

WEST SUSSEX SUPERFAST CONNECTION GAP-FUNDING OPPORTUNITY EXTENDED

West Sussex business estates and clusters of business have until 17 April 2016 to apply for a grant to enable superfast broadband connection

Potential applicants are also invited to find out more about the Digital Connectivity Grant programme at a workshop to be held at the South Downs Centre in Midhurst in early March.

WHO CAN SUBMIT AN APPLICATION?

To be eligible for the grant, businesses must not have access to superfast broadband and are not included in any commercial or publicly-funded rollout.

The application can be made by a lead business representing a group of businesses in a common location, or by landowners, land agents, estate managers and facility managers, for example.

Eligible groups of business include business parks, trading or industrial estates, farm diversification schemes, clusters of businesses in a common location and single business locations with high economic impact. The programme is not open to residential applicants, but clusters of home-based businesses in a common location potentially could apply.

WHAT WILL THE GRANT COVER?

The maximum grant is 40% of the total project cost, with grant funding of between £10k and £25k. This can only be used for capital purchases. The applicant provides a minimum of 60% of the total cost, however this can include revenue costs. Full project costs must be incurred by 31 December 2016.

Generally the applicant will select the best technology for their location. Fibre, wireless and hybrid solutions will be considered, but it must provide certified speeds of a minimum 30Mbps.

WHAT NEXT

Business estates or clusters in West Sussex have until midnight on 17 April 2016 to apply to second round of the Digital Connectivity Grant Programme.

To find out if your business is in an eligible location and to book a place at the Digital Connectivity Grant workshop, or if you have any questions, please email

broadband@southdowns.gov.uk

Find out more at <http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/helping-business-growth/grant-funding>

See over for more about the grant

MORE ABOUT THE GRANT

£225,000 is being made available as part of a pilot grant project to improve connectivity for groups of businesses in West Sussex.

To be eligible, businesses must not have access to superfast broadband and are not included in the planned delivery of the publicly funded roll out by Better Connected, a partnership of West Sussex County Council, BT and BDUK (the government department responsible for broadband delivery).

The funding comes from the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Deal under their 'Growth is Digital' project.

The programme has been developed by Rural West Sussex, Gatwick Diamond, Coastal West Sussex, West Sussex County Council and the South Downs National Park Authority.

Grant applications will be assessed by the programme panel, who will assess value-for-money, economic impact and deliverability.