Unloc

SPARK TANK

Spark Tank Applicant Guidance Pack

Eligibility

To qualify for this grant, you must:

- Be aged between 16-24
- Live, work or study in Westminster
- Have the right to live and work in the UK

Not based in Westminster? Check out our Changemaker Grants here: unloc.online/opportunities/changemakergrants

Expectations

- Each answer within the form should not exceed 250 words.

- The question around sustainability & budget must be in written format
(*You can add a spreadsheet, graphs etc to enhance and explain these question but we want to see your reasoning in written form*).

- Applications open on Monday 2nd February 2026 and close on Monday 2nd March at 9am.

- The deadline for spending your grant is 1st September 2026.

- If you are successful for the grant, you will be invited to six bootcamp sessions where you'll be able to work on your enterprise and learn more about different aspects of being an entrepreneur. Unloc will monitor your progress and spending, checking in regularly with you.

Top Tips

- **Take time** to read each question and answer it without repeating yourself. You only have a limited amount of words, so use them wisely!

- If you have a **website or social media posts** for your project already, add them in! This will give more context to your application.

- Do you need extra support? Get in touch: dom@unloc.org.uk

Your Idea

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Your idea can be:

★ Brand new
★ Very early stage
★ Something you've started informally
★ Something you want to grow

You don't need business experience. You don't need a perfect plan.
We're looking for passion, clarity, and potential.

How Your Application Will Be Reviewed

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Most of the scoring is based on your **idea, your thinking, and your motivation.**

We're looking for a clear idea, a realistic plan, positive impact, a sensible budget, and your motivation to learn.

We are not looking for perfection! You can be honest about gaps in your knowledge or strategy, and if you are successful we will work on these together.

Scoring: Each section will be rated 1 - 5

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Score	Rating	Example
1	**Very Low**	*Idea unclear, unrealistic plan, little impact, weak budget, low motivation.*
2	**Low**	*Idea partly explained, plan unclear, limited impact, budget partly justified.*
3	**Moderate**	*Idea makes sense but needs detail, plan partly realistic, some impact shown.*
4	**Good**	*Clear idea, realistic plan, strong impact, realistic budget, motivated and committed to the programme.*
5	**Very Good**	*Compelling idea, very achievable plan, meaningful impact, well-justified budget, high motivation and growth mindset.*

Section 1: About you

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This section allows us to check your eligibility and circumstances.
We ask about your circumstances because we strive to reach young people who are the least likely to access these opportunities.

The eligibility criteria are:
- You must be aged 16-25
- You must live, work or study in the Borough of Westminster
- You must have the right to live and work in the United Kingdom

If you are not connected to Westminster, you can apply for a <u>Changemaker Grant</u> instead, from anywhere in the UK.

Section 2: Your Idea

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- Give us the name of your project

- Add links to any existing social media or website links for the project (don't worry if you don't have any - it will not be scored against you)

- Upload a file that explains the idea: think about what problem it solves and for whom, what you will create with the funds, and what it will look like in practice.

- Keep it short and simple: if it's a video or audio file, it must be under 3 minutes.

What kind of file can I upload my idea in?

Choose the format you feel most comfortable with: you will **not** be scored based on the type of file you submit, but on how thought-through your idea is. We want to allow your strengths to shine through your application. Here are some ideas…
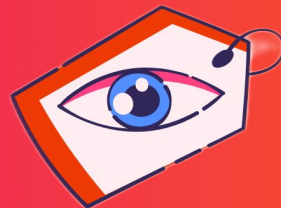
Written document

Recorded Video

Video with Presentation Slides

Voice Note

Posters and Visuals

Presentation

Section 3: Impact

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In this section, we want to understand:

1. The problem your project/service/goods will solve, and for whom. Why does it matter?

2. Your personal reasons for wanting to start or grow your project. What does it mean to you? What will it allow you to achieve?

To write strong answers in this section, provide evidence from your research or lived experience where possible.

Section 3: Examples

Example 1 – Community Benefit
"My idea is to run low-cost photography sessions for young people who need professional photos for CVs, portfolios or small businesses. Many can't afford studio prices, so this makes good-quality photos more accessible."

Example 2 – Personal Motivation
"I've been learning photography for two years and often take photos for friends. This project lets me grow my skills while supporting other young people in my community."

Example 3 – Problem + Solution
"The problem is that professional photography is too expensive for many young people. My solution is an affordable photo service using local spaces and basic equipment to keep costs low."

Section 4: Timeline

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.This section helps us understand how you'll deliver your idea.

A strong timeline includes:

★ **Clear steps** – What will happen first, second, and third?
★ **Realistic timeframes** – Show how you'll use the grant period wisely.
★ **Milestones** – What will you complete by each stage?

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Example Timeline:

➔ **March–April:** Buy materials, set up social media, finalise branding
➔ **May:** Test your idea with a small group or sample batch
➔ **June–July**: Launch your product/service and gather feedback
➔ **August:** Improve or expand your offer based on what you've learned

Keep it simple. Show the journey from **idea → launch → impact.**

Section 5: Budget

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Your budget should explain what you need and why you need it.
It doesn't need to be complicated, just clear and realistic.

A strong budget:
★ Breaks down your costs
★ Links each cost directly to your project
★ Shows good value for money

Remember:
✔ You don't need to apply for the full £1,000
✔ Only include costs that genuinely support your idea
✔ Show how each amount helps you deliver impact

Section 5: Example

Example Budget:

- **Materials / Equipment:** £250
- **Marketing / Promotion:** £180
- **Website / Software:** £120
- **Venue / Space hire:** £150

Contingency (unexpected costs): £50

Total: £750

Do I need to apply for the full £1000?

No, you don't! You can pick between the following amounts:

£250, £500, £750 or £1000

Only apply for the amount you think you need, but don't worry - the amount won't affect how we score your application.

Section 6: The Programme

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If you are awarded a Spark Tank grant, you will join a supportive programme designed to help you bring your idea to life.

You will receive:
★ Six bootcamp sessions covering business skills, marketing, finance, resilience and more
★ 1:1 support from the Unloc team as you launch and grow your idea
★ Opportunities to network with other young entrepreneurs
★ Check-ins to help you stay on track with your spending and goals

Our goal is to help you gain the confidence, skills, and momentum to make your idea real, not just for the grant period, but long after.

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Get connected!

Instagram — UnlocUK

LinkedIn — UnlocUK

X — Unloc_UK