

Unlocking the potential within

With excitement growing ahead of the Post Business Awards on November 26, **Bournville College**, sponsor of the Small and Medium Enterprises category, reveals how it is working for the region

BOURNVILLE College is offering businesses yet another chance to unlock their potential, with the help from the Regional Growth Fund.

The funding, which has over the last four years allowed hundreds of companies to flourish, is back for its fifth round.

Bournville College, in partnership with *Birmingham Post*, is once again enabling local businesses to grow, improve and innovate.

The focus is, as always, on job creation but job safeguarding is also considered. Companies can apply for anything from £10,000 to £100,000 to unlock investment plans.

The funding is delivered in tranches by Birmingham Post and Bournville College to businesses with fewer than 250 employees, allowing opportunities for job creation in Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry.

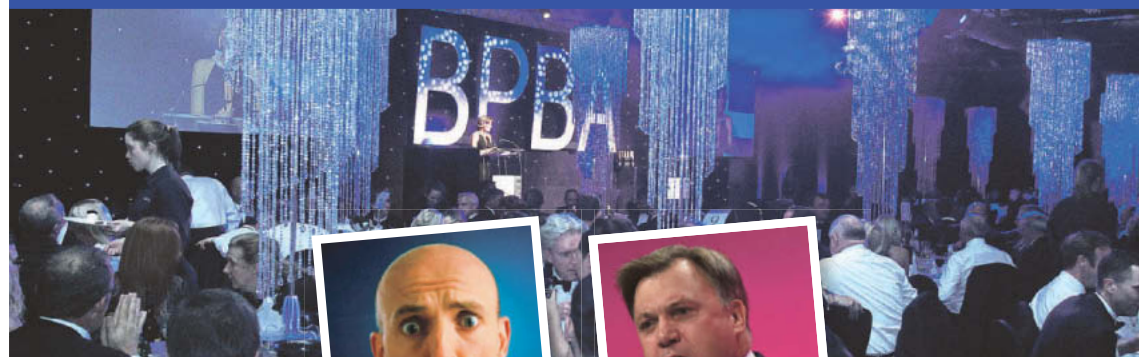
The funding comes from the Government's Regional Growth Fund and it is open to applications now.

Norman Cave, Principal at Bournville College, said: "We are delighted to have



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successfully bid for new funds for the Birmingham sub-region and our continued business collaboration with the *Birmingham Post* will support further economic growth and help even more businesses in our region grow.

"We have already enabled hundreds of companies to create sustainable jobs, invest in training and stimulate economic growth and we look forward to helping lots more in this round of funding."

The last Birmingham Post Growth Fund saw more than 60 firms receive a total of £5 million from the RGF towards growth plans, boosting the region's economy.

VoxPopMe, a mobile video platform that gives brands a new way of engaging consumers for feedback and opinion, was one of the companies which secured the funding.

Chief Executive, Dave Carruthers, said: "The growth funding received has allowed us to ramp up our core business team and our marketing activity and since launching just over a year ago we are now working with over 25 leading brands, including McDonalds, Sky, British Gas and EE."

Another successful funding applicant in a previous round was a Birmingham-based marketing and event communications agency, Big Cat.

Managing dDirector, Anthony Tattum, was full of praise for the project: "The Growth Fund provided us with the confidence and resources to invest in equipment, technologies and expert advisors to sustainably grow our business."

"The investment has created a solid foundation of Sales, Marketing and Operational processes that has developed a team structure and new business pipeline that saw the business grow 30% last year."

Many companies which received the funding invested in training with the College, recognising the value of a skilled workforce. Through a variety of career and job related qualifications, short courses tailor made to a specific business need, apprenticeships and

more, Bournville College helps hundreds of companies every year achieve their bottom line objectives through skills improvement.

This year the College has seen many companies focus on employees' English and maths skills.

"English and Maths are the biggest skills gaps in the country and it's refreshing to see local companies tackling them."

"What's even better is that we have secured European Social Fund money to enable SMEs to do this training for free," Norman Cave added.

Having worked with thousands of local small and medium sized businesses over the years, it's very apt that Bournville College is sponsoring the prestigious Birmingham Post Business Awards 2014 in this category.

The College is proud of the achievements of all local businesses and wishes all the entrants, especially those in the category of Small and Medium Sized Businesses, the very best of luck!

■ Business enquiries about Birmingham Post Regional Growth Fund should be made by emailing RGF5@bournville.ac.uk or visiting bournville.ac.uk/birmingham-post-growth-fund/.

Information on free English and Maths training is available from amderdeep.jakhu@bournville.ac.uk. For any other business training opportunities, email bdt@bournville.ac.uk or call 0121 477 1400.

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