

INNOVATION VOUCHER APPLICATION FORM

V3 03-09-2019

For office use only	
Application Number/AU,BCU/...../..... <i>(number) (delete as appropriate) (month) /year</i>

Data Protection (GDPR)

The information you provide on this application form (Information) will be available to the Project and Finance staff at Aston University involved in the management of the Promoting Functional Material in SMEs project; Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local (MCHLG) and its auditors, and auditors appointed by the European Commission. We will not pass this Information on to any other organisations or third parties. I confirm that the Beneficiary agrees that the Information may be used to identify and advise us of other opportunities where there is potential benefit to us e.g. other opportunities for collaboration and also for project evaluation purposes and to participate in any evaluation exercise carried out by the Funding Agency or an external consultant.

1. Business Details

Business Name*			
Business Address*			
Business Postcode*			
Telephone Number*		Mobile	
Email Address*			
Website			
Company Number *			
Companies House Standard Industrial Classification Code (SIC Code)			

2. Owners/Directors/Key Contacts

Title*	First Name*	Surname*	Position*

3. About Your Business

What is the legal status of the Business? [please tick]*			
Sole Trader	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limited Company	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Interest Company	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you a part of Group	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, please confirm the percentage of ownership by another enterprise or the percentage of your ownership of another enterprise?
Nature of Business*			
Date Business started trading*			
How many people do you employ? (FTE)*		What was your annual turnover in the last financial year? (£)*	

4. About Your Project*

What is the estimated value of the project you would like to fund?		
Value of the Innovation Voucher		£1500/£2500 (delete as appropriate)
Please provide a brief description of the project you would like the Innovation Voucher to fund		
Explain how the Voucher will assist your company to develop a new product or process		
Is the product or process you are trying to develop new to your company?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the product or process you are trying to develop new to the market?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
It is important that the Innovation Voucher assists companies to invest in something additional. If you were going to make this investment anyway then there would be no new economic activity. Please explain clearly how this grant will assist you to make a new investment or will assist you to invest sooner, or to a larger scale than was originally planned.		
Project start date		Project end date

Please note that failure to undertake the project and submit relevant evidence within the stipulated timeframe could lead to the withdrawal of the grant. The latest date that the project needs to be completed and all relevant evidence submitted is 28 February 2019.

5. SME Declaration

Do you employ less than 250 people?*	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Is your annual turnover less than 50 million Euros?*	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Is your balance sheet total less than 43 million Euros?*	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
All data must be related to the last approved accounting period and calculated on an annual basis. In the case of newly-established enterprises whose accounts have not been approved, the data to apply shall be derived from a reliable estimate in the course of the financial year.		

6. De Minimis

You are applying for assistance under the European Commission’s De Minimis Regulation (Regulation 69/2001). This allows a company to receive up to 200,000 Euros of public aid over a three-year period. To confirm that you are able to receive assistance from the Project, you must declare the full amount of any support you have received over the last 36 months.			
Has the company received grants, consultancy support or state aid in the last 3 years? If yes, please provide further details below.		YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of payment	Name of provider	Purpose of funding/project	Amount (£)
Value of the Innovation Vouchers Grant (£)			

7. Declaration

You need to agree to the following in order to receive assistance through the Programme			
The total value of the Innovation Vouchers is £1,500/£2,500 (delete as appropriate).			<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that the amount of state aid I will receive through the workshops / Innovation Vouchers Programme will not take the company over the allotted maximum amount allowed under state aid De Minimis rules every three year period i.e. 200,000 Euros.			<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that my company has an office base in Greater Birmingham and Solihull.			<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that the company is not “in difficulty” as defined at 2.1 of the Community Guidelines and State Aid for Rescuing and Restructuring Firms in Difficulty (2004/C22/02) at the date of this declaration.			<input type="checkbox"/>
I will be providing an original paper invoice from the supplier of my choice; or I will be providing a certified copy of an original paper invoice or a signed copy of an electronic invoice. The invoice copies will be signed by a senior manager. If a paper invoice is received, this will be stored until 31 st of December 2035.			<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I am willing to provide the required information (and photographic proof) to evidence the introduction of a new product or service to my firm or the market.			<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that the collection of personal data is required for the monitoring and evaluation of the project. This is to ensure compliance with the applicable data protection laws.			
I confirm that I will comply with the ERDF regulations and I will have no involvement in any illegal or fraudulent activity with regards to the Innovation Vouchers project.			<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that if this company is later found not to meet the above requirements the company may be required to pay back the value of the aid to the European Union.			<input type="checkbox"/>
Business Signature (Managing Director / Finance Director / Owner / Senior Manager)		Date	

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Application Status			Approved <input type="checkbox"/>	Refused <input type="checkbox"/>	
Signature of the Project Manager of the Innovation Vouchers Programme			Date		
Application Number - the same number as on the front page - give number only if application approved for funding		/AU,BCU/...../..... (number/delete as appropriate/month/year)		
This Application seeks to achieve the following outputs: <i>C1: Number of enterprises receiving support</i> <i>C2: Enterprises receiving grants</i> <i>C4: Enterprises receiving non-financial support (12h)</i> <i>C6: Private Investment Matching Public Support to Enterprises</i> <i>C29: Enterprises supported to introduce new products to the firm</i>			C1 <input type="checkbox"/>	C2 <input type="checkbox"/>	C4 <input type="checkbox"/>
			C6 <input type="checkbox"/>	C29 <input type="checkbox"/>	

8. Monitoring Form

The European Union, which is part funding the Innovation Vouchers Programme, requires evidence that the Programme activities are open to all. The information requested is provided on a confidential basis and we will only reveal it in aggregate form. The exception to this is in relation to Programme auditors who will be able to view all the Programme administration records.		
Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of Birth		
Nationality		
How would you describe your ethnic origin?		
White A British <input type="checkbox"/> B Irish <input type="checkbox"/> C Any other white background <input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British M Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> N African <input type="checkbox"/> P Any other black background <input type="checkbox"/>	
Mixed D White and black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> E White and black African <input type="checkbox"/> F White and Asian <input type="checkbox"/> G Other mixed background <input type="checkbox"/>	Other ethnic groups R Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> S Other ethnic groups <input type="checkbox"/> Please specify: Z Not stated <input type="checkbox"/>	
Asian or Asian British H Indian <input type="checkbox"/> J Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> K Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> L Other Asian background <input type="checkbox"/> Please specify:		
Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act as "a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The disability could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last at least 12 months.		
Are you a disabled person as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

9. Attachment 1 Choosing Your Supplier

It is expected that you will procure a supplier to deliver your project. This will need to be a knowledge base organisation or research institute i.e. public sector research establishments (PSRE) or equivalents (such as consultancies or specialist industry organisations), research and development organisations (RDOs), research and technology organisations (RTOs) higher education and further education institutions. Both public and private sector organisations in these categories can be used. Please contact the Innovation Vouchers Team if you are not sure whether an organisation/company meet these criteria.

We cannot give you the grant without a satisfactory procurement process being implemented. Note that the European Union has quite strict procedures regarding the procurement of suppliers. It is necessary to obtain three quotes and to choose the supplier based on best value for money. For projects valued over £25,000 you need to undertake a full competitive tendering process. This Programme is seeking projects valued less than £25,000.

You need to send a clear product/service specification to all the companies that you are requesting quotes from. You need to be clear how you have selected the three suppliers for quotes and you need to be clear how you have chosen between the quotes. We cannot give the final approval for the grant unless you can demonstrate that you have followed the procurement procedures.

10. Attachment 2 Application Process for Innovation Voucher

1.	<p>Print out and complete the Application Form. Send a complete Application Form to the following address: <i>The Innovation Vouchers Project Team</i> <i>Aston University / Aston Triangle / Main Building – 8th Floor South Wing / Birmingham / B4 7ET</i> OR send an electronic version to innovation-vouchers@aston.ac.uk If you have any queries please contact the project team on 0121 204 3000 or innovation-vouchers@aston.ac.uk</p> <p>NB: If the SME is VAT registered, the project value should amount to at least £5000/£3000 excluding VAT. If the SME is not VAT registered then the project value should amount to at least £5000/£3000 including VAT.</p>	<p><i>For Applicant to check the box</i></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
2.	<p>Together with your Application Form you need to send us details of the supplier you wish to use accompanied by the three quotes you have collected along with a reason why you have selected your chosen supplier. To comply with this requirement please complete Procurement Justification Form (Attachment 4 to this Application)</p>	<p><i>For Applicant to check the box</i></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
3.	<p>Aston University will review your Application for eligibility.</p>	<p><i>For Aston University to check the box</i></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
4.	<p>Aston University will provide final approval for your voucher by email.</p>	<p><i>For Aston University to check the box</i></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
5.	<p>Once you receive our approval you may start your project. The project must start AFTER the approval letter is sent to you and must be completed within the time agreed in the offer letter/email and claim submitted within 30 days of the agreed project completion date.</p>	<p><i>For Applicant to check the box</i></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
6.	<p>You pay the supplier in full against the invoices sent to you.</p>	<p><i>For Applicant to check the box</i></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
7.	<p>You need to send the following evidence to the Innovation Vouchers Project Team via email to innovation-vouchers@aston.ac.uk:</p> <p>a) A certified copy of the supplier invoice b) Evidence of payment (bank statement/BACS statement) c) evidence of project completion</p> <p>You then need to invoice Aston University. This needs to clearly state that the invoice is for an Innovation Voucher of £1,500/£2,500 (delete as appropriate).</p> <p>You need to certify any documents you send to the Innovation Vouchers Project Team that are not originals. In order to do this you need to provide the following statement on all relevant documents: <i>I certify that this is a true copy of the original document.</i> Signed: Date: Position in organisation: Name of organisation:</p>	<p><i>For Aston University to check the box</i></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>
8.	<p>Aston University pays you the £1,500/£2,500 (delete as appropriate). Innovation Voucher</p>	<p><i>For Aston University to check the box</i></p>

11. Attachment 3 Procurement Process

In order to meet European regulations you need to procure your supplier using the correct process. You need at least three quotes from potential suppliers. Remember these need to be knowledge base organisations i.e. public sector research establishments (PSRE) or equivalents (such as consultancies or specialist industry organisations), research and development organisations (RDOs), research and technology organisations (RTOs), higher education and further education institutions. Both public and private sector organisations in these categories can be used. Please contact the Innovation Vouchers Team if you are not sure whether an organisation/ company meet these criteria. There are a number of simple stages to go through:

1.	Find out which organisations may be able to provide you with the assistance you need. It might be a good idea to find 5 or 6 organisations so that you can be sure you will receive a minimum of three good quotes/tenders. You may need to contact these organisations directly to check that they can provide the service that you require. Make sure that you review the range of suppliers available (don't just consider approaching the ones you already know).
2.	Write a clear specification detailing the support that you need and requesting a quote/tender for the work. As well as price, you may wish to ask for additional information such as a detailed breakdown of the different stages of the work, costing associated with the different stages, how many days will be spent on each aspect of the work, how quality will be maintained along with details of the professional background and expertise of the people carrying out the assignment. You will need to decide what information is most important for your project.
3.	Send the same specification to at least three organisations clearly stating the date by which you would like to receive quotes
4.	Decide how you are going to evaluate the quotes received. The usual way to do this is to assign a certain number of points for different components of the specification. Remember that you do not necessarily need to choose the lowest priced quote/tender but you do need to choose a supplier who offers good value or money. If you are not making a selection based on price alone then you need to have a very good reason why the selected supplier was better value for money. Note that you cannot use reasons like "we have used them before" or "we already know them". These would not be considered to be appropriate justifications. You need to use objective criteria based on written information received whereby all companies quoting have an equal chance of success. If you need further information, please contact the Innovation Vouchers team.
5.	Apply your scoring criteria to the quotes/tenders and select you supplier.

12. Attachment 4 Innovation Vouchers Procurement Justification Form

Section 1: Company Details			
<i>All fields within this section are MANDATORY and MUST be completed before this request can be certified</i>			
Beneficiary Company Name			
Contact Person			
Project Code for the Beneficiary Company			
Section 2: Business Case for Purchase of Service (Selection Criteria)			
<i>All fields within this section are MANDATORY and MUST be completed before this request can be Authorised. Please provide a detailed description/ specification of the services/component being requested</i>			
Description/Specification of services to be procured			
What will the service be used for?			
Why is this service required?			
Section 3: Summary of Quotes			
<i>Summary of Three Quotes Obtained. Quotes must be attached to this form, as well as the specification you sent to all potential suppliers.</i>			
Supplier & Contract Details	Quote Value	Outcome in terms of how each Supplier scored	
Section 4: Details of scoring system that was used to select your chosen supplier			
Section 5: Justification of Chosen Supplier			
Chosen Supplier:		Net Purchase Value:	
Address:		VAT	
		Total Purchase Value:	
Phone number:			
Type of organisation <i>The type of organisation that can be used includes UK public sector research establishments (PSRE) or equivalents (such as consultancies or specialised industry organisations), research and development organisations (RDOs), research and technology organisations (RTOs), higher education and further education institutions. Both public and private sector organisations in these categories can be used.</i>			
Supplier Bank details			
Justification of Choice of Supplier <i>(please provide details of scoring system you used to select your chosen supplier</i>			

Please provide a detailed
 Value for Money analysis)

Section 6: Authorisation of Supplier Justification

On behalf of the Company I confirm that the items listed above are solely for the use on the Innovation Vouchers project and necessary for its successful completion

Sign:

Print:

Role in the Company:

Date:

Authorising Aston University Officer

I confirm I am the budget holder/ hold the appropriate delegation to authorise this request.

Sign:

Print:

Project Role:

Date:

Faculty/Dept.:

13. Attachment 6 Eligible Activities

Eligible Activities	<p>General activities and processes:</p> <p>New product/New Service Development/ New service delivery and customer interface</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Analysis to support your ideas in the Idea Screening Phase • Idea Screening • Concept development, prototyping and testing • Development the marketing and engineering details • Identification & investigation of intellectual property, including the process for intellectual property creation, protection (but not patent maintenance fees to Intellectual Property Office or relevant official organisations) • Feasibility through virtual computer aided rendering and rapid prototyping • Concept testing • Conducting focus group customer interviews • Commercialization (often considered post-NPD) • Launch the product • Critical path analysis • New Product Pricing • Impact of new product on the entire product portfolio • Analysis of competition and alternative competitive technologies • Analysis of costs and selling price • Forecast of unit volumes, revenue, and profit • Equipment purchases to develop prototypes • Capital items to develop prototypes • Software purchases to develop prototypes • Beta Testing and Market Testing • Producing a physical prototype or mock-up • Testing the product (and its packaging) in typical usage situations • Producing an initial run of the product • Economic impact assessment • Launch new products or services <p>Process improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity Analysis to support your ideas in the Idea Screening Phase • Idea Screening • Concept development • Concept testing • Critical path analysis • Analysis of competition and alternative competitive technologies • Analysis of costs and selling price • Forecast of unit volumes, revenue, and profit • Efficiency audit, process change <p>Innovative business model development/Innovation Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of innovative business models/ strategy • Engineering operations planning • Program review and monitoring • Contingencies - what-if planning • Innovation/technology audit <p>Quality Improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalising Quality Management System <p>Supply chain management and logistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department scheduling • Supplier collaboration • Logistics plan • Resource planning/publication • Resource estimation
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	<p>Exploiting advanced information technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancy towards IT Strategy and Value Optimisation • Building security algorithms & AI • Specialist electronic system, Software design and computer engineering tools • Designing of Specialist CRM systems that drive hardware • APP design & development for Mobile & portable devices (such as tablets, phones and PDAs) • Development of GIS (Geographical Information Systems) • Analysis and Design of Algorithms • Electronic Communication and Concurrency • Compression Methods for Multimedia • Cryptography and Information Security • System Modelling • Distributed Systems and Applications • Software Measurement and Quality Assurance • Informatics (including Bioinformatics) e.g. Software & hardware design of fingerprint or IRIS or Biometric Identification • Scanners etc. that can be controlled through web technologies <p>Market research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off the shelf market research reports • Customised market research done through professional consultants & market research companies • Overseas market entry research reports done by specialist Accredited organisations / trade & industry bodies in the UK & overseas • Conducting focus group customer interviews
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14. Attachment 7 List of Priority Sectors in Birmingham and Solihull

Companies from certain sectors (and those associated with these sectors) will be given priority access to the grants (see table below), however, applications from companies not included in these groups that have good innovation ideas will also be considered.

Local Economic Partnership Area	Greater Birmingham and Solihull
Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham; • Solihull; • Redditch; • Bromsgrove; • Wyre Forest (based upon Kidderminster);
Priority Sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Manufacturing including Automotive and Aerospace; • Low Carbon; • ICT; • Digital and Creative; • Life Science;