

Business Secretary launches £10 million Brexit readiness fund for business organisations

- £10 million available to support trade associations and other business organisations in helping businesses prepare for Brexit
- funds will support businesses across the UK in understanding the steps they should now take to be ready for 31 October 2019
- events, training and advice will be open to both members and non-members, ensuring businesses of all sizes can benefit

The Business Readiness Fund is open to business organisations and trade associations throughout the UK and will support events, training and the production of advice packs to assist businesses in making sure they are fully prepared for a Brexit on 31 October 2019.

Activities funded by the grants must be open to both members and non-members, and to businesses large and small preparing for Brexit on 31 October. This will ensure all businesses will benefit and can be reassured that they are fully ready, from major British producers to the smallest tech startups and entrepreneurs. There will be no barriers, such as affordability of membership.

Applications for grants will be accepted up to Friday 20 September 2019 and administered through a dedicated website, to be launched on 29 August 2019 and available through GOV.UK shortly. Funding will have to be used on activities to be completed ahead of 31 October 2019 in order to ensure they are focused on Brexit preparations and that our businesses are fully prepared for Brexit day.

Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

The UK will be leaving the EU on 31 October. For businesses that still feel unprepared, I am determined to do everything I possibly can to ensure they are fully ready for Brexit.

We know that companies often rely on the wider business community for help and advice with planning. Business groups will now be given the necessary tools to engage with this crucial task, communicating with non-members and businesses of all sizes.

The funding we are announcing today will mean business organisations from all sectors across the country can stand resolutely behind businesses large and small to support them in preparing for, and seizing the opportunities of, leaving the EU.

Craig Beaumont, Director of External Affairs at the Federation of Small

Business said:

As an organisation representing 165,000 small firms and the self-employed in every local community across the UK, we welcome these funds that target small businesses. It is mission critical to the economy that they have the information they need, to prepare for Brexit.

Notes to editors:

The fund will be open to business organisations (including the Federation of Small Businesses, BCC or Institute of Directors), trade associations, chambers of commerce, chartered institutes and other professional membership bodies with a significant membership.

Applications are invited for practical advice and support, including (but not limited to): advice packs; information campaigns; webinars; podcasts; events or training workshops.

Activities supported by the fund must:

- be delivered in their entirety by 31 October 2019
- be additional to those activities already in delivery or planned to be delivered
- be made available to all businesses in the sector or geographical area and cannot be restricted to an organisation's members or subscribers
- be free (non-chargeable) to businesses
- not create a competitive advantage to certain businesses

Proposed initiatives will be required to deliver their intended impact by the 31 October 2019, and this will be subject to HM Government scrutiny.

The funding forms part of the £108m recently announced by HM Treasury to promote and support businesses in ensuring they are ready for Brexit, including a national programme of business readiness and helping exporters to prepare for, and capitalise on, new opportunities.