

Small Business Brexit Support Fund

Since 15 March, smaller businesses can apply for grants of up to £2,000 to help them adapt to new customs and tax rules when trading with the EU. The £20 million SME Brexit Support Fund enables traders to access practical support, including training for new customs, rules of origin and VAT processes.

This also includes helping businesses prepare for the new import controls coming into force from April and July, as set out in the Border Operating Model. New import controls will be introduced in three stages up to 1 July 2021 to allow traders and hauliers time to adjust to new processes. This means businesses do not have to complete new import declarations for up to six months, unless they are moving controlled goods.

Small and medium sized businesses that trade solely with the EU – and are therefore new to importing and exporting processes – are encouraged to apply for the grants.

The fund, originally announced in February by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, is the latest in a round of government support for UK trade.

Mr Gove said:

“The Government has listened carefully to the issues raised by the business community through the Brexit Business Taskforce and that’s why we are bringing forward this financial support to help small businesses adapt to the changes to our trading relationship with the EU. This

new targeted funding will see small businesses get more of the practical support they need to adjust to the new processes and prepare for further changes as we implement our own import controls in April and July. Together we will seize new opportunities available to a fully independent global trading United Kingdom.”

To be eligible, businesses must import or export goods between Great Britain and the EU or move goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.



Members of the Brexit Business Taskforce have welcomed the additional support. Mike Cherry, National Chair at the Federation of Small Businesses, said:

“This announcement is very significant. Small businesses, often with few cash reserves, are for the first time facing complex new customs processes, VAT requirements and rules of origin. While many have come to FSB for help, we have been asking for proper financial assistance of this scale, so that a cash-strapped small business can afford to buy-in expertise, training and practical support. The new fund will make a significant difference, and we are pleased that Ministers have really engaged with us on this, and come up with an excellent response.”

More information about the SME Brexit Support Fund can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

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