

# **News story: What support is available for my small business?**

## **Access finance available to support small businesses**

[Start up Loans](#) of up to £25,000 can give you a much-needed boost if you're just starting out or looking to scale up. Or take a look at the [British Business Bank's Finance Hub](#) for more finance options for smaller businesses.

If you are an entrepreneur or small business located in the North of England, the [Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund](#) could provide the funding you need to help your business realise its potential.

## **Growing ideas**

[Innovate UK](#) supports businesses to develop and realise the potential of new ideas through funding and research collaboration. Their [Knowledge Transfer Network](#) also connects you to expertise, finance and markets to commercialise your innovation.

## **Attract investment and diverse talent**

[Venture capital schemes](#) can help you raise money for your company. Our 4 schemes offer tax reliefs to investors, designed to help your business grow by attracting investment.

[Start-up visas](#) and [Innovator visas](#) make it easier for you to access international talent. Tech Nation offers a dedicated [Tech Nation](#) visa to bring international tech talent to the UK.

## **Get support and insight for your tech business**

[Tech Nation](#) provides programmes to support UK tech businesses, as well as access to free online courses to build digital skills.

Tech Nation's [Data Commons for UK Tech](#) provides a detailed view of the UK's digital economy and is a rich source of market intelligence and insight.

## **Become more competitive by making a few simple changes**

[Be the Business](#) provides practical tools and resources and can help small businesses across the UK supercharge productivity.

## Get in touch with your local Growth Hub

[Your Local Growth Hub](#) can connect you to the right business advice and support at a local and national level, no matter what size or sector you're operating in. This is available in England only.

## Get advice on selling overseas

If you are a small business invested in or currently selling overseas visit [GREAT](#) for guidance on exporting, access live export opportunities, find an online marketplace to sell your products overseas and access the right finance and insurance to help you win vital international contracts.

## Make tax more straightforward

We've made some fundamental changes to the way the tax system works. If you are a VAT-registered business the [Making Tax Digital service](#) will help make sure you get your tax right through the keeping of digital records and using software to submit your VAT return.

## Take on an apprentice

Grow your own skilled workforce you need by taking on an apprentice. You can get [government funding](#) to cover some of the cost of training and assessing an apprentice if you're in England.

The government has recently launched a [new website](#) with details about how businesses can make the most of our apprenticeship reforms.

## Apply for government contracts

Our [Contracts Finder](#) lets you search for information about government and agency contracts worth over £10,000 and explore information on previous tenders to understand what opportunities there might be for your business.

If you're having any issues with not being paid on time, the [Small Business Commissioner](#) can provide advice on late and unfair payment, to help you take action and work to resolve disputes.

The free Business Support Helpline can also help you find the right advice and support at all stages of the business journey – whether you're starting out, growing or looking to stay ahead. Find contact details for [your area](#).

## Business Representative Organisations (BROs) and UK Trade Associations

Business Representative Organisations are set up to help your business. Each sector has its own Organisation that you can search for online.

## **Prepare your business for EU exit**

The UK will leave the EU on 29 March 2019. Leaving the EU means your business may need to prepare for change.

You can find up to date [information](#) to help you understand how leaving the EU may affect your business and what you can do to get ready.