

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN BOROUGH COUNCIL – ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRY (A2I) 2016/17

Background

- Assistance to Industry (A2I) is part of the Council's (BwDBC) capital programme and is used to award small grants to companies which support the authority's corporate priority of creating more jobs and supporting business.
- Initial expressions of interest/discussion with BwDBC helps to ensure fit with programme criteria, particularly the local authority's desire to support new job creation and activity in the **manufacturing/production sector**.
- Projects supported are predominantly those which cannot be met through other sources of funding (due to nature of expenditure, scale of project, timescales etc.). Visit <http://www.growthlancashire.co.uk> for further information regarding additional business support, and particularly <http://www.growthlancashire.co.uk/funding-and-support/lancashire-business-growth-fund/> for larger capital investments (£50,000 or more).
- BwDBC's management of A2I provides an opportunity to explore additional outcomes with local companies. Examples include: jobs for the borough's residents, work experience placements, skills support, Hive engagement (www.business-hive.co.uk), development of local supply chains, innovation and employee health & wellbeing.
- Funding decisions will be taken by BwDBC's Executive Member with responsibility for Growth and Prosperity, in conjunction with the Director of the department.
- The A2I programme is funded on an annual basis from 1st April to 31st March.

Indicative level of assistance

- A2I investment of **£2,500 plus an additional £1,500 for every full time equivalent job** (min. 30 hours per week) to be created as a result of the project.
- Typically, the A2I programme will not fund more than 20% of project costs up to a total maximum grant award of £10,000.
- Eligible expenditure includes machinery acquisition, property improvements, building expansions and infrastructure improvements.
- Where new employment may not be created, the Council has discretion to consider projects which meet other factors including employment safeguarded, improved business performance and innovation.
- The time to process each application will be largely dependent upon the time it takes an applicant to provide all of the information required. Upon receipt of all information, BwDBC will endeavour to notify applicants of a decision within 2 weeks.

Project approvals

- All grants are discretionary.
- **Any expenditure which successful applicants incur prior to acceptance of a formal written offer of financial assistance from BwDBC will be regarded as ineligible for A2I funding. Likewise, new jobs created prior to a formal offer will not be counted towards the project's outputs.**
- Typically, 50% of the grant award will be paid by BwDBC upon the applicant's defrayment of all project costs, with the remaining 50% to be paid upon new employee's starting in post.
- Further details will be contained within the written offer letter.

Contact

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