

Small grant funding for Secondary Analysis of the Longitudinal Small Business Survey

Call for proposals 2025

The Department for Business and Trade (DBT) has made available £25,000 to fund five secondary analyses of the Longitudinal Small Business Survey. The Enterprise Research Centre (ERC) is administering this call on behalf of DBT. Note that applications will not be accepted from anyone who is being supported through current ERC grant funding. Applications are welcome from those who received funding from the earlier LSBS secondary analysis calls.

Applications for funding should be submitted to ERC by **28th February 2025**. Successful bids will be announced by 10th March 2025. Funded activity should be completed by end-August 2025.

Background

The Department for Business and Trade recently published the ninth wave of the UK Longitudinal Small Business Survey. Data from the LSBS is made available through the ESRC Secure Data Lab.

The Department is seeking to fund 5 focused research projects costing up to £5,000 each which will explore aspects of the LSBS data. Applications which focus on the following areas will be prioritised:

- Productivity and place and how they interact with other aspects of business – growth, finance etc.
- The long-term decline in key indicators (growth ambition, demand for finance, investment in training, demand for business support, etc).
- Differences between high growth firms and low/no growth firms in characteristics, capabilities, attitudes, performance.
- Characteristics and challenges for those businesses who export vs non-exporting for example by size of business, minority ethnic groups led, region etc.
- Differences between women-led businesses vs men-led businesses and how they participate in international trade by sector, size of business etc.
- Which businesses are adopting digital, AI etc, what are the drivers and are there peer effects.
- Demand for different types of business support from businesses with high growth performance/ambition
- Characteristics and challenges for social enterprises, cooperatives and alternative ownership structures.
- Growth and productivity of social enterprises, cooperatives and alternative ownership structures.

Projects may relate to specific sub-groups of the business population, regional or more local analyses or specific groups of firms distinguished, for example, by their use of external finance or exporting activity. Proposals using any aspect of the LSBS data will be considered for funding. Each funded project will be required to produce a research paper of publishable quality and a brief non-technical summary (2-3 pages) of the key results.

The application process

Decisions on funding will be made by the LSBS project manager supported by the ERC Directors. Note that applications will not be accepted from anyone who is being supported through current ERC grant funding. Applications are welcome, however, from those who received funding from the earlier LSBS secondary analysis calls. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Strength of the suggested programme of activity 70%
- Strength of the project team 30%

Awards will each be of £5,000 and are expected to cover all research and reporting costs associated with each project.

Proposals will form the basis for a brief contractual agreement. Payment will be made at the end of the project subject to the completion of the proposed programme of activity and related reporting.

Preparing an application

Applications should be prepared as Word documents and excluding appendices should be no longer than 4 pages. These should take the following form:

- Project title and applicants including full affiliations and contact details. The lead applicant should be clearly identified.
- Overview of proposed research and potential contribution to understanding
- Overview of the project team

Annex - Brief two-page CVs for the lead applicant and other relevant team members should be included in an annex.

Applications for funding should be submitted to Jiao Liu at ERC (CentreManager@enterpriseresearch.ac.uk) by 5pm on **28th February 2025**.