



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills

UNIVERSITY ENTERPRISE ZONES  
PILOT

Frequently Asked Questions

JANUARY 2014

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## **What is the announcement?**

A pilot scheme has been set up to establish University Enterprise Zones (UEZ), aimed at encouraging greater university-business interaction to increase innovation and growth. The pilot fund is £15m capital funding for England across three years (14-15 to 16-17) and is aimed at developing incubator and grown on space for businesses. The pilot will be administered by the Dept for Business, Innovation and Skills.

### **1. What is a UEZ?**

A University Enterprise Zone is an identified area which will provide a focus for increasing interaction between universities and business. Each UEZ will be supported by a partnership between a university, the Local Enterprise Partnership and others. This partnership will identify a geographical location of the zone and will agree a strategy and approach which will help the zone to contribute to local and where relevant national economic growth. Government support for this includes capital funding to build incubator and/or grown on space within the UEZ.

### **2. How is this different from an Enterprise Zone?**

Whilst there are similarities between both zones, enterprise zones typically have a number of incentives which the UEZs will not offer, such as business rate discounts and support for superfast broadband. However each UEZ will have support from UK Trade and Investment and a clear offer from the relevant local planning authorities of simplified planning constraints wherever relevant. Enterprise Zones are administered by The Department for Communities and Local Government.

### **3. Who can apply for funding from the pilot?**

The pilot is being trialled within the 8 Core City LEP areas. The 8 Core Cities are Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield. Applications are invited from universities as lead bidders, in partnership with their LEP. Bids are restricted to one application per LEP.

### **4. How do I apply?**

The application form and guidance for bidders is available on the Gov.uk website. The deadline for applications is 31 March 2014.

### **5. How will the applications be assessed?**

Bids will be assessed on the basis of presenting a clear offer for businesses, evidence of cooperation with LEP associated with the university, wider economic benefits expected and value for money. Bids will need to promise that Government capital funding for incubator or grow-on space will be matched on the basis of £2 from local partners and/or EU structural and investment funds for £1 of Government funding applied for. The Guidance for Bidders document has details of the full assessment criteria.

### **6. Who will decide which bids are successful?**

David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science, will make the final decision, based on advice from an assessment panel.

**7. When will funding be available to other areas?**

This is currently a 3 year pilot. We will evaluate its success throughout the life of the pilot, and if it is effective in meeting the aims we have set out we will look to extending it.

**8. Why is eligibility so restricted?**

The Government has made available a fund of £15m over three years, as a pilot, so we will only be able to fund 3-4 projects. The Core Cities are the focus for this pilot because of their particular role in driving economic growth.

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