



How to sell overseas

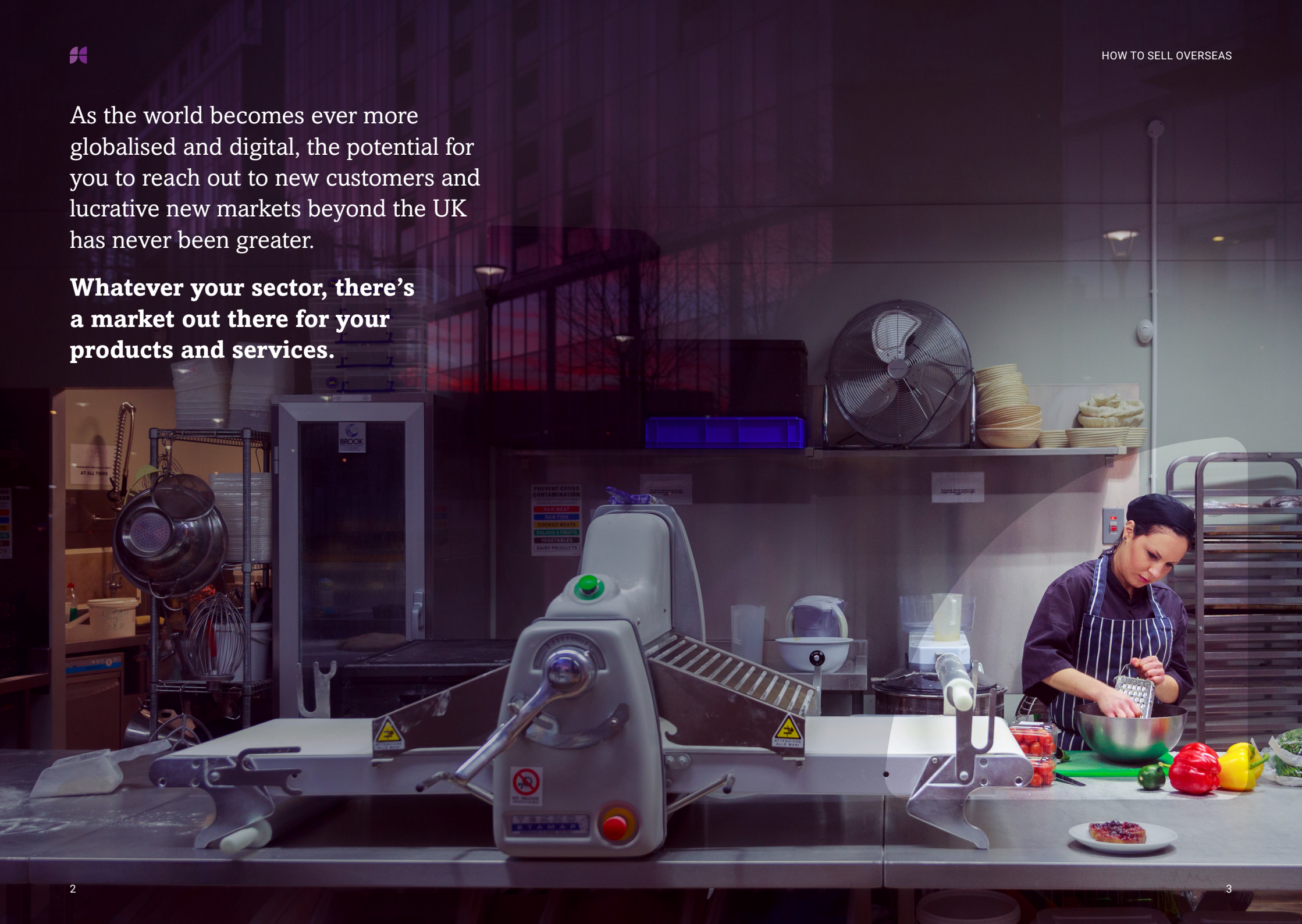
A beginner's guide





As the world becomes ever more globalised and digital, the potential for you to reach out to new customers and lucrative new markets beyond the UK has never been greater.

Whatever your sector, there's a market out there for your products and services.





Brought to you in partnership with the Department for International Trade

At Funding Circle we want to help every business to grow, thrive and take new opportunities. As well as helping to fund your new ventures, we want you to have the resources and know-how to make your expansion a huge success.

By partnering with the Department for International Trade to produce this guide, you can use their wealth of experience and expertise to start your own exporting journey.



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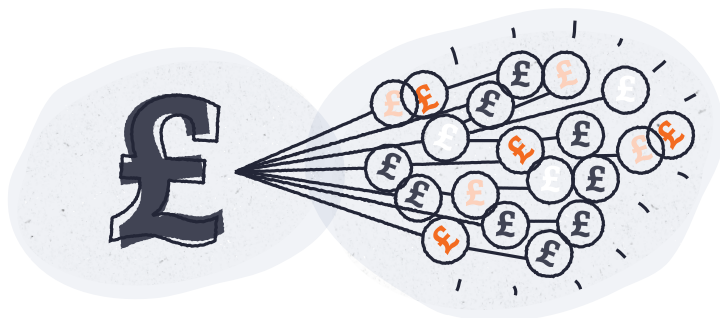
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People are looking for your goods, skills and services

If you have a product or service that is performing well at home, in many cases there will be demand for it overseas. If you're a small company in an unusual sector don't be put off - two out of five companies with fewer than 10 employees are already doing business in at least one high-growth market.

Not only is exporting a way to grow your business, research shows that companies that sell overseas are more productive, innovative and resilient to economic downturns than those that don't.






What selling overseas can do for you



Whatever your size or sector, the rewards for selling your products or services abroad can be huge. Doing business outside the UK can:

- ✓ Make you more profitable, competitive and innovative.
- ✓ Boost your profile at home and internationally.
- ✓ Help you grow your business, because you're selling to new customers and accessing new revenues.
- ✓ Give your products and services a longer commercial life, because you have access to new customers and markets.
- ✓ Help you get better economies of scale that aren't always possible at home.
- ✓ Make you more resilient and allow you to spread your business risk.
- ✓ Transform your financial performance and balance sheet.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue and white patterned dress and sunglasses, is riding a teal-colored bicycle on a paved path in a park. The path is bordered by a black metal fence. In the background, there are lush green trees and a tall, slender stone monument topped with a sphere. The sky is clear and blue.

“It’s amazing how people find us from around the world, someone sees a picture online and the next thing you know we are selling bikes in Uruguay.”

Tom and Sian at Bobbin Bicycles took extra finance to fund their ecommerce channel, and now a quarter of their sales come from overseas.



Get ready to export

Eight things to consider:

- 1 Have I protected my intellectual property, completed my research and conducted due diligence?
- 2 Do I need to work with an overseas partner to succeed?
- 3 Have I evaluated the potential business risks?
- 4 What are the legal issues I need to consider?
- 5 What do I need to do to get paid and deliver my products on time?
- 6 Who will be leading this project in my company?
- 7 Do I have the resources – finance, time, expenses and skills – I need to deliver this project?
- 8 In which country, region, sector or segment should I start?



Four steps to exporting

There are four tried and tested steps you should take to write your export plan. You can get help and support for each of these steps with a visit to [great.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/great).

- 1 Do your research
- 2 Find finance
- 3 Plan
- 4 Find customers



1

Research

Market and customer research is essential, along with understanding how to protect your rights.

Ask yourself:

Who is your target customer?

Define them in detail and build a profile of what they look like.

Where is the overseas demand for your product or service?

Who is your competition and how do you compare?

What are the legal, financial and cultural differences of your target market?

How can you protect your intellectual property (IP)?

It's one of the most valuable assets you own so you need to know how IP rights vary across your markets.

Basic support and information, as well as business tools from the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) are freely available at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/seekingintellectual-property-advice

Find out from HM Revenue and Customs about the classification of goods, duty relief, VAT, taxes and exchanges rates.

Visit www.gov.uk/business-tax/import-export to get you started.

Could you get funding for a visit to where you're planning to export? Trade shows are where you'll make contacts with potential trading partners and get advice from trade experts.

Find out more at: www.gov.uk/guidance/tradeshows-access-programme

Use great.gov.uk to gauge overseas demand for your product or service and decide which market is best for you.



2

Finance

Find out as much as you can about the finance you'll need to grow your business abroad. That includes the extra investment you'll need for advertising, research and other essentials.

Be sure to:

Review the extra finance you may need to fund your move overseas, remembering that working capital requirements may need to take into account extended shipping times or payment terms.

Always think long-term, being realistic about the time it will take you to get established and make a profit in your planning, so you have the resources you need to keep going.

Funding Circle

We can help fund your overseas expansion with an affordable business loan. You can get an unsecured loan from £10,000 to £500,000 with a personal guarantee.

When you apply, you'll only be assessed on your current business activity. That means you won't have to rely on the extra sales abroad to repay your loan, and can make the best decisions for the long-term success of your business.

Visit [fundingcircle.com](https://www.fundingcircle.com) to find out more.

UK Export Finance (UKEF)

UKEF is the UK's export credit agency and is a part of the Department for International Trade. They provide insurance to help protect against the risk of not getting paid, and additional finance to help export deals if other providers can't fulfill your needs.

They make sure that no viable export fails for lack of finance or insurance and provide financial support for any size of exporter across all sectors.



3

Plan

Once you've completed your research and explored finance options, you need an export plan that sets out how you'll break into your new market.

An export plan is similar to a business plan but with an international focus.

It should outline your objectives, strategy and preparations for selling your product or service in a new or existing overseas market. It will also help you evaluate risks and benefits. An independent trade advisor can help you with your export plan.

To get your plan started you should:

- Set out how you'll launch your product or service
- Decide if you want to sell directly, online or through an agent or distributor.

- If you're selling online get in touch with your local Department for International Trade (DIT) office (details on page 28) to talk to an e-commerce adviser and find out about DIT's E-Exporting programme.
- Plan your routes and choose the most efficient transport method.
- Are your goods insured?
- Think about capital, resources, logistics, distribution and customer support.

Your export plan should include:

- ✓ A marketing strategy
- ✓ Any modifications you need to make to your product or service
- ✓ Your preferred route to market – what's your most cost effective and efficient distribution channel?
- ✓ Your chosen business model – agent, distributor, B2B, B2C?
- ✓ Whether you need to establish an overseas presence – such as a sales office or by forming a strategic alliance, joint venture or subsidiary
- ✓ Your financial resources and how to get paid
- ✓ The right people to help you develop your new export markets
- ✓ Relevant info about your chosen market



4

Customers

How will you find customers? Should you use an agent or distributor, or maybe just sell online or directly?

Depending on your product and its shelf life, there is a range of ways you can sell to your customers.

This could be selling directly, online or via agents or distributors – you can find out more about all of these on [great.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/great).

Selling online to overseas customers

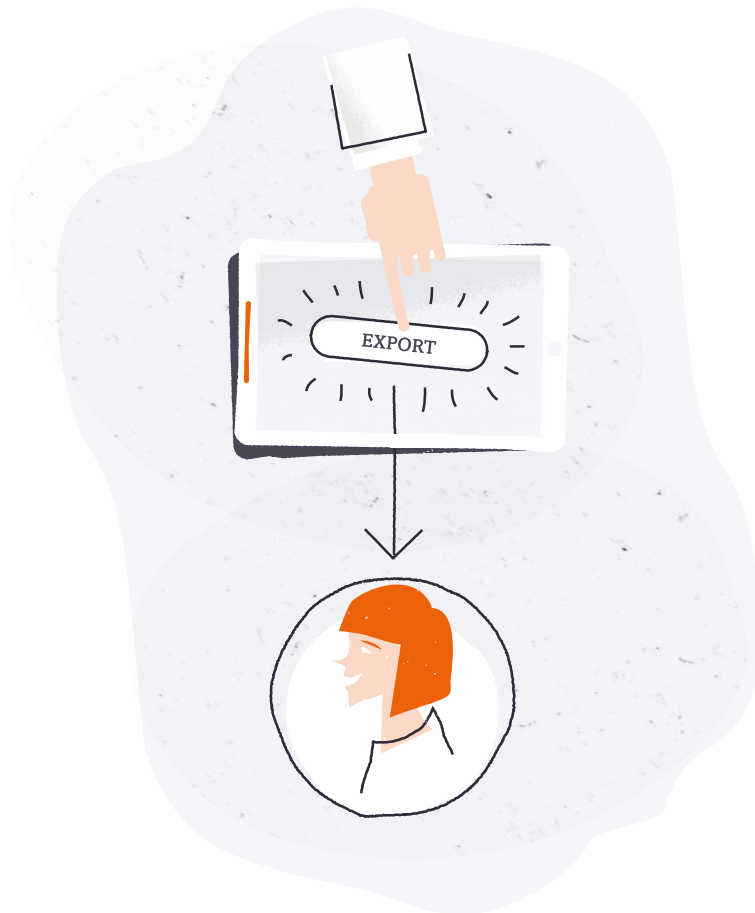
The Department for International Trade's E-Exporting Programme gives you access to the Selling Online Overseas Tool, a free to use, online service that allows you to click, connect, prepare and sell on global e-marketplaces, such as Amazon, eBay and Rakuten, based on your product category and export market of choice. Through the tool, you can also access discounts, including waived commissions and special marketing packages.

Selling through a partner

Some businesses choose to work with a partner who is already familiar with a particular market. There are two types – distributors and agents. A distributor will buy your products directly from you and re-sell them locally. They will be responsible for any profit or loss in stocking and selling on your goods. Agents will arrange sales on your behalf and receive commission on the sale once payment is made. In both cases they are an invaluable, on the ground resource to feed back market intelligence.

Getting help and advice

Of course, making the move into any new market – especially when you're dealing with a different language, culture or set of regulations – can feel like a leap into the unknown. But with the right help and support you can do it.



great.gov.uk is the ideal starting point for UK businesses that are looking to export for the first time or increase the amount of exports they produce. It brings together the best information across government and suitable partners.



On [great.gov.uk](https://www.great.gov.uk) you'll find:

Find a buyer or a supplier

UK businesses can create their international profile on the 'Find a Buyer' section of the great.gov.uk website. International buyers view these profiles through the 'Find a Supplier' service on the same site.



Find the right online marketplace

Selling online overseas helps businesses find the best online marketplaces to sell their products and take advantage of preferential deals.

- ✓ Live export opportunities
- ✓ Guidance on how to research export markets
- ✓ Seminars and webinars on starting to export or exporting to new markets
- ✓ Details of forthcoming trade missions
- ✓ How to find your nearest trade adviser who has specialist sector and market knowledge



Fast affordable loans to help you thrive

Whether you need to buy more stock to fulfill orders, hire overseas staff or a cash flow boost to cover new contracts, our business loans could help. You could borrow up to £500,000 unsecured. Apply online in just 10 minutes, you'll get a dedicated Account Manager and a decision typically in 24 hours.

- ✓ Up to £500,000 unsecured*
- ✓ Rates from 1.9% per annum
- ✓ 6 month – 5 year terms
- ✓ No fees for full early repayment
- ✓ Decision typically in 24 hrs
- ✓ Dedicated account manager

* Personal guarantee required

FOR MORE INFO VISIT
fundingcircle.com

OR GIVE US A CALL
0800 048 2467



You can get help from these government departments

Department for International Trade (DIT)

The Department for International Trade has a network of experienced international trade advisers across the country as well as staff based in UK Embassies and other Diplomatic Offices around the world. They're all ready to provide you with expert trade advice, market know-how and practical support to grow your business internationally. Contact the Department for International Trade regional office nearest you, details can be found at the back of this brochure.

UK Export Finance (UKEF)

UKEF is the UK's export credit agency. It helps UK exporters by providing insurance to exporters and guarantees to banks to share the risks of providing export finance. In addition, it can make loans to overseas buyers of goods and services from the UK. UKEF works closely with exporters, banks, buyers and project sponsors to support exports to, and investments in, markets across the world. www.gov.uk/uk-export-finance

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

HMRC can give you expert assistance on a number of matters relating to the importing and exporting of goods. This includes information and guides covering topics such as the classification of goods, trading in the EU, imports from outside the EU, duty relief on imports and exports, import and export controls and procedures, VAT, export licences, export taxes and exchange rates. www.gov.uk/business-tax/import-export

Intellectual Property Office (IPO)

The IPO is the government body responsible for intellectual property (IP) rights including patents, designs, trademarks and copyright. The IPO operates and maintains a clear and accessible intellectual property system in the UK. The IPO can also help you protect and benefit from your ideas or inventions at home and abroad. This includes access to a range of IP events, guidance, tools and case studies to support your export ambitions. www.gov.uk/ipo

You can also get advice from your bank, accountant or lawyer and from your local Chambers of Commerce or trade association.



Help and advice in your region

The Department for International Trade has a network of experienced international trade advisers across the country based in our local offices listed here:

DIT East of England

eastinfo@mobile.trade.gov.uk
01707 398 398

DIT East Midlands

info@tradeEM.co.uk
0345 052 4001

DIT London

export@tradelondon.org.uk
020 7234 3000

DIT North East

northeast@mobile.trade.gov.uk
0345 136 0169

DIT North West

info@tradenw.org
0333 320 0392

DIT South East

info@tradesoutheast.com
0330 300 0012

DIT South West

DITsw@mobile.trade.gov.uk
01275 370 944

DIT West Midlands

wmenquiries@mobile.trade.gov.uk
0345 222 0159

DIT Yorkshire and the Humber

yorkshire@mobile.trade.gov.uk
0300 365 1000

UK export support, outside of England,
is also available from:

Business Wales

businesssupport@wales.gsi.gov.uk
0300 060 3000

Invest NI

enquiry@investni.com
0800 181 4422

Scottish Enterprise

international@scotent.co.uk
(within Scotland)
0300 013 3542

(from mobile phones or if outside
Scotland)
0141 247 1385



Funding Circle Limited
71 Queen Victoria Street
London EC4V 4AY
T: +44 (0) 207 401 9111
www.fundingcircle.com

