

# SME Finance

# Charter

## Overview

NatWest Group is a signatory to the UK Government's SME Finance Charter. This document sets out our commitments that sit alongside the commitments made by the Government under the 5 principles:

## We're open for business and ready to lend

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- Our capital strength means we are well placed to support our customers, invest for growth and drive sustainable returns to shareholders
- We pivoted from our leading role supporting customers with £14.4 billion of approved government scheme lending through the Covid-19 crisis to support UK businesses to recover and grow
- We doubled our Female Entrepreneurship Funding to £2 billion to support female-led businesses recover from the pandemic
- We are targeting £100 billion of Climate and Sustainable Funding and Financing for customers by the end of 2025
- We have a funding commitment of £6bn to support SMEs to scale and grow, with £4bn of that allocated outside London
- We are supporting customers through the new relationship with the European Union, through facilitating UK imports and exports by onboarding 27 more non-UK suppliers to Supply Chain Finance programmes
- We collaborate with industry leaders to deliver better customer experiences and have partnered with Business in The Community (BITC), Hatch and Digital Boost, to empower underrepresented entrepreneurs and communities and embed new skills and technology

TOMORROW  
BEGINS TODAY



NatWest

## **We'll help you build back better after Covid-19:**

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- Our focus is on supporting businesses, helping them to manage their business needs, be that through access to tools and resources, funding and cashflow options along with government support
- We know that SMEs need support tailored to their specific needs and we're aware of differences in the allocation of support and funding across gender, location and ethnicity. Through our Springboard to Recovery work we've conducted a survey to see how best we can support the economic recovery
- We have also committed to helping to create an additional 50,000 new businesses of which: 60% will be Female led, 20% Black, Asian and Minority ethnic-led with, 75% outside of London and the South East
- Our dedicated Coronavirus hub provides SMEs with a wealth of support and information including our full range of loans and finance options and range of supportive initiatives
- Business Builder provides free online learning and events
- For high growth business with ambitions to expand, our Entrepreneur Accelerator programmes help provide the skills to scale up
- NatWest Mentor can help with HR policy, staff engagement and legal queries
- We have specialist support in place for Women in Business and ethnic minority business communities
- We've launched green loan and green asset finance solutions to support our customers Net Zero ambitions and have a dedicated climate hub

## **We'll support your application and signpost other options if needed**

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- We have a variety of funding options available, from asset finance to invoice finance, and our staff will ensure customers are supported with the product that meets individual requirements and circumstances
- We'll help you understand how you can improve your credit score, explain how we make lending decisions and help you to appeal any lending decision we make

## **We'll treat you fairly at all times**

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- We've made it easy for businesses to compare our products with competitors, helping customers make an informed choice
- If we can't support your lending request, we will clearly state why this is the case and outline the alternative options available to your business
- We'll continue to ensure our existing customers are treated fairly, for example by ensuring that any pricing offers available to new customers are available to all
- We are a Registered Firm with the Lending Standards Board which publishes the Standards of Lending Practice for Business Customers
- If businesses experience financial difficulties we will carefully review the issues and the options available, taking account of both economic and non-economic factors. The steps we'll take to do this will be clearly explained with empathy, honesty and transparency

## **We will work with the Government-owned British Business Bank (BBB) to support SMEs**

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- We continue to support business through the Recovery Loan Scheme to ensure all small businesses get the helping hand they need
- We work closely with the Department of Business, Energy and the Industrial Strategy, HM Treasury and other Government departments to promote available relevant content and support customers through our specialist staff
- We are a key partner in the Government's Help to Grow: Management and Help to Grow: Digital schemes and sit on the Help to Grow Management, Expert Advisory Council
- We will continue to partner, and promote, the British Business Bank and its finance schemes to relevant customers to ensure they receive the support they need