|  |
| --- |
| **For office use only** |
| **Application Number** | **………………….…….…..../AU,BCU,WLV/………………………………….……/……………………….….***(number) (delete as appropriate) (month) /year)* |

***Data Protection***

*The details you provide on this form and subsequently provided to the Innovation Vouchers Programme will only be used in connection with services relating to the Programme and its partner organisations. The Innovation Vouchers Programme will input the information you provide onto a computer system and also a paper record for statistical and research purposes. We must protect the public funds we handle and so may use the information you have provided on this form to detect any irregularities. We may also share the information, for the same purposes, with other organisations that handle public funds. To ensure the continuous improvement of our services, we may contact you in the future for your comments about the Programme and our partner service.*

1. **Business Details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Business Name\* |  |
| Business Address\* |  |
| Business Postcode\* |  |
| Telephone Number\* |  | Mobile |  |
| Email Address |  |
| Website |  |
| Companies House Standard Industrial Classification Code (SIC Code) |  |

1. **Owners/Directors/Partners/Key Contacts**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Title\* | First Name\* | Family Name\* | Position\* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

1. **About Your Business**

|  |
| --- |
| What is the legal status of the Business? [please tick]\* |
| Sole Trader | □ | Partnership | □ |
| Limited Company | □ | Community Interest Company | □ |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Are you a part of Group | YES □ | NO □ | If yes, please confirm the percentage of ownership by another enterprise or the percentage of your ownership of another enterprise? |
|  |
| Nature of Business |  |
| Date Business started trading |  |
| How many people do you employ? (FTE) |  | What was your annual turnover in the last financial year? (£) |  |

1. **About Your Project**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What is the estimated value of the project you would like to fund? |  |
| Value of the Innovation Voucher  | £2,500 |
| Please provide a brief description of the project you would like the Innovation Voucher to fund |
|  |
| Explain how the Voucher will assist your company to develop a new product or process |
|  |
| Is the product or process you are trying to develop new to your company? | YES □ | NO □ |
| Is the product or process you are trying to develop new to the market? | YES □ | NO □ |
| It is important that the Innovation Voucher assists companies to invest in something additional. If you were going to make this investment anyway then there would be no new economic activity. Please explain clearly how this grant will assist you to make a new investment or will assist you to invest sooner, or to a larger scale than was originally planned. |
|  |
| Project start date |  | Project end date |  |
| ***Please note that failure to undertake the project and submit relevant evidence within the stipulated timeframe could lead to the withdrawal of the grant. The latest date that the project needs to be completed and all relevant evidence submitted is 28 February 2019.*** |

1. **SME Declaration**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Do you employ less than 250 people? | YES □ | NO □ |
| Is your annual turnover less than 50 million Euros? | YES □ | NO □ |
| Is your balance sheet total less than 43 million Euros? | YES □ | NO □ |
| All data must be related to the last approved accounting period and calculated on an annual basis. In the case of newly-established enterprises whose accounts have not been approved, the data to apply shall be derived from a reliable estimate in the course of the financial year. |

1. **De Minimis**

|  |
| --- |
| You are applying for assistance under the European Commission’s De Minimis Regulation (Regulation 69/2001). This allows a company to receive up to 200,000 Euros of public aid over a three-year period. To confirm that you are able to receive assistance from the Project, you must declare the full amount of any support you have received over the last 36 months. |
| Has the company received grants, consultancy support or state aid in the last 3 years? If yes, please provide further details below. | YES □ | NO □ |
| Date of payment | Name of provider | Purpose of funding/project | Amount (£) |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Value of the Innovation Vouchers Grant (£) |  |

1. **Declaration**

|  |
| --- |
| You need to agree to the following in order to receive assistance through the Programme |
| The total value of the Innovation Vouchers is £2,500 | □ |
| I confirm that the amount of state aid I will receive through the workshops / Innovation Vouchers Programme will not take the company over the allotted maximum amount allowed under state aid De Minimis rules every three year period i.e. 200,000 Euros | □ |
| I confirm that my company has an office base in Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Black Country or The Marches area | □ |
| I confirm that the company is not “in difficulty” as defined at 2.1 of the Community Guidelines and State Aid for Rescuing and Restructuring Firms in Difficulty (2004/C22/02) at the date of this declaration | □ |
| I will be providing an original paper invoice from the supplier of my choice; or I will be providing a certified copy of an original paper invoice or a signed copy of an electronic invoice. The invoice copies will be signed by a senior manager. If a paper invoice is received, this will be stored until 31st of December 2035. | □ |
| I understand that if this company is later found not to meet the above requirements the company may be required to pay back the value of the aid to the European Union. | □ |
| Business Signature(Managing Director / Finance Director / Owner / Senior Manager |  | Date |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Aston Business School Use Only** |
| **Application Status** | **Approved □** | **Refused □** |
| **Signature of the Project Manager of the Innovation Vouchers Programme** | **Date** |  |
| **Application Number*** the same number as on the front page
* give number only if application approved for funding
 | **…………..../BCU,WLV/……………../…………..***(number/delete as appropriate/month/year)* |
| **This Application seeks to achieve the following outputs:***C1: Number of enterprises receiving support**C2: Enterprises receiving grants**C4: Enterprises receiving non-financial support (12h)**C6: Private Investment Matching Public Support to Enterprises**C29: Enterprises supported to introduce new products to the firm* | **C1 □** | **C2 □** | **C4 □** | **C6 □** | **C29 □** |

1. **Monitoring Form**

|  |
| --- |
| The European Union, which is part funding the Innovation Vouchers Programme, requires evidence that the Programme activities are open to all. The information requested is provided on a confidential basis and we will only reveal it in aggregate form. The exception to this is in relation to Programme auditors who will be able to view all the Programme administration records. |
| Gender | Male □ | Female □ |
| Date of Birth |  |
| Nationality |  |
| How would you describe your ethnic origin? |
| **White****A** British □**B** Irish □**C** Any other white background □ | **Black or Black British****M** Caribbean □**N** African □**P** Any other black background □ |
| **Mixed****D** White and black Caribbean □**E** White and black African □**F** White and Asian □**G** Other mixed background □ | **Other ethnic groups****R** Chinese □**S** Other ethnic groups □Please specify: ……………………………..**Z** Not stated □ |
| **Asian or Asian British****H** Indian □**J** Pakistani □**K** Bangladeshi □**L** Other Asian background □Please specify: ……………………. |  |
| Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act as “a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The disability could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last at least 12 months. |
| Are you a disabled person as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act? | YES □ | NO □ |

1. **Attachment 1 Choosing Your Supplier**

|  |
| --- |
| It is expected that you will procure a supplier to deliver your project. This will need to be a knowledge base organisation or research institute i.e. public sector research establishments (PSRE) or equivalents (such as consultancies or specialist industry organisations), research and development organisations (RDOs), research and technology organisations (RTOs) higher education and further education institutions. Both public and private sector organisations in these categories can be used. Please contact the Innovation Vouchers Team if you are not sure whether an organisation/company meet these criteria. |
| We cannot give you the grant without a satisfactory procurement process being implemented. Note that the European Union has quite strict procedures regarding the procurement of suppliers. It is necessary to obtain three quotes and to choose the supplier based on best value for money. For projects valued over £25,000 you need to undertake a full competitive tendering process. This Programme is seeking projects valued less than £25,000. |
| You need to send a clear product/service specification to all the companies that you are requesting quotes from. You need to be clear how you have selected the three suppliers for quotes and you need to be clear how you have chosen between the quotes. We cannot give the final approval for the grant unless you can demonstrate that you have followed the procurement procedures.  |

1. **Attachment 2 Application Process for Innovation Voucher**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | Print out and complete the Application Form. Send a complete Application Form to the following email address:*bcuadvantage@bcu.ac.uk* | *For Applicant to check the box*YES □NO □ |
| 2. | Together with your Application Form you need to send us details of the supplier you wish to use accompanied by the three quotes you have collected along with a reason why you have selected your chosen supplier. To comply with this requirement please complete Procurement Justification Form (Attachment 4 to this Application) | *For Applicant to check the box*YES □NO □ |
| 3. | Aston University will review your Application for eligibility. | *For Aston University to check the box*YES □NO □ |
| 4. | Aston University will provide final approval for your voucher by email. | *For Aston University to check the box*YES □NO □ |
| 5. | Once you receive our approval you may start your project. The project must start AFTER the approval letter is sent to you and must be completed within the time agreed in the offer letter/email and claim submitted within 30 days of the agreed project completion date. | *For Applicant to check the box*YES □NO □ |
| 6. | You pay the supplier in full against the invoices sent to you. | *For Applicant to check the box*YES □NO □ |
| 7. | You send a certified copy of the supplier invoice along with evidence of payment (bank statement/BACS statement) to the Innovation Vouchers Project Team. You need to invoice Aston University. This needs to clearly state that the invoice is for an Innovation Voucher of £2,500. This invoice needs to be addressed to *Purchase Ledger, Aston University, Aston Triangle, B4 7ET.* You can send it electronically on fbsinvoices@aston.ac.uk A paper copy of this invoice also needs to be sent to innovation\_vouchers@aston.ac.ukYou need to ensure that any documents that if the documents you send to the Innovation Vouchers Project Team are not originals they need to be certified as true copies. In order to do this you need to provide the following statement on all relevant documents:*I certify that this is a true copy of the original document.* *Signed:**Date:**Position in organisation:**Name of organisation:* |  *For Aston University to check the box*YES □NO □ |
| 8. | Aston University pays you the £2,500 Innovation Voucher | *For Aston University to check the box* |

1. **Attachment 3 Procurement Process**

|  |
| --- |
| In order to meet European regulations you need to procure your supplier using the correct process. You need at least three quotes from potential suppliers. Remember these need to be knowledge base organisations i.e. public sector research establishments (PSRE) or equivalents (such as consultancies or specialist industry organisations), research and development organisations (RDOs), research and technology organisations (RTOs), higher education and further education institutions. Both public and private sector organisations in these categories can be used. Please contact the Innovation Vouchers Team if you are not sure whether an organisation/ company meet these criteria. There are a number of simple stages to go through: |
| 1. | Find out which organisations may be able to provide you with the assistance you need. It might be a good idea to find 5 or 6 organisations so that you can be sure you will receive a minimum of three good quotes/tenders. You may need to contact these organisations directly to check that they can provide the service that you require. Make sure that you review the range of suppliers available (don’t just consider approaching the ones you already know). |
| 2. | Write a clear specification detailing the support that you need and requesting a quote/tender for the work. As well as price, you may wish to ask for additional information such as a detailed breakdown of the different stages of the work, costing associated with the different stages, how many days will be spent on each aspect of the work, how quality will be maintained along with details of the professional background and expertise of the people carrying out the assignment. You will need to decide what information is most important for your project.  |
| 3. | Send **the same** specification to at least three organisations clearly stating the date by which you would like to receive quotes/tenders. |
| 4. | Decide how you are going to evaluate the quotes received. The usual way to do this is to assign a certain number of points for different components of the specification. Remember that you do not necessarily need to choose the lowest priced quote/tender but you do need to choose a supplier who offers good value or money. If you are not making a selection based on price alone then you need to have a very good reason why the selected supplier was better value for money. Note that you cannot use reasons like “we have used them before” or “we already know them”. These would not be considered to be appropriate justifications. You need to use objective criteria based on written information received whereby all companies quoting have an equal chance of success. If you need further information, please contact the Innovation Vouchers team.  |
| 5. | Apply your scoring criteria to the quotes/tenders and select you supplier. |

1. **Attachment 4 Innovation Vouchers Procurement Justification Form**

|  |
| --- |
| Section 1: Company Details*All fields within this section are MANDATORY and MUST be completed before this request can be certified* |
| Beneficiary Company Name |  |
| Contact Person |  |
| Project Code for the Beneficiary Company |  |
| Section 2: Business Case for Purchase (Selection Criteria)***All fields within this section are MANDATORY and MUST be completed before this request can be Authorised. Please provide a detailed description/ specification of the item(s) requested (Including make, model. If various items are required please list items and quantity)*** |
| Description/Specification of goods and/or services to be procured |  |
| What is the item to be used for? |  |
| Why is this item required? |  |
| Where will this item be used? |  |
| Section 3: Summary of Quotes*Summary of Three Quotes Obtained. Quotes must be attached to this form, as well as the specification you sent to all potential suppliers and a signed MOU. See Attachment 5 for the MOU template*  |
| Supplier & Contract Details | Quote Value | Outcome in terms of how each Supplier scored |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Section 4: Details of scoring system that was used to select your chosen supplier |
|  |
| Section 5: Justification of Chosen Supplier  |
| Chosen Supplier: |  | Net Purchase Value: |  |
| Address: |  | VAT |  |
| Total Purchase Value: |  |
| Phone number: |  |
| Type of organisation*The type of organisation that can be used includes UK public sector research establishments (PSRE) or equivalents (such as consultancies or specialised industry organisations), research and development organisations (RDOs), research and technology organisations (RTOs), higher education and further education institutions. Both public and private sector organisations in these categories can be used.* |  |
| Bank details |  |
| Justification of Choice of Supplier *(please provide details of scoring system you used to select your chosen supplier Please provide a detailed Value for Money analysis)* |  |
| Section 6: Authorisation of Supplier JustificationOn behalf of the CompanyI confirm that the items listed above are solely for the use on the Innovation Vouchers project and necessary for its successful completion |
| Sign: | Print:  |
| Role in the Company:  | Date: |
| Authorising Aston University OfficerI confirm I am the budget holder/ hold the appropriate delegation to authorise this request. |
| Sign: | Print:  |
| Project Role:  | Date: |
| Faculty/Dept.:  |   |

1. **Attachment 5 Memorandum of Understanding**

**Aston Business School**

**Innovation Vouchers Project**

**Memorandum of Understanding**

This document presents details of work to be undertaken on behalf of ………………………………….. [name

of the Company] by ……………………………………………………….….….[name of the Supplier - knowledge base

organisation]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name and address of the Company** |  |
| **Name and address of the Supplier (knowledge base organisation)** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activities to be undertaken by the Company [Grant Recipient]** |  |
| **Activities to be undertaken by the Supplier [the knowledge base organisation]** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Total project cost (£)** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Signature (Company Senior Manager)****......................................................................** | **Date****...................................................................** |
| **Signature (Supplier Senior Manager)****.....................................................................** | **Date****...................................................................** |

1. **Attachment 6 Eligible and Ineligible Activities**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Eligible Activities** | **General activities and processes:*** New product/ process development
* New business model development
* Efficiency audit, process change
* Supply chain management and logistics
* New service delivery and customer interface
* New service development
* Product and service testing and economic impact assessment
* Innovation/technology audit

**Specific activities where particular limitations apply:*** Exploiting advances web technologies for the region and/or industry (this does not include standard web design, development or search optimisation)
* Market research

**Types of processes that encompass the above themes:*** Opportunity Analysis to support your ideas in the Idea Screening Phase
* Idea Screening
* Concept development, prototyping and testing
* Development the marketing and engineering details
* Identification & investigation of intellectual property, including the process for intellectual property creation, protection (but not patent maintenance fees to Intellectual Property Office or relevant official organisations)
* Feasibility through virtual computer aided rendering and rapid prototyping
* Concept testing
* Development of Business Plan
* Beta Testing and Market Testing
* Producing a physical prototype or mock-up
* Testing the product (and its packaging) in typical usage situations
* Conducting focus group customer interviews
* Producing an initial run of the product
* Technical implementation
* New programme initiation
* Finalising Quality Management System
* Resource estimation
* Requirement publication
* Publishing technical communications such as data sheets
* Engineering operations planning
* Department scheduling
* Supplier collaboration
* Logistics plan
* Resource plan publication
* Program review and monitoring
* Contingencies - what-if planning
* Commercialization (often considered post-NPD)
* Launch the product
* Critical path analysis
* New Product Pricing
* Impact of new product on the entire product portfolio
* Value Analysis (internal & external)
* Analysis of competition and alternative competitive technologies
* Analysis of costs and selling price
* Forecast of unit volumes, revenue, and profit

**Exploiting advanced web technologies for the region and/ or industry (this****does not include standard web design, development or search optimisation)*** Consultancy towards IT Strategy and Value Optimisation
* Building security algorithms & AI
* Design & building of Integrated Development Environments (IDEs)
* Specialist electronic system, Software design and computer engineering tools
* Designing of Specialist CRM systems that drive hardware
* APP design & development for Mobile & portable devices (such as tablets, phones and PDAs)
* Development of GIS (Geographical Information Systems)
* Analysis and Design of Algorithms
* Electronic Communication and Concurrency
* Compression Methods for Multimedia
* Cryptography and Information Security
* System Modelling
* Distributed Systems and Applications
* Software Measurement and Quality Assurance
* Informatics (including Bioinformatics) e.g. Software & hardware design of fingerprint or IRIS scanners etc. that can be controlled through web technologies

**Market research*** Launch new products or services
* Off the shelf market research reports
* Customised market research done through professional consultants & market research companies
* Overseas market entry research reports done by specialist Accredited organisations / trade & industry bodies in the UK & overseas
 |
| **Ineligible Activities** | **General activities and processes:*** Achieving compliance with statutory regulations or legislation
* Intellectual property protection
* Standard training courses
* Software purchases
* Capital equipment purchases
* Aid that would promote/subsidise the cost of exports
* Internships for students of knowledge providers
* Design and production of advertising materials
* Sales and marketing activities –this includes standards website design, development and search optimisation (the only exception would be the exploitation of new web technology for the region and /or industry)
* Advertising and promotional activities e.g. design of posters leaflets etc.
* Accreditations
* Capital items
* Travel costs
* Continuation and existing projects with the knowledge providers
* Legal advice
 |

1. **Attachment 7 List of Priority Sectors in Birmingham and Solihull, Black Country and the Marches**

Companies from certain sectors (and those associated with these sectors) will be given priority access to the grants (see table below), however, applications from companies not included in these groups that have good innovation ideas will also be considered.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Local Economic Partnership Area** | **Greater Birmingham and Solihull** | **Black Country** | **The Marches** |
| **Districts** | * Birmingham;
* Solihull;
* Cannock Chase;
* Lichfield;
* Tamworth;
* East Staffordshire (based upon Burton and Uttoxeter);
* Redditch;
* Bromsgrove;
* Wyre Forest (based upon Kidderminster);
 | * Dudley;
* Sandwell;
* Walsall;
* Wolverhampton;
 | * Telford and Wrekin;
* Shropshire;
* Herefordshire;
 |
| **Priority Sectors** | * Advanced Manufacturing including Automotive and Aerospace;
* Low Carbon;
* ICT;
* Digital and Creative;
* Life Science;
 | * Transport Technologies including Aerospace and Automotive;
* Building Technologies / Construction;
* Advanced Manufacturing including Advanced Engineering;
* Environmental Technologies;
* Business Services;
 | * Defence and Securities;
* Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing;
* Environmental Technologies and Services;
* Renewable Energy, water technology, waste management and pollution control;
* Food and Drink (processing, food packaging, materials innovation, testing and development, specialist logistics and preservation);
 |