Receiving a grant guidance: Nature Networks Fund (round two)

See all updates

This guidance sets out how you will receive your Nature Networks Fund (round two) grant. It also explains what we expect of you.

Attachment	Size
FILE View Grantee Outstanding Permissions Template as FILE(3.97 KB)	3.97 KB

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Introduction

Congratulations on being awarded a Nature Networks Fund grant, we look forward to helping you deliver a successful project.

The funding you will receive is public money from the Welsh Government and the Heritage Fund, and as such we have to ensure that it is managed in an accountable way. This means that there are a number of processes that you need to follow throughout the life of your project. We try to make these proportionate to the amount of grant you are receiving.

We appreciate that this may be the first time you have received funding from us and you may be unsure how to request your grant and keep us informed about your progress. This page explains what to do and will answer any queries you may have. It also sets out our standard practices, but please note we may choose to vary our processes depending on the specific circumstances of your project.

Working with us

We like to work in a collaborative way, so keep in touch with us if you need our support. Your first point of contact with the Heritage Fund is the person named in your notification email. Please invite us to key project events and openings and we will aim to send a representative where possible, to show our support for your project.

We expect you to respond in a timely manner to any requests for information and to discuss any substantial changes to your project with us. You must address any issues we identify throughout your project. We will carry out checks periodically to confirm that you are delivering the outcomes identified in your application and the approved purposes set out in your grant notification letter.

If you do not comply with the grant contract, we reserve the right to request repayment of some or all of your grant.

Top tips

- don’t start your project before we give you permission
- evaluate your project from the beginning

- keep track of your project spend
- keep track of your project timetable
- keep all invoices and receipts organised
- know your approved purposes
- review and learn from what you are doing
- make sure you speak to us about any issues
- keep project evidence, for example from launches, workshops and promotion
- above all else, enjoy your project!

Important documents

We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the following documents before embarking on your project:

- grant contract
- Nature Networks Fund application guidance on our website
- Evaluation: Good-Practice Guidance

Additional guidance is available in the Good practice guidance sections of the website.

We also recommend that everyone who is closely involved in the delivery of your project becomes familiar with the application you submitted to us. In particular, they should understand the outcomes and the approved purposes you committed to deliver.

Getting started

Grants of £30,000 to £250,000

You will need to log into the grants portal in order to agree to the grant contract. You must:

- check the details we have about your project are correct and tell us if there are any changes to your project since you first applied
- send us any new evidence for your project, including:
    - a copy of a recent bank statement, paying in slip or cheque
    - a monitoring plan for each project site
    - proof of partnership funding
    - documentary proof of property ownership including, for example, up-to-date copies of the Land Registry title register (with plan), leases and evidence of any existing mortgages
    - Proof of any necessary statutory permissions or licences, or landowner permissions. If these are still outstanding, then please download and complete our **Outstanding Permissions Template** from this page. Record on the template when you expect to obtain each license/permission/consent.
    - project cashflow forecast
- read the terms and conditions of the grant and the Standard Terms of Grant
- tell us details of two legal signatories for your organisation, so we can send them a link to download, read, sign and upload the terms and conditions

Once we have received all the information we require, including your signed terms and conditions, we will email you to inform you that you may begin the project.

You must submit your signed grant contract and evidence within three months of being notified of your grant award. If you will not receive the relevant permissions, licenses or consents within three months, contact your Investment Manager for advice.

Grants of £250,000 to £1million

You will need to log into the grants portal in order to work through the Permission to Start process. You must:

- complete the Permission to Start form, including telling us if there are any changes to your project since you first applied
- check the details we have about your project are correct
- send us any new evidence for your project, including:
    - a copy of a recent bank statement, paying in slip or cheque
    - a monitoring plan for each project site
    - proof of partnership funding
    - documentary proof of property ownership including, for example, up-to-date copies of the Land Registry title register (with plan), leases and evidence of any existing mortgages
    - Proof of any necessary statutory permissions or licences, or landowner permissions. If these are still outstanding, then please download and complete our **Outstanding Permissions Template** from this page. Record on the template when you expect to obtain each license/permission/consent.
    - project cashflow forecast
- read the terms and conditions of the grant and the Standard Terms of Grant
- Download your completed Permission to Start form and upload a signed copy. It should be signed by the person completing the form, two legal signatories for the organisation (one of whom can be the same person that completed the form), and project partners if applicable. You must submit your Permission to Start form and evidence within three months of being notified of your grant award. If you will not receive the relevant permissions, licenses or consents within three months, contact your Investment Manager for advice.

Payment of your Grant

Payment will be made to the bank account identified in your Permission to Start and Payment Request form.

Grants under £100,000

Your grant is paid in three instalments based on the following percentages:

- **50%**: Once we have granted you Permission to Start.
- **40%**: Once you can evidence that 50% of the total project costs have been spent.
- **10%**: Once your project is complete.

Grants over £100,000

We will pay your grant in arrears once you are able to provide invoices or receipts that demonstrate your project expenditure. We will agree a payment schedule with you at the start of your project, and payments will be made as the project progresses, subject to you providing evidence of expenditure.

You will need to use the Payment Request form to request payment of your grant. We typically expect a Progress Report to be submitted with the Payment Request Form in order to receive a payment of your grant, as we will only release payments after being satisfied with the progress of your project.

All grants

We withhold the final 10% of your grant until the project is completed. We will only pay the full 10% if:

- the total agreed costs have been spent *and*
- you have completed and submitted your Completion Report and Final Payment Request form, including evidencing your total project costs

Payment percentage

We will pay a proportion of the costs you have incurred based on the payment percentage identified in your grant notification letter. Therefore, if you provide invoices totalling £50,000 and your payment percentage is 85%, your grant payment will be £42,500.

If you spend less than your agreed costs and your project completes under budget, you will need to return any grant that has not been spent to us. This will be calculated based on your overall project costs and the payment percentage identified in your grant notification letter. See the ‘Completion report and final payment request’ section of this document for further details on how the final payment of under-budget projects is calculated.

Delivering your project

Grant Expiry Date

You must complete your project and submit your Completion Report and Final Payment Request form by the Grant Expiry Date:

- projects with grants of £30,000 to £250,000 have a Grant Expiry Date of 31 March 2025
- projects with grants of £250,000 to £1million have a Grant Expiry Date of 31 March 2026

We are unable to grant extensions to this timetable. If your project is at serious risk of not completing, we may close your project early and ask for the repayment of all or part of your grant, so please discuss with us at the earliest time possible.

Acknowledgement of your Nature Networks Fund Grant

Acknowledging your grant is a condition of the grant contract. You must acknowledge Welsh Government and the Heritage Fund in all printed and digital materials that you produce, for example, on public consultation or fundraising information or materials. You must also include the logos on all designs or plans you produce, on all specialist reports or

surveys, and on all tender documents or job adverts that are funded by your grant.

We encourage you to develop innovative and creative offers or promotions designed to raise awareness of our funding. We may ask you to participate in press campaigns or events acknowledging the Welsh Government's contribution to your organisation and project.

Find out how to acknowledge your grant. If you do not comply with our acknowledgment guidelines we reserve the right to stop making payments and to request repayment of some or all of your grant.

Procurement: consultants, contractors and suppliers

In all projects, whenever you use your grant to purchase goods, works or services, we will ask you to give us details of the procurement (which is the buying, tendering and selection process). If you have already purchased goods, works or services for your project, you will need to tell us how you did it. We cannot pay your grant if you have not followed the procedure outlined below.

You should always consider equality of treatment, transparency, mutual recognition and proportionality when procuring any goods, works or services.??

If you are a public body grantee or your project is subject to public procurement legislation, then you must follow the relevant legislation.???

Procedures to recruit consultants and contractors must be fair and open and comply with relevant equality and employment legislation. Fees for any consultants or other professionals that you recruit during the project should be in line with professional guidelines and be based on a clear written specification. If any of the contractors, suppliers or consultants you wish to appoint are linked – for example, if they are close friends or relatives, or if they have any financial link, such as ownership – you will need to obtain our written permission first.?

If you are unsure about your obligations, we advise you to take professional or legal advice.?

Under £10,000?

If you are buying goods, works or services for under £10,000 you do not need to openly tender for these or obtain multiple quotes. We will still expect you to show overall value for money.??

Between £10,000 and £50,000? ?

You must get at least three competitive quotes for all goods, works and services worth £10,000 or more (excluding VAT) that we have agreed to fund.??

You do not necessarily need to appoint the contractor, supplier or consultant who provides the lowest quote. When deciding who to appoint for your project, you should look at the overall value for money the quote presents and the skills, experience and financial viability of the contractor, supplier or consultant.??

Above £50,000?

For all goods, works and services worth more than £50,000 (excluding VAT), you must provide proof of competitive tendering procedures. Your proof should be a report on the tenders you have received, together with your decision on which to accept.??

You do not necessarily need to appoint the contractor, supplier or consultant who provides the lowest quote. When deciding who to appoint for your project, you should look at the overall value for money the quote presents and the skills, experience and financial viability of the contractor, supplier or consultant.??

When a competitive tender is not needed

In some circumstances, you do not need to undertake a competitive tendering procedure and you can invite only one organisation to tender. This is where:?

- the total price of the contract is less than £10,000
- a framework agreement is in place for the supply of goods, works or services which has been previously competitively tendered, and the goods or services are directly relevant to the scope of the project works to be undertaken?
- There is a project contract in place, which has previously been competitively tendered, and it is logical to extend to cover additional project work. In this case you must confirm that:??
    - in the case of capital works the prices of most elements of work, including preliminaries, overheads and profits can be directly applied from the existing contract to the new work
    - the new work is smaller in scale, and is of a similar type to the main contract work
    - the contractor will not claim disruption or prolongation cost to the main contract if the new work is introduced
    - the existing contract restricts work being undertaken by others
- the goods, works or services required are unique as set out in a non-branded requirement specification and it is not possible to obtain them from other sources by competitive tender
- You can demonstrate that you have tried to tender the goods, works or services openly and competitively but had not received sufficient interest. The only tender received was submitted by a service provider who believed they were doing so in competition with others.
- emergency work, where it can be shown that time taken to obtain tenders would put the project at risk and add considerably to eventual costs
- the company providing the single tender is not connected, either through ownership or through family connections, with senior representatives of the grantee

Social values

We will also require you to consider social values in your procurement, including:?

- diverse supply chains?
- improved employability and skills?
- inclusion, mental health and well-being?
- environmental sustainability?
- safe supply chains?

Be aware of our digital licence requirement

You should ensure any contractor/supplier/consultant who may contribute to the creation of digital outputs is aware of our requirement for projects to share these under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence or equivalent, and ensure you have agreement for the resulting work to be shared in this way. Where this is not possible, you must seek written agreement to make alternative arrangements with us, for example to use an alternative Open Licence, prior to issuing any contract of work.

Recruitment of staff

All staff posts must be advertised with the following exceptions:

- if you have a suitably qualified member of staff on your payroll that you are moving into the post created by your project
- If you have a suitably qualified member of staff on your payroll whose hours you are extending so that they can work on the project. In this case we will fund the cost of their additional hours spent on the project and you will need to tell us about the role they will undertake.

We may ask to see evidence of the recruitment procedure you followed so keep these records safe.

If you are moving an existing member of staff into a post created by the project, then we can either pay for the cost of this member of staff, or for the cost of backfilling their post, whichever cost is less. Backfilling is where an employee is assigned to a new job and their position is temporarily filled by another employee.

If you wish to appoint any new members of staff on your project who are linked with any members of staff at your organisation, for example, any close friends, relatives, or ex-members of staff, you will need to obtain written permission from us first.

All salaries should be based on sector guidelines or similar posts elsewhere.

We are committed to ensuring that the heritage sector is inclusive and sustainable. You must use the Living Wage rate (and London Living Wage where applicable) for all project staff.

VAT

We cannot cover the costs of VAT that you can reclaim, it is therefore your responsibility to seek appropriate advice.

If your VAT status changes during your project, we will reduce our contribution to the costs where you have managed to claim back the VAT.

If you spend less on VAT than you have outlined in the project costs section of your application, you can, with our permission, transfer the underspend to another cost heading if a clear need is demonstrated. You will need to demonstrate how these changes will help you to deliver your project to achieve your approved purposes.

Supporting documents

It is important that documents you submit throughout the project are legible and are given names that usefully describe their contents. In submitting invoices, these should be combined into a single file and set out in the order in which they

appear in the claim. Scans should ideally be in monochrome (B&W or grey-scale) as these will be smaller files and allow you to attach more.

All documents should be in PDF format, with the exception of spreadsheets which should be in their original format.

Photographic record

We expect you to capture photographs throughout your project showing your progress which you should submit with your Progress Report (where relevant). You will need to provide a photographic record of your project with your Completion Report and Final Payment Request form. This should include at least five high-resolution digital images in electronic format showing different aspects of your project.

The images should show your project in action and its outcome. You will need to provide a sample of images that show your project before, during and after it is finished. When completing your Progress Report and Completion Report and Final Payment Request form, you can let us know if material from your project is available on the internet and where it can be found.

We may make use of your images in publicity material. You give us the right to use those you provide us with at any time, including altering them. You must get all the permissions required for you and us to make use of them before you use them or send them to us.

These images, along with other digital outputs from your project, should also be shared with an open licence (Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International). If you are not the rights holder, you must ensure you have agreement to share these images under this specified open licence.

You must ensure that you collect appropriate written consent from anyone who appears in these images that they can be reused in relation to publicity and promotional materials, and that they can be shared online under the specified open licence. This is particularly important where images include young people or vulnerable adults and where specific permission must be sought in advance. If you require any guidance on this please speak to us.

If your images are not suitable for sharing under an open licence, other arrangements will need to be put in place. Please speak to us as soon as possible.

Community Grants scheme

As part of your project, you may have asked us to contribute towards a ring-fenced pot of money that you can use to fund other groups/organisations (who we call Community Grantees) to deliver small discrete projects (Community Grants).

These Community Grants will contribute to the overall aims of your project. Any grants like this must demonstrate good value for money, and public benefit should outweigh any private gain.

You will manage the funding pot, develop an application process with a decision panel and monitor progress. The Community Grant scheme must also be publicised by you, so it is widely known and open to all.

You may wish to make Community Grants payments to third party owners (including private owners) for activities and capital works that contribute to achieving project outcomes. If you are the lead applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that the specific project outcomes are delivered by third party landowners (the Community Grantees) and that

the grant contract is complied with, including repayment of the grant if necessary.

This should be formalised through third-party agreements that define the outcomes to be delivered on third party land. They should also secure the management and maintenance of capital works from the expected date of the works' completion until 10 years after the project completion date. This should be a legal agreement between you and the Community Grantee.

For more information about delivering a Community Grant Scheme, please speak to your Grant in Aid Manager.

Updating us on your project

Once we have confirmed you have permission to start, you do not need to submit any further forms until you are ready to claim the second instalment of your grant.

However, you must get in touch with us as soon as possible about any problems or significant issues that arise during the course of your project so that we can respond and support you as appropriate. This includes issues that could lead to changes in costs, serious delays, or failure to deliver the approved purposes and outcomes. Let us know in advance about any events and update us on any successes and good news stories.

Project changes

You cannot change the approved purposes of your project without our prior written agreement. If you want us to consider any changes to your approved purposes you must send us written details of the reasons for the request and explain how it will affect:

- the quality and outcomes of your project
- the cost of your project
- the time you need to complete your project
- the future viability of your project

We may then re-assess the project or take any other action we consider necessary. We may give permission for the change only if you agree to keep to extra terms and conditions.

Any changes that are agreed with us must be in writing and should also be reported in your Progress Report and/or Completion Report and Final Payment Request form.

Budget changes

Your grant notification letter includes the project costs agreed as part of your grant. All money spent on the project should be reported against these cost headings.

If you need to make minor changes and move funds between these cost headings in order to achieve your approved purposes you can report this in your Progress Report. You must demonstrate how these changes helped you to deliver your project.

You must get in touch with us in advance if you want to propose any substantial changes to these cost headings and for any major spending of your contingency. Please note all changes must be within the capital/revenue limits set by Welsh Government in the application guidance. Approximately 90% of the total project costs should be capital. Up to 10%

revenue funding is available to assist the delivery of the project.

If you spend less than your agreed costs and your project completes under budget, we will adjust your final payment accordingly and you may need to return some of your grant to us. See the ‘Completion Report and Final Payment Request’ section of this page for details about how this is calculated.

If the total project cost increases during the course of the project, we will only consider increasing your grant in exceptional circumstances. In this case you will have to provide further information.

Completing your project

Once your project is complete you must submit the Completion Report and Final Payment Request form. This form will allow you to claim the final payment of your grant (up to 10%). We recommend that you do this as soon as you can gather all the information together and while the project is still fresh in your mind.

This form **must** be submitted by your Grant Expiry Date. If we do not receive the report within this timescale, we may withhold your final payment or ask for the repayment of some or all of your grant.

By complete we mean:

- your project is finished, and you have achieved your approved purposes
- you have followed our Nature Networks Fund acknowledgement guidance throughout the project
- you have a practical completion certificate or equivalent (for projects that have undertaken capital works)
- you have evaluated your project and created a report
- you can supply high resolution digital project photographs and proof of acknowledgment of our funding
- you have listed the project’s digital outputs and provided the web address (URL) of the website or websites where they can be accessed

Once you have made your final grant request, we will not accept any further requests for payments from you. You should therefore agree your final accounts with your contractors and suppliers before you apply for the final grant payment.

We will continue to keep in contact with you at intervals after the project is completed including through our customer surveys.

Projects completing under budget

If you spend less than your agreed costs and your project completes under budget, you will need to return any grant that has not been spent to us. If the underspend is less than 10% of your grant we will adjust the final payment of your grant accordingly. If the underspend exceeds 10% of your grant you will need to return the unspent grant to us via cheque or BACS transfer (bank details are available upon request). Your final payment will be calculated based on your overall project costs and the grant percentage identified in your grant notification letter.

In the event of your project completing under budget, you must retain the budget limits set by Welsh Government in the application guidance. Approximately 90% of the total project costs should be capital. Up to 10% revenue funding is available to assist the delivery of the project.