

Broadband

Support Scheme

Brochure 1 of 5



Broadband Support Scheme for business and voluntary sector organisations

Following the success of the Satellite Broadband Scheme the WDA have widened the reach of the scheme to encompass additional broadband technologies which include, but are not limited to, xDSL, satellite, cable, wireless and Dedicated Internet Access Connections. Furthermore voluntary sector organisations are now eligible in addition to business.

The Broadband Wales programme announced by the Welsh Assembly Government in July 2002 will ensure that the whole of Wales will benefit from access to affordable broadband services. As part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Broadband Wales programme the Welsh Development Agency are delivering key elements of the programme, including the Broadband Support and its associated 'Try Before You Buy' schemes.

Try Before You Buy

We have enabled the ICT Centres in Wales with satellite and terrestrial broadband services where available. These ICT Centres offer free impartial advice not only on broadband but on all aspects of communication technology, and a visit to one of these centres is highly recommended.

Applicants to the Broadband Support Scheme would benefit by a visit to their local ICT Centre to enjoy hands on experience of the technology and understand the business benefits it can offer. Your nearest ICT Centre is listed in document 2 of 5.

Broadband Support Scheme

The scheme provides a subsidy for a broadband connection from a range of technologies (as detailed below). This support will effectively reduce the cost of broadband services, to a level comparable with the South East of England, thus ensuring a level playing field on which Welsh businesses can compete.

The following broadband technologies are available under the support scheme:

- xDSL
- Cable
- Wireless
- Dedicated Internet Access Connection
- Satellite



xDSL

An "always on" technology for transmitting digital information at high speeds using existing phone lines.

Cable

An internet connection which connects to the internet via a cable TV line.

Wireless

A connection to the internet by radio waves rather than being physically connected by a cable

Dedicated Internet Access Connection (Leased lines) -

A Dedicated Internet Access Connection is a permanent connection to the internet and is dedicated for the sole use of a company/voluntary sector organisation at a fixed upload/download speed.

Satellite

An internet connection in which the upstream (outgoing) and downstream (incoming) information is sent from, and arrives at, a computer via a satellite transmission.

The Broadband Support Scheme is open to Small and Medium enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary Sector organisations located in Wales

An eligible broadband service means a **dedicated business broadband service installation of:**

- Over 500Kbps download and 128kbps upload for satellite
- Over 500kbps download and 250kbps upload for wireless or bespoke forms of connectivity
- For xDSL and cable services, minimum speeds of 1000kbps download and 250kbps or greater upload

All forms of connectivity must have a minimum service provision contract duration of no less than one year.

For clarification, residential xDSL or cable products are not eligible for support.

To qualify your organisation must:

- Either be a Welsh Small and Medium Sized business (SME) or a Welsh Voluntary Sector Organisation.
- Employ between 1 and 249 employees
- Have a turnover of no more than £25 million or €40 million per annum.
- Not have received more than €100,000 of 'de Minimis aid regulation' over the last three years.
- Be able to demonstrate that it will increase productivity and competitiveness as a result of this support.
- Provide an official quotation for the total cost of your broadband connection from a supplier (include site survey, hardware, installation and monthly connection fee).

You are strongly encouraged to try out the various forms of broadband technology at your nearest ICT Centre.

Level of Assistance

The award for eligible broadband service is restricted to one award per organisation for all eligible forms of connectivity to a maximum value of £3000 or 50% of the total cost whichever is the lesser.

Eligible costs include site survey, installation, equipment and running costs, but does not include PC's and servers.

Assistance is limited to one offer of support per organisation during the lifetime of the programme.

Previously successful applicants of the Satellite Subsidy Scheme will not be eligible.

Timescale

Successful applications will be supported for one year.

Note

Any offer of support is at the sole discretion of the broadband team at the WDA. We cannot guarantee assistance even where applications fully meet the criteria of the programme. The purpose of the support is to help improve efficiency. For this reason you are asked to provide evidence that the assistance through public funding is necessary to improve business performance.

Please note that NO VAT should be levied on your claims statement.

Project Applications

The Broadband Team at the WDA require the following information to support your application form:

- The benefits of installing broadband to your organisation.
- Clear demonstration of how broadband will improve your organisations performance.
- Which type of connectivity you are applying for.
- The supplier who will provide your connectivity and attach a copy of the original quotation for providing/installing this service.

Part of the evaluation of every application includes a technical review.

We emphasise that you should not begin any installation work prior to receiving an offer letter signed by both parties (the WDA and you). The date on the offer letter indicates the earliest possible start date of the project. If you install prior to the date of the offer letter then the support offer may be withdrawn.

If you have difficulty in identifying a supplier please contact your nearest ICT Support Centre who will provide you with a comprehensive list of suppliers and offer impartial advice.

NOTE: The ICT Centres are impartial and therefore cannot and will not recommend a supplier. This must be your decision.

Further Information

We will endeavour to process applications as quickly as possible. We will contact you if we require further information about your application. If successful, you will receive an offer letter which we ask you to sign and return to us.

During the period of the Broadband Support Scheme you will be asked to submit grant claims, quarterly in arrears (but not less than quarterly and further grant application terms will be considered). The grant forms will be forwarded to the successful applicants with an offer letter. Failure to provide these claims may mean that the WDA will cease assistance on the project.

Upon completion of the contract it is possible that you will be asked to submit a short progress report. This will prove invaluable in the evaluation of the scheme.

Should you require assistance please contact the broadband team at the WDA.

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The Broadband Support Scheme is delivered by the Welsh Development Agency which is a sponsored body of the Welsh Assembly Government.