A new approach to business support
This leaflet explains why we have changed our approach to business support and how our new business support products work. It will enable you to explain the products to customers and other key stakeholders.

All products and delivery channels are operating now, unless stated otherwise. You can obtain more information and regular updates at one of the following websites:

- [www.dti.gov.uk/bss](http://www.dti.gov.uk/bss)
- [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)
- The Business Support Directory at: [www.businesslink.gov.uk/support](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/support)

Helping UK businesses to compete globally

Businesses make their own success, but government support can help them meet some of the challenges they face. The DTI provides a range of solutions to help overcome barriers to success by offering practical support and encouragement at the key stages of a business’s development.
What has changed?

We initiated a review of our approach to business support at the beginning of 2002. We consulted with businesses, stakeholders and intermediaries to identify specific areas for improvement. These include:

- better evaluation of the economic impact of our business support activities
- marketing business support solutions in a more customer friendly way
- streamlining delivery to cut out duplication and improve response times.

So what’s new?

Each year we spend about £0.5 billion on direct business support. This figure isn’t changing – but we are aiming to spend it more effectively, whilst providing a better quality service.

We are replacing the complex array of DTI business support schemes, with a suite of a few strategically focused business support products.

Easier access to the products through designated channels:

- Business Link for small and medium sized businesses
- the DTI for larger corporates and business organisations

What support do we provide?

Nine tailored products carrying the DTI branding which are

- easier to understand and use
- grouped into four themes reflecting the areas in which businesses are most likely to need help: innovation, best practice, raising finance and regional financial support.

The DTI’s Business Support Solutions: Practical help for businesses

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 a 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 a business is most likely to need help: innovation, best practice, raising finance and regional financial support.

Information can be obtained 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The product</th>
<th>Who is it for?</th>
<th>What does it provide?</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Transfer Networks</td>
<td>All businesses wanting to grow by exploiting technology.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Research and Development</td>
<td>All UK-based businesses wishing to exploit technology.</td>
<td>Funding for collaborative R&amp;D projects between businesses, universities and other potential collaborators.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant for Investigating an Innovative Idea</td>
<td>Small businesses wishing to exploit an innovative idea.</td>
<td>Reimbursed consultancy to help businesses get advice on the steps needed to implement their ideas.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant for Research and Development</td>
<td>Small businesses with an innovative product or technology.</td>
<td>A grant to help businesses carry out R&amp;D that could lead to a technologically innovative product or process.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Transfer Partnerships</td>
<td>All businesses needing expert help to innovate.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.
## Achieving best practice in your business

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to Best Business Practice</td>
<td>All businesses wishing to find out how to improve their performance through better ways of working</td>
<td>Materials on best practice, networking events, organised visits to businesses successfully implementing best practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to Implement Best Business Practice</td>
<td>Small businesses wanting practical help in implementing best practice. (Also open to larger firms for certain projects.)</td>
<td>A free diagnostic run by a Business Link adviser, with subsidised consultancy for selected projects</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Raising finance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Firms Loan Guarantee</td>
<td>Small businesses with viable proposals unable to obtain conventional loans because of a lack of security</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Regional investment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selective Finance for Investment in England</td>
<td>All businesses located in or considering relocating to one of the ‘Assisted Areas’</td>
<td>A grant towards a project’s capital cost, subject to criteria on productivity, job numbers and quality, and need.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:

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 SMEs with better access to venture capital.
What information are we providing?

We have produced a small range of literature, available in a printed format and also downloadable from www.dti.gov.uk/bss. For use by DTI and channel staff, customers and partners, the brochures explain how the products work and enable businesses to choose the most appropriate solution for their needs. The literature comprises:

- individual ‘theme’ guides on innovation, best practice and regional financial support. The innovation guide comes in two versions, aimed at SMEs and larger corporates. Raising finance for SMEs is covered on www.businesslink.gov.uk and in associated publications.
- specific information about the products themselves, including guidance notes, eligibility criteria, application forms and case studies. There will also be a wide range of reports and guides to raise awareness of best practice.
- recognising that for many businesses the best solution to their needs may not actually be a business support product, the brochures also cover some of the wider range of offerings which may meet their needs within each theme area. For example, R&D tax credits are designed to help businesses that are wanting to innovate and are a key part of the innovation theme.

The Business Link website also hosts the Business Support Directory. Information about the DTI’s range of business support products and other Government, regional, local and private sector support for business can be found on the Business Support Directory at www.businesslink.gov.uk/support

There is also information on the intranet available to DTI staff.

To obtain copies of the brochures call the DTI Publications Orderline on 0870 150 2500 or visit www.dti.gov.uk/publications

For this leaflet, quote URN 04/1107
For the best practice brochure, quote URN 04/1005
For the innovation (SME) brochure, quote URN 04/860
For the innovation (corporates) brochure, quote URN 04/859
For the regional investment brochure, quote URN 04/867A
How do customers access our products?

Small and medium sized businesses should contact their local Business Link, of which there are over 40 throughout England.

- Businesses in England can call 0845 600 9006 to speak to their nearest Business Link.
- Businesses located in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland should also call this number for the relevant contact in their region.

For larger businesses and corporates, the DTI should normally be the first port of call. Many already have a regular contact point; those which don’t should call 020 7215 5000.

For enquiries specifically relating to the regional investment product, businesses may wish to contact the RDA direct.

How is business support managed in DTI?

- To ensure we invest our business support funds effectively, all new products have a balanced scorecard detailing specific targets. Data on a product’s economic and customer performance is gathered regularly and measured against these targets.
- This data is also monitored by an Investment Committee which has significant private sector membership. The Committee uses the data to recommend how the DTI should allocate its funds. Any proposals for new products are assessed by the Committee prior to sanctioning their launch.
- A separate governance structure is being set up to assess product marketing plans and ensure that the channels deliver the products to the target customers.
- Feedback on customer satisfaction, gathered through the balanced scorecard and other processes, will ensure we continually improve our products and the way we market and deliver them.
- We will continue to make delivery more efficient and streamlined, with a strong focus on value for money. This will include outsourcing and consolidating the number of third party contractors we use.
A Technology Strategy Board will set the priorities for the Technology Programme, which will be delivered through the knowledge transfer network and collaborative R&D products.

As well as transforming our business support products, we have also put considerable effort into improving access channels. The number of customers using the improved Business Link network has doubled since 2001, with customer satisfaction up by 6% points.