoption. 	01.2016
Birmingham Knowledge Economy Business Incubation Partnership Innovation Birmingham (Aston Science Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A partnership between Birmingham's two science parks, to support emerging innovative hi-tech SMEs. The project provides access to digital and life-science / wet-laboratory facilities and expertise, the support of Entrepreneurs-In-Residence and a wide community of associates. 	01.2016
Enterprise Development & Growth Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start-up and new business growth support across GBS - giving entrepreneurs access to advice, support and networking, with specialist expertise including social enterprise, women's enterprise and innovation. 	04.2016
Business Growth Programme Birmingham City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business support package (including revenue and capital grants of £10,000 to £200,000) to strengthen supply chain companies, stimulate innovation and grow existing SMEs 	06.2016
Aston Programme for Small Business Growth Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting potential growth businesses to increase their management capacity to develop and grow. Generate a network of alumni that can be used for ongoing support. 	07.2016
GBSLEP Growth Hub Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single point of contact for the coordination and delivery of business information and support. 	10.2016

Project/Lead Agency	Description	From
Property Investment Programme Birmingham City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants for SMEs in the GBSLEP area to fund up to 40% of costs for the refurbishment or new build of industrial or business premises. 	11.2016
Midlands Engine Investment Fund Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Fund of Funds providing a range of affordable finance products to small and medium sized enterprises across the Midlands to help businesses achieve their growth ambitions. 	04.2017
Manufacturing Growth Programme WMMBF Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveraging the experience, resources and expertise developed under the national Business Growth Service (BGS) to support SME manufacturers to co-invest in growth/business improvement projects. 	10.2016
SME International Growth Project West Midlands International Trade LLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting small and medium sized enterprises to enter and grow in overseas markets, leading to increases in turnover, productivity and the creation of new jobs. 	01.2017

PRIORITY AXIS 4: Supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy

Priority Axis 4 aims to support the shift to a low carbon economy in all sectors

The Investment Priorities for Priority Axis 4 are to promote and support:

- the production and distribution of energy derived from renewable sources
- energy efficiency and renewable energy use in enterprises
- energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings and the housing sector
- 'whole area' low-carbon strategies including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures
- research & innovation in, and adoption of, low-carbon technologies

PA4 Projects in the Greater Birmingham & Solihull area:

Project/Lead Agency	Description	From
Accelerating Thermal Energy Technology Adoption (ATETA) University of Birmingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting innovation and adoption of low carbon technologies by working closely with SMEs to meet local development needs. • The project exploits the existing and emerging facilities and expertise from the Thermal-Energy Research Accelerator, ensuring that the world leading research arising from this government-funded initiative lead to economic benefits for SMEs in the local GBS economy. 	03.2017
Low Carbon SMEs Aston University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping small and medium sized enterprises adopt energy efficient and low carbon options 	03.2017
Low Carbon Growth Support Groundwork West Midlands		

PRIORITY AXIS 6: Preserving and Protecting the Environment

Priority Axis 6 aims to preserve and protect the environment, and promote resource efficiency.

The Investment priorities for Priority Axis 6 are:

- Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure
- Promoting innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in the waste and water sectors; with regard to soil; or to reduce air pollution

PA6 Projects in the Greater Birmingham & Solihull area:

Project/Lead Agency	Description	From
BASIS - Birmingham and Solihull Industrial Symbiosis Birmingham City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping businesses optimise the use of resources in ways that improve business performance and contribute to the protection and preservation of the environment. 	04.2017
Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvements Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A three year programme of infrastructure and habitat improvements 	04.2017
Greening the Grey Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving and providing green corridors across the urban part of Solihull Borough – enabling better access to green space • Provide grants of up to £250,000 for habitat improvement projects across the GBS LEP area. 	05.2018
Natural Rivers and Green Corridors Birmingham City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and watercourses along the River Rea and its tributaries in south-west Birmingham and the River Tame in West Birmingham – to provide better habitats for wildlife, make local green spaces more attractive & encourage healthy lifestyles. 	08.2018

NOW OPEN: ERDF Habitats Grants Programme

- Grants of £20,000 to £200,000 for habitat improvement projects across the region are available through the ERDF Habitats Grants Programme, run by Solihull Council.
- The ERDF grant can pay for up to 40% of the cost of each project.
- Projects could include: grassland creation; woodland or wetland improvement; wildflower seeding; access improvements; hedgerow planting; tree planting; planting of native species; river restoration
- Projects will only be funded where the land is open to the public and where people are free to enter and enjoy the space.
- **For further information please contact esif@solihull.gov.uk**