

## **Funding Options launches first Green Finance Marketplace for SMEs**

- UK SMEs are responsible for approximately 25 percent of the UK's CO2 emissions. If SMEs do not reduce these emissions, the UK will be unable to meet its climate goals.
- ESG risk directly impacts on a borrower's ability to repay debt, impacting credit risk
- The SME lending market has a pivotal role in enabling SMEs to become carbon neutral as part of the UK Government's Together for our Planet campaign

**London, 06.07.2021:** [Funding Options](#), the leading platform for business finance, has today launched the UK's first Green Finance marketplace.

With UK SMEs responsible for approximately 25 percent of the nation's CO2 emissions, lenders including Swishfund and Cambridge & Counties Bank have joined the platform's Green Lender panel to help businesses source the right funding to achieve their sustainability goals. This initiative reinforces Funding Options' commitment to drive sustainability in the SME lending market by connecting businesses to the funding they need to help them reach net zero.

The Green Finance marketplace will help to bring greater transparency and awareness of the funding options available to support SMEs - with financial products increasingly rewarding businesses that consciously seek to reduce their carbon footprint. Representing 99 percent of all UK businesses, SMEs will play a critical role in meeting the country's climate goal of net-zero emissions by 2050.

Funding Options' initiative, complements the UK Government's [Together for our Planet](#) campaign which is urging SMEs to take small and practical steps to cut emissions in the run up to the UN Climate Summit COP26 in Glasgow this November. Accelerating the provision of green finance to SMEs will enable these small changes which are pivotal to supporting the delivery of the UK's carbon targets and its clean growth, resilience and environmental ambitions.

Companies will be able to access funding through the Green Finance marketplace to facilitate the purchase of 'green assets' - for example, solar panels or clean vehicles. Lenders will also be matched with 'green businesses' displaying strong environmental credentials, such as those participating in renewable, low/zero carbon or sustainable activities. Additionally, the platform will connect 'green businesses' - those providing verifiably sustainable products, services or working on a green project - with the right funding partner.

**Simon Cureton, CEO of Funding Options, comments,** “Funding Options sits at the heart of the SME lending ecosystem, giving us the power to ensure ‘green demand’ is met with ‘green supply’ through our data-driven Funding Cloud™ platform. Data analytics and open banking APIs help to ensure that green borrowers are matched with the appropriate lenders, incentivising SMEs to focus on their environmental footprint. We are in agreement with the UK Government that small and medium-sized enterprises are the economic backbone of the UK and so providing access to the best funding options will greatly assist them to implement more sustainable processes, business models and consumption patterns, paving the way for a green future.”

ESG compliance is already a key component in asset and fund management decisions, which will almost certainly have a knock-on impact on the credit lines offered to alternative lenders. Non-financial disclosures are also becoming a standard obligation within corporate financial services.

Partners have been certified in accordance with Funding Options’ green lender criteria, which includes having a specific green finance proposition or expressing a clear ethical commitment to the environment.

**Simon Cureton continues,** “As the green finance market for SMEs matures, there will be greater opportunities to support a wider range of businesses by offering lower product pricing to ‘green’ SMEs in order to encourage them to become more sustainable. Our own wider sustainability policy and commitment is to play a leading role helping to drive environmental and social governance in the alternative lending market, while at the same time promoting a broader choice of competitive green finance options for our customers.”

**Andrew Jackson, Managing Director at Swishfund comments** “We are delighted to be part of the new Green Marketplace. This is an important step in increasing awareness of environmental issues within the SME community. Since people usually pay attention to only what is directly in front of them, it is incumbent on all businesses to keep green initiatives at a prominent place in their shopfronts, their offerings, and in their brands. Swishfund believes that commercial success and environmental responsibility can be happy bedfellows. We believe that within 20 years from now environmental and social responsibility will be a prerequisite for commercial success, and Funding Options will have been at the forefront of that trend.”

**ENDS**

**About Funding Options:**

Funding Options is a leading data-driven marketplace for business finance, helping SMEs get the right funding in place so they can trade, plan and grow with confidence. With over 120 leading lender partners, Funding Options has helped more than 10,000 businesses across the UK and Netherlands secure over £0.5bn in funding.

In a highly fragmented SME lending ecosystem, Funding Options is fast becoming the de facto marketplace for business finance, connecting businesses, lenders and partners in a frictionless digital journey. The company is transforming the way SMEs access finance through a combination of award-winning technology which uses data analytics, open banking APIs and Artificial Intelligence, and a dedicated team of experienced Business Finance Specialists to ensure borrowers can make informed decisions and have access to funding within minutes.

Recognised as a fast-growth scaleup, Funding Options was named in the top 25% of the FT 1000, the annual list of Europe's fastest growing companies and is part of Silicon Valley Comes to the UK's (SVC2UK) 2020 Scale Up Club cohort, a prestigious annual list of fast-growth UK technology companies destined for great things.