



BUSINESS SUPPORT

GUIDE FOR **EXISTING BUSINESSES**

FOREWORD

Welcome to the Business Support Guide for businesses currently operating or looking to relocate to Britain's Ocean City.

There is a large and yet frequently changing amount of business support available making it a full time job for businesses to keep up.

To make the process of finding appropriate support easier for businesses in the City, Plymouth City Council Economic Development Service produce and maintain two booklets focussed on helping start ups and existing businesses to find support locally available:

Click to see [Business Support Guide for Start Ups](#)

This guide will be updated at regular six monthly intervals to ensure the contents stay relevant and up to date.

The information in this guide is subject to change and was accurate when published.

If you notice any business support that has been left out, please contact us:

E invest@plymouth.gov.uk
www.investinplymouth.co.uk

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Business Advice			
Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)	Provides free and impartial information and advice to employers and employees on all aspects of workplace relations and employment law.	0300 123 1150 www.m.acas.org.uk/	Free
Better Business for All	Brings together businesses and regulators to consider and change how local regulation is delivered and received, promoting growth.	brdo.enquiries@bis.gsi.gov.uk www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-regulation-better-business-for-all	There may be cost implications from the service provider.
Business Support Hotline Gov.uk	Advice and guidance for new and existing businesses, with information schemes, grants and loans to help businesses start and grow.	0300 456 3565 www.gov.uk/business-support-helpline	Advice is free. Call charges may apply.
Connecting Devon and Somerset	Advice and support for businesses to understand the benefits and adapt to faster broadband availability across Plymouth.	broadband@devon.gov.uk www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk	Advice is free.
Great Business	Support, advice and inspiration for growing your business	0300 456 3565 www.greatbusiness.gov.uk	Great Business is a free online resource.
Growth Hub Heart of the South West LEP	Regional service designed to help both new and established local businesses identify and access the best business support available.	03456 047 047 info@heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk	Free service.

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Growth Support Programme Devon County Council	A fully funded 1:1 advisor service which helps businesses identify and plan their development needs. Additional follow up specialist workshops available in Finance, HR, Marketing and Innovation.	03456 047 047 info@heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk	ERDF eligibility applies
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	Online health and safety toolbox, providing relevant information to SMEs that applies to their industry.	01752 226024 www.hse.gov.uk	A vast amount of information is available for free through the HSE website.
HMRC	Support and advice to help businesses understand their tax affairs.	www.hmrc.gov.uk	Information, documents and forms on the website is provided free.
Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales Business Advice Service	Business advice session with a chartered accountant including subjects such as business growth, securing loans, capital and finance, export planning, meeting tax and regulatory requirements.	020 7920 3561 bas@icaew.com	ICAEW offers one hour free business support.
Intellectual Property Office	The Intellectual Property Office is able to provide advice and guidance to businesses about their IP including innovative designs and trademarks.	0300 300 2000 www.gov.uk/ipo	Information supplied by the Intellectual Property Office is free but to protect IP will have a cost associated with it.
Local Manufacturing Advisory Programme (LMAP)	For established manufacturing businesses to develop their productivity capabilities using funding support and access to experienced manufacturing specialists.	0845 608 3838 info@swmas.org www.swmas.co.uk/business-support/local-manufacturing-advisory-programme-0	Free business review and diagnostic to access services
Manufacturing Advisory Service	Support to businesses with the potential to improve and grow. Can identify barriers to growth and providing tailored support that fits business needs.	0300 303 0034 advice@mymas.org www.mas.businessgrowthservice.greatbusiness.gov.uk	Initial consultation is free.

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
MentorSME	MentorSME is a gateway for businesses that are looking to contact a mentor in their area.	www.mentorsme.co.uk	Free service. Some mentors on the website charge for their services, each is different and some offer free information to SMEs.
Plymouth City Council Business Relationship Programme	Free impartial support to help businesses identify available property, relocation advice, recruitment, links to regional funding and skills schemes, network introductions, economic research and gateway to relevant council services.	01752 307996 info@investplymouth.gov.uk	
Plymouth City Council PATLIB	Provides free patent searches by appointment and advice and guidance around copyright, trademarks and designs.	01752 306795 patlibplymouth@plymouth.gov.uk	Free of charge
Plymouth City Council Public Protection Service (PPS)	Advice and guidance to all trade an industry concerning regulation and best practice. Operates the assured trader scheme Buy With Confidence.	01752 304141 public.protection@plymouth.gov.uk	Free of charge.
Plymouth Social Enterprise Network	Promotes social enterprises in and around Plymouth. It provides a range of networking and membership services.	07786 863206 gareth@plymsocent.org.uk www.plymsocent.org.uk	Membership fees start at £20.

Exporting

Department for International Trade	Helping overseas businesses relocate to the UK	020 7215 5000 enquiries@trade.gsi.gov.uk www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-trade	Most services provided by DIT are free, but cost may vary for some services.
---	--	---	--

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Department for International Trade South West	Regional support service helping local business to export.	01275 370829 www.businesswest.co.uk/export	Most services provided by DITSW are free, but cost may vary for some services.
Enterprise Europe Network South West	Local gateway to a wealth of information on doing business in Europe.	01275 370997 info@enterpriseeuropesw.org.uk www.enterpriseeuropesw.org.uk/swr	Advice and services offered by Enterprise Europe Network SW are free to businesses in Devon and Cornwall.
Open to Export	Free online information service, which is dedicated to helping small UK businesses, get ready to export and expand internationally.	www.opentoexport.com	Free online resource.

Finance

Access Point for the Reach Fund Plymouth City Council	Aimed at growing the social enterprise sector in Plymouth, applicants can apply for a grant of up to £22,000 to develop their enterprise to become 'loan ready'.	jane.hunt@plymouth.gov.uk www.reachfund.org.uk/what-reach-fund	This fund is only open to social enterprises who are willing to take on loan capital as part of their business growth.
British Business Bank Finance Guide	The business finance guide is an invaluable tool for directors managing established or growing companies of all sizes.	0114 206 2131 info@british-business-bank.co.uk www.thebusinessfinanceguide.co.uk/?utm_source=p&utm_medium=o&utm_campaign=bbb	Advice is free.
Business, Energy and Investment Strategy (BEIS) Angel CoFund	Funding available alongside syndicates of business angels in order to support high potential businesses and give them the capital they need to develop and propel growth.	info@angelcofund.co.uk www.angelcofund.co.uk	The critical criterion is the presence of a strong group or syndicate of private angel investors who are looking to make a good commercial investment.

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Fredericks Foundation	Microloans for start-up and established businesses unable to borrow conventional sources, with funds secured from Plymouth City Council.	01276 472722 www.fredericksfoundation.org	The loan will need to be paid back to Fredericks Foundation through an agreed format.
Funding Central	Database of grants and funding available to the voluntary and community sector including social enterprise.	fundingcentralhelp@ncvo.org.uk www.fundingcentral.org.uk/search.aspx	Subscription based service with costs associated.
Funding Circle	An online marketplace which can help businesses access finance exclusively focused on small businesses.	0800 048 8747 www.fundingcircle.com/	Costs associated with Funding Circle services.
Innovate UK	Fund, support and connect innovative businesses to accelerate sustainable economic growth.	0300 321 4357 support@innovateuk.gov.uk www.gov.uk/innovate-uk	Service is free.
Patent Box	The Patent Box enables companies to apply a lower rate of Corporation Tax to profits from exploiting patented inventions.	www.gov.uk/guidance/corporation-tax-the-patent-box	You can only benefit from the Patent Box if your company is liable to Corporation Tax and makes a profit from exploiting patented inventions.
Research and Development tax relief (RnD)	R&D is a Corporation Tax (CT) tax relief that may reduce your company's tax bill.	www.gov.uk/guidance/corporation-tax-research-and-development-rd-relief	Companies can only claim for R&D tax relief if an R&D project seeks to achieve an advance in overall knowledge or capability in a field of science or technology through the resolution of scientific or technological uncertainty.

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Royal Bank of Scotland and Natwest Small Business Loan Fund	A loan programme designed to support small businesses operating in the South West looking to grow or diversify their business.	0345 600 2230 (RBS) 0345 711 4477 (NatWest)	Free to contact for support.
South West Angel Investor Network (SWAIN)	Helping SMEs to find equity finance and business angels. It assists private investors to search for company investment opportunities in businesses with growth potential.	0870 060 6560 enquiries@swain.org.uk www.swain.org.uk	Costs associated with SWAIN services.
South West Investment Group (SWIG)	Non-profit organisation that provides risk capital to businesses in the South West	01872 277 331 finance@swigcapital.co.uk www.swigfinance.co.uk	The majority of money is available through a loan scheme.

Networks

Devon Chamber	Plymouth's local chamber providing opportunities to make new connections meet other businesses and stay informed about activities taking place in the local business community.	01752 220471 chamber@devonchamber.co.uk www.devonchamber.co.uk	Membership costs vary.
Devon and Cornwall Business Council (DCBC)	DCBC is the regional body that supports private sector businesses by operating at a strategic level across the counties of Devon and Cornwall	01752 395665 www.dcbc.co.uk	Membership costs.
Digital Plymouth	Connecting Plymouth's digital community. An opportunity to network and learn about the amazing things that are being created right here in Plymouth.	www.digitalplymouth.com	There will be cost implications with this service.

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Federation of Small Business (FSB)	Wide range of vital business services including advice, financial expertise, support and a powerful voice in government	0808 2020888 customerservices@fsb.org.uk www.fsb.org.uk	Membership costs.
Growth Acceleration and Investment Network (GAIN)	Connect online with fellow business owners and experts. Discover finance and investment opportunities, or search for funding with GAIN GrantFinder.	0800 073 2020 info@gaininbusiness.com www.gaininbusiness.com	GAIN services are free via the website. Registration required
Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN) Part of Innovate UK	KTN can lead businesses to potential partners, horizon-expanding events, bespoke support and innovation insights relevant to their needs.	03333 403250 enquiries@ktn-uk.org	
Plymouth Woman in Business	An opportunity for women business owners and decision makers to meet with local, like-minded business focused women, once a month, at a well-structured and facilitated network meeting.	Facebook page	Free to attend.
Plymouth Manufacturing Group (PMG)	An informal network of manufacturing companies from across the Plymouth travel-to-work-area.	www.mypmg.co.uk	Membership cost

Skills

Apprenticeships	UK National apprenticeship programmes.	0800 015 0400 nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk www.getingofar.gov.uk/employers	Free website information. There will be cost implication to employing apprentices.
Grad South West	Graduate matching services for businesses.	01392 241301 admin@gradsouthwest.com www.gradsouthwest.com	

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Skills Support for the Workforce Learndirect	Free bespoke training for businesses, to raise attainment levels and to reduce skills shortages that restrict business growth.	0345 5210066 www.learndirect.com/business/employers-general	Free to Small Medium Enterprises
The Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards	Represents, promotes and supports the 21 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) across the UK, working with over 550,000 employers to define skills needs and skills standards in their industry.	0300 303 4444 info@fisss.org www.fisss.org	Free

Tech Support

Bristol University CFMS	Independent, non-for-profit organisation, committed to accelerating the delivery of more intuitive and powerful simulation-based design processes.	0117 906 1100 info@cfms.org.uk	There will be a cost implication of using CFMS.
Engineering Innovation Network South West	Business support to help grow SME engineering sector in the South West.	01249 466800 einsw@wiltshire.ac.uk	The two days of business support is free.
FAB Labs	Centre for experimental production, investigation and education, housing sophisticated computer-aided design software and machinery for the creation of prototypes and scale models in the creative and commercial industries.	T 01752 203434 E fablab@pca.ac.uk www.fablab.plymouthart.ac.uk/	Free induction programme, but there could be costs associated with using the service.

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Innovate2Succeed	A 5 – 9 day programme provides access to innovation specialists to help harness innovation and overcome barriers to growth.	0300 123 3066 contact@enterprise-europe.co.uk www.enterprise-europe.co.uk/content/our_services/innovate2succeed__managing_innovation_for_growth/	Service is free for ERDF eligible businesses.
Laboratory for Integrated Metrology Applications (LIMA)	Manufacturing solutions from metrology research for businesses large and small, allowing them to benefit from emerging technology and state-of-the-art solutions.	01225 385138 contact@limauk.com www.limauk.com	Many of its free services are free to SMEs in the South West.
National Composites Centre	Independent, open-access national centre that delivers world-class innovation in the design and rapid manufacture of composites and facilitates their widespread industrial exploitation.	0117 370 7600 info@nccuk.com www.nccuk.com	Tiered memberships option available or pay-per-use for private venture work.
Plymouth University Enterprise Solutions	Enterprise Solutions can provide access to Plymouth University's facilities, expertise and services.	0800 052 5600 enterprisesolutions@plymouth.ac.uk www.plymouth.ac.uk/business-partners/business-services/enterprise-solutions	There may be a cost implication depending on what services are used.
Plymouth University Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre	Can offer expert and specialist support to companies, acting as an 'outsourced lab' for many Plymouth businesses.	01752 584535 emc@plymouth.ac.uk www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/about-us/university-structure/faculties/science-engineering/electron-microscopy-centre/working-with-industry	There may be costs associated for the required facilities.

SUPPORT PROVIDER	SERVICE	CONTACT	COST
Regen SW Zero Energy Building	Intensive business support to businesses in construction, energy efficiency and micro-generation sectors.	01392 494399 tcrook@regensw.co.uk www.regensw.co.uk	Free to eligible businesses.
Somerset College The Genesis Project	A facility in Taunton which provides information on sustainable construction.	01823 366 366 trevor.payne@somerset.ac.uk www.genesisproject.com	Each course on offer has its own cost implication.
University of Exeter The Centre for Additive Layer Manufacturing	Innovative manufacturing for the benefit of businesses in the South West.	01392 725 831 calm@exeter.ac.uk www.exeter.ac.uk/engineering/research/calm/	Initial advice is free to all businesses; however further support available at a cost.
University of Exeter Centre for Alternative Materials and Remanufacturing Technologies	Supporting businesses in the South West involved in composites and plastics. Provides access to expertise, advice and technology.	01392 725821 calmare@exeter.ac.uk	12 hours fully funded support to SMEs.

Business Support – A guide for businesses in the city
Published by Plymouth City Council

Contact
Economy, Enterprise and Employment Team
Plymouth City Council
Ballard House
Plymouth PL1 3BJ

E invest@plymouth.gov.uk
www.investplymouth.co.uk
[@investplymouth](https://www.instagram.com/investplymouth)