

Regeneration & Economy Service

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Dear Oxford City Centre business

## 1. Are you eligible and have you applied for the coronavirus business support grants made available via your local Council?

Oxford City Council is processing payments now for business support grants and is currently paying out a combined total of around £1m in grants a day to eligible businesses. However, to receive payment, you'll need to complete the Business Rates Grant form at: <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/businessgrants>

Our team is processing the following grants:

- Small businesses in Oxford that pay little or no business rates because of small business rate relief (SBRR) and tapered relief, are eligible for a grant of £10,000
- Businesses in retail, hospitality and leisure are now eligible for a grant of up to £25,000 per property.

Additional guidance on eligibility for both grants, including the sectors that are eligible, can be found [here](#). Please check to see if your business qualifies.

We want to get this funding to qualifying businesses as quickly as possible. If, having read the guidance, you think your business is eligible for one of the grants, please provide us with the basic information needed to ensure prompt payment of the grant by following the link and completing our simple questionnaire at [www.oxford.gov.uk/businessgrants](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/businessgrants). We need to capture this information to be able to pay the funding into your bank account. We will not be able to pay by cheque.

In addition, please note that all businesses in retail, hospitality and leisure will not have to pay business rates for the 2020/21 tax year. *This will be adjusted by the Oxford City Council business rates team and qualifying businesses need take no action on this measure. If you have not received an adjusted Rates demand notice by 13<sup>th</sup> April and you think your business should qualify for a rates reduction under this category, please email [brates@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:brates@oxford.gov.uk) with your account details.*

## 2. Is your business covered by recent changes to Government-announced funding measures?

These include amendments to the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS):

- current loan scheme extended so more small businesses can benefit
- lenders banned from requesting personal guarantees on loans under £250,000
- a new scheme announced to bolster support for larger firms previously ineligible for loans.

The updated guidance can be found at:

<https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme/>

Also:

- We continue to encourage Oxford businesses to check the Government's business support website at <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support/> which is regularly updated.



- HMRC is running a series of webinars to support businesses, people who are self-employed, and employees, through this period. For details of what is available please check: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-and-support-if-your-business-is-affected-by-coronavirus-covid-19>
- There is also an FAQ section about business closures and the 'stay at home' policy which can be found here: <https://bit.ly/FAQsStayHome>

### 3. Can your business help as a supplier with immediate priorities in the Covid-19 response?

The Government is encouraging businesses that think they may be able to help to sign up and let them know how they can contribute. The support needed includes:

- medical testing equipment
- medical equipment design
- protective equipment for healthcare workers, such as masks, gowns and sanitiser
- hotel rooms
- transport and logistics, for moving goods or people
- manufacturing equipment
- warehouse or office space, for medical use or storage
- expertise or support on IT, manufacturing, construction, project management, procurement or engineering
- social care or childcare.

If your business can help with projects (a) to (i) above, please sign up via [COVID response](#). Specifically, if you are in a position to help with (d) hotel rooms, our Housing team would be very pleased to hear from you via [housingneeds@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:housingneeds@oxford.gov.uk)

**4. Do you have stories in your business of innovation, collaboration and community support that we can share with others via our communication platforms?** It would be great to know, partly because others might be able to benefit, or do something similar that would help the overall response, but also because we know from feedback we're getting that businesses and residents are pleased to read or hear positive stories. Do let us know by email to [economicdevelopment@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@oxford.gov.uk)

**5. Are there priority issues facing your business now that you would like to raise with central Government or your local Council?** Oxford City Council and a range of partner organisations continue to collate information about the effectiveness of the business support measures announced so far. In particular we are keen to identify business types or sectors that are missing support from key initiatives or who are finding the support that has been announced difficult to access. Please let us know by email to [economicdevelopment@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@oxford.gov.uk)

Kind regards,

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Oxford City Council

