Green Recovery Challenge Fund Round 2 FAQs

Eligibility & Multiple Projects

Q: Can organisations who already have funding from the first round apply as a lead partner again?
A: Yes. Applicants will not be disadvantaged by their success in Round 1. If we have funded you to work in a specific location and you want to apply for funding in the same location, you will need to demonstrate how the project is substantially different. You will also need to demonstrate that you have the capacity to deliver another project.

Q: Are subsidiary organisations able to submit applications as well as their 'parent' or 'host' organisations?
A: This is dependent on the particular arrangements between the organisation and subsidiary. It is highly unlikely that two similar projects in the same area will be funded, so if organisations have identified similar local priorities, it would be preferable for them to work in partnership to achieve the outcomes.

Q: Can Community Interest Companies apply?
A: Community Interest Companies can only apply as part of a partnership with an environmental charity.

Q: How is an environmental charity defined? Could recreational trusts or educational institutions be eligible?
A: We will check your eligibility against your Charity Commission listing and your constitution. This should demonstrate that the organisation's principal aims (or charitable objectives) are concerned with the protection and/or improvement of the natural environment. If you are primarily an educational institution then it is unlikely that you would pass the eligibility criteria checks.

Q: If you are making a partnership application with an environmental charity, does the environmental charity need to be the lead applicant?
A: No, the environmental charity does not need to be the lead applicant. You will however need to provide the constitution of the environmental charity so that we can ensure it is eligible.

Q: Is it better to repeat the core activities within two applications, one over £250,000 and one under?
A: It is important that there is no overlap or duplication across projects you submit, as there is a risk they will both be rejected as a result. Creating dependencies between projects is also not advisable in case one is not successful. However, if you submit an Expression of Interest for a large grant you should be notified of the outcome in time to decide whether to submit an application for a medium grant.

Subsidy Control

Q: Do we need to make subsidy control statement if we are seeking less than £250,000?
A: Yes, you still need to consider subsidy control and state this in your application, although no supporting letter is required for this level of funding. You should flag in your application if you do think there may be an issue.

Q: Does the lead applicant have to make a declaration on behalf of all partners? Who is responsible if subsidy control measures are breached?
A: Subsidy control is the applicant's responsibility, and you should consider the project as a whole and talk to all partners when considering any subsidy control implications. Guidance is available on the gov.uk website, and the considerations are very similar to the principles of state aid. We recommend that you seek legal advice for larger grants if you are not sure, and you can include legal costs in your application form if there is an area of serious concern. If there is a breach of subsidy control restrictions then the grantee would have to repay the full grant, but we stress that this is unlikely. No state aid was identified in any Round 1 projects.

Terms of Grant

Q: Are there specific procurement rules projects are expected to adhere to?
A: Yes, grantees will be expected to follow The National Lottery Heritage Fund's standard procurement guidance, which can be found in the Receiving a Grant guidance on our website.

Q: How long a leasehold do you need on land for a project to be funded?
A: For projects involving work on land and buildings, if your organisation does not own the freehold, you will need a lease with at least 20 years left to run after the expected day of the project completion date (31 March 2023).

Jobs and Apprentices

Q: How important is job creation to this funding, and will job retention be considered equally important?
A: A key aim of this fund is to create jobs, so we are looking to see this as an outcome. This also extends to retaining at-risk jobs, as well as work for suppliers and contractors. There is no set requirement in terms of the budget allocation for jobs; it is up to the applicant to decide what is reasonable for their project.

Q: How should we calculate or illustrate within the application form the number of full time equivalent jobs created/retained? How can we demonstrate that the funding will contribute to jobs for our suppliers and contractors?

A: The number of full time equivalent jobs created or retained must relate directly to your project. Posts funded by your project should be listed and described in your full cost breakdown, which is a mandatory supporting document. You do not need to demonstrate that the funding will contribute to jobs for your suppliers and contractors. Instead, please provide us with how much you expect to spend on contractors and suppliers as we will be able to deduce roughly how many jobs may be created/retained based on this figure.

Q: Can all project partners employ people through this grant?
A: Only non-profit organisations can receive the grant, so they are the only organisations that can employ people through these projects. For-profit organisations cannot receive grant money for jobs.

Q: Can apprentices work broadly across the grantee organisation, or do they have to be working solely on the project?
A: We only expect to fund apprentice or job roles where they are working on the project rather than within the organisation more broadly.

Kickstart

Q: How can we factor Kickstart into our applications when we do not know whether or not we have been successful?
A: You are not required to have secured your partnership funding by the time you apply. If you are applying for Kickstart just in relation to this project, you may wish to submit your application for Kickstart after you have received notification of a grant award from us. The turnaround time for Kickstart applications is 20 days so there should be sufficient time once you have heard back from us to submit your Kickstart application. We can consider a partial permission to start if your Kickstart decision is still outstanding. If you’ve been awarded a Green Recovery Challenge Fund grant, that would put you in a good position for Kickstart, which is not a competitive fund like the Green Recovery Challenge Fund (although we cannot guarantee success). Please ensure that you put forward solid proposals for employability support in your Kickstart application.

Q: Kickstart has its own timetable limitations. How can we accommodate this in our project?
A: Employers can spread the start date of the job placements up until the end of December 2021. If you wish to extend contracts for Kickstart employees beyond the six month limit, or if there is a good reason why your job placements need to start later than December 2021, these costs can be incorporated into your Green Recovery Challenge Fund budget.

Q: Does kickstart cover 100% of national minimum wage, or national living wage? Can we use the Green Recovery Challenge Fund to top-up placements to the national living wage?
A: Kickstart will only cover national minimum wage. It is worth noting that if participants reach the age of 25 during their placements, national minimum wage and national living wage are the same. Otherwise, employers can top-up to national living wage, but organisations would need to fund this themselves as it would not be covered through the Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

Partnership funding

Q: Can the majority of match funding come from other Government Agencies? Will this impact the decisions?
A: The 5% partnership funding requirement can come from anywhere except The National Lottery Heritage Fund. However, in our value for money assessment we will consider what you are proposing to deliver for public funds as a whole. You are likely to perform better in this value for money assessment if some or all of your partnership funding is coming from outside government. We encourage people to see this 5% as a floor rather than a ceiling. Applications will score higher on value for money if you can secure more than 5%.

Q: Do all partner organisations need to contribute financially to the project?
A: No. Match funding can come from a range of private or public sources except The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Eligible Costs

Q: Please can you provide clarity on what full cost recovery means?
A: We recognise different organisations use different methods for calculating full cost recovery, and for this fund we are not being prescriptive as to how you present this. Please ensure your rationale is made clear in your supporting documents. We will consider the value for money of full cost recovery overall. We provide additional guidance on full cost recovery on our website. If you are calculating full cost recovery for the first time, you might find the guidance and template supplied by The National Lottery Community Fund a useful starting point.

Q: Can we include costs to develop long-term plans beyond the scope of the project? For example, consultancy fees to develop a long-term management plan, or landowner training in developing Nature-Based Solutions?
A: These are eligible costs so long as the planning work takes place within the timeframe of the project. We welcome consideration of legacy planning as we recognise that not all nature outcomes can be achieved in a short timeframe. However, the focus of the fund is on delivery so these costs must be proportionate to the overall project.

Q: Are charities expected to recover VAT on grant-funded work delivered on local authority land?
A: Yes, we expect you to recover VAT where you are able to regardless of where you're working.

Portal and application forms

Q: Who do I contact if I require assistance with the application portal?
A: Please contact our Customer Services Team on 020 7591 6044 or through emailing service.desk@heritagefund.org.uk.

Q: How do I access the application portal?

A: The application portal can be accessed through our website homepage and selecting ‘login/register’ (top right hand side), ‘application portal’ and ‘our application portal.’ New users will need to register their email address before completing an application form or Expression of Interest. Select ‘register as a new user’ when asked to enter user name and password.

Q: I am an existing user on the application portal and linked to an organisation which is not associated with my application. What do I need to do?

A: The application portal only allows one particular email address to be linked to one organisation. Applicants can register an alternative email address on the system and link to the new organisation. Alternately, we can move your email address across to the new organisation. However, you will lose access to information relating to the other organisation. Please email this request to service.desk@heritagefund.org.uk.

Q: I am trying to register my email address and received an error message saying ‘The transaction associated with the current connection has completed but has not been disposed. The transaction must be disposed before the connection can be used to execute SQL statements.’ What does this mean?

A: This error message indicates your email address has already been registered on our application portal. If you have forgotten your password, select ‘forgotten password’ when asked to sign into the system.