

A business boost for Coventry and Warwickshire

The first LEP Growth Hub to invest in the GRANTfinder funding service



Coventry & Warwickshire Growth Hub is a jointly-funded public-private initiative acting as the public face of the area's Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP); one of 39 such organisations operating across England. Launched in 2014, the Growth Hub is at the coalface of local industry, serving the needs of its enterprising new entrepreneurs and established companies in accessing the crucial support needed for starting-up or developing a business.

Here, the Growth Hub's Business Navigator, Jon Bass, who advises clients on programmes that are best suited to help them become established and grow, discusses the recent investment in the GRANTfinder and POLICYfinder service.

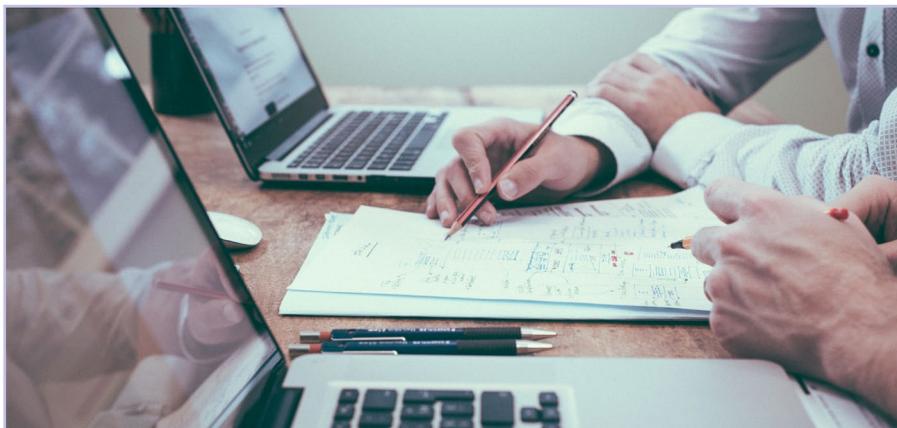
Why we invested in GRANTfinder

The Growth Hub's business support role centres on information gathering, diagnosing business needs and brokerage between the business community and local agencies that provide follow-on support. With a shared background of assisting businesses at the local Chambers of Commerce, the team here have used a range of marketing and business support products over many years and see GRANTfinder as the latest tool in their armoury. Using GRANTfinder will strengthen the Growth Hub's ability to identify up-to-date funding opportunities and create reports and bulletins to send on to local businesses in need of financial assistance. Locally there has always been a lack of access to a funding tool

like GRANTfinder, so that's why we decided to invest in it. The Growth Hub's business support team place high value on GRANTfinder's constantly updated and real-time published bank of private sector funding.

GRANTfinder's support in helping to achieve the Growth Hub's strategic aims

Since launching, the Growth Hub has helped to create no fewer than 2,400 jobs in the area and secured more than £65 million in private sector investment for progressive companies. Adding GRANTfinder to the Growth Hub's assets will help us to successfully accelerate and broaden the process of identifying new funds and support packages for the region's businesses, well into the future.



In order to demonstrate to central Government that we are adding value, providing a well-resourced and sought-after service, we need funding information at our fingertips, ready to pass on to our clients. We frequently field enquiries about grants, whenever the topic hits the local news, but often the call to action isn't clear and money that is intended for one purpose may be requested from those who don't qualify. GRANTfinder is helping to save us time in matching the right funds to their intended markets.

The primary area of support we are asked about is start-up funding, but the Growth Hub is fully aware that businesses already trading and in need of a monetary boost to propel them to the next level are just as important. GRANTfinder allows us to search across both scenarios, with the ability to filter by the applicant's stage of development.

The importance of access to up-to-date policy information

Our chief executive is keen to be proactive with upcoming business legislation and staying informed about associated Government policy. We need to be aware which bills are being presented to Parliament and to track policy changes that present an opportunity for us to diversify and work more efficiently.

GRANTfinder's sister product POLICYfinder contains all important legislation affecting the commercial sector and being aware of what's on the horizon enables us to keep our business community up-to-date. Matching the right opportunities to the Hub's client needs is paramount. Tracking policy and using GRANTfinder's search functions,

automatically generated updates and news alerts is helping us to get the right information though to clients, quickly and seamlessly.

A broad range of business funds

GRANTfinder gives us the ability to quickly run searches, produce reports, monitor the daily news alerts and match up new funding streams with potential applicants already on our books. We can also capture content from the GRANTfinder weekly bulletin for our own newsletters. Already, within the first month of using GRANTfinder, it has opened our eyes to the broad and varied range of business funds that are in the system. Whilst we might already know about some of the larger government programmes, we are finding lots of less well-publicised pots of money on GRANTfinder which we might not have heard of otherwise. And by setting up alerts we are confident that we will be kept constantly updated about new opportunities as they arise, which we can pass on to our business community to apply for and, hopefully, get ahead of the crowd.

Implementing GRANTfinder

The service is currently being managed in-house by a team of advisors who deal with walk-ins and contact by telephone and email. Responding to our clients' needs, GRANTfinder funding reports can be quickly extracted and delivered by email.

Looking ahead we're confident in the knowledge that we can contact the GRANTfinder helpdesk whenever we need one-to-one assistance and as we set about integrating use of the service into our daily activities.

