Funded by UK Government

Invest Northern Ireland

Innovation Turning ideas into value

BUSINESS INNOVATION GRANT (AUGUST 2026)

GUIDANCE NOTES

This document provides guidance on the Business Innovation Grant (BIG) Programme including eligibility criteria, the application process and information required. If you are considering applying for BIG, please read this document and our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) before submitting an application.

Overview
Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI) in partnership with Innovate NI (who operate as a Department for the Economy initiative within Invest NI) has a grant scheme to support Northern Ireland (NI) businesses to develop and progress their innovation activities.

The scheme offers grant support to businesses (micro and Small or Medium sized Enterprises {SMEs}) to help them complete the innovation activities needed to either start an innovation journey or to progress an existing one. The innovation support delivered through BIG also enables businesses to progress along the four stages of the Innovate NI Innovation Framework.



The level of grant support offered through BIG is from a minimum of £5,000 up to a maximum of £20,000. This programme offers a grant support rate of 70% of total eligible project costs. The amount of grant offered is based on activities detailed within the application form and Invest NI budget availability. You should ensure that the eligible project costs listed in your application total a minimum of £7,143 excluding VAT, as the grant minimum is £5,000.

Indicatively, the proposed project activities listed in your application should take place between the start of October 2026 and the end of June 2027. Should your application be successful the relevant dates will be confirmed in a grant Letter of Offer.

The call for applications will open on Monday 10 August 2026 and will close on Friday 4 September 2026 at 12 noon. Invest NI reserves the right to close the application call earlier, or extend its opening, depending on the volume of applications received. Only fully completed applications submitted via the MyINI portal at the agreed closure time, or any extended closing point, will be considered. Once submitted, the online application will be assessed and scored against the scheme criteria on pages 10 and 11 below. Applicants that are successful will be issued with a grant Letter of Offer subject to satisfactory Know Your Customer (KYC) due diligence checks.

Eligibility
BIG is aimed at start-up and established micro and SMEs who are registered businesses (e.g. companies house registration or HMRC registration) based in NI across all sectors - with the exclusion of primary agricultural producers, who are primarily concerned with crops, animal production, forestry, logging, fisheries, or aquaculture - who have a novel idea that will lead to the development of a new or improved product, service, business model or process which will create value in your business/sector.

This scheme is aimed at businesses who are not currently Invest NI clients (support for the duration of the BIG project is only available to non-clients) and have not received an offer or payment of grant support from Invest NI within the last 5 years (not including Covid-19 emergency support measures, Digital Selling Capability Grant, Economic Recovery Innovation Grant, Innovation Vouchers or Access to Finance funding e.g. Techstart Proof of Concept grant) and do not owe any outstanding liabilities to Invest NI. Businesses who have applied for the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund, which is delivered by the local councils, are also eligible to apply for BIG.

If you have previously received a BIG offer of support and received a grant payment you are not eligible to apply again, even if it is for another business entity, if the ultimate ownership is the same. If you have previously received an offer of support from BIG but did not draw down a grant payment you can reapply but only once. There is no guarantee your second application will be successful.

If the applicant business is part of a group structure with the same ultimate ownership, you may only submit one application across the group.

Businesses must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- The business must be based in NI and have at least one Director residing in NI.
- The business must be a micro business or SME (fewer than 250 employees and with turnover less than or equal to €50m or balance sheet total less than or equal to €43m. Balance sheet total is the value of fixed plus current assets.)
- The business must be able to clearly demonstrate how the project or idea aligns with the Innovate NI definition of innovation which is "*the development and implementation of a new or improved product, service, model or process which is novel (significantly different) and has/will be introduced to the market (product/service) or implemented within the business (process, model) creating value*".
- The business must not have received an offer or payment of grant support from Invest NI within the last five years (this does not include COVID-19 emergency funds, Digital Selling Capability Grant, Economic Recovery Innovation Grant (ERIG), Innovation Vouchers or Access to Finance funding e.g. Techstart NI Proof of Concept grants).
- The business must be able to demonstrate that it is viable and will remain so for the duration of the period of Invest NI support, with evidence that the business has sufficient resources to meet any funding gaps.
- The proposed business activity must be a strategic fit with the Invest NI 2024-27 Business Strategy and be aligned to the Department for the Economy Minister's Economic Vision.
- The Business must accept the completion of Invest NI KYC due diligence checks on the business, including a credit check.

Non-Eligible Businesses
The following are **not eligible** to apply:

- Businesses already in receipt of, or intending to gain, other government support for the proposed innovation activities in the BIG application.
- Businesses that have an outstanding liability to Invest NI brought about through grant clawback proceedings. If a satisfactory repayment plan is in place, the business may submit an application for consideration.
- Registered charities and organisations whose activities are by their nature charitable.

- Businesses, or where any member of Senior Management within the business, subject to a current bankruptcy order, Individual Voluntary Arrangement, Company Voluntary Arrangement (CVA), County Court Judgement (CCJ), or Company Director Disqualification.
- Businesses that have any of the following as their main business activity:
    - Primary Agricultural Production (including farming, forestry and logging); or Primary Fishery / Aquaculture production
    - “primary production" means all farm activities in relation to the production of crops or animals, fishing, the cultivation of aquatic organisms, as well as on-farm or on-board activities necessary for preparing a product for the first sale, including cutting, filleting or freezing, and the first sale to resellers or processors.
- Applications which include or relate to activities that Invest NI considers ineligible or involving an unacceptable reputational risk, such as (but not limited to), gambling, tobacco products and drug-based products which are not authorised as medicines, plus adult entertainment. Invest NI reserves the right at its absolute discretion to refuse to support businesses that bring Invest NI, Department of Economy or the Minister for the Economy into disrepute.
- Invest NI clients.
- Businesses owned by Invest NI staff members.
- Previous recipients of a BIG Letter of Offer (where a grant payment has been made)
- Health Care Providers delivering core services on behalf of the NHS/Health Trusts.
- Education – Schools/Higher Education/Further Education.
- Businesses that are part funded by Government.
- Government Organisations/bodies and Government funded bodies.
- Government part owned/supported businesses.
- Businesses that, at the date of their application, have commercialised the product or service to which the application relates more than two years ago.
- Businesses that, at the date of their application, have implemented the model or process to which the application relates more than two years ago.

Eligible Activities
The aim of this programme is to incentivise micro and SMEs to develop and progress innovation activities.

Eligible business development activities are costs that are incurred through the engagement of third party, arm’s length providers with relevant experience in delivering similar activities, where an invoice is raised for services provided. Payment of grant money is not up front and will be dependent on the delivery of specific activities as outlined in any grant Letter of Offer.

There is a cap of £700 per day for consultancy/sub-contracting costs.
There is a cap of £300 per person per night for hotel/overnight accommodation expenditure.

Examples of eligible costs include, but are not wholly limited to:

ACTIVITY	ELIGIBLE COSTS
In Market Research (problem/opportunity validation) In Market Research (product/service idea validation)	Consultancy costs Travel & accommodation costs if outside NI (for maximum of 2 company representatives)
ISO 56000 series Innovation Management Audit and training, including report production	Consultancy costs

Intellectual Property costs e.g. patent advice and searches	Consultancy costs
Product/Service market Validation and Testing	Consultancy costs Travel & accommodation costs if outside NI (for maximum of 2 company representatives)
Minimal Viable Product (MVP) development with industry, including market testing. This can include the purchase of raw materials by the sub-contractor for testing only.	Industry sub-contracting costs
Process design and validation	Consultancy costs Travel & accommodation costs if outside NI (for maximum of 2 company representatives)
Market entry planning including analysis of costs for full product/service development & distribution/implementation	Consultancy costs
Preparation for market compliance and accreditation e.g. CE Marking	Consultancy costs
Design of market entry strategy including brand design	Consultancy costs
Identification and establishing of manufacturing and supply chains outside NI	Travel & accommodation costs outside NI (for maximum of 2 company representatives) Maximum of two visits.
New Market Development Visits outside NI	Travel & accommodation costs outside NI (for maximum of 2 company representatives)
Attendance at Trade Fairs & Exhibitions outside NI	Travel & accommodation costs outside NI (for maximum of 2 company representatives) Note - financial assistance is typically limited to the duration of the exhibition plus one night for stand build and set-up Grant payment will be capped at a maximum of £10,000 per event including travel & accommodation. Maximum of 2 x trade shows per offer of support outside of Europe. Maximum of 4 x trade shows per offer of support inside Europe and the UK.
Product Launches/Demonstrations	Stand rental costs Stand design costs Transportation costs Stand assembly costs (e.g. exhibition stand contractor's fees) Stand operating costs (e.g. insurance, electricity, interpreter) Exhibition speaking slots, VIP passes, pitch opportunities (for maximum of 2 company reps)

	Travel & accommodation costs if outside NI (for maximum of 2 company representatives) Online marketing costs incurred via a third party such as a digital agency

Further detail on the eligibility of costs relating to travel and accommodation can be found here.

The following costs are **not** eligible:

- Related party consultancy and/or sub-contracting costs (including, but not limited to, consultancy and/ sub-contracting provided by family members and current/former employees).
- Project costs incurred prior to the issue date of a BIG grant Letter of Offer.
- Capital purchases - for example, general building costs such as construction and fit out, machinery, IT equipment, raw materials (not being used for testing by subcontractor), buying an event stand and all other tangible items.
- Printing costs e.g. signs, banners, brochures, pens, T-shirts and other marketing collateral.
- Items already part of a business's outgoings or overheads e.g. rent, standard accountancy services.
- Recruitment costs.
- Online marketing costs where expenditure is incurred directly with the online platform e.g., Facebook, Google and LinkedIn.
- The use of Innovation Voucher Programme approved suppliers –Innovation Vouchers Knowledge Providers | Invest Northern Ireland (investni.com)
- Standard mobile apps for the purposes of promoting the business, and sales and marketing functions.
- General sales and marketing activities.
- Standard business advice.
- Business plans and economic appraisals.
- Website development and online optimisation for the purposes of promoting the business.
- Internships for students from knowledge institutions.
- Software purchases and basic software development.
- Aid that would promote or subsidise the cost of exports.
- Testing products that are not within the ownership of your business.
- Internal staff costs.
- Patent application and filing costs.
- Recurring/subscription costs (only one-off costs are eligible).
- General training costs.

The above lists are not exhaustive, and Invest NI has the discretion to omit costs if deemed ineligible or not within the scope of the programme.

The support will focus on activities that take place within a defined time period, with all activities to be completed and grant claimed within the timescales detailed within the grant Letter of Offer.

Procurement
Invest NI recommends that you seek a minimum of two quotes from suppliers to ensure that you are getting good value for money. You must retain any quotes received as these may be

required as evidence in the claims process and any future audit. Alternatively, for very standard items the recommended minimum of two internet price checks are permissible and any screen shots should be saved and documented on file for audit purposes. Except where you are obtaining internet price checks (with screen shots), you must issue a written specification of the goods or service to be procured to potential suppliers.

The specification must include all the information needed for the eligible goods or service to be procured to complete the project and must be sufficiently detailed to allow for a fair comparison of costs on a like to like basis. The same specification must be sent to all suppliers asked to quote or should be used when reviewing internet price checks. In order to demonstrate value for money, it is expected that applicants use the most economically advantageous quotation/price of each item to demonstrate best value on the market for the project item. If you have obtained more than one quote and your preferred supplier is not the cheapest, you may be asked to explain why. We may not be able to accept the cost of your preferred supplier if there is insufficient reasons as to why the cheapest supplier is not chosen, and this may reduce the grant for the good/service to the cheapest quote.

The following guidelines must be complied with:
• The quotes you provide should be from businesses or individuals who are independent from your business and you.
• The quotes should clearly identify the supplier. (Purchasing goods or services from associated companies will not be permitted).
• Quotes must be addressed to the company making the application.
• Quotes must be sought from suppliers who can realistically supply the goods or service.
• Quotes should include a detailed and itemised breakdown of costs to allow Invest NI to determine the eligibility of costs.
• Quotes must include/be accompanied by a Scope of Work and a short biography of the supplier.
• Quotes should be in pounds sterling, or, if another currency, be supplemented with a screenshot of the exchange rate from XE.com showing the date of the conversion.
• Where there is limited competition in the market for the goods or service you are procuring resulting in you being unable to request the minimum number of quotes required, then this should be documented and an explanation provided.
• Quotes should be ‘like-for-like’, particularly where goods or service are specific. All quotations must meet the specification you provide and demonstrate ‘like for like’ comparison to verify value for money.
• Email quotes are acceptable and the covering email from suppliers must be provided.
• Quotes must be dated within 3 months of the date the application is submitted and must contain the supplier’s full details such as name and contact details.
• If VAT is applicable to the items quoted, this should be clearly noted on the quotations to establish total project costs.
• If the lowest quotation has not been accepted because of quality considerations the applicant must provide a clear rationale for this.

Please be aware, the grant amount will be based on the original price within the application. Any increase in eligible costs will not be covered but may have an impact on your project payback and eligibility.

For successful applicants, documentation (such as quotes) needs to be retained until the applicant ceases to be under any obligation to Invest NI under the provisions of a BIG grant offer.
Invest NI reserves the right to reduce or disallow costs, which in Invest NI's view do not appear to offer good value for money or are outside the typical market rates for comparable services.

Timescales
BIG is a competitive call for applications. The call for applications will open at 9am on Monday 10th August 2026 and will close on Friday 04th September 2026 at 12 noon. The call may be closed early or extended depending on the volume of applications received. Applications must be submitted prior to the call closing.

As this is a competitive call, please take note of the assessment process detailed in this document and ensure you read and check your application form before submitting. Corrections or additional information offered after the application call closes will not be accepted. All information must be included within the application form and please note that appended business plans, spreadsheets etc. will not be considered as part of the application.

Applications will be scored and prioritised with highest scoring projects being approved in rank order until the budget assigned for each call is fully allocated.

How to Apply
The first step is to check that you are eligible to apply for BIG by using the eligibility checker, which will be available from Monday 10th August 2026 at Business Innovation Grant | Innovate NI . Successful completion of the Eligibility Checker does not mean you have submitted an application; it is the first step in the process.

If you meet the eligibility criteria, you will be emailed with a link to an online application form via the Invest NI Customer Portal; this is our official online application and administration system. You can save your application and return to it at any time on the portal.

In addition to completing the online application form you will also need to provide a digital copy of your most recent annual accounts (to include a Profit & Loss Account and Balance Sheet), together with any recently available management accounts. If your business has not yet compiled annual accounts, you can submit your most up to date management accounts. You will also need to provide supplier quotations and evidence of funding.

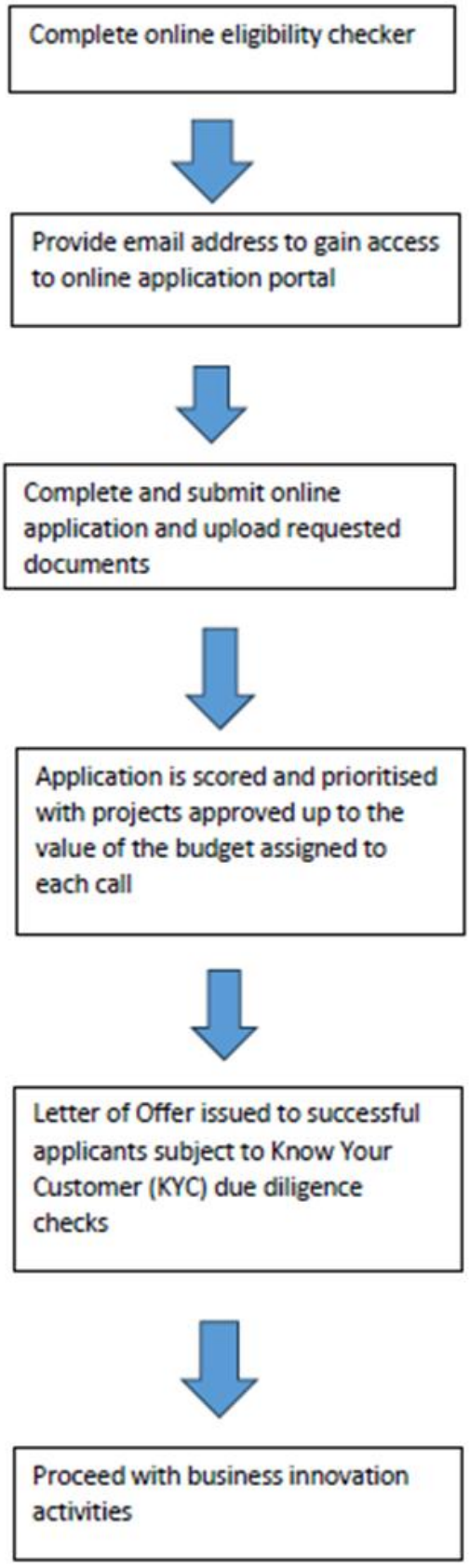
Please note the maximum size of each item that can be submitted digitally is 20MB.

If you meet the eligibility criteria, you will need the following information to complete the application form:

- Information on your business background.
- If applicable, details of other business interests (active, dormant, dissolved or struck off) and both your business interests and the business interests of any member of the senior management within the business.
- Proposed project description, including the purpose and benefits of your proposed project.
- Information on project costs, including itemised expenditure.
- Supplier quotation(s) for all the project costs included in the application form.
- Information and evidence on how you plan to fund the project.

Please note, incomplete applications forms may not be assessed.

You should ensure you have all relevant information at hand before starting the application. You can save a draft of your application and return to update it at any time prior to submitting before the application call closure; regular saving of the application is recommended. You will need to click on the ‘Submit’ button when you have completed the application. The application has been designed to be completed by the owner/operator of the business.


Complete online eligibility checker
Provide email address to gain access to online application portal
Complete and submit online application and upload requested documents
Application is scored and prioritised with projects approved up to the value of the budget assigned to each call
Letter of Offer issued to successful applicants subject to Know Your Customer (KYC) due diligence checks
Proceed with business innovation activities

Assessing Your Application
Applications will be assessed by an assessment panel that will primarily consist of Innovate NI and Invest NI client executives/managers. All applications received will be scored in line with the assessment criteria detailed below. It is important you consider the assessment criteria and ensure your application clearly articulates how you plan to deliver the new business innovation activities.

It is imperative that you describe "Your Innovation Initiative" in the application in sufficient detail to allow us to make an informed decision on your application. It must be clear what you are planning to use the grant for and that your new product, service, process or model is novel to your business and/or the market. Buying in existing equipment or technology is not considered to meet the definition of innovation and will result in an unsuccessful application.

The innovation is assessed against the Innovate NI assessment criteria which is on their website (InnovateNI Home | Help for Northern Ireland businesses to innovate) and is measured against the definition of innovation as "*the development and implementation of a new or improved product, service, model, or process which is novel (significantly different), and has/will be introduced to the market (product/service) or implemented within the business (process, model) creating value*".

The table below highlights the scoring criteria for the innovative project.

Assessment Criteria	**Score**
Innovation	
The innovation is a new or improved product, process, service, model, that will be or has been developed.	Pass/Fail
Novelty	
The innovation is novel (significantly different) from what is currently in the business.	
and/or	
The innovation is novel (significantly different) from what is currently available in the market.	
SCORE	Up to 5
Value	
The submission clearly demonstrates how the innovation will create value within the business.	
and/or	
The submission clearly demonstrates how the innovation will create value within the NI economy.	
SCORE	Up to 5
Sustainability	
The submission clearly demonstrates if the innovation will deliver any elements of sustainability and/or positive environmental impacts.	
SCORE	Up to 5
To be eligible for the grant you must pass the innovation question. Scoring will be used to rank applications on a competitive basis.	

Businesses that demonstrate how the project or idea meets the definition will also receive recognition from Innovate NI in the form of a bronze, silver or gold certificate from the Department of the Economy.

The applications will also be assessed for viability, risk, ability to fund the project and strategic fit, in line with the Invest NI intervention principles. These will be assessed on a pass or fail basis **with <u>all</u> questions requiring a pass to receive a grant offer**.

The following intervention/assessment principles will be assessed.

Intervention / assessment principle	
Strategic Fit - is the project a strategic fit with the Invest NI 2024-27 Business Strategy	Pass/Fail
Project Risk - What are the project risks and have they been mitigated?	Pass/Fail
Viability - Is the business viable? Attach accounts and forecasts.	Pass/Fail
Additionality - Why does the business need the support?	Pass/Fail
Affordability – Can the company afford to fund the project? Attach evidence such as financial accounts, bank statement or letter from your accountant.	Pass/Fail

The application must pass both the innovation assessment criteria and the intervention principles to be considered for a grant Letter of Offer.

To be considered for funding, your application must also achieve a pass in the Invest NI KYC due diligence process.

This KYC due diligence process will review the following:

- Photographic ID and identity documentation.
- Mobile Phone number and Email check.
- Credit check on the applicant/named company individuals and the company itself.
- Information provided in your application form is aligned to publicly held information and is in no way misleading.
- Your business and any member of senior management within the business are not subject to a current bankruptcy order, Individual Voluntary Arrangement, Company Voluntary Arrangement (CVA), County Court Judgement, or Company Director Disqualification.
- You are not currently involved in a CVA either through the applicant company or a linked company.
- Politically Exposed Person & Sanctions Check.

We will complete a credit check, searches on Companies House, web searches and any other due diligence as required in order to satisfy our KYC process.

In addition, you, or the applicant business, will have to declare if you have any current or previous business interests, including as a sole trader, partner, director, shareholder or owner of any business, whether active, dormant, dissolved or struck off.

If any misleading information or elevated risk factors are found in your application, it may be escalated for review and decision on whether to proceed with your application.

Application Detail
To be considered for funding, your application must achieve a pass based on the scoring model detailed above. Any application that does not meet this threshold will be deemed ineligible for funding.

The application process is open to all eligible businesses. The call will remain open for four weeks.

Should a business be unsuccessful with an application to this call, you can submit an application to future BIG calls as and when they open. Please note that, if successful, a business cannot apply again for another BIG grant.

Notification of Funding Decision
Following submission of your application, you will be informed of your outcome by the end of October 2026. However, if your application is submitted early in the process you may be informed sooner.

If you hope to secure Invest NI funding for your proposed business innovation activities, it is vital that you do not commence the project activities or incur any costs until you receive a grant Letter of Offer from Invest NI. **If you incur costs because you have signed contracts, given permission to start work, raised invoices or made payments before you have received an Invest NI grant Letter of Offer, these costs cannot be claimed for and could prevent you from accessing any of the grant funding awarded.** Any argument that Invest NI support is required to proceed will be placed in question and will likely impact the scoring of the application.

On completion of KYC due diligence checks, successful applicants will be informed by email and a grant Letter of Offer will be issued.

A full outline of conditions will be provided to the successful businesses in an Invest NI grant Letter of Offer. This must be signed and returned by the applicant for the support to be available.

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed via email.

Appeals Procedure
Applications will be assessed by an assessment panel that will primarily consist of Innovate NI and Invest NI client executives/managers. All applications received will be scored in line with the assessment criteria detailed above.

Applications that meet or exceed the minimum threshold, subject to budget availability and successful KYC checks, will then be offered financial support towards their proposed business innovation activities.

In the first instance, if an applicant is unhappy with the outcome of their application, they can seek feedback on their application and areas where it did not score highly, relevant to other applications. It is hoped this feedback will be taken on board and used to strengthen any future application made to any future BIG calls that may be opened. Feedback must be requested within six months of receipt of notification of the original decision.

Should an applicant still be unhappy with the outcome, they can request a review of the scoring of their application. This review will be deemed to be an appeal made under Stage 1 of Invest NI's Appeals Procedure, a copy of which is available on request.

Any appeal must be submitted within **30 working days** of receipt of notification of the original decision to bigappeals@investni.com.

Your Responsibilities
You are responsible for providing accurate and true information in your application.

The provision of wrong or misleading information is an offence and any such information may be used in any subsequent criminal investigation. The information provided in this application form may be made available to other departments or agencies for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime.

Support is conditional on the business progressing in line with the business innovation activities that are outlined in the application.

In return for Invest NI funding we will expect:

- You to work in partnership with us to grow your business and the NI economy.
- The implementation of the project as described in your application form. Significant deviations from the project as described in the application may result in the withholding of grant payments.
- Business innovation activities to be carried out within agreed timescales.
- Financial transparency.
- Progress reports as and when reasonably requested.
- A commitment to be an environmentally and socially responsible business.

Submitting a claim
Payment of grant money is not up-front and will be dependent on the delivery of specific activities as outlined in any grant Letter of Offer. Documentary evidence will be required to demonstrate that the specific activities against which grant money is being claimed have been carried out and paid for. For example, when claiming for consultancy and sub-contracting invoices must clearly state a description of the work undertaken, the number of service days provided and the daily rate. If your application is successful, further guidance on submitting a claim will be provided.

BIG funding will be a percentage of overall expenditure on new innovation activities. However, you will have to fund the innovation activities initially and then retrospectively claim the grant.

Once your project is complete you must submit your grant claim to Invest NI using an Invest NI BIG claim pack by the date detailed within your grant Letter of Offer. You also need to complete the BIG monitoring form which can be accessed via your Letter of Offer. The form can also be accessed here so that you know what information you will have to maintain and provide in order to claim your grant payment.

Proof of Invest NI receiving this claim must be retained by the applicant.

Please note that all costs must be incurred and paid for by the legal entity that is named on the Letter of Offer.

Data Protection and Handling
BIG is managed and administered by Invest NI/Innovate NI who will have access to the information you provide as part of your application; both as a means to assess your eligibility and to conduct any post scheme governance assessments.

As this financial support is sourced from public funds Invest NI will, in the interest of openness and transparency, proactively publish limited information on the funding including:

- name of applicant
- application title
- amount of assistance

Invest NI/Innovate NI will handle your data in compliance with applicable laws including the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. For further details on our data handling practices please see the Invest NI Privacy Notice.

Automated Decision Making
Automated decisions, based on responses to the online eligibility checker, will be carried out to assess the eligibility of an applicant to be issued with an application form. We request that you ensure you select your responses to the eligibility checker carefully and accurately.

Applicants have the option to request a human review of an automated decision if they feel an automated decision has been wrongly made based on the information provided. To request a review on this basis please complete this enquiry form and a member of Invest NI's Business Support Team will contact you. The Business Support Team can also be contacted by telephone on 0800 181 4422.

Subsidy Control / State Aid
Invest NI financial assistance is awarded to businesses that trade, or have the potential to trade, outside NI and is granted as either a UK Subsidy or an EU State aid (including *de minimis* aid).

UK Government guidance on the March 2023 Windsor Agreement confirms that Article 10(1) of the Windsor Agreement will normally apply to subsidies granted to goods trading beneficiaries located in NI and this constitutes State aid.

"Goods-trading" beneficiary means a recipient of Invest NI financial assistance which markets goods that are tradeable with the EU. Businesses that are a combination of services and goods are also captured by Article 10(1) of the Windsor Framework and are subject to EU State aid rules. Wholly service-based businesses are subject to UK Subsidy control.

BIG support awarded to goods trading companies will be treated as de minimis aid under Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831. Support awarded to wholly service companies will be treated as a Subsidy under the UK Subsidy Control Act 2022.

Please note that from the 1st of January 2026, all de minimis aid provided to businesses must be registered on an EU wide public database. If your company receives support under BIG your company name, company registration number and the amount of aid you have received will be recorded on the database.

Equality
Invest NI aims to create a successful economy in Northern Ireland which provides equal opportunities for all citizens. We strive to meet our responsibilities across the spectrum of government policy relating to equality and we comply with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The BIG has been subjected to equality screening. Any queries regarding this screening form, including any requests relating to reasonable adjustments or accessibility, should be directed to our Equality team. Please contact equality@investni.com.

Right to Amend
Dependant on future funding availability and uptake, Invest NI reserves the right to amend the scheme eligibility criteria, which may include grant rates and funding priorities.

General Enquiries
If you have any enquiries about the BIG contact us at big@investni.com.

If you have any enquiries about support available to your business, outside of the BIG programme, please complete this enquiry form and a member of Invest NI's Business Support Team will contact you. The Business Support Team can also be contacted by telephone on 0800 181 4422.