FACT PACK

South East LEP Funded COVID-19 Recovery Fund Projects

Starting and Succeeding in Business

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01   INTRODUCTION

As part of the SELEP COVID-19 Business Support Fund, WSX Enterprise are delivering two programmes over the next year (June 2021- June 2022) on behalf of SELEP.

The programmes are free for qualifying businesses within the SELEP region.

- For Starting and Succeeding in Business – the beneficiaries must have a proposal that has the potential to operate during and/or beyond a COVID 19 climate and/or have lost their job as a direct result of COVID 19
- For Adapting with Digital – the beneficiaries must be looking to adapt and innovate through digitisation to remain viable during and/or beyond a COVID 19 climate.

There are more to the two programmes than just events/courses, and this will include grants which will be made available around October/November 2021 for those businesses who have met the eligibility criteria.

PROGRAMMES

Starting and Succeeding in Business
This will be an online-only series of business start-up courses, 1-2-1's and a specialist week-long event supplemented by a 24/7 Start-up App and portfolio of learning materials. This programme is designed to complement the SELEP region's existing business support infrastructure.

Adapting with Digital
A programme of business support driven by a 100% online delivery model consisting of awareness events, masterclasses/workshops, 1-2-1's, specialist week-long events and a pool of online support resources. This programme is designed to complement the SELEP region's existing business support infrastructure.

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STARTING AND SUCCEEDING IN BUSINESS

PRE-STARTS OR START-UPS

What is it?

A package of learning, advice and mentoring along with full support for new entrepreneurs to ensure greater survival and build resilience in their business.

Online programmes consisting of:
- Two business start-up courses
  - **Business Start-Up Programme** (BSUP)
  - **Business Success Programme** (BSP)
- 1-2-1 consultations
- specialist week-long event
- 24/7 start-up app
- portfolio of online learning materials.

Who is it aimed at?

- **Business Start-Up Programme (BSUP)** - An individual with a business idea who is serious about starting (but not yet registered as a company or sole trader) as well as anyone who has been made redundant or is unemployed as a result of COVID-19 and is considering starting up a business.

- **Business Success Programme (BSP)** - Start-ups or those that have completed the BSUP.

- Be located in either East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway or Southend or Thurrock (subject to Postcode Checker).
- Social Enterprises, Community Interest Companies and charities engaged in economic activities are also eligible.

What is the eligibility?

Business Start Up Programme (BSUP)

- Beneficiaries must be located or trading in East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and/or Thurrock (subject to Postcode Checking) and can include Social Enterprises, Community Interest Companies and charities engaged in economic activity
- Basic Business Diagnostic completed via 1-2-1 conversation to determine business support need
- Beneficiaries must have a realistic proposal/ business idea that has the potential to operate during and/or beyond a COVID 19 climate and/or have lost their job as a direct result of COVID 19 (i.e. re-starts)
- Basic business plan (two-pager) to be completed by the start-up and reviewed by a project advisor
- For re-starts, referral from DWP/JCP is accepted (subject to meeting the above criteria as well)
- Beneficiaries eligible for the BSP may be onboarded to the BSUP if they would benefit from inclusion, subject to discussion with a project advisor

Business Success Programme (BSP)

- Beneficiaries must be Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) start-ups registered and operating in East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and/or Thurrock (subject to Postcode Checking) and can include Social Enterprises, Community Interest Companies and charities engaged in economic activity
- Start-ups for the purposes of this programme are SMEs with either sole trader status or be registered with Companies House that have been trading for up to three years; support recipients must be the sole trader, or the owner or an agreed representative from the registered business
- Beneficiaries must have the potential to operate during and/or beyond a COVID 19 climate and/or have lost their primary employment as a direct result of COVID 19
- Businesses who have attended the BSUP course are eligible to attend the BSP course once they are officially registered as a business

How can it be accessed?
- All online
- Events/Resources hosted on Eventbrite
- WSX app made available on the South East Business Hub website

How will end-users be identified?
Through SELEP and Growth Hub communications channels and intermediary partners. The events and 121 consultations will act as an additional resource to the region

What will it cover?
Each business signing up will have access to:
- **Initial 1-2-1** (1-hour minimum) – undertake initial diagnostic
- **Courses**:
  - Business Start-up Programme (BSUP) webinar course (for pre-starts and start-ups if required)
  - Business Success Programme (BSP) webinar course (for start-ups or once completed BSUP)
- **Post-course 1-2-1** (1-hour minimum)
- **Ongoing 1-2-1 support** available via zoom meeting
- **Ongoing 1-to-many support** available via WhatsApp chat, zoom meetings, Facebook group
- **Support for grant applications**
- **Evaluation 1-2-1**

GRANTS

All programme attendees will be provided with access to the grants information and guidelines. Grants will become available in October/November 2021.

All businesses must have received 3 hours of support from the programme (to include a 1-2-1) as the basic requirement to apply for a grant.

Grant applications will be via an online Expression of Interest form in October/November 2021. If the company is eligible, it is will then be passed to the Grant Administrator for them to contact the applicant to gather supporting evidence.

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PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Business Start Up Programme (BSUP)

Part 1 – Researching Your Business
- How to take a step back, before spending any money or time, and really focus on the viability of the business idea
- Identifying potential customers, researching the market and analysing the competition

Part 2 – Planning Your Business
- Understand the necessity of writing a business plan and what to include
- Evaluate the business strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- Looking at how much money is realistically needed to start the business
- Examine various sources of funding and finance for the business
- Suppliers, pricing and insurance

Part 3 – Setting Up Your Business
- Legal status
- Develop an understanding of business finance

Part 4 – Marketing Your Business
- Building the brand
- Website basics
- Marketing
- Social media basics
- Launch planning

This comprehensive two-day workshop will provide information and guidance to help deal with the key issues that are going to be fundamental to setting up and succeeding in business. They are delivered by experienced start-up Business Growth Consultants – real business people who will provide the opportunity to ask questions and invite discussion. The workshops are provided for people planning on starting a business and those who have no previous experience of running a business.

Business Success Programme (BSP)

(Pre-starts will be able to access this once they have attended BSUP and registered their business)

Part 1 – Plan Your Business
- How to format a business plan by answering five key questions

Part 2 – Develop Your Brand
- How to incorporate your brand values into marketing material and ensure brand consistency across all marketing activities.

Part 3 – Grow Your Business
- Understand the 'customer journey' and how to create loyal returning customers and brand ambassadors.
- How to select specific key initiatives to grow the business and how to plan marketing activities throughout the year.
- How to provide outstanding customer service and delight customers to maximize customer referrals and reviews.

Part 4 – Manage Your Business
- Learn the rhythm of the business and how to best start moving with it.
- Prioritisation, effective short, medium and long term planning and how to avoid becoming a firefighter in the business.

Both two-day workshops will be delivered over two non-consecutive days in four key online sessions of one and a half hours with a plenary session at the end of each day to wrap everything up. Sessions will be supported with downloadable and printable resources which you will then complete in supported individual development sessions. The Business Growth Consultants will be available throughout the days to deal with questions and queries. Lunch and coffee breaks have been programmed to coincide with the individual development sessions.

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Post-Course 121s
Post-course 121s will be booked for all attendees following each course and will focus on business planning and assistance will be provided with the initial set-up of the business whether this be as a sole trader or a Limited Company.

Ongoing 121s
All attendees will be able to access ongoing 121s via telephone or zoom.

Ongoing 1 to many Support
It is proposed to hold a monthly zoom meeting for any attendees to join where they will have the opportunity to network, ask questions, and seek advice, support and clarification on any issues that they are experiencing. Attendees will also be added to the WhatsApp group at their request as well as a Facebook group.

ADAPTING WITH DIGITAL

What is it?
A programme of:
- 100% online business support
- online awareness events
- workshops/masterclasses
- 1-2-1s
- specialist week-long event
- a pool of online support resources

The programme aims to help businesses increase their digital capability to be more resilient and efficient. Utilising digital skills is crucial and can make a real difference to the competitiveness of the business.

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Who is it aimed at?
- Business owners or staff who want to explore and make step changes with digital.
- Key businesses who will drive growth in terms of GDP output
- Businesses that have the capacity to create jobs and grow within local communities
- Safeguarding jobs in businesses that are at risk of redundancies in these challenging times

What is the eligibility?
- Beneficiaries must be looking to adapt and innovate through digitisation, focussing on the benefits of online or cloud technologies in order to remain viable during and/or beyond a COVID 19 climate
- Be registered and operating in East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and/or Thurrock (subject to Postcode Checking)
- Beneficiaries must have either sole trader status or have been registered with Companies House and must evidence at least one year of trading history. They must be the sole trader, the owner or an agreed representative from the registered business.
- Social Enterprises, Community Interest Companies and charities engaged in economic activity are also eligible

How can it be accessed?
- All online
- Events/Resources hosted on sites like Eventbrite, zoom
- WSX app will be made available via the programme portal www.digital.wsxenterprise.co.uk

How will end users be identified?
Through SELEP and Growth Hub communications channels and intermediary partners.

What will it cover?
Each business signing up will have access to a portfolio of online events. They will raise awareness about the opportunities offered by different aspects of digital technology to transform the way a business operates, aiding business improvement, sustainability and growth.

Full Event Programme

- **Intensive support – 1-2-1** (1-3 hours dependant on need) - Support from digital specialists via online Zoom meetings to diagnose key technology issues and priorities with the development of an action plan

- **Workshops, Masterclasses and Events – Adapting With Digital Webinar Series** (2-hour sessions): held weekly, delivered by digital specialists and partnered by industry experts

- **Digital Week**

- **Marketing Leaders Forum**: A monthly meetup online of marketing leaders to help learn and share digital developments in the marketing world.

- **Online digital marketing show and networking** (You Are The Media) - access to learning events, networking and events from world-renowned marketing speakers

GRANTS

All programme attendees will be provided with access to the grants information and guidelines. Grants will become available in October/November 2021.

All businesses must have received a minimum of three hours of support including a 1-2-1 as the basic requirement to apply for a grant.

Grant applications will be via an online Expression of Interest form in October/November. If the company is eligible, it will then be passed to the Grant Administrator for them to contact the applicant to get together the correct supporting evidence.

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What is the eligibility for the Business Start-Up Programme (BSUP)?

- Beneficiaries must be located or trading in East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and/or Thurrock (subject to Postcode Checking) and can include Social Enterprises, Community Interest Companies and charities engaged in economic activity
- Basic Business Diagnostic completed via 1-2-1 conversation to determine business support need
- Beneficiaries must have a realistic proposal/ business idea that has the potential to operate during and/or beyond a COVID 19 climate and/or have lost their job as a direct result of COVID 19 (i.e. re-starts)
- Basic business plan (two-pager) to be completed by the start-up and reviewed by a project advisor
- For re-starts, a referral from DWP/JCP is accepted (subject to meeting the above criteria as well)
- Beneficiaries eligible for the BSP may be onboarded to the BSUP if they would benefit from inclusion, subject to discussion with a project advisor

What is the eligibility for the Business Success Programme (BSP)?

- Beneficiaries must be Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) start-ups registered and operating in East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and/or Thurrock (subject to Postcode Checking) and can include Social Enterprises, Community Interest Companies and charities engaged in economic activity
- Start-ups for the purposes of this programme are SMEs with either sole trader status or be registered with Companies House that have been trading for up to three years; support recipients must be the sole trader, or the owner or an agreed representative from the registered business
- Beneficiaries must have the potential to operate during and/or beyond a COVID 19 climate and/or have lost their primary employment as a direct result of COVID 19
- Businesses who have attended the BSUP course are eligible to attend the BSP course once they are officially registered as a business

What is the eligibility for grants for the Starting and Succeeding in Business Programme?

- All applicants must have met the basic eligibility criteria for the BSUP or BSP
- All businesses must have received three hours of support from the programme (to include a 1-2-1)
- Grant applications will be via an online Expression of Interest form. If the applicant meets the eligibility criteria above, supporting evidence will be requested and the full application is assessed by a grants panel.
- The application needs to receive 95 points or higher from the panel and across the scoring matrix to be awarded.
- Grants will be paid subject to evidenced defrayal by the beneficiary.
- Applicants must confirm that they are not in receipt of other de minimis aid that would exceed subsidy relief thresholds

What is the eligibility for the Adapting with Digital Programme?

- Beneficiaries must be looking to adapt and innovate through digitisation, focussing on the benefits of online or cloud technologies in order to remain viable during and/or beyond a COVID 19 climate
- Be registered and operating in East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and/or Thurrock (subject to Postcode Checking)
- Beneficiaries must have either sole trader status or have been registered with Companies House and must evidence at least one year of trading history. They must be the sole trader, the owner or an agreed representative from the registered business.
- Social Enterprises, Community Interest Companies and charities engaged in economic activity are also eligible

How about a business that is registered outside of the SELEP region but trades within it?

As long as the business can prove that it's main source of trade is from within the SELEP region they would be eligible, but if you are unsure, please do contact us:

selep-referrals@wsxenterprise.co.uk

- As an example, a business registered with their accountant who is outside of the area but they have a franchise that only allows them to operate within a radius around Chelmsford would be eligible

When will we get more information on the grants available?
We are working on having the grants available around October/November and will provide you with more details as soon as we have them.

When will we get details on the dates of the events/courses?
We will be setting up a media distribution list from where we will share social media content and an up-to-date list of events each week. Events will constantly be added and shared with you via a bi-weekly social media and events email. Events will also be listed on our portal www.digital.wsxenterprise.co.uk

Can a business take advantage of both programmes Starting and Succeeding in Business and Adapting with Digital?
Yes, as long as they meet the eligibility criteria for both.

What are the six themes within the DNAsix framework? (Part of the Adapting with Digital programme)
- Strategy, Culture, Content, Community, Advertising, Data

Are there any restrictions on previous support received?
No.

Is there a limit in terms of how long a business has been trading for the BSP?
There is no lower limit, so they can join the programme as soon as they are registered, but there is an upper limit of trading for three years to still be considered a start-up.

Will the app be available for those signing up and when will the app be available?
Yes, the app will be accessible on www.digital.wsxenterprise.co.uk for anyone registering for the programmes. This should be available by the 1st August.

What is the referral process for each programme?
Please send all referrals through to selep-referrals@wsxenterprise.co.uk

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Post programme completion, will attendees be referred back to their respective Growth Hubs for ongoing support? What does that process look like?
Yes, on completion of the programmes we will email the attendee and provide details of the growth hubs for them to get in contact with should they need help either immediately or in the future

How do I have a conversation about grants?
Grants will become available in October/November time. In order to access them, businesses will have had to have engaged with us. If someone is interested in the possibility of a grant it is best to ask them to make contact with us directly and we can take it from there.

How about social media for us to share?
We will add you to our 'media distribution' list which will send out social media content for you weekly. This will have social media ready for you to share, or for you to reshare from SELEP social media directly.

I have an excellent case study I'd like to share with you.
Please do share any great stories that you have from businesses that have used these programmes, these will enable us to further our reach and help even more businesses within the SELEP region

What if I have any questions?
WSX will be hosting monthly 'drop in' sessions via Teams for you to come along and get the latest updates as well as ask any questions you might have. In between these meetings, please do get in touch with Robyn Brookes on Robyn.Brookes@WSXEnterprise.co.uk and 07563 027160

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