

NEW START UP AND INNOVATOR VISAS ANNOUNCED BY UK GOVERNMENT

People who want to start a business in the UK will be able to apply for a “Start Up” or “Innovator” Visa. The new schemes replace the previous Tier 1 Entrepreneur and Graduate Entrepreneur schemes.

Criteria - The new route will widen the applicant pool of talented entrepreneurs and make the visa process faster and smoother for entrepreneurs coming to the UK. The Start Up Visa will replace a visa route which previously was exclusively for graduates, opening it up to a wider pool of talented business founders. Start Ups will be high potential Entrepreneurs and spend most of their time developing their business idea but can work outside their business to support themselves.

Start Ups will obtain a two-year Visa, can bring their families with them and can switch to the Innovator Visa. More experienced business people with a genuine innovative business proposal can go straight for the Innovator Visa which takes 3 years to complete. They must also have or have access to a minimum of £50,000 investment to support their idea. Innovator applicants cannot take on employed work as they must work entirely on developing their business ventures.

Unlike the previous Tier 1 Entrepreneur Scheme where applicants had to have access to £200,000, there is no investment requirement for the Start Up Visa route. However, business proposals must meet three basic criteria to be considered by an endorser: **It is innovative, Scalable and Viable**

Funding - Applicants should have funds to invest in their business or access to investment funds to ensure its viability. They may be individuals or members of an entrepreneurial team.

Endorsement - Applicants for both Visa routes will now have to apply to a Government approved Sponsoring Body (SB). The role of the Sponsoring Bodies is to assess applicant’s business proposals only not to consider suitability for a UK residency visa. The latter will remain with the Home Office. The endorsing body will evaluate the business proposal, the business plan and via an interview with the applicant. If approved the SB will monitor the progress of the new business proposal via regular contact with the applicant.

Business Support - Overseas applicants will need to understand what’s involved in setting up and running a business in the UK so will require a range of business support pre-application to the SB, at application and during the 2/5-year qualifying period. It is important that the new business is prepared to meet all the SB’s qualifying requirements and has local support to meet its objectives.

How Can Severn Seed Finance (SSF) Help? – SSF has considerable experience in raising investment via the former Tier 1 Visa scheme and is familiar with Home Office requirements. It is expert in evaluating high growth start up and early stage businesses suitability for funding including the use of its bespoke DriskIT investment readiness tool. SSF also raises investment for start ups and early stage companies via its private deal platform where companies and investors and funds can engage in a secure situation. SSF also has a network of professionals specialising in business support ranging from business plan preparation, sales, recruitment and on-going professional business services.

Contact us - If you are seeking to set up a UK business as an overseas entrepreneur, have an excellent innovative business idea, or wish to replicate a successful business you operate abroad, then contact [US](#) about the new start-up and innovator visas. We will be pleased to help you.