

GRANTS

Newsletter

June 2010

Welcome

Large capital funding grants remain scarce and as we pass from the end of the 2009/10 tax year into the next, some of the better known programmes have drawn to a close, with other opportunities and funding programmes taking their place.

It is still the case that funding opportunities exist, however, we need to be innovative sometimes in our approach to ensure that project aspects that might be eligible for grant funding are identified at an early stage and developed so as to be eligible.

Biomass fund

The 6th Round of the Government's Bio-Energy Capital Grants Scheme closed to bids on 31 March 2010.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change-funded scheme offers grants worth up to £500,000 for businesses, public sector bodies and community organisations across England to install biomass-fuelled or combined heat and power-based (CHP) heating systems.

Feed-in tariff scheme

The feed-in tariff scheme has been introduced as a replacement for the Low Carbon Buildings Programme (LCBP) Phase 1 and Phase 2 which closed to new applications for grants for electrical microgeneration in February 2010.

Under the scheme, energy suppliers make regular payments to householders and communities who generate their own electricity from renewable or low carbon sources such as solar electricity (PV) panels or wind turbines.

The scheme guarantees a minimum payment for all electricity generated by the system, as well as a separate payment for the electricity exported to grid. These payments are in addition to the bill savings made by using the electricity generated on site.

Construction waste recycling

Capital grants worth up to £180,000 are available to expand recycling facilities that deal with construction waste, through the government-backed waste agency WRAP, which is running its latest round of the Construction Waste Recycling and Infrastructure Programme.

Through the scheme, organisations across England can bid for support to increase recycling and reprocessing facilities. Grants can cover up to 50% of the costs of buying the necessary plant and equipment, machinery and the associated engineering costs.

The aim is to help to meet the Government's target of halving the amount of waste sent to landfill by 2012.

The programme will run until the end of March 2011, or until all funds have been exhausted.

RDP funding

The latest application window of the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme has opened in the North East region, covering Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Larne and Moyle for projects that fall under one of the following measures:

- Farm diversification.
- Business creation and development.
- Tourism infrastructure.
- Access to basic services in rural communities.
- Conservation and heritage.

Tees Valley efficiency grants

Energy Efficiency Grants are being offered to Tees Valley based businesses by regional development agency, One North East, as part of their wider Tees Valley Industrial Programme.

The fund is aimed at helping local firms improve efficiency by investing in technologies and energy management systems that lead to 'significant' energy consumption reductions and cost savings.

The grants are being funded as part of the Tees Valley Industrial Programme, a £60 million investment over the next two years aimed at helping the area shift from heavy industry, towards more advanced and low carbon manufacturing.

Natural assets programme extension

The £2 million Natural England 'Natural Assets' scheme run by Advantage West Midlands is designed to 'unlock the economic potential of the West Midlands' natural environment' and will be open to applications for an extended period to 8 September 2010.

Businesses, charities, councils and voluntary organisations are all invited to bid for funding of up to £250,000 to carry out projects that fall under one of the following three broad aims:

- Projects that improve the region's economic activity through natural assets.
- Projects that transform existing natural assets to help realise their economic and social potential.
- Research-based projects that will create a lasting delivery-based legacy and develop future environmental initiatives.

Election 2010

With a new coalition Government in place, what did the Conservative's and Liberal Democrats manifestos have to say about business funding and support - we summarise below:

Conservative Party

- Revoke the Government's planned **National Insurance** increase for employers.
- Support entrepreneurs through a new programme - **Work for Yourself**, which will give unemployed people direct access to business mentors and substantial loans.
- **Research and Development Tax Credits** will be improved and refocused on hi-tech companies, small businesses and new start-ups. The provision of strong backing to the growth industries that generate high-quality jobs.
- The use of funding that currently supports employment and training schemes, such as Train2Gain, to provide **alternative skills improvement assistance**, including:
 - the creation of 400,000 work pairing, apprenticeship, college and training places over two years;
 - a cash incentive for SMEs of **£2,000 per apprentice** hired;
 - establish a **Community Learning Fund** to help people restart their careers; and
 - create a new **all-age careers service** so that everyone can access the advice they need.
- Create a **Green Investment Bank**; drawing together money currently divided across existing Government initiatives, leveraging private sector capital to finance new green technology start-ups.

- Support council business-led **local enterprise partnerships** as opposed to the Regional Development Agencies.
- Make it easier for SMEs to win **public sector contracts**.
- Cut the headline rate of **Corporation tax** to 25p and the small companies' rate to 20p.
- Make **small business rate relief** automatic.
- New businesses no longer required to pay **National Insurance** on the first ten employees they hire during their first year of trading (temporary two year measure).

Liberal Democrats

- Initial one-year **job creation and green economic stimulus package** worth £3.1 billion to be used to create 100,000 jobs and as a first step towards a zero-carbon Britain by 2050.
- Support the establishment of **Local Enterprise Funds** to help local investors.
- Create a **work placement scheme** with up to 800,000 places to ensure that young people have the opportunity to gain skills, qualifications and work experience.
- **Reform Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)** to focus solely on economic development and remove duplication with other parts of Government.
- Set up a '**Creative Enterprise Fund**' offering training, mentoring and small grants or loans to help creative businesses get off the ground.
- Use the purchasing power of Government to expand the markets for **green products and technologies**.
- Set up a **UK Infrastructure Bank** to direct private finance to essential projects such as new rail services and green energy, building the environmentally sustainable economy.

It remains to be seen how the coalition will develop and align the policies that they laid out in their individual manifestos.

Test the grants team

As of January 2010, the grants team and the service that it provides has seen some changes and hopefully you will have noted the improvements we can make to you and your clients.

The team is co-ordinated by Rebecca Clarke through whom any initial enquiries should be raised.

Funding programmes open and close, often within short timescales and sometimes are not openly advertised.

We look forward to receiving your requests for research into projects that for whatever reason are in need of or might attract funding assistance in order to assist affordability. We are able to provide initial advice and investigate on your behalf, with no initial cost implications to your project. In the event that a potential opportunity is identified, then a fee proposal will be provided.

Why not put us to the test by contacting us now:

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