Green Recovery Challenge Fund round 1

Closed programmes

A short-term competitive fund to kick-start environmental renewal whilst creating and retaining a range of jobs in England. It is open to environmental charities and their partners.

Important

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is now closed to new applications.

- Read more about how we are assessing applications
- Find out how to acknowledge your grant
- Explore our available funding

Overview

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is a short-term competitive fund to kick-start environmental renewal whilst creating and retaining a range of jobs. It is open to environmental charities and their partners to deliver projects in England.

The aim of the fund is to support projects that are ready to deliver and focus on nature restoration, nature-based solutions and connecting people with nature, delivering against the goals of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP), whilst helping to sustain and build capacity in the sector.

The £40million fund has been developed by Defra and its Arm's-Length Bodies, including Natural England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency and others. The National Lottery Heritage Fund is distributing and monitoring this government money.

- Grants of £50,000 - £5million to deliver environmental projects in England
- Open to environmental charities and their partners
- Projects must be ready to deliver and funding must be spent by 31 March 2022

The Fund covers three themes:

1. Nature conservation and restoration, including ecosystem restoration and species recovery;
2. Nature-based solutions, particularly for climate change mitigation and adaptation; and
3. Connecting people with nature.

All projects will need to deliver against **at least one** of these themes, but may contribute to more than one or all of the above. Further information can be found in **the Additional Information section of this guidance**.

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Who can apply?

Under this programme, we welcome applications from:

- environmental charities
- partnerships involving at least one environmental charity

Environmental charities

Your organisation will be a not-for-profit organisation such as a charitable incorporated organisation or company limited by guarantee, registered with the Charity Commission. The organisation's principal aims (or charitable objectives) will be concerned with the protection or improvement of the natural environment.

We will ask to see your constitution or governing document as part of your application (see **supporting documents - under How will we assess applications?**)

Partnerships

In addition to at least one environmental charity, partnerships can include:

- Other not-for-profit organisations, including non-environmental charities
- AONBs, National Park Authorities, local authorities and universities, however these bodies can only use the grant funding to **cover certain costs**
- 'For-profit organisations' (for example utility companies) however these bodies cannot be the lead applicant or receive any of the grant funding.

Partnerships **cannot** include the following government bodies:

- Non-ministerial departments, executive agencies, executive or advisory non-departmental public bodies

If you are making a joint application, you will need to decide which organisation will be the lead applicant. The lead applicant will fill in the application form and, if you are successful, receive the grant and report on progress.

We will need to see a draft of your partnership agreement as part of your application (see **supporting documents - under How will we assess applications?**)

Eligible organisations can be involved in more than one application providing they can demonstrate that they have the capacity and capability to deliver within the time available.

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What can you apply for?

Applicants can apply for projects which are ready to deliver and are able to spend the grant fully by end March 2022. You will need to demonstrate how your project delivers against at least one of the Fund's themes and provide the details of any partners with whom you have chosen to work.

All project activity must take place in England.

Below are some examples of the type of work or projects that are relevant to the three themes of this fund. Note that this list is not exhaustive. Further guidance on setting out what your project will seek to deliver against the themes is provided in the **Additional Information section**.

Nature conservation and restoration

For example, projects may include action towards:

- Creation or restoration of priority habitat (as defined under Section 41 of the NERC Act)
- Improvement in the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- Creation of blue and green spaces that connect wildlife-rich habitats by acting as wildlife corridors or 'stepping stones'
- Recovery of threatened, iconic or economically important species
- Reintroduction of native species or tackling invasive non-native species
- Restoring waterways / fish passage improvements
- Preventing, removing or cleaning up pollution, such as marine litter
- Environmental improvements in land management, e.g. for grazing
- Environmental surveying and monitoring work

Nature-based solutions, particularly for climate change mitigation and adaptation

For example, projects may include action contributing to:

- Tree planting and woodland creation
- Peatland, and other wetland, restoration
- Woodland restoration and management
- Wildfire prevention
- Hedgerow planting or improvements
- Natural flood management
- Creating, enhancing or connecting blue and green infrastructure
- Nature-based solutions to address water quality issues
- River or waterways bank protection and improvements
- Blue carbon habitat restoration projects, such as seagrass beds

We are particularly interested in projects that can demonstrate their contribution to the government's net zero target.

Connecting people with nature

For example, projects may include actions contributing to:

- Improvements to visitor/education facilities
- Creation and improvement of nature-rich, active travel corridors, trails, boardwalks, signage, interpretation, increases in accessible paths in urban and rural locations
- Employment of wardens, rangers, educators etc.
- Bolstering health and wellbeing including blue/green social prescribing and ‘green gym’ activities
- Improving access to nature for under-represented groups, such as BAME communities, economically disadvantaged communities, children and young people, and older people
- Local food growing initiatives
- Volunteering, including the establishment of new local groups or greater public involvement within their organisation
- Community engagement and citizen science for environmental conservation and improvement

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What costs can you apply for?

We will provide up to 100% of project costs. There is no partnership funding requirement for this Fund, although we encourage you to include partnership funding if it helps you to deliver better value for money against the Fund’s outcomes.

Examples of eligible costs include:

Capital:

- Building / planting materials
- Equipment purchase
- Contractors / consultants
- Interpretation materials
- Land/ lease purchase where essential for the success of your project

Core costs:

- Salaries etc of staff working directly on projects (including ensuring sustainability of project outcomes)
- Recruitment
- Skills and training
- Volunteer travel and subsistence
- Equipment hire
- Communications
- Monitoring and evaluation activities
- Full Cost Recovery – for charities only

Funding for AONBs, National Park Authorities, Local Authorities and universities can only be used to cover the following:

- Salaries & direct on-costs of staff delivering the project
- Costs of backfilling an existing post where a member of staff is transferred to deliver new work associated with the grant
- Direct costs of project delivery

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and gives you an idea of the types of costs we will cover. Your project costs must be compliant with State Aid rules. For further information about these rules, see **Additional Information** and further guidance.

As part of the assessment process we will consider how the proposed budget delivers on the project's environmental objectives. For example, we will assess how equipment costs relate to stated objectives and will challenge anything that seems disproportionate. We will also consider the balance of budget across partners. We expect a substantial proportion of any grant awarded to benefit environmental charities directly.

Projects can deliver works or activities on private land providing that they are for public benefit rather than private gain.

The costs you apply for should cover the period from 1 November 2020 to 31 March 2022 only.

What costs can't you apply for?

The following costs are ineligible:

- Anything that contravenes HMG's advice on COVID-19
- Recoverable VAT
- Costs related to promoting the cause or beliefs of political or faith organisations
- Costs already covered through other funding, for example from COVID-19 related HMG funds, mainstream funds from HMG or other schemes such as the Heritage Emergency Fund
- Costs related to lobbying and/or activity to influence legislative or regulatory action
- Costs incurred prior to any grant award
- Full Cost Recovery for 'other not-for-profit organisations' (e.g. AONBs, National Parks Authorities, local authorities, universities)

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When to apply

For applications up to £250k:

- We are accepting applications from **now until noon on 2 October**. We aim to assess applications and make decisions within five weeks of this closing date.

For applications over £250k:

- We are accepting Expressions of Interest from **now until noon on 24 September.** We will aim to assess Expressions of Interest within seven working days of the deadline and will consequently invite the top scoring projects to apply. If we invite you to apply, you will then have three weeks to submit the full application.

This guidance covers everything you need to know to apply. We have designed the application process to be as straightforward as possible and we are requesting only the information we need. Please read this guidance and the supporting application form help notes before you start your application. We will not be able to offer specific one to one advice for this fund due to the short application window.

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How will we assess applications?

For applications up to £250k:

We will consider whether you meet the essential criteria for the programme (see under '**Who can apply**' and '**What can you apply for**', above). If you do not meet the essential criteria, we will not assess your application further.

We will then assess your application against the quality criteria below. We will also consider if your proposals are proportionate to the amount of funding for which you are applying.

For applications over £250k:

At Expression of Interest stage, we will consider whether you meet the essential criteria for the programme (see under '**Who can apply**' and '**What can you apply for**', above). If you do not meet the essential criteria, we will not assess your expression of interest further.

We will then assess your expression of interest against the primary quality criteria below. We will also check that your costs appear reasonable for what you are delivering.

If you are invited to submit a full application, we will check that you still meet the essential criteria for the programme. We will then assess your application against the full range of quality criteria below, based on the more detailed information provided. We will also consider if your proposals are proportionate to the amount of funding for which you are applying.

Quality Criteria

You will be primarily assessed on your ability to:

- Contribute to HMG environmental objectives as set out under the three fund themes Please see the **Additional Information section**.
- Create and/or retain jobs, especially for young people (16-24). This should include proposals for training, skills development and work experience and volunteering, and employment and/or opportunities for under-represented groups to access nature.
- Deliver value for money for the amount of grant requested.
- Deliver the project activities within the required timescale. Your project plan should set out activities that will clearly progress the land, feature or community towards the eventual outcome. Your project plan should also show how all permits, licences and consents needed to carry out the work will be in place within six months of any grant awarded. Priority will be given to projects that are already fully planned with permits, licences and

consents in place.
- Demonstrate a track record of high-quality delivery on the part of the applicant(s), and the appropriate skill sets to deliver the project.

If your application addresses the criteria outlined above, we will then further prioritise applications according to the extent to which they:

- Demonstrate the long-term sustainability of the project outcomes beyond the funded period. We want to see how you will maintain and build on what your project has delivered, and how you propose to secure any follow-on funding required. We will expect you to work up your plans further during your project, and you should budget for this in your project costs.
- Demonstrate that the project proposal has been developed using existing evidence of best practice or 'what works' in contributing towards the three key themes of the Fund or demonstrate a degree of innovation and/or an opportunity for testing and learning from new approaches.

- Demonstrate links to local plans and strategies (for example Green Infrastructure Plans, National Park Authority management plans, AONB management plans or new initiatives like Local Nature Recovery Strategy pilots).

You can find more information about the criteria and how you can measure your progress against them in the application form and help notes for this fund.

Evaluation

We will need to understand how you plan to demonstrate the impact of your project or how you have delivered against your objectives. You must build in evaluation from the beginning of your project. We expect to see a realistic budget included for evaluation in your project costs.

We will expect you to collect qualitative and quantitative information to evidence the proposed outputs of your project, against an identified baseline. These outputs will vary according to the nature of your work, but you can find further guidance in the **Additional Information section**.

At the end of your project we will expect delivery of an evaluation report, sent in before we pay the last 10% of your grant.

We will also expect you to participate in a wider evaluation of the Fund to be managed by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, which will require you to share data about the outputs of your project at interim stages. Further details on this will be supplied if you are successful in receiving a grant.

Supporting documents

You will need to submit the following supporting documents with your online application. We must receive them by the published application deadline.

Everything we need to assess your application is in the application form and supporting documents. Please do not submit any extra documents as we will not use them in our assessment.

All applications must include:

1. Governing document (for example, constitution) (**mandatory** for all environmental charities)
2. Detailed cost breakdown (**mandatory** for all applicants)

A spreadsheet detailing the cost breakdown provided in Section six: project costs in the online application form. For partnerships, please separate out costs per partner.

3. Project plan (**mandatory** for all applicants)

All applicants must submit a project plan using the template provided.

4. Table of consents (if applicable)

A list of all identified permissions, permits, licences and consents needed to undertake your project with narrative explaining whether these are already applied for or in place. For any not yet applied for, indicate the target date for submission and likely response times.

5. Draft partnership agreement (if applicable)

This document should outline all partners' roles and responsibilities.

6. Calculation of full cost recovery (if applicable)

If you are including full cost recovery in your project budget, you must include a document that outlines how this calculation has been made.

7. State Aid declaration (**mandatory** for all applicants)

A signed letter from your Chief Executive (or equivalent) to declare that State Aid has been considered and checked in relation to your application, flagging any potential issues.

For applications over £250,000, this letter should also include a commentary on how any issues flagged will be resolved in advance of any grant award.

For applications under £250,000, this letter should also declare whether or not your organisation has received *de minimis* State Aid in the previous three years, and – if it has – the total amount received in that period.

If your project includes buying land, you will need to submit additional supporting documents.

We will not begin assessing your application until you submit all of the relevant supporting documentation. If you do not provide your supporting documents by the application deadline your application will be withdrawn.

You should attach the relevant supporting documents to your online application form. We can accept most standard file formats. Please use the document names above so that we can easily identify each document.

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The application process

Before you apply

Please note: The National Lottery Heritage Fund uses the same forms across a variety of programmes we administer. Some questions need to be answered differently for the Green Recovery Challenge Fund so please read the application help notes to understand what information is required where. You do not need to use the help icons embedded in the online form.

1. We are not offering pre-application advice for this programme so make sure you read the guidance and check that you are eligible to apply.
2. Read the application questions and guidance. Make sure you keep within the word limit for the application form.
3. You will need to register on the online portal prior to submitting an application.
4. Have your supporting documents ready to submit with the form.

Applications under £250k

If you do not already have a logon you will need to register.

Applications over £250k: Expressions of Interest

For applications for a grant above £250,000 a short Expression of Interest (EOI) form is mandatory. Guidance on the questions to be answered and a copy of the form is available.

An assessment panel involving all the Fund partners will use the information you provide to decide whether or not to invite you to submit a full grant application. If you are not invited to apply we will explain our reason.

We will aim to respond to all EOIs within ten working days of the deadline. You will then have three weeks to submit a full application.

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If we award you a grant

If we award you a grant, we will send you a letter, which includes the amount you have been awarded and outlines the conditions of the grant.

You will need to complete and sign a permission to start form to confirm that you are accepting the grant and signing up to the terms in the letter. When you have completed this process, we will pay a proportion of your grant upfront.

For projects of £50,000-£250,000:

- We will give you 50% of the grant upfront.
- Once you have spent and evidenced the first half of your total eligible project costs, we will then give you the next 40%.
- The final 10% is paid when you have finished your project and sent us a final completion report and project evaluation, alongside evidence of the remaining grant spend.

For projects over £250,000:

- We will give you 25% or £250,000 of the grant upfront, whichever is the lower.
- Once you have spent this sum, we will pay quarterly in arrears, on submission of a progress report and payment request form including evidence of spend.
- The final 10% will be paid when you have finished your project and sent us a final completion report and project evaluation, alongside evidence of the remaining grant spend.

All grantees will be required to participate in monitoring and evaluation of the Fund.

- For grants of under £250k, we will expect you to report on the progress of your project at the mid-point, and on completion.
- For grants of over £250k, we will expect you to report on the progress of your project quarterly, including on completion with the evaluation report.

We will expect evidence of delivery and expenditure, such as before and after photographs, reports, invoices and receipts. More detailed information will be provided at point of grant award.

We will be evaluating the impact of the whole Fund and we will require you to take part in data collection to support this work. We will provide more information about this requirement in due course.

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Additional information

Guidance on Project Outcomes and Output measures

We recognise that it may not be possible to demonstrate delivery of longer-term environmental or social outcomes by the end of March 2022. However, we expect you to:

- set out in your application what you will deliver during the project that will contribute to your longer-term outcomes,
- have a plan to evaluate the project's impact (see 'Evaluation', above).
- have a plan to sustain positive impacts of the projects post-delivery, on which you will work in more detail during your project

We expect you to describe in your application where you have drawn on existing evidence around what works in delivering against the key themes, or in developing indicators for your projects. For example, you may wish to use websites such as the Cambridge Conservation Database, Woodland Wildlife Toolkit or Natural England's Climate Change Adaptation Manual in considering objectives and indicators for Nature Conservation and Restoration or Nature-Based Solutions, or the Nature Connectedness Research Group resources for Connecting People with Nature. Where projects are more innovative in their approach, we are interested to understand how the project could contribute to wider learning.

Below are some example project outcomes and output measures under each theme, that you may want to consider in completing the section on Project Outcomes. This may help you to define activities and deliverables within your plan and collect quantitative data to evaluate impact. Please note that these are intended as examples and you may wish to focus on different aspects against your chosen theme(s).

1. **Nature conservation and restoration**

Example Project Outcomes

Heritage will be in a better condition, as a result of (for example):

- New or restored wildlife-rich/priority habitats
- Existing wildlife habitats protected and enhanced
- Wildlife habitats expanded or more connected
- Actions to support species (particularly pollinators and other native species)

Example Outputs – what are your expected results by March 2022?

- Area of land/water prepared or planted to support new habitat or species
- Area of woodland brought into active management to improve condition
- Area of natural habitats now joined up to create wildlife corridors
- Area and number of wildlife ponds
- Measures implemented as part of river or waterways restoration plan and fish passageways

2. **Nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation**

Example Project Outcomes

Heritage will be in a better condition, as a result of (for example):

- Habitat restored or created for enhanced carbon sequestration and storage or improved resilience to climate risks

- Nature and land use change supporting better resource management, reduce carbon emissions or improve quality e.g. water, air
- Nature-based solutions to support climate change adaptation, including flood mitigation or coastal erosion management
- Increased investment in Natural Capital to deliver solutions
- Use of green infrastructure to support enhanced river or urban cooling
- Improvement in soil health

Example Outputs – what are your expected results by March 2022?

- Area of land undergoing or prepared (wetter, seeded, water clean) for peat restoration
- Area of land undergoing or set aside and secured for tree planting
- Number, area and/or density of trees planted
- Land management assessed for carbon budget and actions implemented to reduce emissions
- Measures implemented to improve soil health
- Volume of natural water storage secured or area of land managed for water quality
- Area of catchment roughened for water slowing
- Area of land and habitats identified, prepared or undergoing changes to increase resilience to climate change risks , following assessment of local vulnerabilities

3. **Connecting people with nature**

Example Project Outcomes

- Engaging or empowering community to support nature-based objectives
- Access to nature improved
- People connecting with nature to increase understanding and/or improve wellbeing
- Improving or increasing nature where people live

Example Outputs – what are your expected results by March 2022?

- Relative position along the community engagement standards scale (outreach/consult/involve/collaborate/shared leadership)
- Opportunities for volunteering for nature or citizen science, such as species monitoring
- Increase in numbers and diversity of people engaging with nature or visiting natural features
- Length of footpath or area of open access land now accessible
- Area of new nature identified/ prepared or introduced within 200m of residential area
- Number of features supporting wildlife in schools, parks and residential areas

4. **Jobs/ Local Economic Impact and Financial Sustainability**

Example Project Outcomes

- People gain or retain employment in the environment sector
- Skills developed or retained within the organisation
- Additional income for local businesses
- Greater local involvement in your organisation
- Improved governance or partnership arrangements
- Increased financial resilience

Example outputs – what are you expecting to achieve by March 2022?

- Number of jobs created or retained
- Skills, expertise or qualifications gained
- Number of businesses supported
- Increase in visitor or volunteer numbers
- Development of relationships to secure income streams
- Improved evidence base to support ongoing activities

Citizen science, biological-recording and data

Any habitat and species data collected through your project must comply with the standards for data quality and accessibility as set out by the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) on the NBN Atlas. These observations must be made available to the public on an Open Licence at capture resolution, subject to sensitive species restrictions.

There are several ways of achieving this. NBN Atlas Data Partners may prefer to supply datasets directly to the NBN Atlas. Alternative options include through the online recording tool iRecord or they can be shared with your local or regional environmental record centre for onward transmission to the NBN Atlas. Please ensure if submission to the NBN Atlas is via a third party they are aware of the requirements to submit this data at capture resolution on an Open Licence. If you are unsure how best to proceed, please contact the NBN directly to discuss the most appropriate data supply route.

State Aid

It is an applicant's responsibility to confirm that their application has been considered and checked in relation to State Aid rules.

State Aid is a European Commission term that describes forms of assistance (usually financial) from a public body given to undertakings on a discretionary basis with the potential to distort competition and affect trade between Member States of the European Union.

State Aid rules prevent undue competition arising when there is potential for organisations to gain an economic advantage by having all or some funding provided from state resources to the detriment of other organisations who can only use their own private funding. We are a public funder and our grants are subject to State Aid rules. If we awarded a grant that was subsequently found to be in breach of State Aid rules, we would be required to reclaim those funds from the grantee with compound interest, noting this must occur irrespective of the outcome, be that financial hardship or bankruptcy.

For projects where the primary objective is conservation and/ or restoration of landscapes, habitats and species for the benefit of biodiversity, it may be that they do not constitute State Aid because:

- they may not be considered to be economic activity; and/ or
- they may be considered non-selective in that the main beneficiary is the general public; and/ or
- they may not have a measurable effect on intra EU trade.

Further advice on State Aid rules is provided on the government's website. Applicants should seek independent legal advice if they are unsure whether their project will be compliant with these rules before submitting their application. When making their declaration that their application has been considered and checked against these rules, they should flag any aspects of their application that may have State Aid implications. If steps are needed to address State Aid issues in an application, these may form a condition of any grant awarded.

Working on private land

Many priority habitats and species occur on land that is owned by private individuals or for-profit organisations. Projects can deliver works or activities on private land so long as any public benefit clearly outweighs any potential private gain, and provided State Aid rules are not breached. For example, we could fund the restoration of hedgerows or create farm ponds, provided that they do not add financial value to the land or convey any significant indirect financial benefit that could breach State Aid rules.

When working on private land we understand there may be limits to public access. We do however encourage public access whenever practical and also accept that physical access may not always be appropriate or desirable for habitat conservation reasons. If improved access is possible you may also wish to apply for funding for new infrastructure, for example paths or hides, that can help to accommodate increased public access.

Works can take place on land owned by a Government Department or Arm's Length Body provided they do not financially benefit from any investment. If an environmental charity or partnership were to undertake work on such land, then it can only be for works that would not be covered by any statutory responsibility. For example, if a charity created a new fish pass on Environment Agency (EA) land that would be acceptable provided responsibility for ongoing maintenance was transferred back to the Environment Agency and it is work that EA would not normally undertake as part of their statutory duties. Due consideration would also need to be made to ensure compliance with State Aid rules.

Third party ownership requirements

Where the land subject to grant funding is owned by a third party or multiple third parties (including private owners), legal agreements should be put in place between each land owner and the grantee. We expect these agreements to be in place **within four months** of any grant award.

There is no prescribed form of agreement but we have specific requirements which should be included in any third party land owner agreements.

At a minimum, the land owner agreements should include:

1. Details of the parties
2. Confirmation as to how the land is held (freehold or leasehold);
3. A description of the property (including plans);
4. Covenants on the part of the land owner to maintain the land in accordance with the terms of the grant (as applicable) or to allow access for the grantee to undertake maintenance;
5. A provision that any onward disposal should be subject to the third party agreement.
6. A provision that the agreement will last from the start of the work on the third party land until 10 years following Project Completion. You will need to provide us with copies of the landowner agreements to ensure compliance with these requirements. The land owner agreements will need to be completed and in place before any grant monies are released for work on each plot of land owned by a third party.

Consideration of Permissions or Licenses

Applicants should consider if their project requires any permissions, permits, consents or licenses for the project to be delivered. These could include (but are not limited to):

- A protected species license issued by Natural England or the Marine Management Organisation
- A Marine Licence from the Marine Management Organisation
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) consent or assent from Natural England
- An Environmental Impact Assessment from the Forestry Commission
- A valid approved felling licence from the Forestry Commission
- Planning permission from a local planning authority

The cost of any permissions or licenses should be considered in the overall project costs and included in the bid if appropriate to ensure the project is deliverable. Early engagement with licensing bodies is advised.

Buying land

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund can fund projects that involve the purchase of land that is important for nature conservation and is at or below market value. The principal reasons for purchase must be a benefit for nature. If you already manage the land that you want to buy, you will need to show us what extra benefits the purchase will bring. You will need to show that all options for entering into an appropriate management agreement with the freehold owner have been explored before seeking a grant for purchase.

We can help you to buy land if you demonstrate in your application that:

- any risks to the land, habitat(s) and/or species will be reduced by your purchase;
- the price accurately reflects the condition and value;
- you can demonstrate the significance and value of the land in a regional or national sense.

We will not support purchases which we think are above market value. If we award you a grant, we may require a charge on the land or any buildings. We can fund all associated purchase costs such as agent’s fees, saleroom fees

and taxes. Please ensure these are reflected in your cost table. If your project includes buying land then the terms of the grant will last in perpetuity. If you wish to dispose of what you have bought in future, you will need to seek the permission of both Defra and The National Lottery Heritage Fund. We may claim the grant back.

The information we need about the purchase

With your application you will need to provide:

- a location plan to scale, clearly identifying the extent of the land and any building(s) to be purchased and any relevant access to the land and building
- one independent valuation. This should include an explanation of how the assessment of the market value was reached. We welcome valuations by the District Valuer. We will normally be prepared to support a purchase at a figure up to 10% above the top of any range in an accepted valuation
- evidence that the current owners are the owners (have legal title) and have the right to both sell the land and/or building and transfer the title to the new owner
- evidence of any legal covenants, or rights (such as fishing, shooting, mineral, drainage), or long- or short-term tenancies, or rights of way or access, or any other interests which are attached to the land or building

Managing your data

For more information about how your data will be processed under this grant programme please see our privacy policy.

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Essential templates

- Application help notes £50k-£250k
- Application help notes £250k-£5m
- Expression of interest guide and questions
- Project plan template

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Making a complaint

We understand that you may be disappointed with a decision. We can only review our decision again if you can make a formal complaint about how we have dealt with your Green Recovery Challenge Fund application.

We will only be able to consider and investigate the complaint if:

- We did not follow the published procedures for assessing your application.
- You can show that we have misunderstood a significant part of your application.
- You can show that we did not take notice of relevant information.

A complaint must be made in writing by emailing enquire@heritagefund.org.uk within 10 working days of receiving your application decision. We aim to acknowledge your complaint within three working days.

Your complaint will initially be reviewed by an Area/Country Director from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, who is independent of recommendation and decision panels for this fund. We aim to communicate a decision within 15 working days from when you submitted your complaint.

For assistance, contact our Customer Services Team on 020 7591 6044 or email enquire@heritagefund.org.uk.

Your questions answered

On 16 and 18 September 2020 we hosted two webinars for applicants to the Green Recovery Challenge Fund. Both of the sessions sold out very quickly, so we have published a digest of the questions and answers covered in those webinars.

The Heritage Fund is distributing the Green Recovery Challenge Fund in partnership with Natural England, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission, on behalf of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra).

Green Recovery Challenge Fund

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Heritage Fund

Environment Agency

NATURAL ENGLAND

Changes to this guidance

We will continue to review our processes to ensure we are able to provide support where it is needed. We reserve the right to make any changes needed to the guidance and programme. We will communicate any changes as quickly as possible via this webpage.