Seed Fund Process

If you have any queries, please refer them to SeedFund@aberdeencity.gov.uk in the first instance.

STAGE 1: REFERRAL & ELIGIBILITY

i. Participants are referred to ABZWorks from Business Gateway via SeedFund@aberdeencity.gov.uk.
ii. ABZWorks assess initial eligibility (as stated in Annex A) and, if eligible, informs Business Gateway of decision.
iii. Business Gateway supports participant to develop Business Plan and Financial Forecast and submits via SeedFund@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

NB 1: Participants who come directly to ABZWorks will be referred to Business Gateway to be assigned and work with a business adviser.
NB2: **Eligibility**: SEED Fund eligibility is initially screened at referral stage; however, eligibility is not confirmed until Stage 2, when a full ABZWorks registration has been completed. Seed Funding is accessible to all who are eligible for ABZWorks support until SEED Funding is fully allocated. In addition, SEED Funds participants must have reasonable ***English Language*** skills and certain 'rules' apply. See Appendix A below for full eligibility criteria.

STAGE 2: APPLICATION, REGISTRATION & REVIEW

i. Business Gateway assesses and submits Business Plan and Financial Forecast to SeedFund@aberdeencity.gov.uk.
ii. ABZWorks contacts participant to arrange an appointment. Participants supported to complete ABZWorks Registration Form, Action Plan and Seed Fund Application Form. It is at this point full eligibility for ABZWorks is assessed.
iii. ABZWorks reviews the business plan and application form. Should additional information be required or any concerns identified, a meeting will be arranged with the participant to discuss.

NB: There are few hard and fast rules as to what Seed Funds can/can't be used for. However, funding can't be used to finance illicit or illegal activity or activity that Aberdeen City Council and Public Funding should not be associated with. See Annex B for further details.

STAGE 3: GRANT AWARD

i. Where SEED Fund applications are successful, funding is awarded via a Grant; the full value of the award is based upon the financial forecast accompanying the Business Plan.
ii. ABZWorks will go through Grant Letter, terms & conditions with participant and confirm their understanding of those.
iii. Participant accepts grant offer and returns signed grant agreement to SeedFund@aberdeencity.gov.uk.
iv. Grant recipients will be published on the Aberdeen City Council grant register.

Where Seed Fund applications are **unsuccessful**, ABZWorks will inform the participant and provide feedback – SEED Fund is not guaranteed and award is at the discretion of Aberdeen City Council. Providing false information to the council with the purpose of securing a grant may constitute fraud and require any money awarded to be returned.

Participant may resubmit once via Business Gateway.

We expect all SEED Fund recipients to register their business with HMRC.

STAGE 4: PAYMENT

Once applications are approved the participants bank details will be added to our payment system. Once added to the system, participant will receive payment in 3-5 days depending on bank.

STAGE 5: RECEIPTS

i. Participants must submit all receipts ASAP and within **6 months** of signing the Grant Letter.
ii. Receipts to be emailed directly to SeedFund@aberdeencity.gov.uk

ANNEX A

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SEED FUNDING

Seed Funding is normally accessible to all who are eligible for ABZWorks support.

Businesses can apply at pre-start stage or within the first 3 months of trading.

1. Aberdeen City residents. You can use postcode checker to confirm: https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council

2. People who are unemployed, i.e. not participating in education*, learning*, training or employment, and also have at least one barrier to employment as detailed in section 5 below.

*The only exception to this is individuals who are undertaking ESOL classes at NESCol or through Aberdeen City Council and who meet the broader eligibility criteria.

3. Right to Work: Eligible participants must also have the right to live and work in the UK.

4. Age: Seed Fund Participants must be **16-66.**

5. Barriers to meet <u>All-Age Support</u> Eligibility

- Above 50 years of age
- Armed forces veteran
- At risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Care experienced young person
- Criminal convictions
- Disability
- From employment deprived areas
- Homeless or affected by housing exclusion
- Living in a household with children in poverty
- Living in a jobless household
- Long-term physical illness/ condition
- Long term unemployed
- Low skilled
- Material deprivation
- Mental health issues
- Migrants
- No or limited work experience
- Primary carer of child/ children (under 18) or adult
- Recently made redundant (within the last 12 months)
- Refugee
- Substance related conditions

5. Barriers to meet <u>Parental Employability Support</u> Eligibility

Parents** who are unemployed or experiencing in work poverty and meet one of the following criteria:

- Lone parents
- Parents with a disability or families in which there is a disabled child
- Parents with 3 or more children
- Parents from a minority ethnic background
- Parents with a child under 1
- Parents who are aged 25 and under

**Parents must have the primary responsibility of their child(ren) who are living with them and under the age of 18 years old.

6. English Language: SEED Funds participants must have reasonable *English Language* skills. If they do not, we can offer to support them *first* with ESOL training before they can be considered for Seed Funds.

7. SEED Fund is not guaranteed and award is at the discretion of Aberdeen City Council. Providing false information to the council with the purpose of securing a grant may constitute fraud and require any money awarded to be returned.

ANNEX B

There are few hard and fast rules as to what Seed Funds can/can't be used for. However, funding can't be used to finance illicit or illegal activity or activity that Public Funding should not be associated with. Any eligible start-up business can only be funded once. Applicants who have been declared bankrupt and have not yet been discharged are not eligible for SEED Fund support. Prior to the business plan being submitted, all participants must attend a minimum of 2 Business Gateway events or workshops to develop their skills and increase knowledge on starting and running a business.

Some examples are provided below. This is a living document; the lists are not exhaustive and will be kept updated as further examples arise. Eligible spend is at the discretion of the council.

Eligible Spend	**Prohibited Spend**
• Equipment including furniture / fittings e.g. shelving • Trade licences • Training programmes for certification or continuous professional development (CPD) • Consumable items for services e.g. beauty products, art materials, photography paper/frames etc • Administrative products e.g. stationery • Social media • Marketing activity • Digital equipment and licences	• Animals (pets or livestock) • Alcohol • Drugs inc. tobacco • Profanity items • Sex Industry activity • Vehicles of any kind including ebikes & scooters • Upgrades to home to include working premises e.g. garden huts • The sales of supplements / holistic medications