

Business Funding Opportunities in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin (2026)

1. Local Funding (Shropshire & Telford & Wrekin)

Thrive Telford Programme (UK Shared Prosperity Fund - running to March 2026)

A major local funding ecosystem offering multiple grant schemes for SMEs in Telford & Wrekin.

Large Grants Fund

- £5,000-£20,000, 30% match funding.
- Prioritises manufacturing, engineering, digital, logistics, construction, and environmental sectors.

Small Grants Fund

- £1,000-£3,000, 40% match funding.
- Supports capital investment for business growth.

Export Grants Fund

- Up to £3,000, no match funding required.
- Supports international trade development.

Business Development Fund

- £5,000-£9,000, 30% match funding.
- Supports growth, new markets, and technology adoption.

Innovate Telford

- Innovation support delivered with European innovation partners.
- Expanding further in 2025-26.

Business Start-Up Service

- Workshops, mentoring, and early-stage support.

Business Energy Advice Service

- Support to reduce energy use and costs.

Business Growth Enabler

- Expert guidance for scaling SMEs.

Source: Telford & Wrekin Council - Thrive Telford Business Support Programme.

2. Regional Funding (The Marches: Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, Herefordshire)

Local Innovation Partnership Fund (LIPF) - Marches to the Midlands Cluster (2026)

Shropshire Council is preparing a bid for £20 million from UKRI's £500 million Local Innovation Partnership Fund.

If successful, this will support:

- Green energy innovation cluster.
- Advanced manufacturing and agri-tech cluster.
- Digital and wireless innovation (building on DSIT-funded programmes).

The programme aims to attract inward investment, support R&D, and strengthen innovation-led growth across the Marches.

Source: Shropshire Council - LIPF Bid Announcement.

3. National UK Funding Programmes

These programmes are available to businesses in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

Innovate UK Grants

- Supports R&D, innovation, feasibility studies, and prototype development.
- Typical awards: £25,000-£2 million depending on competition.

UKRI Funding Calls

- Supports research partnerships, innovation clusters, and sector-specific R&D.

British Business Bank Programmes

- Start Up Loans (£500-£25,000).
- Recovery Loan Scheme (RLS) for growth finance.

Made Smarter Adoption (West Midlands)

- Digital transformation grants and support for manufacturing SMEs.

Energy & Net Zero Funding

- Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (IETF).
- Boiler Upgrade Scheme (for eligible premises).

Export Support Service (Department for Business & Trade)

- Advisory support and match-funded export programmes.

Sources: Innovate UK, UKRI, British Business Bank, Made Smarter West Midlands.

4. Industry-Specific Funding Opportunities

Manufacturing & Engineering

- Innovate UK Smart Grants.
- Made Smarter West Midlands.
- Marches advanced manufacturing cluster (pending LIPF bid).

Agri-Tech & Food Production

- Defra Farming Innovation Programme.
- Marches agri-tech cluster (LIPF).

Green Energy & Environmental Technology

- Green energy innovation cluster (LIPF).
- Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (IETF).

- Local energy efficiency grants via Thrive Telford.

Digital, Creative & Tech

- Innovate UK digital competitions.
- DSIT-funded Advanced Wireless Innovation Region.

Sources: Defra, Innovate UK, DSIT.

5. Local Organisations Offering Support

- Telford Business Services - general business support.
- Shropshire Chamber of Commerce - funding navigation and training.
- Enterprise Telford - business centre and advisory services.

6. Summary Table

Funding Type	Example Schemes	Typical Amounts	Best For
Local Grants	Thrive Telford (Large, Small, Export, Innovate)	£1,000-£20,000	SMEs in Telford & Wrekin
Regional Innovation	LIPF Marches to Midlands	Up to £20 million (regional)	Innovation clusters, R&D
National Funding	Innovate UK, UKRI, BBB	£25,000-£2 million+	R&D, growth, manufacturing
Industry-Specific	Made Smarter, Defra, IETF	Varies	Manufacturing, agri-tech, green energy

7. Notes

- All funding schemes are subject to eligibility criteria.
- Some programmes require match funding.

- Availability may change depending on government budgets and local authority allocations.
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8. Sources

- Telford & Wrekin Council - Thrive Telford Business Support.
- Shropshire Council - Local Innovation Partnership Fund updates.
- Innovate UK & UKRI funding portals.
- British Business Bank - Start Up Loans and RLS.
- Made Smarter West Midlands.
- Defra - Farming Innovation Programme.
- Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).