

#BackingtheUK

# Helping female-led businesses through COVID-19 and beyond

A checklist for businesses from  
The Female Founders Forum – a project by  
The Entrepreneurs Network and Barclays



At Barclays we're committed to doing everything we can to help level the playing field for female-led businesses so that more female founders start up and run businesses across the UK.

Barclays is delighted to have partnered with The Entrepreneurs Network since 2016, to create The Female Founders Forum (FFF) - an ambitious project to bring together aspiring and established female founders across the UK.

This document, designed in partnership with The Entrepreneurs Network, outlines practical guidance and useful resources to support your business resilience through COVID-19 and beyond.

## Access to finance throughout the pandemic and beyond

- ❑ Learn more about how [Barclays High Growth & Entrepreneurs](#) team can support you
- ❑ Talk to your bank about what Government financial support is available, you may be surprised about what support you still may be eligible for
- ❑ Think about other ways to help [manage your cashflow](#)
- ❑ Consider whether you need help with managing your [international trading arrangements](#) or [foreign exchange](#) exposure
- ❑ Check the [Government's AtoZ of Business Finance and Support](#) to find out what's on offer
- ❑ Use the [Government's Business Support Finder tool](#) to see if you are eligible for a loan, tax relief or cash grant
- ❑ Visit the [British Business Bank's Finance Hub](#) to understand and identify what finance options are available to you.

## Planning ahead to stay ahead

- ❑ Find the [templates and resources you need to write your business plan](#)
- ❑ Create a forecast of your future cash flows using [Barclays' cashflow forecast templates](#)
- ❑ [Consider Barclays' Scale-up programme](#) to support your planning through COVID-19 and beyond
- ❑ Explore the wide range of free support and other resources available via the Government's [Business Support Helpline](#)
- ❑ Think about moving your products online to improve efficiency, reduce costs and communicate with more customers.

## Attracting and retaining talent

- ❑ Read the Government's [step-by-step guidance on getting your business ready to employ staff](#) and decide what type of employee you need
- ❑ Read these helpful [guides on avoiding discrimination during recruitment](#) and make your application process accessible for employees with disabilities or health conditions
- ❑ Check the [Apprenticeships Employer Hub](#) for useful guidance on hiring an apprentice
- ❑ Consider the [Government's Kickstart scheme](#) for eligible employees. The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to employers to create job placements for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit. You can find Kickstart Gateways to partner with through a [DWP tool](#).

## Building personal and operational business resilience

- ❑ Consider ways to reduce direct, indirect and overhead costs, such as reviewing service contracts and utilities
- ❑ Check the terms and conditions of your insurance cover for business interruption
- ❑ Keep an up-to-date list of key business contacts including staff, consumers, suppliers, insurers and utility providers
- ❑ Reach out to your [local LEP growth hub](#) for support in your region. There are 38 across England providing support and guidance to local businesses like yours, or consider engaging with your local business groups and networks. The Female Founders Forum is a good place to start to help meet other aspiring and established female founders
- ❑ Utilise a multitude of free tools, resources and support offered by [Enterprise Nation](#)
- ❑ Look at accessing the free online courses in business digitisation on [TechNation's Digital Business Academy](#)
- ❑ Regularly check in on your staff's home-working and wellbeing through COVID-19 and beyond. [The Health & Safety Executive \(HSE\) has lots of helpful advice](#) to support your business planning.

## Cementing your story and enhancing your business narrative

- ❑ Elevate your business pitch by telling a real customer story that addresses the problem your product or service solves
- ❑ Define your brand and pinpoint the space in the market that your brand occupies
- ❑ Research the emotive and rational needs and concern of your customers
- ❑ Speak to your customers with a consistent tone of voice to reinforce your brand
- ❑ Improve your Google ranking with Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
- ❑ Before pitching for funding, [understand the funding ecosystem using Barclays insights](#), and tailor your pitch to suit the audience.

## Exporting

- ❑ If you were already exporting before Brexit, some of the rules will have changed. Look at the [Brexit checker](#) to see how your business may have been impacted and use the resources in the [CBI's transition hub](#) to adjust to the new arrangements
- ❑ Read the Government's [step by step guide](#) to exporting goods. To work out your plan to get started and for more bespoke advice you can contact an [international trade advisor](#)
- ❑ When choosing which countries to start exporting to, check the Government's [guide to finding international opportunities](#) and then the [country by country](#) advice
- ❑ When you have decided what countries you would like to export to, you should check the [business risks](#) and work out how to mitigate them
- ❑ Make sure you research the business etiquette and customs of the places you are hoping to do business in
- ❑ Consider joining one of our [Business Banking webinars](#) to help you unlock international opportunities, understand trading abroad and how to grow your business globally.

Barclays is helping to connect female business leaders with the investment and support they need to grow. Visit [Barclays' Women in Business site](#) to find solutions that work for you.

The Entrepreneurs Network is a think tank for Britain's most ambitious entrepreneurs. Visit [www.tenentrepreneurs.org](http://www.tenentrepreneurs.org) to find out more.

To find out more about the opportunities from the Female Founders Forum - a project co-created by The Entrepreneurs & Barclays visit [www.tenentrepreneurs.org/aboutfff](http://www.tenentrepreneurs.org/aboutfff).