

Start-Up grant FAQs

I am having trouble filling out the [application form](#) who do I contact?

Send an email to essexgrad@essex.ac.uk and someone will get in touch with you. You may want to keep a record of what you write on the form (perhaps in a Word document) so you can come back to the form at a later date.

When do I need to set my business up?

Grants will not be paid until evidence of the legal entity or self-employment has been provided to the University of Essex. If your application is successful you will need to provide the University with this evidence no later than 3 months after application approval.

Why are there monthly deadlines?

We wanted to make sure that businesses get the resource they need, when they need it. Therefore we have created a monthly deadline for applications. Don't worry if you miss a deadline, you will only need to wait a month before the next deadline! The last deadline is the end of January 2020 but the sooner you apply, the sooner you will be able to access a grant.

How quickly will I get the money if successful?

Applications will be reviewed a week after each deadline. We intend to notify each applicant of the judging decision within two weeks of the monthly application deadline. Once we receive relevant evidence, grants will be processed which may take up to 3 weeks after receipt of all paperwork and business details.

What can I use the grant for?

The grant can be used for a variety of things that applicants might need to start and grow the business. This will vary depending on the nature of the business. For example a Sports Therapist may use the money to buy a mobile consultation table, a freelance writer may want to purchase industry specific software or a music producer may need to hire some room space. In short though, we anticipate that grants will be provided for the purchase of equipment or assets, the hire or rental of physical space and/or certain training/qualifications (see below).

What can't I use the grant for?

Grants can't be used for salaries or consultancy fees. Grants will not be provided for generic or non-vocational training/qualifications. Any request for grants to cover qualifications or training must be directly related to being able to trade in goods or services. For example, we would fund a Health and Safety qualification for a catering company or a Personal Trainer qualification for a personal trainer but we wouldn't fund an excel course or non-vocational Masters course.

Why will the grant only cover 75% of the costs?

We are offering grants of up to either £500 or £1000 but we also want recipients to make a contribution too. Therefore grants will only cover 75% of the costs. For example, for a piece of equipment costing £1000, the total grant provided would be £750.

Can I get a grant for more than one item?

As long as the total sum of the grant requested is not greater than either £500 or £1000 depending on the funding option you apply for, the grant can be used for multiple items which could be multiple applications or a single application covering multiple items. Recipients can only receive a maximum of £1000 however.

How will the money be paid to me?

The grant money will be paid into a UK bank account where the account name matches the name of the business or the applicant.

What is the progress report?

As part of the grant you will be expected to submit progress reports every three months for a period of twelve months. The first progress report will need to be submitted three months after you sign the agreement form. This will be a simple update to let the University know how you are getting on and to show that you have spent the grant on the intended purpose.

What if my business has to close?

We know that setting up a business can be risky, and we know that not all businesses survive. In the event that a business has to close, and providing the grant was spent on its intended purpose (as set out in the application form), the University will not recoup the grant.

What is covered in the business support and advice package?

In addition to providing grant funding, the University will also make the following Essex Startup Services available to all grant recipients:

- **multiple workshops, Mini Bootcamps and 2-day weekenders throughout the year**
- **potential 2-year accelerator programme license with access to free workspace and the opportunity to network with like-minded entrepreneurs**
- **1:1 mentoring support with one member of the Essex Startups Team**
- **and much more**

Keep an eye on [CareerHub Events](#) for dates, times and how to book your place.

Will the University ask for its money back at any point?

The grant is a grant, not a loan. Providing the grant is spent on its intended purpose (as set out in the application form) and the progress reports are submitted on time, the University will not ask recipients to pay back the grant. Further information on contractual obligations is contained within the grant agreement – a copy of which is available on request via essexgrad@essex.ac.uk