



Listening Learning Leading

Please do not re-apply for the Winter Support Grant if you previously applied to the scheme between 25 November and 16 December 2021.

Before reviewing the Eligibility advice and FAQs for the Winter Support Grant scheme Omicron Update (WSG), please review the below application advice:

Information on Acceptable Evidence

- **Please clearly label your evidence before uploading:** *i.e. label documents as “Happy Hair November Bank Statement”, or “Happy Hair Supplier Invoice 1”.*
- **All evidence provided should demonstrate a clear link to the business that you are applying on behalf of.** *Evidence should show the business name and details that allow us to independently verify the legitimacy of the documents provided if needed.*
- **We cannot accept evidence that does not demonstrate a clear link to your business or does not show relevant details.** *This includes photos or images of business cards, events, locations, or products.*
- **We are unable to accept bank statements as trading evidence if they do not include clearly labelled transactions or explanative documents.**
- **We cannot accept bank statements uploaded as Excel documents.**
- **Wherever possible, evidence should clearly demonstrate the link of your business to the district.** *If the link is not clear and obvious within your evidence, please ensure you provide an explanation of the link to the district within your application.*
- **If your business operates from a trading address that differs from its registered address, or alternative correspondence addresses are shown within evidence, please ensure the reason for this is clearly explained within your application, and that corroborating evidence is also provided:** *i.e. “the business is registered at our accountants address shown on our bank statement, but operates from a trading address within SODC as evidenced on invoices.*
- **Please note that applications may be rejected where a clear and obvious link to the district is not evidenced.**
- **Please note, the purpose of the application is for the applicant to prove their eligibility for the scheme by providing relevant evidence. **Where sufficient evidence is not provided, applications will be rejected.****

Eligibility Information and FAQs

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If your question is not covered by this list, please contact business.support@southandvale.gov.uk.

1. Who can apply for funding through the Winter Support Grants (WSG) programme?

The primary purpose of the WSG scheme is to support South and Vale based businesses that are continuing to face challenging trading conditions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic (including the Omicron variant).

Please note: For the purpose of this grant, a business is defined as “*carrying on a trade or profession, or buying and selling goods or services in order to generate turnover*”.

Applicant organisations must be based in and able to evidence a permanent trading address within the appropriate local authority boundaries.

We are offering funding under two different schemes, a Hardship Sector Grant, and Start-Up Grant, details as follows.

HARDSHIP SECTOR GRANT

Applications are invited from businesses that can evidence they are operating as a:

- Brewery, Winery, Distillery, including wholesalers within sector and Freelance professionals within sector
- English Language School
- Wholesaler in any sector

Or primarily within the following sectors:

EVENTS SECTOR

- Event Caterer
- Event Hire
- Events Logistics
- Event Organiser
- Event Security
- Event Technical services (including sound engineers, audio visual providers)
- Events Technology Supplier
- Event Venue Operator
- Exhibition Suppliers
- Wholesaler within sector
- Freelance professional within sector
- Supply Chain within sector

HOSPITALITY SECTOR (added for Omicron update)

- Bar
- Café
- Canteen
- Public House

- Restaurant
- Social Club
- Freelance professional within sector
- Wholesaler within sector
- Supply Chain within sector

LEISURE SECTOR (added for Omicron update)

- Dance/fitness Studio
- Golf Course/Driving Range
- Gym
- Indoor Playground (inc.softplay)
- Skating Rink
- Shooting/Archery venue
- Sports Courts
- Swimming Pool / water park
- Trampolining Centre
- Freelance professional within sector
- Supply Chain in sector
- Wholesale in Sector

PERSONAL CARE SECTOR (added for Omicron update)

- Barber
- Beauty and Hair
- Massage
- Nail
- Piercing
- Spa
- Tanning
- Tattoo
- Freelance professional within sector
- Supply Chain in sector
- Wholesale in Sector

THEATRE SECTOR

- Cinema
- Concert Hall
- Theatre
- Freelance professional within sector
- Supply Chain in sector
- Wholesale in Sector

TRAVEL & TOURISM SECTOR

- Accommodation Provider
- Holiday Park

- Travel Agent
- Travel Consultant
- Transport Provider
- Tour Operator
- Tour Guide
- Ticketing services
- Visitor Attractions
- Freelance professional within sector
- Supply Chain in sector
- Wholesale in Sector

WEDDING SECTOR

- Bridal Shop
- Wedding Caterer
- Wedding Florist
- Wedding Hair / Beauty Services
- Wedding Hire Company
- Wedding Organiser
- Wedding Performer
- Wedding Technician
- Wedding Venue
- Freelance professional within sector
- Supply Chain in sector
- Wholesale in Sector

Applications for the Sector Hardship Grant are invited from businesses operating primarily within the listed sectors. **Businesses will only be eligible where their main service falls within one of the above listed business types or sectors.**

The main service can be determined by assessing which category constitutes 50% or more of their overall income and applicants must be able to evidence that most of their revenue is derived from one of the business sectors above (on request).

START-UP GRANT

Applications are also invited from South and Vale based businesses, operating in any sector, **that began trading between the 1 April 2021 and 1 November 2021.**

Start-up applicants must be able to evidence **the date their business was legally established**, and detail how their business intends to use the grant funds.

2. Why is the funding limited to these categories?

The Councils have limited discretionary funding available. The Councils have used their discretion to offer support to a limited number of sectors, these are based on the Government's ARG scheme guidance for local authorities.

3. I do not qualify for either grant category, is there any alternative funding available?

For the latest information on the availability of Covid-19 business support grants, please visit our website at www.svbs.co.uk.

Application forms for the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant (OHLG) can be found on the [SVBS website here](#) from Midday on 19 January 2022.

The OHLG scheme is open to businesses offering in-person services, where the main service (50% or more of overall income) and activity takes place in a fixed rate-paying premises, in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors.

4. I am a sole trader and not a resident of South or Vale, but I have a mobile business operating in the area, can I apply?

To apply, sole traders must be a resident of the district, or **operate from within fixed commercial premises within the district** (backed by appropriate evidence, such as a premises lease or business rates bill).

Unfortunately, we cannot accept applications from sole traders based outside of the districts that operate mobile businesses within South or Vale's boundaries. This includes mobile businesses that are licensed by South Oxfordshire or Vale of White Horse District Councils.

5. Can charities apply for funding?

This grant fund is primarily aimed at businesses. For the purpose of these schemes, businesses are defined as carrying on a trade or profession or buying and selling goods or services in order to generate turnover.

If a charity has a trading arm engaged in buying and selling goods, or operates primarily within one of the sectors listed within the sector hardship grant, (i.e. a charity owned wedding venue) then we encourage an application for consideration.

6. Can town and parish councils apply for funding?

This grant fund is primarily aimed at businesses. For the purpose of these schemes, businesses are defined as carrying on a trade or profession, or buying and selling goods or services in order to generate turnover.

If a town or parish council has a trading arm engaged in buying and selling goods, or operates primarily within one of the sectors listed within the sector hardship grant, (i.e. a parish council owned wedding venue) then we encourage an application for consideration.

7. What is meant by wedding / event venue?

If requested, applicants selecting a wedding or an events venue as their business category must be able to evidence that the primary use of the facility is for weddings or specialised event hire (such as exhibitions or conferences).

8. I am applying as a start-up but have accessed previous Local Authority Covid Grant support schemes, can I still apply?

The start-up grant scheme is reserved for businesses that have not been able to access previous Covid grant support administered by Local Authorities. (Please note this excludes national covid support schemes such as those administered by the Arts Council, and those operated by independent organisations, including banks)

If your business operates within one of the sectors outlined for the Sector Hardship Grant, then you may consider applying for this grant stream instead.

9. Why can't funding be used as salary support for the business owner, or employees?

Government guidance for the Additional Restrictions Grant states "*ARG funding should not be used as a wage support mechanism*". Businesses are asked to declare that grants will not be used for this purpose at the declaration stage of the application form. Government organisations may undertake follow up checks as described in point 10 below.

10. Will any post-payment grant monitoring take place?

Due diligence checks may be undertaken by both the awarding council, and Government departments, including BEIS and HMRC, following award of a grant.

As per the privacy statement for the scheme, we will share your information with Central Government for reporting on what grants the councils have paid. We will share your information to enable the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to undertake research and evaluation of the grant scheme. You may be contacted by BEIS for research purposes.

To check and validate grant applications, your information may be shared with organisations such as Spotlight, cabinet office and National Fraud Initiative and the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN).

11. If my application is successful, will I need to repay the grant?

Grants issued under this scheme are not required to be repaid, unless paid in error by the Council, or because of fraudulent activity.

12. Are grant funds taxable?

Grant income received by a business is taxable and will need to be included as income in the tax return of the business. **Only businesses that make an overall profit once grant income is included will be subject to tax.**

13. Will I receive any updates on the progress of my application?

Winter support grant applications are being assessed as a single lot once the scheme has closed for applications.

Due to our limited resources in processing grants, we ask that businesses do not contact us specifically to seek an update on the progress of an application as we will not be able to service these types of requests.

Please be assured that all applicants will be informed of our funding decision as soon as possible, and all payments for the scheme will be completed before the 31st March 2022.

14. I have missed vital information from my application, can I edit or add information?

We ask that applicants ensure all information is correct and fully provided before submission. **Once you complete and submit the application form, you cannot amend, update, or otherwise edit your application.** If your application does not contain the requested information or evidence, it may be rejected.

Unfortunately, we are unable to offer the opportunity to apply for the scheme again, this is due to the timescales required for us to assess applications, and the deadline set by Government for full defrayal of funds under the scheme (funds must be defrayed by 31st March 2022).

Please note that as part of your application, you are asked to agree to the following condition: *“I understand that my application will be rejected if I do not provide the information requested on the application form in full, and that once my application has been submitted, I will no longer be able to edit or add information to my application.”*

15. For the sector specific grant, what do you mean by hardship?

The sector hardship grant seeks to support businesses facing ongoing challenges related to the pandemic. This may include but is not limited to debt incurred due to the pandemic, staffing, supply or logistics issues, increased costs, disruption to customer base, adaptations to premises.

16. Who can apply as a wholesaler?

Businesses in any industry who exist as a “merchant middleman”, i.e. a business that buys stock in bulk and sells mainly to retailers, merchants, or industrial, institutional, and commercial users mainly for resale or business use.

For this scheme, the wholesaler’s main cliental should not be the public. To qualify through this category, evidence provided should clearly show wholesale activity.

17. Who can apply as a visitor attraction?

Permanently established destinations, a primary purpose of which is to allow public access for entertainment, interest, or education rather than being primarily a retail outlet or a venue for sporting, theatrical or film performances.

Attractions that have been built purposely to attract visitors into that area.

18. How much funding will successful applicants be awarded?

The award will be based on our remaining funding divided by the number of successful applications received.

We're unable to confirm how much funding applicants will be paid at this stage, but successful applicants will receive a share of available funding up to a maximum of £15,000 per applicant.

The amount of funding awarded will be confirmed within offer letters that will be sent by email in March 2022.