



## Industrial Communities Alliance

The all-party association campaigning on behalf of local authorities in the industrial areas of England, Scotland and Wales

National Secretariat, 1 Regent Street, Barnsley S70 2EG

Tel: 01226 200768 [www.industrialcommunitiesalliance.org.uk](http://www.industrialcommunitiesalliance.org.uk) Email: [natsec@ccc-alliance.org.uk](mailto:natsec@ccc-alliance.org.uk)

Rt Hon Peter Kyle MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Business and Trade

Email to: [dbtcorrespondence@businessandtrade.gov.uk](mailto:dbtcorrespondence@businessandtrade.gov.uk)

6 October 2025

Dear Peter,

### **Growth Mission Fund: eligibility**

Could I begin by congratulating you on your appointment as Secretary of State for Business and Trade.

I chair the Industrial Communities Alliance, the all-party association representing local authorities in the older industrial areas of England, Scotland and Wales. Our authorities cover many of the most disadvantaged parts of the country, badly hit by job losses over decades. As you might expect, we have a strong interest in industrial policy and regeneration.

I'm writing about the new Growth Mission Fund, which we understand will be managed by your department. We have a specific concern about the eligibility rules, which we gather are yet to be determined.

Many of our member authorities cover the former coalfields and we have a great deal of respect for the work of the Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT), a charitable body originally set up by the Labour government back in 1999. You may be aware that CRT has a proposal to build new business units for small firms across the former coalfields, the profits from which would be recycled into local community projects. CRT has requested government funding of £50m over five years to kick-start this programme.

CRT's proposal has received strong support from your colleagues in the House, including in a Commons debate earlier this year, so there was disappointment when there was no specific commitment in the Spending Review. However, correspondence with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury has pointed towards the Growth Mission Fund as a possible source of funding.

It's important therefore that the criteria for the Growth Mission Fund are set in a way that organisations such as CRT are clearly eligible and that bids covering developments across several regions and nations are firmly in scope.

I'd add of course that, if and when the Department receives a formal bid from the CRT, it would have the full backing of our member authorities and I'm sure of a great many MPs as well.

I'd be grateful if you could confirm that the eligibility criteria for the Growth Mission Fund will allow a bid of this kind from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Keith Cunliffe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cllr Keith Cunliffe  
National Chair