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United Kingdom
Residence by Investment



United Kingdom

The UK has long been a significant world power, both economically and politically. London is the financial capital of the world, offering an international business environment. The UK is also renowned for having some of the best educational institutions in the world and an open, international culture.

Residence by Investment

The Tier 1 Innovator Visa is aimed at those who can demonstrate relevant experience in business and requires individuals to set up or run an existing business in the UK. To qualify, applicants must invest GBP 50,000 into a new business that has been endorsed and approved by the Home Office and produce a business plan.

- **Investment**

GBP 50,000

- **Processing time**

One–eight weeks from submission of the application to approval

- **Key benefit**

The right to live, work, and study anywhere in the United Kingdom



UK Innovator Visa – An Overview

The Tier 1 Innovator visa is aimed at those who can demonstrate relevant experience in business. It requires an individual to set up or run an existing business in the UK. The applicant must be at least 18 years of age and have at least GBP 50,000 in investment funds if they want to set up a new business. They do not need funds if their business is already established and has been endorsed for an earlier visa. The funding can come from any source.

Before one applies, one needs to have one's business or business idea assessed by a Home Office-approved endorsing body. They will assess the viability of the business or business idea and, if approved, provide an endorsement letter to submit with the application.

The immigration rules distinguish between applicants who apply under the 'new business' criteria and those who apply under the 'same business' criteria. Individuals who go to the UK for the first time will need to apply under the 'new business' requirement.

Successful innovators are granted leave for three years at a time and can bring their family members to the UK. After three years, innovators can apply to extend their stay for a further three years or to settle permanently in the UK under indefinite leave to remain (ILR). Each of these three stages (initial application, extension, settlement) requires endorsement from an endorsing body. To qualify for ILR under the Tier 1 Innovator visa category, applicants are required to meet certain criteria, detailed in the downloadable UK Innovator Program factsheet.

Criteria for the UK Innovator Program

You can apply for a Tier 1 Innovator visa if:

- You want to set up or run a business in the UK. You need to have your business or business idea endorsed by an approved body
- You are outside the UK



- You meet the other eligibility requirements (that is, are 18 years old, have sufficient personal savings, and speak the English language)

Procedures and time frame of the UK Innovator Program

The completed application and supporting documentation must be submitted to the diplomatic post in the applicant's country of residence. The time frame from the submission of the application is dependent on the embassy receiving the application, and approval may take between one and eight weeks. Upon expiry of the initial three-year period, the main applicant must apply for an 'extension of stay' from within the UK. The authorities will issue the applicant with a three-year extension if all relevant criteria are met. Upon being granted settlement and spending a minimum of five years in the UK (the applicant must have held ILR in the last 12 months of that period), it is possible to apply for British citizenship.

Key advantages of the UK Innovator Program

- International business environment — London is the financial capital of the world
- Attractive tax regime for high-net-worth individuals who are resident but not domiciled
- Direct international flight connections to almost all major cities in the world
- World-renowned schools and universities



Detailed information on the Tier 1 Innovator visa is available on the Home Office website. This information is not intended to be immigration advice.

Additional Residence Visa Option – UK Overseas Business Visa

The Representatives of an Overseas Business visa is designed primarily to allow senior executives and managers of an overseas company to enter the UK to set up the company's first UK office, branch, or subsidiary.

Prospective investors who are senior employees of an overseas business and would like to go to the UK to set up and run a UK branch or wholly owned subsidiary of that business may be able to submit an application for a sole representative visa. The company must have its headquarters and principal place of business outside the UK and, where applicants are seeking entry as sole representatives, the company must have no other branch, subsidiary, or representative in the UK.

Criteria for the UK Overseas Business Visa

Applicants must:

- Have an intention to work full-time for their current employer in the UK and must have been recruited and employed outside the UK
- Maintain a physical residence in the UK to avoid losing their permanent resident status
- Pass the 'Life in the UK' test and an English language exam



The company:

- Must have its headquarters and principal place of business outside the UK
- Must have no other branch, subsidiary, or representative in the UK
- Must not have transacted business in the UK
- Cannot have any employees in the UK, although it can have previously used agents, such as distributors, in the UK
- Must be the same type of business as the parent company, which must still be actively trading and remain centered overseas

Procedures and time frame of the UK Overseas Business Visa

Prospective investors who are senior employees of an overseas business and would like to go to the UK to set up and run a UK branch or wholly owned subsidiary of that business may be able to submit an application for a sole representative visa. Married or unmarried partners and dependent children under 18 can apply to live in the UK along with the sole representative. Successful applicants will be given permission to enter and remain in the UK for up to three years initially. Applicants from certain countries will be required to register with the police within seven days of their arrival in the UK. Beyond this, they will need to submit a further application for leave to remain, which would be valid for two years. After five years in the UK in the sole representative visa category, successful applicants may be granted permission to remain in the UK permanently.



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