



Create Growth Programme

Frequently Asked Questions



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire



Innovate
UK

Who is eligible?

To be eligible for support under the programme, you must meet the following criteria:

- Registered as a business on Companies House.
- Trading or registered within one of the following areas: Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield.
- Operating across one of the following creative sectors: advertising and marketing, architecture, crafts, design and designer fashion, film, TV, video, radio and photography, IT, software and computer services (including gaming), publishing, museums, galleries and libraries, music, performing and visual arts. West Yorkshire Combined Authority has a particular interest in certain subsectors – convergent screen technologies, TV and film, gaming, music, fashion/textiles – but these will not be an exclusive criteria for the programme.
- This programme is aimed at generating investment in businesses with the following 'high-growth potential' characteristics:
 - turnover growth of 10% year-on-year over approximately three years (including either prior to or during the pandemic)
 - employing a minimum of 2 people over the last two years (full-time, part-time or freelance)
 - created a revenue generating product, launched a new platform or service or reached a market of scale
 - generated sales revenue in the last 2 years.

However, if your businesses has some but not all of these characteristics, we may still consider it for the programme if we believe it has the potential to become investment-ready as a result of participating in the programme.

I'm a freelancer/sole trader, can I apply?

Not as a freelancer/sole trader – but you can if you are also a company founder and/or director. This programme is designed for businesses to become investment ready, so entities are required to be legally constituted and registered with Companies House.

I'm not a founder/director, can I take part as a company representative?

No. We require participation from senior-level decision-makers in order to take full advantage of the programme.

I'm a Charity / Community Interest Company / not-for-profit, can I apply?

We know from experience that the legal structure of Community Interest Companies (CIC) and charities can exclude them from some types of investment. Please discuss your investment and growth ambitions with the programme team.

Are there any other eligibility criteria?

The programme is open to businesses in West Yorkshire from the full breadth of the creative industry sectors as listed above. The programme team, consulting with the diagnostic panel, will use balancing criteria to select businesses if there are more applications than available places on the programme.

There is an existing strategic focus in the region, so we are particularly interested to hear from companies working in the following target disciplines or sub-sectors: convergent screen technologies, TV and film, gaming, music, fashion/textiles. However, this will not exclude businesses operating in the wider creative sectors.

What is a creative business?

For the purpose of this programme a creative business is a company registered with Companies House with creativity at its heart. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) definition of creative industries includes: Advertising and Marketing; Architecture; Crafts; Design and Designer Fashion; Film, TV, Video, Radio and Photography; IT, Software and Computer Services (including Gaming); Publishing; Museums, Galleries and Libraries; Music, Performing and Visual Arts.

What are the balancing criteria?

Balancing criteria include:

- stage of business and the company's potential for 'high growth'
- target sub-sector
- founder/owner demographics locations within the West Yorkshire area. that are under-represented in the overall applications.

I have a West Yorkshire business but my company is registered outside of the region for accounting reasons, can I still apply?

Yes, companies may be operational in West Yorkshire but formally registered elsewhere, for example for accounting purposes. If this is the case we will require evidence of your activity in West Yorkshire. This could be an operational base, being part of the creative ecology, or having employees situated here, or other evidence of significant activity.

When can I apply?

Applications to the programme are now open. Submit your application here:

www.wearecreative.uk/support/regional-growth-programmes/west-yorkshire-create-growth-programme/

When does the programme start?

The programme is due to commence from July 2025 - and complete by December 2025.

I don't know if I am ready for the programme but I am interested in learning more?

Please fill in an Expression of Interest form and one of our team will contact you to find out more about your business ambitions. If we decide together that this programme isn't a good fit for the stage your business is currently at, we will make referrals and sign post you to other opportunities wherever possible.

We will be running virtual open access events and attending in-person events in the region where you can meet the programme team and hear more about the programme. Check out our News page for live events and pre-recorded information.

Is West Yorkshire Create Growth Programme a grant programme?

No. However, as part of the Create Growth national programme, Innovate UK are running funding competitions to facilitate business growth in the selected regions. Companies on our cohorts will be signposted to relevant Innovate Competitions.

What's it going to cost?

West Yorkshire Create Growth Programme is funded by DCMS and there are no costs for selected applicants. However, successful companies will not be reimbursed for their own time and may be required to contribute to the costs of associated travel.

Am I guaranteed to secure an investor and how much investment will I receive?

No investment is committed or guaranteed through the programme. Applicants will have an opportunity to present their investment proposal to private investors.

What type of investors are involved?

The programme will connect you to a range of investors with experience across multiple sectors, not just creative industries. You will have the opportunity to engage with suitable investors from angels to institutional funds.

Where does the programme take place?

West Yorkshire Create Growth Programme will be a hybrid programme with both virtual and in-person engagements. At all times we will follow public health guidelines. In-person events will be held within the West Yorkshire region.

How much time would I have to commit?

West Yorkshire Create Growth Programme's purpose is to support companies who are preparing for their investment journey.

As investment is a critical part of a company's growth journey, we expect cohort members to stay with the programme from start to completion. This activity will be, on average, 2 days a month over a period of 6 months.

What will I get out of the programme?

Subject to your commitment throughout, by the end of the programme you will have, at minimum, an investment strategy and proposal designed to solicit growth capital. Companies will also benefit from informal discussions with appropriate investors to help shape their investment proposal.

How long will it take the team to assess my Expression of Interest?

Please allow up to 4 weeks for a member of the team to get back to you regarding a submitted Expression of Interest.

Why is this programme only available to creative businesses?

The creative industries are recognised as a high growth and innovative sector in the UK. However, historically, they have struggled to get growth investment and face unique barriers to securing equitable funding, especially outside of London. The Create Growth Programme is designed with skills, growth, and knowledge support tailored to the industry, to address these specific challenges.