

Guidance notes for applicants

1. Purpose

The Tamworth Town Centre 'Tell Your Story' Business Grant offers grants between **£500 to £7,000** to new and existing businesses with a fixed premises based in the Town Centre.

The grant is designed to assist businesses to tell their story better; to create new products, expand on or improve their product(s), service or offer, clarify their unique selling proposition, define their brand, increasing brand awareness, and improving their marketing strategies.

The scheme invites businesses to strengthen their brand, perception, establish their identity, unique selling point and communicate it effectively to their audiences to attract new customers, compete better in crowded markets, increase turnover and/or increase opportunities for survival in the current economic climate.

2. Grant detail

The Council has up to £21,000 in funding available.

The scheme operates on a match-funded basis in order to make the limited grant budget reach more businesses and have a greater economic impact for more town centre businesses.

Minimum grant award available is £500 and maximum grant award is £7,000.

Businesses must pay the costs upfront. The awarded grant amount will be reimbursed once Tamworth Borough Council has received receipts or other appropriate evidence of spend.

For every £100 that businesses contribute Tamworth Borough Council will grant up to £500. Please see the table below for how the grant will be allocated and the business contribution required:

Grant award:	Business contribution:	Total project value:
£500	£100	£600
£600	£120	£720
£700	£140	£840
£800	£160	£960
£900	£180	£1,080
£1,000	£200	£1,200
£1,500	£300	£1,800
£2,000	£400	£2,400
£2,500	£500	£3,000
£3,000	£600	£3,600
£3,500	£700	£4,200
£4,000	£800	£4,800
£4,500	£900	£5,400
£5,000	£1,000	£6,000
£5,500	£1,100	£6,600
£6,000	£1,200	£7,200
£6,500	£1,300	£7,800
£7,000	£1,400	£8,400

Project eligibility:

- Grants **can be** used towards items such as the following:
 - Creating or launching a new product or service
 - Design and innovation costs to develop a new concept, product or offer.
 - Services or costs associated with designing a new brand or re-branding, such as new logo, new website or any other costs that meet this criteria.
 - New software or systems to assist with the running of the business, or introduce a new feature to the service,
 - Designing of an app or creating app content.
 - New capital equipment to introduce new services or product offers to the business.
 - Marketing, advertising, social media campaign costs to refine brand or improve image and brand perception.
 - Website services to refine perception of business, products or services.
 - Brand development services to help refine brand and product or service offer

The above is not an exhaustive list. The Council may consider any other costs that the Council deems appropriate and in line with the intention and objective of the grant scheme.

Applicants must have relevant consent and permissions to implement their proposed projects.

- Grants **cannot** be used for:
 - Refundable rental deposits
 - Income tax or national insurance payments
 - VAT (unless the business is not VAT registered)
 - Working Capital – for cash / debtor / creditor management excluding stock
 - Lease / Hire Purchase
 - Personal Vehicles
 - Capital equipment not relevant to shop fronts or window displays including but not limited to laptops, mobile phones and iPad or tablets.
 - Purchase of an existing business
 - Salaries or owner drawings
 - On-going premises/rental costs
 - Recurring business running expenses, such as business rates, mobile phones, broadband etc.
 - Any other cost the Council may from time to time deem to be ineligible.

3. Who can apply?

Eligible:

- Existing businesses with a fixed premises that are based in the Tamworth Town Centre boundary, as identified on the map available.
- The business must have fewer than 250 employees.
- Businesses registered with HMRC or as a registered company.
- The business must be a member of the Tamworth Town Centre Business Hub (which is free to join) and had a 30-minute support meeting with one of the Hub business support team.
- Business must sign up to, and complete in full a "Tell Your Story" programme workshop. List of workshops will be made available and promoted on Tamworth Town Centre Business Hub and running from July to August 2023. Businesses are encouraged to complete the full day of both workshops to receive maximum benefit of business support.

Ineligible:

- **Businesses who have already successfully been awarded a grant through the previous Town Centre 'Be Seen' Grant scheme.**
- Applicants with a business outside of the Town Centre boundary.
- Applicants who have not been given the correct and relevant permission (Mortgage holder / landlord / planning consent etc) to run a business from their premises or home address.
- Business activities deemed as counter-productive to any of Tamworth Borough Council's policies and strategies. These include but are not exclusive to: Betting Shops; ticket agents; landlords; money lending; debt factoring; hire purchase financing; projects which have as their object the promotion of political or religious views; social clubs; night clubs; nudity; illegal or immoral activities.
- Projects or events which promote or condone extremist ideology, activities or terrorism.

4. How do I apply for funding?

Business will have to register on the Tamworth Town Centre Business Hub <https://tamworth-town-centre-business-hub.mn.co/>, the Council's free online platform for Town Centre Businesses.

Business will have to sign up to one of the "Tell Your Story" programme workshops.

Following the completion of the workshop, businesses will be invited for a follow up one-to-one discussion with a business adviser for further bespoke support.

Upon completion of the workshop, if eligible, business will be sent an application for the grant by email.

Completed applications should then be submitted to Business@tamworth.gov.uk.

Grant applications must be submitted by **14th August 2023 at 2pm.**

5. Application requirements

As part of the application process applicants will have to:

- Provide quotes for the costs they expect the grant to cover – submitting these within a template included on the application form.
- In some cases, and depending on planned activity, planning permission, advertising consent, or other permissions may be required before implementing the project. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all relevant and required approvals prior to the grant payment being approved.
- Complete the application form detailing the nature of business, the project they are aiming to fund, how the project will impact their business, and how the project will support the wider local economy.
- Applicants must be willing to provide evidence of the improved impact that the grant has had on their business (by providing before and after photographs, customer testimonials, data on improved sales or a case study). Applicants will be asked to state how you hope to measure the impact on your business, and evidence you will gather to demonstrate this.

6. Application process

The 'Tell Your Story' Business Grant is expected to be a highly competitive process. As a result the Council cannot guarantee that all eligible applications will be successful or that the full amount of money applied for will be awarded.

All applications will be evaluated and scored, if the total value of applications for grants in this programme is greater than £21,000 then awards will be scored and awards made on how closely applicants meet the aim of the project and the following criteria:

- Need or demand demonstrated for the project and relevance to items requested as part of the project,
- Growth potential or maintaining stability of business and/or job creation and retention,
- Impact on the town centre,
- Increasing town centre engagement,
- Increasing engagement in local community
- Strengthening town centre offer,
- Job creation,
- Impact on wider place (place investment value and reputation),
- Utilising new ways of operating and innovating to evolve the business by way of new products, new services, new ways of working and technology,
- Innovation and productivity growth potential,
- Utilising investment to increase resilience and survival of business

Once scored, grant applications will be taken to the Council's Nominations and Grants Committee for approval.

Once the application is approved by the Council's Cabinet Committee, applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application. A formal award letter and terms and conditions will be sent to successful applicants for signing.

7. Payment of grant funding:

The grant will be offered on a reimbursement basis.

Successful applicants will have to sign their issued award letter and terms and conditions before making any purchases towards their project.

Once award letter and terms and conditions have been signed and returned to the Council team, the business will have to make their purchases and provide receipts of their spend to the team in order to be issued the reimbursement of the grant amount they have been awarded.

As soon as receipts have been provided to evidence spend, the team will request payment of the funding. All grant funding will be paid by BACS directly into the applicant's bank account.

Businesses have three (3) months of the date on the grant award letter (extension may be permitted if agreed with Council) to deliver their project.

Failure to submit required evidence within the agreed timescale will result in the Council requesting the grant funds to be returned fully or in part.

The Grant cannot cover the cost of expenditure made prior to formal grant award letter being issued.

Where external permission is required in order to deliver the proposed project, permissions must be obtained before undertaking the work.

An officer from the Council will follow up with the business to review and receive an update on the completed project and measure its impact with evidence the business has collected.

8. Terms and conditions

Tamworth Borough Council may share information submitted by the applicant among partners for the purpose of business support activities.

Businesses must seek relevant permissions where necessary in order to implement project activities.

Businesses must provide evidence requested by the Council to evidence how the grant has impacted the growth or stability of the business.

Businesses working with children and/or adults with care and support needs must have appropriate safeguarding measures in place, and provide evidence of this.

Any grant awarded will be conditional upon the applicant agreeing to the Council's Terms and Conditions. The full terms and conditions will be issued with any grant award document and will form the basis of the agreement between the applicant and the Council. If the applicant accepts the offer, he/she is agreeing to all the Council's Terms and Conditions which will be required to proceed with the grant payment.

Failure to adhere to the terms and conditions may result in recovery of the grant wholly or in part.

If you would like an informal discussion to determine the eligibility of your business or if you have any questions, please contact the Economic Development Team on email: business@tamworth.gov.uk and a member of the team will be in touch.