



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

### ERDF Business Support Schemes Available in the Marches – Updated 18/09/18 (green shaded entries)

Funding Stream	Funding Source	Description	Contact details	More information links
Agri-tech Growth and Resources for Innovation	Aston University / Harper Adams	AGRI seeks to address barriers to growth in the agri-food industry by providing an innovation support service focussed on companies involved with agri-tech, food and drink manufacturing and food logistics in the Marches LEP area. The support will involve a combination of workshops and one-to-one business advice, which may include assistance with technology development or application.	<a href="mailto:m.grant3@aston.ac.uk">m.grant3@aston.ac.uk</a>  Tel: Martin Grant on 01212044652  <a href="mailto:info@agri.org.uk">info@agri.org.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.agri.org.uk">http://www.agri.org.uk</a>  Follow on Twitter at: @agritechsupport
AMCASH (Advanced Materials Characterisation and Simulation Hub).	University of Birmingham Metallurgy and Materials School	AMCASH is a Business Support service for SMEs in the region. It allows access to key facilities and expertise within Metallurgy and Materials. The core offer is for 2-days work fully funded through ERDF in the areas of Polymers, Microscopy or Modelling of metallic alloys. Examples of work completed so far on behalf of SMEs include Polymer characterisation and mechanical testing, microscopic imaging of damaged components and simulation of material performance at high temperatures (mirroring the factory processes involved).	<a href="mailto:n.haigh@bham.ac.uk">n.haigh@bham.ac.uk</a>  Tel: 07896 620702 Office: 0121 414 3436	<a href="http://www.amcash.co.uk">www.amcash.co.uk</a>
Aston Programme for Small Business Growth	Aston University	<b>Shropshire and Telford only.</b>  Take your small business to the next level by joining the Aston Programme for Small Business Growth. Develop your leadership skills and build a targeted growth strategy for your own business in the company of other ambitious business leaders.  It is free of charge (subject to a competitive application process) and offers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops taught by experts in SME leadership and management.</li> <li>• One-to-one support to help you tackle your business challenges.</li> </ul>	0121 204 5023  <a href="mailto:v.hogan@aston.ac.uk">v.hogan@aston.ac.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.aston.ac.uk/aston-business-school/business/centre-for-growth/aston-programme-for-small-business-growth/">http://www.aston.ac.uk/aston-business-school/business/centre-for-growth/aston-programme-for-small-business-growth/</a>



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking with other early stage business owners from the Midlands.</li> <li>• SME case studies from business leaders talking about their growth journey.</li> <li>• Guidance through the various external finance options available to you.</li> <li>• The opportunity to pitch your growth strategy to external finance experts.</li> <li>• Time to explore the strategic growth opportunities for your business.</li> </ul>		
BECCI (Built Environment Climate Change Innovation)	University Of Wolverhampton	<p>To promote sustainable economic opportunities and growth by working with SMEs to develop innovative climate change solutions within the built environment. It specifically focuses on products associated with the retrofitting of housing.</p> <p>Helping businesses develop new or improved energy efficient products, engage with housing providers in the region to support the use of more green products and give SMEs access to the latest information and knowledge on low carbon technologies.</p> <p>Additionally, high quality, technical support is available to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduce companies to technology opportunities</li> <li>▪ Assess the company's route to technologically based progress</li> <li>▪ Provide links to other companies, supply chains and universities.</li> <li>▪ Enable a beneficiary company to identify the next steps</li> </ul>	<a href="mailto:BECCI@wlv.ac.uk">BECCI@wlv.ac.uk</a> 01902 32 1028	<a href="https://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/funding-and-support/becci-project/">https://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/funding-and-support/becci-project/</a>
BGP (Business Growth programme)	Birmingham City Council	<p>The fund consists of four strands of business support; namely the Business Development Programme, the Business Innovation Programme, the Green Bridge Supply Chain Programme and the HS2 programme.</p> <p>The package of support is designed to strengthen supply chains, stimulate innovation and grow existing SMEs. To qualify for consideration, you need to answer nine eligibility questions, and operate on at least an 80% Business-to-Business (B2B) basis.</p>	<a href="mailto:shropshire@marchesgrowthhub.co.uk">shropshire@marchesgrowthhub.co.uk</a> 01743 250525	<a href="http://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/finance-and-funding/business-growth-programme">http://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/finance-and-funding/business-growth-programme</a>



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

Building Business Confidence – Start 2 Great and Smarter Growth	Telford and Wrekin Council	<p>Business support delivered through a contracted provider, Good 2 Great, providing direct support through a range of mediums including workshops, assessments and one-to-one follow up sessions.</p> <p>Start2Great seeks to equip aspiring entrepreneurs and new business start-ups with the skills and knowledge to launch a new business or support its early stage development.</p> <p>Smarter Growth is targeted at existing or growing businesses and aims to equip owners, or key people, with skills and knowledge to help grow and develop a company in four key areas; exploiting market opportunities; high performance working practices; growing your own workforce and operational management.</p>	<p><a href="mailto:info@good-2-great.co.uk">info@good-2-great.co.uk</a></p> <p>01746 330730</p>	<p><a href="https://start2great.co.uk">https://start2great.co.uk</a></p> <p><a href="https://smarter-growth.com">https://smarter-growth.com</a></p>
Business Energy Efficiency Programme	Worcestershire County Council	<p>The Business Energy Efficiency Programme provides help to businesses to reduce energy costs and cut carbon emissions across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Telford &amp; Wrekin, and Shropshire.</p> <p>Essentially businesses can receive a free energy efficiency assessment (worth two days of support) that helps to measure and manage energy consumption, and provide recommendations on how to make improvements.</p> <p>Grants of £2,000 to £20,000 are then available at 40% of total costs. These can be towards energy efficient lighting, heating, compressors, motors and drives, equipment, fast acting doors, insulation, renewables, feasibility studies, behavioural change studies and more.</p>	<p>01905 677 888 or email <a href="mailto:info@business-central.co.uk">info@business-central.co.uk</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.business-central.co.uk/beep/">http://www.business-central.co.uk/beep/</a></p>
Connect 2 Grow	University of Wolverhampton	<p>Connect2Grow is designed to encourage the adoption of digital technology by eligible SME businesses within The Marches region and to increase the digital skills in those SMEs accordingly.</p>	<p>Tel: 01902 518971</p>	



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

		<p>The project will provide opportunities for companies to benchmark their proficiency in the digital arena by completion of a Digital Review and Digital Skills analysis, thus highlighting areas needing support, and or advice &amp; guidance.</p> <p>SMEs will be able to access workshops and seminars covering a variety of topics designed to enhance SME competitiveness including the following:</p> <p>Building Information Management (BIM) Support and guidance for the wider construction industry. Enhanced CAD design and development, particularly for engineering manufacturing, Aerial Surveying by Drone and further support and guidance, including the use for Construction, Planning, Security and Defence, and Geotechnical (e.g. flood monitoring). Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) with emphasis for the Food and Drink industries. Cyber-Security training and guidance.</p>	<p>Email: <a href="mailto:Connect2Grow@wlv.ac.uk">Connect2Grow@wlv.ac.uk</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.Businessolutionscentres.co.uk/Connect2Grow">www.Businessolutionscentres.co.uk/Connect2Grow</a></p>
<p>CREST@UCS Centre for Research into Environmental Science and Technology</p>	<p>University Centre Shrewsbury (University of Chester) and University Centre Reaseheath</p>	<p>CREST based at University Centre Shrewsbury provides research and innovation support to small and medium enterprises across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin to develop and test new products, processes or services which relate to the Environmental Science and Technology sector. This support includes; research collaborations, bringing products to market, feasibility and testing, lab facilities on site, masterclasses and workshops. <b>Shropshire and Telford only.</b></p>	<p>Phone 01743 297561</p> <p>Simon Burgess or Vicki Ayton</p> <p><a href="mailto:crest@ucshrewsbury.ac.uk">crest@ucshrewsbury.ac.uk</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.crestatucs.com">www.crestatucs.com</a></p>
<p>Digital Solutions</p>	<p>University Centre Shrewsbury (University of Chester)</p>	<p>The Digital Solutions Project provides support for SMEs working in the digital sector and beyond to raise the level of research and development in digital innovation. The main focus is on how developments can be used to unlock growth in the health sector, across Shropshire and Telford &amp; Wrekin, helping to de-risk (by, for example, making it more affordable) the exploration of digital</p>	<p>Nikki Ayton 07342094171</p> <p><a href="mailto:digitalucs@chester.ac.uk">digitalucs@chester.ac.uk</a></p>	<p>To be launched.</p>



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

		<p>innovations; other sectors may also be eligible (technology transfer and commercialisation).</p> <p>The support can include: One-to-one advice from digital technology specialists, facilitation of knowledge exchange and technical transfers, demonstrations of the latest digital innovation, research collaborations, bringing products to market, masterclasses and workshops. <b>Shropshire and Telford only.</b></p>		
EBRI (European Bioenergy Research Institute)	University Of Aston	EBRI can support your company to apply for collaborative research funding to develop new products, processes and technologies and take them to market.	<a href="mailto:bioenergy@aston.ac.uk">bioenergy@aston.ac.uk</a> 0121 204 3430	<a href="http://www.bioenergy-for-business.org">www.bioenergy-for-business.org</a>
Enterprise Action	University of Wolverhampton	<p>Enterprise Action (part funded by ERDF) can support entrepreneurs to start up their own business across a wide geographical area that includes the Black Country (Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley, Sandwell) and the Marches LEP (Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford &amp; Wrekin) areas of the West Midlands.</p> <p><i>May 2018 – Grant funding opportunities for this project are fully subscribed; opportunities to attend business development workshops in Telford remain open.</i></p>	01902 518960	<a href="http://www.e-action.org">www.e-action.org</a>
Focus Digital Project	Coventry University Enterprises Ltd	A project to help eligible SME's to 'step up' the digital ladder by accessing a range of workshops, 1 to 1 support and capital and revenue grants to help improve the use of digital technology and services within a business.	Graham Bayliss, <a href="mailto:GBayliss@cad.coventry.ac.uk">GBayliss@cad.coventry.ac.uk</a>  07557 425655	<a href="http://www.cuebusinessolutions.com/focus-digital/">http://www.cuebusinessolutions.com/focus-digital/</a>
Innovation Vouchers	Aston University	<b>The project has now allocated all Innovation Vouchers out to SMEs and have quite a large waiting list for in case of cancelled applications.</b> However, slots are still available on our Innovation Workshops however if your SMEs are interested in those? They can register at: <a href="http://www.innovation-vouchers.com/innovation-workshop/">http://www.innovation-vouchers.com/innovation-workshop/</a>	<a href="mailto:innovation-vouchers@aston.ac.uk">innovation-vouchers@aston.ac.uk</a>  0121 204 4321/ 0121 204 3579	<a href="http://www.innovation-vouchers.com/">http://www.innovation-vouchers.com/</a>



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

<p>Innovate 2 Succeed</p> <p><i>(note: Innovate UK funded not ERDF)</i></p>	<p>Coventry University Enterprises Ltd</p>	<p>“Innovate 2 Succeed” is a fully funded programme that is targeted at ambitious SME’s that wish to grow, and develop new products and services. The aim of the programme is to help SME’s bring these products and services to market more quickly and with less risk. In addition it will improve the organisation’s innovation and growth capabilities.</p>	<p><a href="mailto:tgoodwin@cad.coventry.ac.uk">tgoodwin@cad.coventry.ac.uk</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.cuebusinessolutions.com/innovate2succeed-i2s/">http://www.cuebusinessolutions.com/innovate2succeed-i2s/</a></p>
<p>IPSS (Innovative Product Support Services)</p>	<p>University Of Wolverhampton</p>	<p>The IPSS programme supports businesses through the early stages of developing a new product or process. The programme is specifically designed to support businesses developing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced manufacturing and engineering</li> <li>• Building Technologies</li> <li>• Defence &amp; Security</li> <li>• Environmental technologies and low carbon</li> <li>• Food &amp; Drink (Agri-food)</li> <li>• Photonics</li> <li>• Digital technologies</li> <li>• Transport technologies</li> <li>• Electronics</li> <li>• Medical technologies</li> </ul> <p>Businesses benefit from staged support, from an initial 2-day review through further, more intensive stages of assistance with design, engineering and intellectual property where there is good potential for placing the new product on the market. For the most compelling opportunities, there is the possibility of a funded research collaboration to progress the development of the technology.</p>	<p><a href="mailto:ipss@wlv.ac.uk">ipss@wlv.ac.uk</a> 01902 321105</p>	<p><a href="https://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/funding-and-support/ipss---innovative-product-support-service/">https://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/funding-and-support/ipss---innovative-product-support-service/</a></p>
<p>KEEN (The Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise Networks)</p>	<p>University Of Wolverhampton</p>	<p>KEEN works by putting a recent graduate into an organisation to work on a strategic growth project, with ongoing support from the university. Companies benefit from part funding by the ERDF, allowing them to recruit graduates and access university knowledge throughout the duration of the project.</p>	<p><a href="mailto:keen@wlv.ac.uk">keen@wlv.ac.uk</a> 01902 321272</p>	<p><a href="http://imkeen2.co.uk">http://imkeen2.co.uk</a></p>



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

<p>Marches &amp; Gloucestershire Business Broadband Grant Scheme</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council</p>	<p>A business broadband grant scheme that helps eligible businesses to seek quotes to resolve their connectivity issues and to apply for a grant from the Marches and Gloucestershire Broadband Grant Scheme.</p>	<p><a href="mailto:info@mgbroadbandgrants.com">info@mgbroadbandgrants.com</a></p> <p>01432 260609</p>	<p><a href="http://www.mgbroadbandgrants.com/">http://www.mgbroadbandgrants.com/</a></p>
<p>Manufacturing Growth Programme</p>	<p>Economic Growth Solutions</p>	<p>The Manufacturing Growth Programme (MGP) provides free advice and support to manufacturing SMEs to help them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities and create plans for growth and improvement</li> <li>Work with the best external experts to implement those plans</li> <li>cover 35% of the cost of implementing the plans through a growth/improvement grant</li> <li>Connect to wider support to maximise opportunities for growth</li> </ul>	<p><a href="mailto:catherine.bray@egs.live">catherine.bray@egs.live</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.manufacturinggrowthprogramme.co.uk/">http://www.manufacturinggrowthprogramme.co.uk/</a></p>
<p>Marches Building Investment Grant</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council</p>	<p>Capital grants are available for up to 45 percent of total eligible project costs (to a maximum £100,000) to reconfigure, extend and renovate premises for commercial use. Applicants can be owner-occupiers or tenants. Tenants must have a fixed-term lease with at least six years unexpired. Retrospective applications are not eligible and no work should start until written approval is received.</p> <p>Eligible projects must lead to the creation of at least one full time equivalent job within four months of the building completion works and the overall total number of jobs created will be taken into account when assessing the level of grant awarded.</p> <p>The grant is primarily available to businesses that trade with other businesses (B2B).</p>	<p><a href="mailto:mbig@herefordshire.gov.uk">mbig@herefordshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>01432 260662</p>	<p><a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200139/community/393/community_funding_advice_and_business_grants/8">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200139/community/393/community_funding_advice_and_business_grants/8</a></p>
<p>Midlands Engine Investment Fund</p>	<p>British Business Bank (via fund managers)</p>	<p>The Midlands Engine Investment Fund aims to transform the finance landscape for SMEs in the Midlands and to realise the region's potential to achieve economic growth through enterprise. It provides commercially focussed finance and the following products are available:</p>		<p><a href="http://www.meif.co.uk/">http://www.meif.co.uk/</a></p> <p>This site will refer you on to the specific products</p>



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European Regional  
Development Fund

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debt Finance Business loans from £100,000 - £1.5 million</li> <li>• Small business loans from £25,000 - £150,000</li> <li>• Equity finance from £50k - £2 million</li> <li>• Equity finance for proof and concept</li> </ul>		run by the fund managers.
Smart Concept Fund	University of Wolverhampton	<p>The Smart Concept Fund is a grant scheme offering up to 60% of approved project cost (Maximum value of grant £30,000) towards demonstrating 'Proof of Concept' and bringing a product or technology innovation closer to market.</p> <p>The grant is awarded against capital and/or revenue costs incurred in carrying out an approved project and is available to qualifying SMEs located in the Marches.</p> <p>Eligible applicants benefit from support provided by a specialist new product development consultant to help them define a programme of work that will demonstrate 'Proof of Concept' for their new product or technology innovation, supported by a Business Plan justification.</p> <p>The acceptance criteria are targeted towards advanced engineering products and technologies that are in line with the economic development strategy for the Marches.</p> <p>If a Smart Concept Grant is awarded, then the business commences procurement against the approved project plan and must fund purchases through its own cash flow. Grant is paid after evidence of settlement of invoices is proven.</p> <p>The business meets its own resource and internal costs in full – grant is paid only against eligible procured and invoiced bought-out costs.</p>	<a href="mailto:SmartConceptFund@wlv.ac.uk">SmartConceptFund@wlv.ac.uk</a>  01902 323911	<a href="https://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/funding-and-support/the-smart-concept-fund/">https://www.wlv.ac.uk/business-services/funding-and-support/the-smart-concept-fund/</a>
SME International Growth Project	West Midlands International Trade LLP	<p>Enhancing the core Department for International Trade export support to provide additional elements that will address SME needs. Three project elements will support SMEs in the West Midlands, including the Marches:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Grant Support – grants of between £1k and £3k match funded</li> </ol>	<a href="mailto:erdf@wmchambers.co.uk">erdf@wmchambers.co.uk</a>  0121 6071770	<a href="http://www.wmchambers.co.uk/about-us/projects/current-business-support-">http://www.wmchambers.co.uk/about-us/projects/current-business-support-</a>



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

		<p>2) Awareness Raising 3) Inward and Outward Missions</p> <p>Project Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to raise awareness amongst SMEs that are based in the West Midlands of the opportunities presented by trading in overseas markets;</li> <li>to increase the number of West Midlands SMEs that are considering trading internationally;</li> <li>to address barriers to trading internationally that are faced by SMEs;</li> <li>to increase the number of SMEs engaging with the UKTI service;</li> <li>to enhance the international trade capabilities of SMEs based in the West Midlands;</li> <li>to increase the number of SMEs based in the West Midlands that trade internationally, and;</li> <li>to increase the value of goods and services exported from the West Midlands;</li> <li>providing innovative routes to markets;</li> <li>assisting women and BME groups.</li> </ul>		<a href="#">projects/sme-international-growth-project/</a>
System Analytics for Innovation	Aston University	<p>The project will enable businesses to make better use of their data, empowering them to better understand and control their domain, through the use of leading edge AI, machine learning and analytics techniques.</p> <p>We will work alongside businesses, supporting them to develop new services and products, to leverage large public datasets (e.g. data.gov.uk) and to develop a workforce that is highly skilled in leading-edge techniques.</p>	<p>Miss. Mahmuda Khanom</p> <p>0121 204 3399</p> <p><a href="mailto:m.khanom@aston.ac.uk">m.khanom@aston.ac.uk</a></p>	<a href="http://www.thinkbeyonddata.com">www.thinkbeyonddata.com</a>

Contact [gary.spence@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:gary.spence@shropshire.gov.uk) in relation to any amendments or additions.