

Digital Investment Fund (#Grow) Eligibility Criteria

Businesses must:

- Operate in the priority digital sub-sectors¹
- Be based in the City Region, which includes the local authority areas of Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Craven, Harrogate, Kirklees, Leeds, Selby, Wakefield and York
- Have been trading for at least 12 months and must operate from commercial premises
- Generate over 50% of their turnover from trading with other businesses, or, their application must demonstrate how the grant-supported project will lead to this. The creative experience sector (e.g. museums, performing arts, exhibitions) is excluded on the basis of potential additionality and displacement issues, relating to the localised services of predominantly business to consumer trading activity. There is alternative grant support available to specifically support this sector (e.g. Arts Council)
- Have a capital investment project of £20,000 or above. Grants of between £10,000 to £50,000 are available, covering up to a maximum of 50% of project costs, depending on the number of jobs to be created
- Have private finance available: either their own cash reserves, bank lending, or other commercial finance to invest alongside the grant (please note: the minimum total project cost is £20,000 - therefore businesses must have at least £1 of private sector finance to invest for every £1 in grant)
- Demonstrate financial viability of the project and the need for grant support (e.g. it cannot progress with the proposed project without grant support, or it cannot progress at the same scale or within the same timescales)

Projects must:

- Have a digital focus (i.e. the investment will support the implementation of emerging digital technologies in the business, support digitally enabled growth, or the majority of the new roles created will involve digital skills)
- Consist of capital investment in equipment and/or fit-out and refurbishment of buildings (refurbishment or renovation costs will only be supported where the business will be the sole occupier within the refurbished or renovated business property)
- Create at least one permanent full-time job. All jobs must pay at least the real living wage (currently £9 p/h). The maximum grant per job created will be £12,500. Freelance and contract roles may be counted as eligible roles at a lower grant intervention rate (maximum grant of £5,000 per 2,000 hours worked) as long as the project will create at least one permanent full-time job

¹ Priority digital sub sectors: IT, Software and Hardware; Creative industries (creative content and creative services); Cyber Securities and Data Protection Technologies; Smart Technology, Smart Cities, Internet of Things and New Technologies

and assurances surrounding the monitoring of contractor hours can be evidenced by the applicant

Inclusive growth:

- As part of West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership's commitment to deliver inclusive growth that benefits everyone, all successful grant applicants will be encouraged to make additional inclusive growth commitments. For businesses receiving a grant of at least £25,000, this will be mandatory.