

[News story: Improving productivity for businesses: apply for funding](#)

The [Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#) (BEIS) has up to £2 million to invest in trials of innovative ways to improve productivity for micro, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs).

The funding is part of the government's Business Basics Programme, announced as part of the modern Industrial Strategy.

The aim of the programme is to identify and test ideas that encourage SMEs to adopt existing technology and management practices that would improve their productivity.

Projects should show how to improve SME productivity

The competition will fund 2 types of project, proof of concept or feasibility studies and full-scale trials. If a proof of concept is successful, there is potential to access further funding to move the project into a full-scale trial in the future.

Projects should look at how to increase the adoption of technology and business practices to improve the productivity of SMEs. This could include:

- adopting existing technology, such as accountancy, CRM or HR software, cloud computing or payment systems
- adopting modern business practices, such as leadership and management capabilities or developing an innovation culture
- a combination of the 2 approaches above

Ideas could include increasing awareness about the benefits of technology, how to create interest in adopting new technology and business practices, making the benefits of new technology clearer and providing advice and support.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for applications is at midday on 4 September 2018
- projects can be led by a business, public sector, academic, charity or trade organisation working alone or with partners
- we expect projects for full trials to have costs of up to £400,000 and to last between 3 and 12 months
- we expect proof of concept projects and feasibility studies to have costs of up to £60,000 and to last between 3 and 6 months
- businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- a briefing event will be held on 12 July 2018