



dti

**SUCCEEDING  
THROUGH INNOVATION**

A guide for small and  
medium sized businesses



The DTI drives our ambition of 'prosperity for all' by working to create the best environment for business success in the UK.

We help people and companies become more productive by promoting enterprise, innovation and creativity.

We champion UK business at home and abroad. We invest heavily in world-class science and technology. We protect the rights of working people and consumers. And we stand up for fair and open markets in the UK, Europe and the world.

To help drive up UK productivity through better innovation, the DTI provides a range of solutions that offer practical support and encouragement at the different stages of the innovation process.

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A photograph of a factory worker in a white lab coat and blue hairnet pouring liquid into a row of green cans on a production line. The worker is in the background, slightly out of focus, while the foreground is filled with rows of green cans, some containing a yellowish liquid. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a clean and professional industrial environment.

Innovation enables you to compete successfully and profitably in today's fast-changing marketplace.

# What is innovation?

Innovation is the successful exploitation of new ideas.

It's about:

- bringing new knowledge and processes into your business
- developing new, high value-added products, processes and services.

The UK has a reputation for innovative ideas. Our world-class scientific and technical knowledge offers a vital competitive edge against developing and low-wage economies such as China and Korea.

## Why is innovation important to your business?

Innovation enables you to compete successfully and profitably in today's fast-changing marketplace. It can help your business:

- become more competitive
- participate in new industries and new markets
- offer customers and suppliers better quality goods and services
- keep pace with constantly changing consumer demands and markets
- achieve higher returns on investment
- increase sales and profits
- capitalise on new knowledge and innovative ways of doing things
- help your business survive and grow, safeguarding jobs.

## What makes it so difficult to innovate?

Having a good idea for a new product or service, or for streamlining your production or business processes, is, in many ways, the easy aspect of innovation. Sourcing and putting together the necessary skills, expertise and resources needed to make it happen is invariably more of a challenge.

Like most businesses, you're probably too busy with the everyday demands to be able to spare much time or money to track down the support you need. Often you'll need to work with others, but you may, understandably, have reservations about doing this.

But where do you start? How do you get hold of the right kind of help? And if you need them – and you probably will – how do you go about finding like-minded collaborators whom you can trust?

## How can the DTI help?

The DTI would like to help your business make innovation, research and development an essential part of your growth strategy.

After talking to businesses like yours and taking into account their feedback, we've developed a range of five carefully targeted, easy-to-access business solutions that provide practical support at key stages of the innovation process.

Your requirement	The solution	It provides
If you want to exploit an innovative idea and need advice	Grant for Investigating an Innovative Idea	Reimbursed consultancy to help businesses get advice on the steps needed to implement their ideas
If you have an innovative product or technology	Grant for Research and Development	A grant to help businesses carry out research and development that could lead to a technologically innovative product or process
If you need expert help to innovate	Knowledge Transfer Partnerships	A grant to cover part of the cost of using a person to transfer and embed knowledge into a business from the UK knowledge base via a strategic project
If you want to make contact with others in particular technology areas	Knowledge Transfer Networks*	A grant to an intermediary to set up a network in a priority technology area, bringing together businesses, universities and others with an interest in technology applications
If you want to work with others to develop particular technologies for exploitation	Collaborative Research and Development*	Funding for collaborative research and development projects between businesses, universities and other potential collaborators

\* Knowledge Transfer Networks and Collaborative Research and Development are focused around the technology priorities business tells us are critical to future economic success and which form the basis of the Government's Technology Strategy. For further information please go to [www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme](http://www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme)

## There's more help available

The DTI's five core business solutions complement other solutions and information services already in place to help your business be innovative:

Existing solution	It offers help or information	It provides
R&D Tax Credits	If you spend money on research and development and would like to invest more	Significant tax relief on certain expenditures associated with research and development
Patents and other forms of intellectual property right	If you want to protect your invention, design or creative work	Mechanisms to consider for registering and protecting your designs and ideas from the competition
Further information on innovation	If you want to check out the latest innovation thinking, investigate foreign markets and forge contacts abroad	A free-of-charge online service which provides information on innovation tools and techniques, including reports and self assessment

## How do you find out more?

Over the following pages you'll find more detailed information about the solutions outlined above, together with case studies showing how they have helped individual businesses fulfil their potential for innovation. Contacts for further help and advice are sign posted at the end of this brochure. This brochure, along with other information about how the DTI can help you to innovate, is available at [www.dti.gov.uk/innovate](http://www.dti.gov.uk/innovate)

# Grant for Investigating an Innovative Idea

Taking forward an innovative idea for a new product, process or service can be a daunting prospect for many small businesses. You may lack the knowledge or skills in essential areas and be put off implementing your ideas completely. This grant will help you overcome these barriers.

## What is the Grant for Investigating an Innovative Idea?

It's a grant which enables you to work with a consultant to identify those areas where you need help to make your idea a reality.

## What does it do?

It can provide you with practical advice and an action plan on:

- introducing new technology to improve your business
- exploring the commercial feasibility of an idea and whether there's a market for it
- bringing a new product to market
- identifying any skills your business needs, and how to go about filling any gaps.

## What financial support does it offer?

The grant covers 75% of the costs of consultancy. Most grants are usually between £2,500 and £7,000. The maximum grant is £12,000.



## When can I apply?

Anytime it suits you.

## Am I eligible?

Yes, if you satisfy the following criteria:

- you are planning to set up or are running a business in England with fewer than 250 employees
- you have an innovative idea for a new or improved product, process or service that could significantly contribute to the success of your business
- you can demonstrate that the project couldn't go ahead without the grant.

## What should I do next?

Your next port of call should be Business Link, where an adviser can:

- confirm your eligibility
- help you prepare and submit your application
- help you identify the key areas you need to address to implement your idea
- possibly act as mentor in your project
- recommend a suitable expert to work on your project and provide the necessary advice.

### Case study:

#### Changing a product to take advantage of a new market

A small plastics extruding business was looking for ways to take advantage of newly identified markets and had an idea for how it could diversify.

The business investigated its innovative idea by getting advice on changing products and processes to meet the needs of new markets. Its external expert helped the business plan how to introduce new technology and assessed the likely impact on the business.

The project provided advice on developing and acquiring new skills, and adapting the management structure to help the business introduce the new products successfully. It also helped the business to establish that there was a real market need for its products and explore different routes to that market.

# Grant for Research and Development

Introducing a brand new product, process or service could make your business measurably more efficient and give you an invaluable competitive edge. However, turning an idea into a marketable reality is an expensive business.

The grant will help you by supporting the costs of a technologically innovative project which has been unable to get funding from conventional sources of finance.

## What is the Grant for Research and Development?

Individuals and small businesses based in England can enter a competition to get grant funding to undertake a research and development project into an innovative product or process. The costs supported could include for example staff pay, materials, sub-contracting and capital equipment.

There are four types of grant available (listed below) to support different stages of a research and development project.

### 1 Micro Project Grant

This grant helps you develop a simple, low-cost prototype of an innovative product or process, to be completed and ready for commercialisation within 12 months.

#### What financial support is offered?

A grant of between £2,500 and £20,000 is available, covering 50% of your project costs.

#### Am I eligible to apply for a Micro Project Grant?

Yes, if you satisfy the following criteria:

- you are planning to set up or are running a business in England with fewer than 10 full-time employees
- your business has either an annual turnover of no more than €7 million or an annual balance sheet total of no more than €5 million.

## 2 Research Project Grant

This grant will help you investigate the technological and commercial feasibility of turning highly innovative technology into a new product, process or service. A project should take between six and 18 months and typically result in an early bench-top or experimental working model.

### What financial support is offered?

A grant of between £20,000 and £75,000 is available, covering 60% of your project costs. A higher % of support is available in the Assisted Areas (for further information on this speak to your Business Link adviser).

### Am I eligible to apply for a Research Project Grant?

Yes, if you satisfy the following criteria:

- you are planning to set up or are running a business in England with fewer than 50 full-time employees
- your business has an annual turnover of no more than €7 million or an annual balance sheet total of no more than €5 million.

## 3 Development Project Grant

A grant to help you develop a pre-production prototype of a new product or process involving a significant technological advance. A project should take between six and 36 months to complete.

### What financial support is offered?

A grant of between £20,000 and £200,000 is available, covering 35% of your project costs. A higher % of support is available in Assisted Areas (for further information on this speak to your Business Link adviser).

### Am I eligible to apply for a Development Project Grant?

Yes, if you satisfy the following criteria:

- you are planning to set up or are running a business in England with fewer than 250 full-time employees
- your business has an annual turnover of no more than €40 million or an annual balance sheet total of no more than €27 million.

#### 4 Exceptional Development Project Grant

This grant helps you to develop a new technology that is of strategic importance to UK industry. A project must have the potential to deliver significant benefits for industrial productivity or quality of life.

##### What financial support is offered?

A grant of up to £500,000 is available, covering up to 35% of your project costs.

##### Am I eligible?

The eligibility criteria are the same as for a Development Project Grant.

#### When can I apply for a grant?

You can apply at any time but your application will not be considered until the closing date for each competition has passed. It will then be judged against other entries received in your region. To find out the next closing date call your nearest Small Business Service regional office whose details can be found at [www.dti.gov.uk/r-d](http://www.dti.gov.uk/r-d)

#### How do I apply for these grants?

You will need to fill in an application form and submit a project proposal. The application form and guidance notes can be downloaded from [www.dti.gov.uk/r-d](http://www.dti.gov.uk/r-d)

#### What should I do next?

Your next port of call should be Business Link, where an adviser can:

- confirm your eligibility
- help you prepare and submit your application.

For case studies of past Smart projects (the forerunner to the Grant for Research and Development) go to [www.dti.gov.uk/r-d](http://www.dti.gov.uk/r-d)

##### Case study:

##### Developing a new product for a global market

A research and development grant under the previous Smart scheme has helped Manchester-based business Refrigerant Products develop non-ozone-depleting refrigerants which are non-toxic, energy efficient and compatible with traditional lubricants. These environmentally friendly refrigerants offer significant cost savings by avoiding expensive retrofits of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment.

'The grant enabled the business to change focus, survive and expand to become a global player in the market for replacement of ozone-depleting refrigerants,' says John Poole, the business's founder. 'The technology has enabled us to punch above our weight in an international market.'



'The technology has enabled us to punch above our weight in an international market.'

# Knowledge Transfer Networks

Many small businesses don't make the most of their potential for innovation and therefore miss out on its competitive advantages. Often this is through a lack of awareness of, and access to, the latest technological knowledge and breakthroughs.

Networking is a classic route to finding out what's going on in the wider world. Knowledge Transfer Networks provide small and medium sized businesses with an opportunity to network in this way.

## What is a Knowledge Transfer Network?

A Network actively promotes and accelerates the transfer of knowledge between the science, engineering and technology base and industry.

It offers invaluable opportunities through networking to mix, make contacts and exchange information with other businesses and research organisations working in similar fields or sectors.

## What kind of activities does a Network undertake?

Typical activities include:

- technology workshops, seminars and conferences
- exploratory studies into new technologies
- matchmaking potential joint ventures
- exchanging information on key topics such as intellectual property rights and marketing
- predicting market trends and requirements.

## How can it benefit my business?

Participating in a Network can benefit your business by:

- giving you access to technical and business knowledge and expertise, together with the experience and support of the other members of the group
- providing inspiration from associating regularly with other organisations in your field
- offering many potential sources of help and advice when you have a dilemma or a need for a specific piece of information
- enhancing your business's own knowledge and expertise – and ultimately its profits.

## Am I eligible to join a Network?

Yes, you are eligible if:

- you have a keen interest in finding out about the latest technology, how it has been applied in the marketplace and what it can do for your business
- a Network exists in your field or sector.

## Will I have to disclose confidential business information or practices?

No – the DTI understands that confidentiality is important in retaining competitive advantage. Being a member of the Network does not automatically mean that confidential information is made available to all. Businesses participating in Networks need only share the information they feel comfortable disclosing.

## How can I join a Network?

Networks are in the process of being set up across technology sectors. To find out when one is launched that's relevant to your business or sector:

- contact your local Business Link
- log onto the DTI's Technology Programme website at **[www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme](http://www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme)** for an update on the latest Networks.

If there isn't currently a Network operating for your sector, contact your Research and Technology Organisation (try **[www.airto.co.uk](http://www.airto.co.uk)** members' directory) or Trade Association for information about the many other existing networks available to businesses.

### Case study:

#### Networking in the fuel cells community

The Fuel Cells Forum was established to bring together industrial and academic research teams working in fuel cell technology. Funded by the DTI, the Forum's objectives are to identify common interests, collaborate more effectively, disseminate global news and developments and provide a platform for discussing issues, influencing policy and developing technology roadmaps.

The Forum operates through an interactive website, facilitating 'webinars' to communicate topics of interest to the community. The website provides business and research teams with the tools to interact nationally and internationally – American fuel cell networks have expressed an interest in joining the Forum to share their knowledge and experience.

# Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

There's a wealth of expertise and resources in the UK's universities, colleges and research organisations your business could be making use of. But how do you go about tapping into it?

A Knowledge Transfer Partnership makes this possible and part-funds the cost of a joint project that could help you increase your knowledge, expertise, sales and profitability.

## What is a Knowledge Transfer Partnership?

A Partnership gives your business access to the expertise in the UK's universities, colleges and research organisations by working in partnership with academics or researchers.

## How can a Partnership benefit my business?

A Partnership can help you increase the profitability of your business by:

- improving existing products and developing new ones
- upgrading or streamlining a manufacturing or logistics process
- developing a marketing strategy.

## How does a Partnership work?

A Partnership works in the following way:

- working together, you and your chosen research partner prepare a proposal for a project designed to enhance your business and the latter submits an application for funding to the DTI
- once it's approved, you both recruit a suitably qualified graduate or technician, known as a Partnership Associate, to carry out the project work
- employed by your research partner, the Partnership Associate works onsite with your business
- throughout the project academics or researchers at the university, college or research organisation remain closely involved throughout the project.

## Who funds a Partnership?

A Partnership is part-funded by the DTI, which reimburses some of your research partner's costs. You pay the rest – typically £16,000 for a one-year project. This gives you the services of your Partnership Associate and also the time and expertise of the academics and researchers working with you. You will also have to meet your own business overheads.

## Who benefits from a Partnership?

The following benefit from a Partnership:

- your business does, by acquiring new knowledge and expertise
- your Partnership Associate gains business experience and personal and professional development
- the research organisation enhances the business relevance of their research and teaching.

## Am I eligible to set up a Partnership?

Businesses of all sizes in most industries and commercial sectors are eligible to take part. There are some limitations affecting the type of project and the sectors that can be supported.

A Partnership may not be appropriate for very small businesses, or businesses just starting up, which may not have the capacity to provide active support for the Partnership Associate or the resources to commit to the project.

## How do I find a Partnership partner?

Contact your local Business Link adviser, who should be able to put you in touch with a Partnership Office in a nearby university or college.

Alternatively, the DTI's specialist Partnership Consultants can help you identify the research organisation with the most appropriate academics or researchers. To contact the consultant covering your area telephone **01367 245215**, e-mail **companies@ktponline.org.uk** or visit the website at **www.dti.gov.uk/ktp**

### Case study:

#### Switching over to new technology

Softel Limited, a small business specialising in teletext and subtitles, needed to make a vital strategic shift from analogue to digital television. Through the DTI's Knowledge Transfer Partnerships programme, it acquired the hands-on expertise of a Partnership Associate, a graduate from the University of Reading's Department of Cybernetics. In the initial stages of the partnership, the Partnership Associate undertook global market research to gain a detailed understanding of a very new and evolving market. The information gathered was instrumental to the success of the business's new business strategy and helped it remain one step ahead of the competition.

Softel's subsequent move into the digital arena has seen its existing products improve significantly and led to the development of an innovative new range. The business has built a strong industry profile, established partnerships with other businesses operating in the industry, gained a wealth of knowledge and recruited a number of skilled employees. Turnover forecasts show an increase of £400,000, with a £60,000 rise in profit in the year following the end of the partnership. The Partnership Associate who helped set them on the path to success is now employed full time as the business's research engineer.

# Collaborative Research and Development

The cost involved in financing and resourcing a research and development project is an inhibiting factor for a lot of businesses, especially small and medium sized ones. Collaborating with other organisations brings many benefits. Pooling ideas, experience and resources cuts costs, reduces the risk factor and accelerates the time it takes to bring innovative technologies, products, processes and services to market.

## What is Collaborative Research and Development?

Collaborative Research and Development aims to get the industry and research communities working together on research and development projects in strategically important areas of science and technology, from which successful new products, processes and services might emerge.

It also primes the flow of the latest knowledge and thinking from the UK's science, engineering and technology base to business.

## What type of programmes does it support?

Collaborative research and development programmes across the spectrum of basic, industrial and pre-competitive research involving:

- science-to-business as well as business-to-business consortia
- collaborations in both the manufacturing and service sectors.



## How does it benefit my business?

It gives you the opportunity to bring your specialist skills to work on pioneering technology applications with leading-edge businesses and the science, engineering and technology base.

The twice-yearly competitions for funding help you plan your research and development commitments well ahead and ensure that you have equal access to funding as the larger businesses and research organisations.

## What form does the support take?

Grants to cover between 25% and 75% of direct research and development costs of industrial partners, subject to EU state aid rules. Funding is awarded through open competition, with calls for proposals focusing on technology areas of importance to UK business under the DTI's Technology Programme.

## When can I submit a proposal?

Competitions for funding are issued in the Spring and Autumn. You can find out about them by logging on to the Business Link website at [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) or going to [www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme](http://www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme)

### Case study:

#### Collaborating for Success

Small UK firm Primal Pictures Ltd., has built a world lead in 3-D computer graphic modelling of the human body with the help of a collaborative research project funded by the DTI and EPSRC.

An interactive model of the human hand was created in collaboration with researchers from University College London as part of the programme. Results demonstrated that the combination of advanced computer graphics and medical imaging technologies provided a powerful tool for surgeons and students. Primal Pictures went on to launch the interactive hand as a commercial product on CD-ROM. One in four hand surgeons throughout the world now use it.

The idea has now been extended with the launch of the interactive knee, foot, hip, shoulder and spine. The world's first 3-D anatomical model of the entire body was unveiled in 2003.



A range of practical information, tools and case studies to help innovative businesses take their ideas to market.

## Further help on innovation

Innovation often involves the application of new technologies, and so far this brochure has explained the business support available to help you access the latest technological advances and get new ideas off the ground. However, funding is not the only solution.

If you are interested in finding out how other businesses in your sector are handling and benefiting from new technologies, investigating foreign markets and forging contacts abroad there is a wealth of further innovation information available online.

### What further help is available?

Online information sources are available free of charge to all businesses through the [www.innovation.gov.uk](http://www.innovation.gov.uk) portal.

### What can it provide me with?

These sources provide you with further help on increasing the innovation in your business, including reports and self-assessment tools. It also refers you to other organisations who support innovation, such as the Design Council ([www.designcouncil.org.uk](http://www.designcouncil.org.uk)) whose website provides a range of practical information, tools and case studies to help innovative businesses take ideas to market.

### What financial support is offered?

There is no financial support associated with this free information service.

### How do I access it?

You can visit the website at [www.innovation.gov.uk](http://www.innovation.gov.uk) and use the free self-assessment tools at any time.

### Am I eligible to use it?

All businesses can access this information simply and easily. All you need is an internet connection and, for some documents, Adobe Acrobat Reader. This software can be downloaded free of charge from the website.

Best Practice information on a wider range of issues beyond innovation is available at [www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice](http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice)

# R&D Tax Credits

UK businesses currently under-invest in research and development compared to their international competitors, and the Government has introduced tax incentives to support businesses to invest more.

Following joint work with the Inland Revenue, the DTI and the Treasury, R&D Tax Credits have been introduced to offer small and medium sized businesses a greater incentive to raise their own research and development investment levels.

## What are R&D Tax Credits?

They're a Government incentive in the form of tax relief designed to encourage small and medium sized businesses to undertake more research and development.

## How do Tax Credits work?

You can claim 150% corporation tax relief on certain expenditures associated with research and development, such as staff costs and materials. If you're not in profit, you can get a payable credit of 24p in the pound instead, helping you to manage your cash flow between development and market entry.

## Am I eligible?

You can claim R&D Tax Credits if you are a small or medium sized limited business and spend at least £10,000 in the year on qualifying research and development. Broadly speaking, your business should have:

- fewer than 250 employees
- either or both of an annual turnover not exceeding €40 million (about £25 million) and an annual balance sheet total not exceeding €27 million (about £17 million)
- less than 25% of its capital or voting rights owned by an enterprise (or jointly by several enterprises) which is not small or medium sized.

## My business isn't trading yet – can I still claim?

Yes – the scheme recognises that you could be funding research and development costs for two years or more without seeing the benefits, which is a major drain on your resources.

## What costs don't qualify for R&D Tax Credits?

Research and development costs don't qualify if:

- they are met by another organisation or individual
- they are part of a project which receives state aid, such as a government grant (for example, Collaborative Research and Development)
- your business doesn't own the rights to the intellectual property resulting from the research and development.

In these circumstances you can actually claim the R&D Tax Credit for large businesses instead, even though you are a small or medium sized business.

## How do I claim?

You can claim on your business's tax return.

## How do I find out more?

To find out more information:

- talk to your accountant or local tax office (see [www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/menus/contactus.shtml](http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/menus/contactus.shtml))
- visit [www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/randd](http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/randd)



# Protecting your intellectual property

All businesses have intellectual property – perhaps the name of the business, inventions, designs, works of creative or intellectual effort. These are valuable assets and a potential means of increasing your profits.

A variety of intellectual property rights exist to help you protect them, the reasons for using intellectual property rights are clear:

- as competition increases the importance of intellectual property is increasing
- businesses are using intellectual property rights to protect their market position
- effective use of intellectual property rights has given many businesses a competitive advantage
- ownership of intellectual property rights may provide the incentive investors are looking for.

## How can I protect an innovative product or process?

A patent protects products or processes that possess new functional or technical aspects. It's an intellectual property right granted by a government (e.g. the UK) for a limited period. Patent rights make it illegal for anyone other than you, or someone given permission by you, to use and profit from your invention in the country where the patent is granted.

Published patents are also an excellent source of ideas and information – many businesses regularly search them for inspiration and to keep up to date with what's new in their sector.

## How can I protect a symbol, sign, jingle or logo that represents my business?

A trademark is a symbol, sign or even words, sounds or jingles which distinguishes your goods and services from those of another business. Trademark registration gives you the right to stop someone using the same or similar mark on the same or similar goods and services.



## How can I protect my design?

Design registration can protect the design of the outward shape or configuration of products, patterns and ornamentation. Once you have the rights for a registered design, no-one else can use it without your permission.

## Can I protect creative works?

Yes. Copyright gives rights to the creator of original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works, and published editions of works, sound recordings, films, videos, broadcasts, cable programmes and computer programs. Protection against copying happens automatically without you having to do anything else.

## Where can I go to get advice or find out if I am eligible to register?

Applying for intellectual property rights can be a complex process, but there is a considerable amount of advice and support available to you:

- your first port of call should be the UK Patent Office's website ([www.patent.gov.uk](http://www.patent.gov.uk)) or contact its Central Enquiry Unit (tel: **08459 500505**). They can answer general enquiries and forward you on to professional advisers, e.g. the Chartered Institute of Patent Agents or the Institute of Trademark Attorneys, if this is appropriate
- the Patent Search and Advisory Service, which is a fee-based research service can carry out patent searches for you ([commercialsearches@patents.gov.uk](mailto:commercialsearches@patents.gov.uk))
- the British Library, which offers free access to a patent and trade mark database (tel: **020 7412 7901**, website: [www.bl.uk/patents](http://www.bl.uk/patents)).

## How much does it cost to apply for intellectual property rights?

The following costs will apply:

- fees for processing a UK patent or registering a trademark are normally around £200. Registering a design is less at around £60. The Patent Office can advise on the latest costs. Copyrights are free
- if an agent or attorney is involved, professional fees can range from £100 to over £1,000. The Patent Office can put you in touch with people who can advise you on this
- making an application in several countries can cost tens of thousands of pounds over several years
- once a registration is granted a renewal fee is payable. Again, the Patent Office can advise.

## How long does it take?

Registering a design or trademark can be done in a matter of months. Patents generally take longer, and can take up to three to four years depending on the complexity of your specific request.

# I want to find out more – What do I do now?

## Contact a Business Link adviser

Where an adviser will:

- guide you as to which of the grants and schemes mentioned here are relevant to your business and its requirements
- help you assess your eligibility and take you through any application process
- point you in the right direction for joining a Knowledge Transfer Network and getting involved in a Collaborative Research and Development project
- give you information about any other relevant schemes that may be available in your area.

## To locate your nearest Business Link

Business Link is a key source of independent and objective information and advice for small and medium sized businesses. Its aim is to help businesses innovate, grow and be more competitive by analysing their development needs and providing access to the most appropriate Government, private or voluntary support. To locate your nearest Business Link:

- call **0845 600 9 006**
- visit the Business Link website at **[www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)**

## The DTI's Business Support Directory

Complementing the DTI's Business Support Solutions is the web-based Business Support Directory (**[www.businesslink.org/support](http://www.businesslink.org/support)**). Searchable by business size, sector, region and the type of support required, the Directory gives a

comprehensive guide to all Business Support schemes offered by the DTI and other Government Departments.

Further copies of this brochure are available from the DTI Publications Orderline on **0870 150 2500**, or alternatively online at **[www.dti.gov.uk/innovate](http://www.dti.gov.uk/innovate)**

### A note about Support in the Devolved Administrations

Grant for Research and Development and Grant for Investigating an Innovative Idea are available in England only. Similar products are available in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, e.g. SMART, but provision for investigating an innovative idea may only be available on a local basis.

For information about the UK-wide innovation products featured in this brochure and other business support products available in Wales, please contact Business Eye/Llygad Busnes on **08457 969 798** or on **[www.businesseseye.org.uk](http://www.businesseseye.org.uk)** or **[www.llygadbusnes.org.uk](http://www.llygadbusnes.org.uk)**

For information about the UK-wide innovation products featured in this brochure and other business support products available in Scotland, please contact Business Gateway on **08456 096611** or on **[www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com)**

For information about the UK-wide innovation products featured in this brochure and other business support products available in Northern Ireland, please contact Invest Northern Ireland on **028 9023 9090** or on **[www.investni.com](http://www.investni.com)**



An adviser will guide you as to which of the grants and schemes are relevant to your business and its requirements.

## The DTI's Business Support Solutions: practical help for your business

The solutions outlined in this brochure are part of the DTI's range of tailored business support. They are designed to meet different stages of your business's development and growth. They are easy to access and use.

The solutions, listed below, are grouped into four themes reflecting the areas in which your business is most likely to need help: innovation, best practice, raising finance and regional financial support.

Information can be obtained from the contacts on page 26, or online at [www.dti.gov.uk/bss](http://www.dti.gov.uk/bss) or at [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

Succeeding through innovation			
The product	Who is it for?	What does it provide?	Notes
Knowledge Transfer Networks	All businesses wanting to grow by exploiting technology	A grant to an intermediary to set up a network in a priority technology area, bringing together businesses, universities and others with an interest in technology applications	1 4
Collaborative Research and Development	All UK-based businesses wishing to exploit technology	Funding for collaborative research and development projects between businesses, universities and other potential collaborators	1 4
Grant for Investigating an Innovative Idea	Small businesses wishing to exploit an innovative idea	Reimbursed consultancy to help businesses get advice on the steps needed to implement their ideas	2 4
Grant for Research and Development	Small businesses with an innovative product or technology	A grant to help businesses carry out research and development that could lead to a technologically innovative product or process	2 4
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships	All businesses needing expert help to innovate	A grant to cover part of the cost of using a person to transfer and embed knowledge into a business from the UK knowledge base via a strategic project	4

## Achieving best practice in your business

The product	Who is it for?	What does it provide?	Notes
Access to Best Business Practice	All businesses wishing to find out how to improve their performance through better ways of working	Materials on best practice, networking events, organised visits to businesses successfully implementing best practice	4
Support to Implement Best Business Practice	Small businesses wanting practical help in implementing best practice. (Also open to larger firms for certain projects.)	A free diagnostic run by a Business Link adviser, with subsidised consultancy for selected projects	2 4

## Raising finance

The product	Who is it for?	What does it provide?	Notes
Small Firms Loan Guarantee	Small businesses with viable proposals unable to obtain conventional loans because of a lack of security	A government guarantee covering 75% of the loan, encouraging commercial lenders to provide loans to businesses lacking security. Borrowers pay DTI a premium of 2% pa in return for the guarantee	3 4

## Regional investment

The product	Who is it for?	What does it provide?	Notes
Selective Finance for Investment in England	All businesses located in or considering relocating to one of the 'Assisted Areas'	A grant towards a project's capital cost, subject to criteria on productivity, job numbers and quality, and need	2 4

### Notes:

- 1 The DTI is delivering the Technology Strategy and Programme through these products. Applications can only be made in the priority technology areas specified by the Strategy. More details are available at [www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme](http://www.dti.gov.uk/technologyprogramme)
- 2 Available in England only. In many cases similar schemes are offered by the appropriate organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. All other solutions are UK-wide.
- 3 The DTI also funds various programmes to provide small and medium sized businesses with better access to venture capital.
- 4 Participants may be contacted on behalf of the DTI as part of the department's routine evaluation and monitoring system.







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