

FUNDING

A guide to accessing Microsoft-funded resources

FY 2025



Introducing Microsoft Funding

As an award-winning Cloud Managed Service Provider (CMSP), we know that cloud projects aren't cheap. Costs are often one of the biggest barriers to entry for organisations, with projects often delayed or – worse – shelved altogether.

We also know that cloud projects don't happen overnight. They are complex in nature, affecting each and every aspect of the business, and take plenty of time and resource to get right.

So, if you're considering your next cloud project, it's likely that you're looking to reduce the costs, and accelerate the process. You want to unlock all of the possibilities presented by the cloud, making your organisation more agile, scalable, and innovative, without exorbitant, uncontrollable costs and timescales that just grow and grow. Well, you're in luck.

Microsoft offers a wealth of funded resources for organisations like yours to leverage, and help you get the most out of their technology. From funded proof of concepts and assessments that give you a greater understanding of your current standing and what can be achieved, to tailored workshops that accelerate your adoption of new

technologies, these funded resources are available across a whole host of Microsoft's technology suite – including Azure, Defender for Cloud, Copilot, and plenty more.

Sounds good, doesn't it?

There's nothing to hide. No small print, no ridiculous stipulations. These resources are there to get your project going, and to empower your organisation with Microsoft's suite of technology products as quickly as possible, so that you can keep doing what you do best.

So, let's get cracking. There's a lot to understand, but you're in safe hands – after all, Cloud Direct was named the number one Microsoft funding partner in 2023, and third in EMEA. Throughout this guide we'll explore the different funding opportunities, assessments, and workshops that are available to you, give you the lowdown on how you can access them, and point you in the right direction.

Microsoft Partner
Azure Expert MSP


Microsoft
Partner


2022 Partner of the Year Finalist
Solution Assessments Award

What's on offer?

Microsoft offers three different types of funded resources, each with the ability to accelerate your latest cloud project. There's no one-size-fits-all solution – this isn't a magic money pot for you to delve in to. It all depends on your project, your business needs, and your timescales.

FUNDING



When working with Azure, Microsoft offers exclusive funding opportunities to optimise your environment at each stage of your migration. These range from initial Proofs of Concept and Landing Zone deployments, to migrating your initial workloads to the cloud. When a full project has been scoped and costed, these funding pots are leveraged against the total costs and remove from the charge to the customer.

Recently, we secured \$75,000 (around £59,000) of Partner-led funding for a local government authority that was migrating a 300VM estate to Azure. Sounds good, right?

WORKSHOPS



As one of Microsoft's closest partners, we offer bespoke one-to-one workshops that will help you accelerate your journey in adopting, optimising and maximising various Microsoft tools and technologies. These are tailored to your specific business context so that they address your needs and solve your challenges.

We work with Microsoft to cover the costs of these workshops, making them free of charge for your organisation. This was the case for one local government authority, with which we explored and evaluated the full suite of end-to-end security offerings from Microsoft as part of the Cybersecurity Investment programme.

ASSESSMENTS



Microsoft's assessments are thorough, detailed, and give you the exact lay of the land before you get started with your project. Before embarking upon your next cloud project, undertaking an assessment is crucial in ensuring you aren't wasting time, effort, or resource – and that's where the organisation's funded assessments come in.

When we were working with an international law firm based in Bristol, it wasn't until a Solution Assessment was undertaken that the costs of migrating the business' SQL server to Azure were fully realised. It was evident that the project was only going to get bigger, more complex, and therefore costlier, but the funded assessment would lead on to funding opportunities totalling more than \$35,000 (roughly £27,500) to be secured.

What do they mean?

We've covered the funding, workshop and assessment resources in a nutshell, but what do they really entail, and what do they mean for your business? Let's delve into a bit more detail.

What is funding?

Funding is one of the key ways that Microsoft supports its customers in their cloud journey. By providing financial incentives and technical assistance, Microsoft helps businesses overcome the challenges and risks of migrating, modernising, and innovating with their applications and infrastructure on Azure.

Depending on which of those boxes your project is ticking, you can choose from two main funding options: Azure Migrate and Modernise, and Azure Innovate.

How much is available?

Microsoft funding packages are ranked in t-shirt sizes, with 'small' starting from \$5,000 and 'XL' reaching up to \$100,000.

Azure Migrate and Modernise



This does what it says on the tin. Azure Migrate and Modernise (AMM) is a funding programme that aims to accelerate the migration and modernisation of your existing work-loads to Azure. Whether you want to lift-and-shift your applications, refactor them to use cloud-native services, or rearchitect them for greater scalability and resilience, AMM can help you achieve your objectives faster and with less risk.

There are six key scenarios that this funding covers:

1. Infrastructure and database migrations
2. Migrating to Azure VMware solution
3. Migrate Enterprise apps
4. Virtual Desktop Infrastructure
5. SAP migration to Azure
6. SAP RISE

The funding amounts that businesses can receive vary depending on the type of workload, the duration and complexity of the project, and the involvement from Microsoft or your cho-sen cloud partner. Typically, funding ranges from \$5,000 to \$100,000 (roughly £4,000 to £80,000) per customer, but this can change depending on the specific case.

Businesses that are looking to move their on-premise or other cloud workloads to Azure, or to update their existing Azure applications to leverage the latest features and best practices, are eligible for this funding. which can help businesses accelerate their cloud adoption, re-duce risks, improve performance and security, and ultimately lower costs.

Azure Innovate



Technology is developing quicker than ever before – blink and you’ll miss it. Microsoft is leading the way when it comes to innovation, as it strives to empower your business with the latest and greatest technology to better service your teams, customers and clients. If you aren’t looking to leverage technologies like artificial intelligence, then you are already falling behind your competitors.

Azure Innovate funding offers financial support and technical guidance to businesses that want to accelerate innovation by using Microsoft Cloud to unlock AI, empower their data, and delve into analytics. This funding can be used in a whole host of scenarios...

- Developing new products, services or applications powered by Azure
- Migrating existing applications or infrastructure to Azure
- Increasing developer productivity
- Scaling up existing Azure solutions to meet growing demand
- Leverage data to gain insights and drive business decision

The amount of funding that businesses can access through Azure Innovate depends on their eligibility criteria, project scope and business objectives, but it can be as much as \$50,000 (£40,000) and cover up to 100 per cent of the Azure consumption costs for the duration of the project. It’s the master key for unlocking innovation.

How we’ve helped

With business-critical infrastructure running on soon-to-be obsolete servers, Rouse Partners decided it was time to migrate to the cloud and unlock new opportunities, security features and scalability.

Transformation is expensive, but Cloud Direct’s close relationship with Microsoft meant we were able to mitigate the concerns around costs. Having been named Microsoft’s number one UK partner for partner-led funding in 2023, we delivered large financial savings from the project brief by securing two AMM funding grants to cover around 70 per cent of the total project cost.

“Looking at the initial figures of the project cost, we might have been having thoughts otherwise,” David Bevan, Assistant IT Manager at Rouse Partners, explained. “But having some of that financial burden reduced really helped with the reality of the project, and that’s not something we were aware was possible until we started engaging with Cloud Direct.”

[READ MORE](#)

What are assessments?

Microsoft offers various assessments to help accelerate your cloud projects by providing you with a clear understanding of your current situation – your 'as is' – and outlining a pathway to where you want to be. These assessments cover infrastructure, applications, security, sustainability and more, leaving you with...

- A clearly identified plan aligning to business goals and objectives
- A clear understanding of your current data estate
- Expert analysis of how to optimise your investment
- A ready-to-implement cloud migration strategy

If you are looking for a way to transform your business with the power of cloud computing, then really you need look no further. Microsoft's assessments come in an array of shapes and sizes, each tailored to specific scenarios.

Azure Infrastructure and Datacentre Migration Assessment



If your datacentre exit is right around the corner, then the next logical step is planning its migration to Azure – and this assessment helps you plan and execute that move. You will get a comprehensive analysis of your current environment, a migration readiness assessment, a cost estimation and optimisation report, and a migration roadmap with recommendations and best practices for moving to Azure.

Azure Application and Database Modernisation Assessment



This assessment helps you upgrade your legacy applications and databases to the latest versions and platforms in the cloud. With a detailed inventory of your current applications and databases, a compatibility analysis and migration assessment for each of them, you will receive a roadmap with recommendations and best practices for modernising your applications in Azure. You will also learn how to use Azure's innovative features and services, such as containers, microservices, serverless computing, and DevOps, to enhance your application development and delivery.

Azure Security and Compliance Assessment



Protecting your business from today's threat landscape is more important than ever before, and this assessment will help you do just that. You will get a thorough evaluation of your current security and compliance practices, policies, and controls, as well as a gap analysis and recommendations for improvement. You will also get guidance on how to use Azure's built-in security features and tools, such as Azure Security Centre, Azure Sentinel, and Azure Policy, to protect your data and resources, detect and respond to threats, and comply with regulatory standards.

Azure Sustainability Assessment



Sustainability is increasingly become a priority for businesses, with customers showing they prefer to buy from vendors and suppliers that are making an effort to protect our planet.

The Azure Sustainability Assessment helps you measure and improve your environmental impact in the cloud, providing you with a baseline of your current carbon footprint, energy consumption, and emissions across your data estate, as well as a projection of your potential savings and reductions by moving to Azure. You will also get recommendations and best practices for implementing green IT strategies, such as using renewable energy sources, optimising your resource utilization, and reducing your waste and emissions.

What next?

The insights that your solution assessment provides are invaluable – now it's a case of putting them in the right hands. You'll gain a clearer picture of the road ahead, showing you where you are, where you need to be, and how to get there. To put that into action you'll need to work with a Cloud Managed Service Provider.

We've been there, done it, and got the t-shirt. Off the back of your Solution Assessment, one of Cloud Direct's experts will be on hand to help you decipher the findings and put them into action. Together, we'll unpick the results, address the pain points, and work collaboratively to create a clear and achievable roadmap to get your next project off the ground.

SPEAK TO AN EXPERT

What are workshops?

While assessments provide you with an objective overview of your current environment, Microsoft's funded workshops provide the opportunity to work directly with an expert partner and look at your specific business context, its goals, and the challenges you face. These interactive sessions allow you to dig that little bit deeper, to ask those scenario-specific questions, and gain a deep understanding of the work that needs to take place.

Microsoft offers a vast array of funded workshops, which are delivered by select partners like Cloud Direct.

Microsoft Sentinel Workshop



IT is more complex than ever before, and therefore the importance of security increases daily. Security Information and Event Management solutions (SIEMs) that are built on old environments will struggle to stay up with today's threats – and won't stand a chance against tomorrow's.

This is why Microsoft has launched Sentinel; an intelligent security analytics and threat intelligence platform that provides a single view for alert detection, threat visibility, proactive hunting, and threat response.

It's a complex platform, but Microsoft has a workshop to help you fully understand Sentinel and provide your business a bird's eye view of your security estate.

This workshop will provide you with:

- An understanding of the features and benefits of Microsoft Sentinel
- Visibility into threats across your business
- A better understanding of potential threat vectors
- A defined deployment roadmap based on your environment and goals

Threat Protection Workshop



Businesses have a wider security parameter than ever before. It's important that you identify current and real security risks by leveraging threat protection on your IT. Microsoft is offering a workshop that will provide you with Microsoft security recommendations to help you gain visibility into threats across your email, identity and data. Enabling you to remediate vulnerabilities and upgrade your security posture for the long term.

This workshop will provide you with:

- Current, ongoing security threats and discover vulnerabilities in your environment
- The actionable next steps based on your specific needs and objectives
- A security strategy for the benefit of key stakeholders
- Better understand how to accelerate your security journey with Microsoft tools

Data Security Workshop



Businesses have more data than ever before – and more data means more security risks. Data is the most valuable thing to your organisation as it leads on your business decisions, shows business growth and much more. And with 83% of organisations experiencing more than one data breach in their lifetime, it's important that you have the right security in place to protect it. Microsoft has created this workshop to help you intelligently investigate and take action on your data security risks.

This workshop will provide you with:

- An understanding of the risks or dark organisational data
- The opportunity to learn about the internal risks there are on your data
- A clear overview of your environment against data protection standards
- A report on findings and associated data risks
- The tools and services that can help you mitigate these risks

...and so much more



Funded resources don't stop with Microsoft. Cloud Direct offers an extension to these programmes with a whole host of funded opportunities to explore.

Our exclusive 1:1 workshops – covering Azure optimisation, DevOps migration, Security, Data & AI and so much more – help apply Microsoft solutions to your specific business context. Over the course of a couple of hours, our experts work with you to explore your current environment, identify improvements, and create a roadmap that outlines your next steps. They clear up the confusion, and set you on the path to transformation.

Interested? See our full list of 1:1 workshops below.

Cloud Direct workshops



Azure VMware
Solution
Workshop

REGISTER



Application
Modernisation
Innovation
Workshop

REGISTER



Azure
Optimisation
Innovation
Workshop

REGISTER



Cloud Centre
of Excellence
Innovation
Workshop

REGISTER



Data and AI
Innovation
Workshop

REGISTER



Copilot
Innovation
Workshop

REGISTER

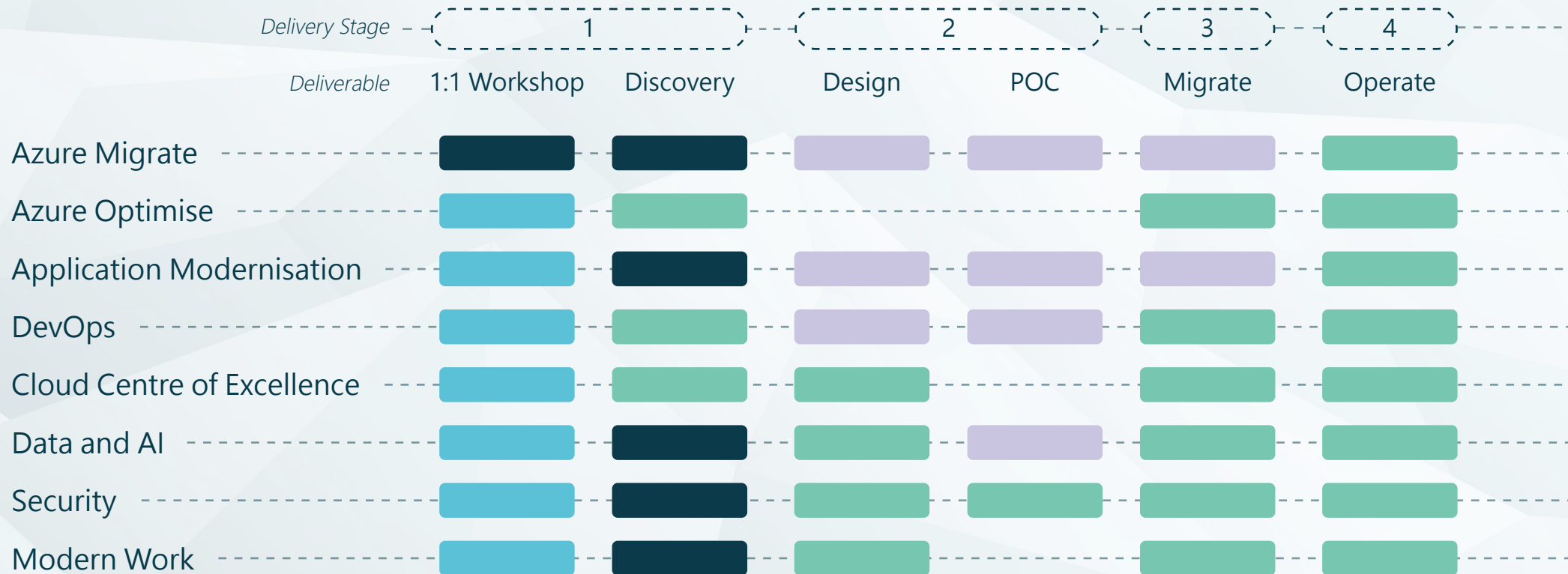


Security
Innovation
Workshop

REGISTER

Our solution areas

The diagram below outlines where both Microsoft and Cloud Direct funding opportunities fit into our solution areas, and demonstrate which areas of your transformation you could receive financial support with.



Key: Microsoft & Cloud Direct funded

Cloud Direct funded

Microsoft funded

Cloud Direct service

How do you access Microsoft-funded resources?

All of these resources are there, sitting in a glass cabinet for all to see and ready for your organisation to tap in to – all you need now is the key.

Finding the key and unlocking the cabinet is simple. The keys are held by select Microsoft partners across the globe, who form a cornerstone of Microsoft's partner ecosystem. These funding opportunities cannot be supplied directly by Microsoft, nor can they be accessed by a customer – a trusted partner is required bridge the gap.

Luckily for you, you're already in the right place! Cloud Direct is one of those select partners – among the best, in fact. In 2023, we were named as the leading partner in the UK for accessing Microsoft-funded opportunities, and we placed in the top three across EMEA. We were listed as a finalist in the Partner of the Year Awards in the same year as well, so it's safe to say we know a thing or two about Microsoft funding.

In fact since the funding programmes were launched, Cloud Direct has secured more Azure Migrate and Modernise Partner-led funding than any other organisation in the UK. With the launch of the Azure Innovate funding, we are excited to continue helping organisations accelerate their growth, and maximise their use of Microsoft's extensive and exciting technology stack.

How we've helped

Migrating an organisation of [SafetyKleen's](#) size is a complex, and therefore expensive task, but by working with a leading Microsoft partner in Cloud Direct it was able to access funding opportunities worth more than £110,000.

By reducing their initial migration bill by more than £70,000, SafetyKleen was able to free up some of its IT budget to put towards additional security and innovation projects – which, in turn, garnered more funding. This included Cloud Direct workshops to optimise and modernise its cloud platform, security workshops to ensure the organisation was protected in the face of an increasingly dangerous threat landscape, and more than £40,000 towards rolling out Microsoft Defender and Microsoft Sentinel.

Project	MSFT Funding
Azure Migration	£73,000
Defender rollout	£32,000
Sentinel 24/7 SOC rollout	£12,000
Total Funding received	£117,000

This funding was only accessible by working with a Microsoft partner like Cloud Direct.

To find out more about SafetyKleen's funding story, watch our Senior Cloud Sales Executive Henry Bird walk through it at our recent CISO Security Briefing event.

WATCH

What are you eligible for?

Find out for yourself with our Microsoft Funding quiz. In just a matter of minutes, you'll know if your next transformation project can be accelerated by Microsoft Funding, and get information on how to access it.

TAKE THE QUIZ

What next?

So, with funding help available, what's stopping your transformation project now?

Cloud Direct is on hand to help you gain access to Microsoft's funding, workshops, and assessments – and we've have backed them up with our own funded resources too. We understand your challenges, and we've faced them before. We've been there, done it, and got plenty of t-shirts to show for it.

Set up a call with a Cloud Direct expert, and let's get going.



2022 Partner of the Year Finalist
Solution Assessments Award

As one of Microsoft's most-trusted UK partners, Cloud Direct is perfectly positioned to help your business unlock innovation. Supported by an extensive list of accreditations, including being one of the most established Azure Expert Manager Service Providers, we build the foundations that ambitious organisations need to grow, to innovate, and to succeed.

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