



Guide to Leicester and Leicestershire's ERDF Programme 2014-2020





Foreword

I became Chair of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) in July 2018 after being Vice Chair for the previous four years.

Being involved in the LLEP means I've witnessed, at first hand, the positive impact the LLEP's £50m European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) has had in supporting our small and medium-sized enterprises.

The time has come to bring together the decision makers, business support providers and the businesses themselves to celebrate their success and share the learning from the first phase of the ERDF projects. Since launching in 2016, these projects have engaged with thousands of businesses and helped them find the right support to develop and grow.

This document showcases some of those fantastic businesses - many of which are the hidden gems within our communities - and to thank the business support providers who have delivered outstanding levels of expertise and support.

We are also celebrating the ongoing success of the LLEP's ERDF programme, which to date has allocated over £48m of funding into the local economy, leveraging a further £60m of investment to boost jobs and productivity in the Leicester and Leicestershire area.

The ERDF funding has been delivered via 16 key strategic projects, including the Growth Hub, 'LLEP Business Gateway'. This particular project has helped businesses by providing information on the multitude of services available and offering direct business guidance and support from our fantastic business advisers, programme of workshops and website services.

The LLEP is launching the latest round of ERDF funding calls and invite outline applications from organisations looking to deliver further meaningful impacts to businesses across Leicester and Leicestershire.

Kevin Harris
Chair of the LLEP



Leicester and Leicestershire's ERDF Projects

In Leicester and Leicestershire, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme has already made great strides, with over £48 million allocated to projects that are helping local businesses to grow and become more productive.

During the next twelve months, the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership is aiming to commit its remaining ERDF allocation, beginning with the release of two further calls for research and innovation and low carbon projects in October 2018. This will ensure that businesses across Leicester and Leicestershire continue to receive the support they need for years to come.

Mike Durban
Head of strategy
Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership



Leicester and Leicestershire's ERDF Programme (2014-2020)

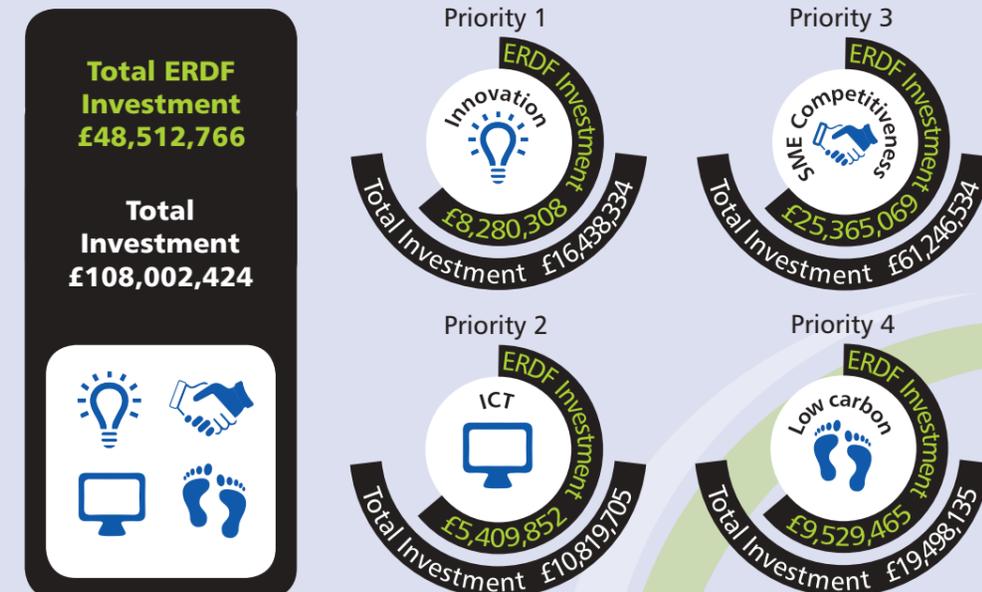
The LLEP's £50m European Regional Development Fund (or ERDF) aims to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Leicester and Leicestershire. It does this by providing a range of opportunities for them through business support providers, higher education and research institutions as well as public bodies such as local authorities.

Whether you wish to start up a business, are looking for scale-up support, need finance,

or are looking for office space, the Growth Hub - LLEP Business Gateway can help. To find out more about how the Business Gateway can support you, visit www.llepbizgateway.co.uk

To date the LLEP has allocated over £48m of ERDF funding to the local economy, and secured a further £60m of investment to boost jobs and productivity in Leicester and Leicestershire.

ERDF Investment (2015-18)



iNet PACE and SING Gasfill Ltd manufacture compressed natural gas pumps for re-fuelling cars and vans at home or work. The iNet researched consumer incentives and provided part-funding towards design costs.

"The iNet process is straightforward. The team have a real interest in understanding your business and identifying the right support."

Norman Leece,
Managing Director
bit.ly/2wzvl8i



Leicester Innovation Hub is a brand new £5.1m innovation asset delivered in Leicester and Leicestershire by the University of Leicester. The Leicester Innovation Hub is designed to enable more R&D and innovation by working in partnership with business and our graduates.

"Leicester Innovation Hub is the 'front door' to launching great ideas and also provides a dedicated incubation and innovation space, making it easier for companies to utilise innovation support, expertise and facilities."

Rajinder Bhuhi,
Business Manager -
Leicester Innovation Hub
bit.ly/2xUOOh7

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Ventola Projects received £25,000 through Enterprise Loans – one of the three fund managers responsible for the debt finance available through the MEIF. The funding helped to facilitate the firm's expansion in the U.S, including attaining certification, manufacture forward stock and investing in marketing and PR activity.

"We've extended our links with a company in the States who will now supply our branded products as our official distributor for this region. The funding has supported this expansion."

Mick Ventola,
Managing Director
bit.ly/2xj8WM



Due to a favourable exchange rate we have recently received a further boost of £8m from the ERDF programme. As a result we are pleased to announce the launch of two further funding opportunities for those seeking to support businesses in the low carbon (£6m) and innovation (£1.6m) sectors within Leicester and Leicestershire. In addition, two more funding calls under SME Competitiveness (£3.85m) and ICT (£0.8m) are planned for release in March 2019.

Leicester and Leicestershire's ERDF Programme (2014-2020) continued

CASE STUDY

Harborough District Council – Grow on Space

Harborough District Council's Grow on Space project, due to open in October 2019, will provide prime office space for businesses looking to expand and grow.

This exciting project will offer flexible office suites – ranging from 1,000ft² to 3,000ft² – for businesses looking to grow into larger accommodation or relocate to the Harborough district.

It will be located at Compass Point Business Park in Market Harborough, and built to high environmental standards [BREEAM Excellent]. It will create around 230 jobs and bring £20million into the local economy over the next five years.

Harborough District Council is providing up to £4,270,333 to fund the Grow on Space project, together with £3,282,500 funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and £987,833 from the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP).



It follows the success of the Harborough Innovation Centre, which Harborough District Council developed and opened in 2011, to provide office space for start-up and new businesses.

Businesses interested in securing office units at the Grow on Space building should email lettings@harborough.gov.uk



Since 2015 the LLEP has invested £27,672,034 of the ERDF programme in 15 key strategic projects with a further £33,394,103 of investment coming on line next year. The £48m ERDF allocation includes projects that have not gone live yet.

Current ERDF Projects

Priority	Project	Organisation	ERDF	
1	Leicester Accelerator	UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER	£824,167	
	Space Technology Application from Research (STAR)	UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER	£2,786,924	
	Smart Life Sciences Technology Innovation and Commercialisation Enabler (SolSTICE)	MEDILINK EAST MIDLANDS	£440,023	
	SolSTICE Phase 2	MEDILINK EAST MIDLANDS	£612,502	
	Leicester Innovation Hub / Leicester Innovation Accelerator	UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER	£2,555,031	
	Smart Innovation and Networking for Growth (SING)	Loughborough University	£989,773	
			£8,208,380	
2	Digital Business Growth Programme	East Midlands Chamber	£3,360,219	
				£3,360,219
	3	Harborough Grow-on Space	Harborough District Council	£3,282,500
		Better Off in Business	Princes Trust YOUTH CAN DO IT	£101,266
		Collaborate for Business Growth	Leicester City Council	£3,100,690
		Growing Enterprise	NBV encouraging enterprise	£606,822
Internationalising SMEs		EMB group	£511,973	
Productivity and Capability Enhancement (PACE)		Loughborough University	£995,620	
			£8,598,871	
4	Green BELLE	Leicester City Council	£1,464,564	
	Leicester Low Carbon Transport Accelerator	Leicester City Council	£6,100,000	
			£7,564,564	

ERDF Impact to Date Display

Total No. of Enterprises supported 4,868
Total Estimated GHG Reductions (Tonnes of Co2) 12,611





Digital Growth

Adey Steel Group received a grant of almost £18,000 to purchase a management information system. The software has enabled the firm to make their operations process more efficient from start to finish.

"The grant has allowed us to invest in new software that would bring improvements in efficiencies and accuracy. The benefits have been huge."

Robert Hall,
Operations Director
bit.ly/2y2J9VN



encouraging enterprise

Incredible Pies was launched in 2016 by brothers Pete and Rob Sharpe. They started their luxury mince pie making business in the pie-loving town of Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire. NBV provided support via the Starting in Business Programme

"The support given by NBV has been such a great help in our early days as it helped us to avoid the many pitfalls a start-up can fall into. They also helped us access funding to grow the business."

Pete & Rob Sharpe,
Business Owners
bit.ly/2hPsSxF



Growth Hub - LLEP Business Gateway

The Growth Hub for Leicester and Leicestershire - LLEP Business Gateway - has been operating for just under four years. The Growth Hub is managed by the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) and delivered in partnership with East Midlands Business and the East Midlands Chamber.

The Growth Hub provides businesses in Leicester and Leicestershire with simplified access to a network of over 60 business support providers.

The service is supported by a team of information and business advisers who offer dedicated advice for businesses to understand their needs and barriers to growth. They facilitate introductions and help businesses to access specialist expertise across a range of themes from innovation to marketing and funding.

The Growth Hub works as a result of strong partnerships. Our purpose is to ensure that SMEs receive impartial support which focuses on getting the right help for any client - wherever they are across the city and county - to help them achieve their growth aspirations.

During 2017-18 the Growth Hub expanded on its workshop series. It delivered 31 free sessions attended by 802 delegates, across a range of business topics. These topics were identified by businesses, with the aim to motivate, inspire and inform. These fully-funded workshops, delivered in partnership

with the private sector, use professional expertise to create learning opportunities and collaboration to further business growth.

Continuing to inspire and facilitate entrepreneurship, the Gateway proudly supports the Leicester Business Festival (LBF), now in its fourth year. The Growth Hub also works strategically with other growth hubs in the Midlands Engine area and business regulators under the Better Business for All partnership.

From 2019 the Growth Hub intends on enhancing the support on offer to businesses in Leicester and Leicestershire through investment readiness support, direct grants and intensive support for businesses that can demonstrate ambitious growth potential.

Testimonial: Grant Funding

"I met Jo Maltby, a business adviser from the Business Gateway, who referred us to some marketing workshops and told us about the NBV grant. We were able to claim back a third of our marketing costs which was a great help. The NBV grant was really easy to apply for, mostly done through email and over the phone. From completing the application, the funding came through in a matter of weeks. This help has taken our marketing to the next level and we've seen differently in the market place as it has given us a more professional image."

Melanie Mee, Pyrotech Limited



Since the project began:



Top 5 sectors seeking business support

	No. of enquiries	
Manufacturing		398
Wholesale and Retail Trade		227
Professional / Scientific / Technical		204
Other Service Activities		183
Information and Communication		125

Most sought after support

	No. of enquiries	
Support for Business Growth		941
Access to Finance		684
Start-up Support		364
Pre-start-up Support		250
Training Workforce and Skills		210

CASE STUDY

Growth Hub: making it simple for business to access support to grow

Businesses that access external support are more likely to grow. However it can be confusing as to what support is available, the quality of that support and whether it is right for your business.

The Business Gateway offers free and impartial advice to help businesses get the right support to achieve their ambitions – saving time and energy.

World Products Ltd was founded in 2010 by Mauli Shah in her garage in Leicestershire. She started in e-commerce and wanted to improve distribution links across the world in the grocery and health and beauty sectors.

Mauli found the Growth Hub - LLEP Business Gateway after searching the internet for business support in 2016, as she was looking to grow her business beyond her garage. After the initial enquiry, a business adviser from the Growth Hub made contact with Mauli, and her son Ash who had joined the business, to discuss their challenges and aspirations and put an action plan in place.

The Growth Hub provided industry contacts in human resources, employment, health and safety, marketing strategy and website development, opening doors Mauli didn't think were possible.

World Products Ltd has taken on two apprentices as a result, while other staff members have attended Business Gateway workshops, developing skills they didn't have the opportunity to previously.

World Products Ltd now employs 10 people and has recently moved to a new, larger facility, enabling global distribution

to countries including Japan, USA and Australia.

"What I found most beneficial is the way that Business Gateway has given us this injection of enthusiasm within the company. This enthusiasm has allowed us to see the bigger picture of where we are going and understand when we need to make calculated business decisions to take us to the next level. This has improved our sales, our structure and the overall commitment from our team."

Ash Shah –
Director of
World
Products
Ltd



JC Metalworks completed a strategic business review through the Manufacturing Growth Programme. The result has been a £1m surge in business, and plans to achieve £10m turnover by 2020 - a £3.3m increase on its current £6.7m order book.

"I'd recommend other companies get involved. The grant, and more importantly the knowledge it brings, can make a major difference to your business."

Nick Oakland,
Managing Director
bit.ly/2hAJRyZ



Opulence Hair and Beauty House, with the help and advice from the Prince's Trust Better Off in Business programme, has grown as a new business.

"My business is gradually improving; I am gaining more and more new clients every week and feeling more and more positive. The Prince's Trust is helping me to achieve my goals and understand the standards I must achieve to be a success."

Rebecca Neal, CEO
bit.ly/2ca9buP



Food Attraction received expert advice and Collaborate grant funding of £18,846 to purchase a new flow wrap machine.

"From this investment we've seen a growth in supermarket sales and will create three new jobs."

Jake Karia,
Managing Director
bit.ly/2txfkv6

Both of the following ERDF funding calls are now open and will close on 23rd November.

£1.92m Innovation Call

The LLEP has a number of key projects either being delivered or coming on line under this investment priority. The Innovation Call is to help businesses to scale up, develop new products and/or bring them to market. Activities are sought under both investment priorities:

The barriers most often cited by businesses to being more innovative are related to the perceived costs associated with research and development. In Leicester and Leicestershire, 71% of businesses say that they make no financial investment in research and development. This proportion is higher still amongst micro enterprises, with 78% making no investment at all.

The aim of this fund is to invest in future technologies whilst encouraging a stronger relationship between our universities and research institutions, and our local businesses. This type of partnership has played an important part in helping MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone become one of the largest transport sector research and development technology park in Europe.

A second enterprise zone is currently being created across Loughborough and Leicester to support local businesses and build on local strengths in science and research. This enterprise zone will cover three sites, two in Loughborough and one in Leicester. It will create a science and hi-tech manufacturing-themed 'zone of excellence' to support new and growing businesses to bring their innovative ideas and products to market. The sites will have a focus on life sciences, space and engineering and energy. As a result projects that align and accelerate our enterprise zones will be welcome.

Investment Priority	Description
1a	Enhancing research and innovation infrastructure and capacities to develop research and innovation excellence, and promoting centres of competence, in particular those of European interest.
1b	Promoting business investment in research and innovation.

£6m Low Carbon Funding Call

Under this funding call the LLEP is looking for projects to support the low carbon sector though one or more of the following initiatives:

Low Carbon is one of the LLEP's priority sectors for economic growth. Element Energy and Cambridge Econometrics have been commissioned to prepare an energy challenge paper to develop and deliver the Energy Infrastructure Strategy and Implementation Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire.

Extensive research into current energy use has been carried out to model our future energy scenario and identify both opportunities and barriers to the growth of the sector.

The energy challenge paper aims to encourage further engagement and raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities for Leicester and Leicestershire's energy system. It has informed the Energy Infrastructure Strategy (published early October 2018), and in turn, the Local Industrial Strategy which will be developed over the coming months.

The Energy Infrastructure Strategy will guide future investment, ambition and openings for projects in the region. Clean growth will not only provide environmental benefits, but also the opportunity to drive economic growth both locally and nationally.

For further information go to www.llep.org.uk/strategies-and-plans/energy-infrastructure-strategy/ or contact Andy Rose at the LLEP at andy.rose@llep.org.uk

Investment Priority	Description
4a	Promoting the production and distribution of energy derived from renewable resources.
4b	Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in enterprises.
4c	Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings and in the housing sector.
4e	Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multimodal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures.
4f	Promoting research and innovation in, and adoption of, low-carbon technologies.

ERDF Future Funding Opportunities

When applying for funding from the ERDF, apart from IP-4a, the minimum amount that can be applied for is £500,000. This must be "matched" with a further £500,000 from the applicant, making the project worth a minimum of £1 million.

Under IP-4a only, the minimum amount that can be applied for is £250,000 ERDF / £250,000 match. All projects must plan to deliver activity over a maximum period of three years or less.

It is a two-stage process beginning with the submission of an outline application. Once this is assessed for eligibility and endorsed by the ESIF Committee regarding strategic fit,

applicants may be invited to submit a full application.

Before applying to the ERDF programme, it is advisable to speak as soon as possible to the LLEP's ESIF technical assistance team to discuss your proposal. They will be able to provide you with the right technical support as well as ensure that you refer to all of the correct ERDF or local documentation.

To book an appointment with the LLEP's Technical Assistance Team, contact **Mary-Louise.Harrison@llep.org.uk** or call **0116 4542944**

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To receive news and information about the LLEP's ERDF programme and activities please visit: www.llep.org.uk/newsletter



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