



**Business Events Growth Programme
International Delegate Growth**

Guidelines 2020/21

12 May 2020

Introduction

The International Delegate Growth strand of the programme helps growing the international attendance and profile of recurring business events held in the UK

Financial support is available to recurring business events that are held in the UK, up to the value of £20,000 gross per event. Funds would be to support the growth in international attendees at the event, growing its economic benefit through additional international visitor spend, and also through encouraging greater international trade and investment potential for the UK. Exceptional proposals requiring more than £20,000 per bid, backed by a strong business case may be considered on a case by case basis (subject to available funds). In exceptional circumstances we may consider proposals requiring less than £5,000.

Funds could be used to support the following, indicative activities:

- International delegate marketing campaign through digital or trade media channels
- Attracting a high profile speaker that will be a draw card for international attendees (match-funding required)
- Targeted international trade delegations

These serve as examples and VisitBritain welcomes suggestions from applicants on further ideas to attract international delegates.

The following types of activities will not be supported:

- Business as usual costs (e.g. office rent, utilities)
- Compensation payments to employees for loss of office
- Payments that support activity intended to influence or attempt to influence Parliament, Government or political parties, or attempting to influence the awarding or renewal of contracts and grants, or attempting to influence legislative or regulatory action

You will need to set out what activities will be delivered, and by when, in your application as well as a project plan that highlights key delivery milestones and resource/budget allocation.

Eligibility

Support from the Business Events Growth Programme (BEGP) is determined via a submission and assessment process. Submissions will be assessed against mandatory eligibility criteria to ensure activities:

- Align with the Government’s priority sectors
 - Aerospace
 - Legal services
 - Agricultural technology
 - Maritime
 - Automotive
 - Nuclear energy
 - Creative industries
 - Oil and gas
 - Cyber security
 - Real estate
 - Education
 - Renewable energy
 - Engineering and manufacturing
 - Retail
 - Financial services
 - Space
 - Food and drink
 - Sports economy
 - Healthcare and life sciences
 - Technology

- Align with VisitBritain’s Business Events strategy
 1. Build the sector’s capability
 2. Grow international awareness & consideration
 3. Provide connections to international markets
 4. Support bids / existing events

- Have the potential to attract more than 250 visitors to the UK and have an international audience of at least 30%

- Are likely to deliver significant economic value to the UK

Mandatory Eligibility Criteria

All applications will be assessed against the following criteria. If the answer is ‘yes’ to all of the questions, then the event is eligible to apply. Before submitting your application, please ensure you have reviewed and addressed the following:

Will all the proposed grant funded activities occur in the financial year 2020/21?	Yes/No
<i>All items of expenditure must be concluded and claimed in arrears within the financial year ending on 31 March 2021. No pre-payments for activities being delivered in future financial years are permitted, but the event can take place a future financial year.</i>	
Is it a ‘business event’ for a professional, trade, B2B or academic audience?	Yes/No
<i>This includes tradeshows/exhibitions and conferences/congresses. Consumer/ B2C events, festivals, sport and other events are ineligible to apply.</i>	
Will the business event only be held in the United Kingdom?	Yes/No
Is the event recurring?	Yes/No
<i>Only recurring events qualify. Funding will be considered if the event is being held in the UK, but held outside of the UK on other years (e.g. UK won International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA) event).</i>	
Do more than 250 delegates currently attend the event?	Yes/No
<i>VisitBritain will consider events of a smaller size if the event is clearly for a very senior audience, i.e. CEO-level or equivalent.</i>	

Does the funding proposal seek to grow the international profile and attendance of your domestic event?	Yes/No
<i>To be eligible for support an increase of 20% delegate attendance should be achieved from an international audience (VisitBritain considers an 'international' event as one where at least 50% of total delegates/visitors are international (non-UK) visitors). Events that currently do not meet this benchmark must demonstrate how they intend to reach it through activity supported by the funds. Events that already meet this benchmark must indicate how this can be exceeded, and to what extent.</i>	
Does the event have the potential to further internationalise its profile and grow the international attendance through targeted activity?	Yes/No
Does the proposal seek to grow international visitor/ delegate and/or press audiences?	Yes/No
<i>This includes visitors/trade visitors, international buyer delegations / 'hosted' buyers, conference delegates and international press. Proposals that seek to grow exhibitors or sponsors will not be considered.</i>	
Does the event have large UK trade and investment potential; both during the event (international delegates attending) and also the potential for future trade and investment post-event?	Yes/No
Does the event clearly align with one of the priority sectors for UK industry?	Yes/No
Does this funding application support new, additional activities to grow international delegates at your event?	Yes/No
<i>The following does not qualify for support from the fund, activity already confirmed to take place, 'business as usual' costs, such as, but not limited to, help with running costs (e.g. rent, overheads, etc.), salaries for existing or new positions within your organisation and capital expenditure/replacing equipment or in retrospect of expenditure already made.</i>	
If successful, will event marketing activity incorporate approved GREAT Britain campaign branding?	Yes/No
<i>Any marketing activity funded by this programme will require the inclusion of approved GREAT Britain Campaign branding. GREAT showcases the best of what the country has to offer, to inspire the world and encourage people to visit, do business, invest and study in the UK. It is HM Government's most ambitious international promotional campaign ever, uniting the efforts of the public and private sector to generate jobs and growth for Britain. You will be given access to the brand guidelines assets and contacts to approve the brand's use. Any activities that could bring GREAT into disrepute do not qualify for support from the Programme.</i>	
If successful, will you be able to supply an evaluation plan that measures the success of funded activity?	Yes/No
<i>If your application is conditionally approved, you will need to provide and agree evaluation plan that includes robust methodology that measures tangible outputs and outcomes from all funded support. Reporting is not restricted to the funding period, and could take place in future financial year.</i>	
If successful, will you be able to provide the following, necessary information?	Yes/No
<i>Completed grant claims to draw down funding, which must include copies of invoices and receipts as evidence of payment. A project monitoring report alongside each grant claim highlighting all GREAT branding utilised e.g. marketing materials and good quality images from event activity including the GREAT brand.</i>	
Has your organisation received less than €200,000 (approximately £169,000 at the time of writing) in de minimis State Aid within the past 3 financial years?	Yes/No
<i>If your answer is NO to this question, we regret that you cannot proceed with an application. Support from this grant fund operates under the European Commission's State Aid Regulations which allows de minimis aid up to €200,000 over a rolling three-year financial period awarded by public bodies and local authorities. This value can be a combination of grants over the given period. Please note, if your application is successful, a de minimis State Aid Declaration from the organisation applying for support will be required before a grant can be awarded. In particular, such confirmation must specify that the organisation and the applicable project is state aid compliant.</i>	

(Criteria last update: March 2020)

If you are in doubt as to whether your application meets the Business Events Growth Programme criteria, please do not hesitate to contact VisitBritain at EventSupport@visitbritain.org for further assistance.

Who can apply

We welcome applications from all organisations, including but not limited to; event organisers, convention bureau/ destination management organisations, universities or associations. If you are delivering the event in partnership, please make this clear in your application.

Preference will be given to grant applications from SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises), those organisations who have less ability to access financing to support such growth activities or events which have potential for a high economic impact and increase in visitors. Government and the European Commission's definition of an SME, which defines it as an entity engaged in economic activity that employs fewer than 250 people, and has turnover less than or equal to €50 million; or has a balance sheet total of less than or equal to €43 million.

How to apply

1. Read the guidelines to familiarise yourself prior to completing your application for support. It describes where, when and how VisitBritain will consider offering financial support and the criteria that must be satisfied before this support will be offered.
2. Read the Mandatory Eligibility Criteria, to understand the key requirements for any event seeking support through the Business Events Growth Programme
3. Complete the Application Form, ensuring you answer all questions and including as many details as possible regarding the funding requested, and the Annex B, confirming de minimis aid received over a rolling three-year period
4. Take note of the stages and the time required before signing a Grant Funding Agreement and ensure that fits with your application.
5. During the assessment process, VisitBritain may require additional information and will communicate directly with applicants to obtain details as required
6. Be aware that submitting a request for support, regardless of whether the minimum criteria is satisfied, does not ensure that the support will be made available under this or any other initiative. VisitBritain, at its discretion, will determine where, when and how support will be offered and provided.
7. Once you have completed your application, please email it to EventSupport@visitbritain.org, with the following reference in the subject line: IDG/Event name.

Assessment

Applications will be considered by a Panel of industry experts, to determine successful applicants.

If successful, we will conduct a credit check on your organization and you will be requested to provide us mandatory information (i.e. Corporate Information and Organization Details including VAT registration number and recovery status, detailed Evaluation Plan) in order to complete a **Due Diligence & Fraud Risk Assessment**.

Please note, the assessment is a two-way process that can take up to **two months** after application. Bear this in mind when considering your activity.

Once the above documents are received and approved, we will draw up and sign a Grant Funding Agreement.

Please note

- This grant funding opportunity is being operated by VisitBritain as a de minimis scheme. At the time of application, you will need to submit a State Aid Declaration (Annex B). For further detail, please refer to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's (**BEIS**) **state aid manual**, which includes details of de minimis Regulations. **Please note any funds awarded must be within State Aid limits, as this fund is provided under de minimis aid.** If the total funding from State sources exceeds €200,000 de minimis aid over a rolling three-year period (at applicable exchange rate), then we are unable to award the grant.
- Applicants are advised that any marketing activity funded from this programme will require the integration of approved **GREAT Britain Campaign** branding. This Campaign showcases the best of what our whole nation has to offer to inspire the world and encourage people to visit, do business, invest and study in the UK. It is the Government's most ambitious international promotional campaign ever, uniting the efforts of the public and private sector to generate jobs and growth for Britain.
- Any activities that could bring the **GREAT Britain Campaign** into disrepute, do not qualify for support from this programme.
- Funding from this programme cannot be used to pay hosting fees.
- Grants will be paid in arrears on the basis of the actual reimbursement of eligible project costs. If successful, you will need to provide completed grant claims to draw down funding, which must include copies of invoices and receipts as evidence of payment, and a project monitoring report alongside each grant claim.

Find out more

For more information on the Business Events Growth Programme, please visit: www.visitbritain.org/business-events

For enquiries about the programme, please email EventSupport@visitbritain.org