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## This is the fifth in our weekly COVID 19 Business Support Information

### New UK Government “Support Finder” for Businesses

UK Government has launched a new ‘**support finder**’ tool which will help businesses and self-employed people across the UK to quickly and easily determine what financial support is available to them during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The finder tool on GOV.UK will ask business owners to fill out a [simple online questionnaire](#), which can take minutes to complete, you will then be directed to a list of all the financial support they may be eligible for.

### Furlough eligibility cut-off date extended to 19 March – Claim system now live

The eligibility cut-off date for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furlough scheme) has been extended from 28 February to 19 March. Employers are now able to claim for furloughed employees that were employed and on their PAYE payroll on or before 19 March 2020. This means that the employee must have been notified to HMRC through a Real Time Information (RTI) submission on or before 19 March 2020.

If you made employees redundant, or they stopped working for you on or after 28 February 2020, you can re-employ them, put them on furlough and claim for their wages through the scheme. This applies to employees that were made redundant or stopped working for you after 28 February, even if you do not re-employ them until after 19 March.

Read more about the [eligibility extension](#) and [how to claim support](#) through the scheme here.

Click [here](#) to link through to the UK Government website which provides the information you need to make your claim.

### Corona Virus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)

The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) opened on **Monday 20th April 2020** to facilitate access to finance for medium-sized and larger businesses affected by the coronavirus outbreak.

This scheme will be available for mid-sized and larger businesses with a turnover above £45 million. [Further information](#)



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## **Billion pound support package announced for innovative firms hit by COVID-19**

UK businesses driving innovation and development will be helped through the coronavirus outbreak with a £1.25 billion government support package.

The package includes a £500 million investment fund for high-growth companies impacted by the crisis, made up of funding from government and the private sector. SMEs focusing on research and development will also benefit from £750 million of grants and loans.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak, said the targeted and tailored help would ensure firms in some of the most dynamic sectors of the UK economy – ranging from tech to life sciences – are protected through the crisis so they can continue to develop innovative new products and help power UK growth.

The comprehensive package includes a new £500 million loan scheme for high-growth firms (Future Fund) and £750 million of targeted support for small and medium sized businesses focusing on research and development.

[For more information on the support package click here](#)

## **FinTech needs your feedback for Innovative Support Package**

FinTech Wales is a part of the UK FinTech network which feeds into the constant dialogue with government and regulators that has been occurring in recent weeks.

Ahead of the launch of the scheme in May mentioned above, we have a further opportunity to present feedback from across the UK FinTech sector to HM Treasury officials, especially from investors and founders, on what the eligibility criteria for the support should be.

Your views will, as ever, be critical to helping us represent the views of UK FinTech to the government.

Please get in touch directly with any feedback to [info@fintechwales.org](mailto:info@fintechwales.org)

[Further information](#)



## **Torfaen based manufacturer, Capital Valley Plastics, supports hospitals with vital materials**

Founded in 1987, Capital Valley Plastics based in Cwmavon, is an award winning firm employing 100 staff which recycles 9,000 tons of reclaimed scrap plastics every year and manufactures 10,500 tons of finished goods for the construction industry each year. They are now working with the British Plastics Federation and GOV.UK to offer their support in providing vital materials to a number of hospitals and the health care sector during the fight against COVID – 19.

Recently Capital Valley Plastics reacted quickly to an urgent request from an Exeter client to supply of polythene sheeting to aid in the construction of a temporary COVID -19 hospital in Devon. Within 24 hours 2 tonnes of material were despatched, followed by a further 9 tonnes over the following days, as well as supplying 66 tonnes of polythene to projects around London.

More locally, Managing Director, Roger Phillips, delivered a donation of polythene handy packs to Neville Hall hospital, Abergavenny. These will be used to protect vital medical equipment, create screened areas and to wrap up all contaminated PPE prior to its disposal.

[Full Story](#)

## **Cwmbran based AVoptics Ltd proudly supports London doctors with Face shields**

High tech firm, AVoptics with its research division based in Ty Coch Business Park, Cwmbran has recently been working in conjunction with Airbus and the Welsh government through the Endeavr programme to develop next generation 3D printed structures for aerospace markets.

Now, their rapid tooling and prototyping facilities, usually used for developing optical systems, have been put to excellent use and have enabled the team's highly qualified scientists, technicians and engineers to produce and supply face shields to doctors in London using an open source design originally approved by the Czech Ministry of Health.

Andrew Lee, Technical Director at AVoptics said "We are also looking at other potential concepts for example the use of non-contact UV light sterilization methods. We are delighted and incredibly proud to be supporting the NHS in this way."

**AVoptics** is a graduate company of **Springboard Business Innovation Centre**, Llantarnam Park, Cwmbran which supports high growth science and technology businesses.

[Full story](#)

***If any other local businesses are helping support the effort to fight Covid-19, let us know and we'll share your story.***

***E-mail: [info@southwalesbusiness.co.uk](mailto:info@southwalesbusiness.co.uk)***



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## **Welsh Government Flexible Skills Programme: 50% towards training costs available**

This fund is available across all sectors and areas of Wales and provides companies with a 50% contribution for upskilling their staff in a number of business sectors / areas, specifically:

Advanced manufacturing and engineering

- Advanced digital skills
- Compound semiconductors
- Export skills

Further details are on the [Business Wales Skills Gateway website](#), which includes a link where employers can submit an expression of interest (funding is available until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021)

## **Superfast Business Wales: COVID 19: Resources for businesses**

Superfast Business Wales has put together a number of resources to help you transition to working from home, promote your business and compete online. These include blogs and checklists with topics such as 'How to use video conferencing' through to 'How to stay in touch with customers'. Click [here](#) for further information

In addition, Superfast Business Wales are continuing to offer a range of free webinars including 20 minute taster sessions and a range of more in depth courses. These will help you put digital at the heart of your business. For dates and topics please click [here](#)

## **Economy & Enterprise Team – Business Support**

If you need to get in touch with an enquiry complete your [details here](#) and we will contact you as soon as possible.

## **COVID-19: guidance for employees, employers and businesses**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

## **COVID-19: Support for businesses**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>