Employee Upskilling Grant 2026 Call 3 – Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is the Employee Upskilling Grant?

A. The Employee Upskilling Grant is delivered by Antrim and Newtownabbey Labour Market Partnership (LMP) and funded by the Department for Communities. The grant supports local businesses to upskill existing employees to address labour market shortages and support workforce progression within the Borough.

Q. Who can apply for this grant?

A. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises based within Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough can apply. Organisations that represent or support multiple businesses may also apply. Priority will be given to businesses that have not previously received Employee Upskilling Grant funding.

Q. How much funding is available?

A. Businesses can apply for up to £10,000 towards eligible upskilling training costs. Grant aid is awarded on net costs only, excluding VAT, and is subject to budget availability and value-for-money assessment.

Q. What can the funding be used for?

A. Funding can support externally delivered training or qualifications aligned to job promotion and career progression opportunities, including industry-related certifications and associated licence or medical costs (excluding travel).

Q. What cannot be funded?

A. Retrospective costs, VAT, in-house training, training not linked to a new role or salary increase, travel costs, or costs assessed as poor value for money will not be funded.

Q. What commitments must businesses make?

A. Businesses must commit to progressing at least 30% of upskilled employees into new, higher-paid roles and retaining supported employees for a minimum of 12 months.

Q. When must training be completed?

A. All training must be completed by 28 February 2027, with final grant claims submitted by 10 March 2027.

Q. How do I apply?

A. Applications must be submitted online via antrimandnewtownabbey.flexigrant.com by Monday 30 November 2026. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Q. How will applications be assessed?

A. Applications will be assessed against eligibility, training relevance, recruitment need, commitment to progression, and value for money. Applications will be considered by an Assessment Panel and ratified by the Labour Market Partnership.

Q. How is the grant paid?

A. This is a retrospective grant. Businesses must pay training costs upfront and submit a grant claim with supporting evidence. Payments will be made by BACS transfer only.

Q. What monitoring is required?

A. Businesses and employees must complete monitoring reports, equality monitoring forms, questionnaires, and provide evidence of qualifications achieved, job progression, and salary increases.

Q. Where can I get further support?

A. For queries about eligibility or the application process, contact the Funding Unit at fundingunit@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk.