

## Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme

### Visitor Economy Grants

Whilst the visitor economy has been decimated globally due to COVID 19, with huge implications for national and local economies as well as individual businesses, jobs, means of travel, and wellbeing, it is now beginning the process of resetting itself and recovery. The Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme, delivered by Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), has been designed to help assist the recovery of this important economic sector.

The main aim of the Programme is to 'attract visitors and ensure that Oxford and Oxfordshire maintain its position as one of the UK's most desirable visitor destinations for local, national, and international visitors, with a focus on attracting value from all visitors and encouraging green and sustainable tourism and practices'.

Oxfordshire Businesses will be able to access support from the Programme and apply for grants to improve business competitiveness and COVID resilience within Oxfordshire. Businesses that can adapt, refresh, and renew experience led products, make use of technology innovation can position themselves to boost visitor numbers, safeguard jobs, and be more pandemic resilient.

Visitor Economy Grants of between £5000 and £24,999 will be available to businesses who can demonstrate that they are operating within the visitor economy, with a primary function in one of the following sectors: tourism, culture, arts, leisure, events, hospitality or retail. Businesses receiving grant support are expected to provide match funding.

The scheme will operate as a competitive single stage application process. The grant scheme will open to eligible businesses across two funding rounds.

- ROUND 1 – 5<sup>th</sup> October – 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022
- ROUND 2 - 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 – only if funding is still available

Applicants must be able to cash flow their projects. All grant claims, including evidence of spend, must have been submitted to OxLEP by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 for round one, and 30<sup>th</sup> September for round 2.

Eligible grants will be for projects that deliver tangible outcomes that allow a business to;

- Adapt, diversify, or innovate its visitor economy offering;
- Enhance their higher spend customer offer
- Encourage visitors to areas not traditionally known as 'hotspots' (heavily visited)
- Encourage shoulder season/off peak visitor opportunities
- Encourage longer stays/overnight visitors
- Improve digital presence to grow market share and attract new customers,
- Support the county's aim to be known as a COVID safe destination.

ALL projects will need to demonstrate how the project will have a positive impact on the wider visitor economy and also highlight how the organisation is continuing to minimise the risk of Covid-19 transmission in relation to increased visitor numbers, describing measures taken.

## Eligible sectors and Activities

To be eligible to apply, businesses must demonstrate that they are operating within the visitor economy, with a primary function in one of the following sectors:

### Tourism

Passenger transport – Water and land  
Hotels, holiday centres and villages, youth hostels and other collective accommodation,  
Recreational camping grounds  
Renting of cars and light motor vehicles  
Renting and leasing of passenger water transport equipment  
Travel agency and Tour operator activities  
Activities of tourist guides  
Visitor attractions

### Culture

Cultural education  
Museums activities  
Operation of historical sites and buildings and similar visitor attractions  
Botanical and zoological gardens and nature reserves activities

### Arts

Performing arts and theatres  
Operation of arts facilities, galleries and studios

### Leisure

Sports, recreation and well-being activities for visitors  
Amusement parks and theme parks and activity/ recreation centres

### Events

Letting and operating of conference and exhibition centres  
Activities of exhibition and gatherings – fair / festival organisers  
Activities of conference organisers  
Wedding venues

### Hospitality

Distilling, rectifying, and blending of spirits  
Manufacture of cider, beer, and wine  
Licensed restaurants, Unlicensed restaurants and cafes  
Take-away food shops and Mobile food stands  
Event catering activities  
Licensed clubs, Public houses and bars

### Independent Retail

Independent retailers based in Oxfordshire tourist destinations