

Supporting Rural Communities in Northumberland

Guidance





THE ROYAL
COUNTRYSIDE
FUND

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How to apply for funding



- 1. Read the guidance:** Read the guidance to decide whether your activities align with the programme objectives
- 2. Expression of Interest:** Once you have completed the above step, you will need to send a short video and complete a simple 'Expression of Interest' form via our website. **The deadline to submit your expression of interest is Thursday 26th September 2024 at midday.**
- 3. Full proposal:** If we feel that your Expression of Interest is a good fit with our programme, we'll invite you to take your proposal to the next stage, by sending us in some more details. You will have 4 weeks to complete this. We'll ask for more detail about the activity – delivery plan, evidence of need, how many people it will impact on, actions and outcomes. Along with the extra information above, we will also ask for the following:
 - Evidence of relevant permissions/agreements if applicable (e.g. rental agreement for capital work)
 - A bank statement dated in the last three months to check account details
 - Confirmation that you will hold the funding in a UK based account or building society account, which is in the legal name of the organisation that is applying for funding
 - Confirmation you have at least two board or committee members who are not related
 - A copy of your latest approved annual report and accounts
 - A set of draft accounts covering the last financial year if your annual accounts are more than 14 months old
 - A copy of your safeguarding policy

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI): Once you've submitted your full proposal, you will be asked to fill in a DEI monitoring form about your organisation. We want to use the information we gather to help us identify and address structural inequality, and ensure that the reach of our funding and our funding practices are fair and just.

4. Panel and Final Decision: Following submission of your full proposal, you will be invited to do a short presentation on your project to our panel. Our panel will then make a final decision and we'll be in touch to let you know if we're going to fund your proposal or not. Final decisions will be made at the end of November/early December 2024.



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Programme Overview

Our mission is to empower rural communities to develop community-led solutions that address the unique challenges and opportunities that exist in rural Northumberland. The aim is to “power up, not prop up” communities, to inspire change and encourage economic vibrancy.

We want to support work that falls under two key themes:

1. Powering up rural communities
2. Environmental sustainability

We are looking to support projects that help to do **one** or more of the following four things:

1. Help provide financial benefits to the locality.
2. Build a stronger sense of community and connectedness
3. Benefit the local environment, creating positive benefits for the community
4. Create an innovative and replicable approach, addressing an unmet need within the rural area.

Communities are invited to bid for money that will create tangible change.

For example, it could be a project to generate a new income stream for the local community, or the creation of learning or skills opportunities.

It might be ideas that have environmental benefit, for example projects which reduce negative environmental impacts in the community or help to increase community awareness and engagement in the local environment.

We are particularly seeking **innovative** solutions to the challenges facing rural areas. Is there a project that hasn't been done before that could be replicated in other rural communities, helping to increase the scale of change?





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How much?

You should apply for as much as you need to complete your activity, to a maximum of **£30,000**, to be spent over a period of up to **18 months**.

We can fund:

- **direct costs** to deliver activities in the community – such as staff, materials, equipment, room hire, volunteer expenses and evaluations
- **organisational development** to enable organisations to deliver the programme outcomes – such as business planning, testing new ways of working, staff training and development, developing governance and leadership, tech or IT purchases or upgrades, developing and sharing impact and learning, and increasing capacity to support collaboration and partnership working
- **core or fixed costs** to support the day-to-day running of organisations – such as core salaries, utilities, equipment

If you want to buy a vehicle we'll ask you to look into the best option for your activity and the planet. You'll only have to do this if we want to take your proposal further.

If any part of the funding is used to buy goods or services, or to buy or develop intellectual property, costing more than £10,000 you must carry out a competitive tender for the goods and/or services and comply with UK and EU procurement rules if applicable to you.





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Who can apply

This funding is available to rural **community organisations**, not individuals or private businesses. You can apply if your organisation has an income of less than £500,000 a year and is a:

- constituted voluntary or community organisation
- registered, exempt or excepted charity
- charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
- not-for-profit company limited by guarantee - you must be a registered charity or have a not-for-profit 'asset lock' clause in your articles of association
- community interest company (CIC)
- community benefit society
- co-operative society - you must have a not-for-profit 'asset lock' clause in your society rules and also be registered with the Financial Conduct Authority

If you're an unincorporated group

It might be appropriate for you to become a company or other type of incorporated organisation. We suggest you look into this and think about how it might work for your organisation.

You need at least 2 board or committee members who are not related

Related can mean:

- related by marriage
- in a civil partnership with each other
- in a long-term relationship with each other
- related through a long-term partner
- living together at the same address
- related by blood.

All companies who apply must have at least two directors who are not related in any of these ways. This also applies to companies that are also registered as charities.





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Rurality

Support will be focused on **isolated rural areas** with populations usually less than 4,000, where the activity is required due to a lack of alternative services in that locality.

Applications from small villages and towns, or rurally dispersed areas, will be prioritised over those from larger towns, which may be better served.

However, we appreciate that some larger towns (over 4,000 people) may still be underserved and distant from urban and peri-urban hubs so we will assess these applications on a case-by-case basis.





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Types of organisation we are unable to fund

These include (but are not limited to):

- Care Farms or similar activities where the beneficiaries are drawn from a larger area than just the local community.
- Local Authorities, including Town and Parish Councils.
- Hospitals and Schools.
- Private companies, sole traders and individuals.
- Youth clubs.
- Organisations that look to make profits and share these profits out privately - including companies limited by shares, organisations without the right asset locks, or organisations that can pay profits to directors or shareholders.
- Organisations applying to more than one of our funds for the same project over the same period. This is because you cannot get duplicate funding for something we're already funding you to do. It's OK to apply to another programme if you've already had an unsuccessful decision though.
- Uniformed groups such as scouts, guides and sea cadets.
- Sports clubs and associations.





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We are unable to support:

- Activities which involve capital work to buy or build, refurbish, extend or alter a property or other construction-related works.

This includes:

- refurbishment
- retro-fitting
- extending buildings
- purchasing land or buildings
- creating a new building
- developing an external space like a community garden.
- Rent costs
- Village hall and community asset renovation activities.
- Landscape-scale or nature recovery type projects
- Purchase of buildings or land.
- Planning permission/building regulations.
- Activities taking place in a location where the purchase/rent agreement is not complete.
- Statutory requirements.
- Technical energy activities where a specialist funder might be more appropriate.
- Activities that replace government funding
- Activities that benefit individuals, rather than the wider community
- Lobbying activities
- Things you've spent money on in the past and are looking to claim for now (retrospective costs)
- The topping up of organisation reserves.
- Activities where our contribution makes up less than 10% of the total cost of the activity

- Activities that aim to promote a religion (we can fund religious organisations if their activity benefits the wider community and does not include religious content).
- Consumables including food, fuel or refreshments.
- Political activity/campaigning
- Working capital - the liquid funds available to meet your daily business expenses.
- Loans.
- Activities where there may be other, more appropriate funders with a better understanding of the issue. For example, those dealing with:
 - domestic violence
 - migration
 - dementia or elderly care
 - healthcare or mental healthcare provision.



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What might success look like?

1. Help provide financial benefits to the local area.

- Generation of a new, or support to build an existing, income stream for the community, helping to secure long-term viability and reduce reliance on external funding
- Creation of a circular economy within the community e.g. products are produced which can be circulated within the local economy, focused on local production for local use, retaining more of the value and economic activity locally, for local benefit while at the same time reducing carbon footprints
- Skills within the community are built, helping to encourage growth e.g. local employment opportunities are created, training opportunities developed
- Skills/resources are shared with other organisations, and local partnerships are developed which drive economic growth
- An essential resource is provided or developed that is currently inaccessible to the community, helping to improve economic resilience

2. Build a stronger sense of community and connectedness

- Community leadership and planning approaches are developed
- Activity helps to bring the community together, increasing community cohesion and reducing isolation and loneliness
- Project helps community to develop a long-term plan for their future and sustained change beyond the lifetime of the funding, increasing confidence levels





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What might success look like?

3. Benefit the local environment, creating positive benefits for the community

- Solutions are developed which reduce negative impacts on the local environment
- There is increased knowledge and interest from the community in the local environment
- The community are more aware of and engaged in their local environment
- Waste is reduced and resource efficiency initiatives are developed
- *Please note, we aren't accepting nature recovery or landscape scale regeneration type projects.*

4. Create an innovative and replicable approach addressing an unmet need within the rural area.

- Unmet needs or gaps in provision, existing or emerging issues or priorities within the community are identified and addressed through innovative solutions
- Solutions developed are shared with other local communities, helping to expand the scale of change in rural communities





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Key organisation characteristics we are looking for

In your full proposal, we will ask for more detail on how you feel you meet one or more of these key characteristics:

1. Community-led

We want organisations to demonstrate that the need and demand for their activity is coming from the community themselves and that they actively listen to and understand the needs of their community.

You might want to think about:

- If you actively engage and have spoken to the people in your community e.g. regular community consultation, surveys
- If your activity has been developed in response to what people have told you they need and is important to them

2. Working towards a long term vision

We want organisations to be sustainable long-term, with a clear vision or goal for their organisation and community.

You might want to think about:

- If you have a clear long-term vision or goal for your organisation and how you are working towards this e.g. a business plan
- If the activity is likely to lead to further opportunities for your organisation or its beneficiaries e.g. your activity will help to generate an income, enabling further investment in the community

3. Facilitate collaboration and connectedness

We want to support organisations that are inclusive, accessible and collaborative. We are keen to understand how you work with other community groups and organisations, do you share resources or learning and ideas? This is an opportunity to demonstrate how you are connected with others to deliver collective change.

You might want to think about:

- If you currently share skills/resources with other organisations, or how this activity will help you to do that.
- What relationships your organisation has with external partners, stakeholders and funders.

4. Demonstrate innovation

We want to support activities that are creating innovative and replicable solutions to the challenges facing their community

You might want to think about:

- What makes your activity innovative? Is this a bespoke solution you have developed to an identified challenge in your community?
- What unmet need or gap in provision this activity addresses
- If your activity has the potential for scale. Is there scope to share learning and/or replicate elsewhere?



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Previous projects we have supported:

Grizedale Arts and The Farmer's Arms: in collaboration with the community, turned an old pub into a rural hub, creating a local space for creative and business projects to run, as well as hosting training events and volunteer placements for local people.

What we liked about it: This project reached a larger number of local people and demonstrated their impact through strong quantitative and qualitative evidence like survey results and testimonials from local people. They went beyond simply purchasing the pub and, with the support and involvement of the community, turned it into a hub providing a vital range of services for local people.

Blackhall Mill Community Association, Tyne and Wear

This project developed a 'how-to' guide and model for setting up their community electric vehicle car club, called a 'car club in a box', so that other communities can create their own. Building on research they have conducted, this innovation will accelerate the speed at which they can support the development of new clubs in other communities, decarbonise transport, improve accessibility and strengthen the sustainability of their own club for their community.

What we like about it: They created a model that can be replicated and shared with other rural communities and is highly innovative. As well as improving access to transport in their isolated community, the project is generating an income stream for the community through the sale of their model, ensuring the future long-term viability of the car club, helping to decarbonize transport and reducing isolation and loneliness through their voluntary driver scheme. This organisation also demonstrates good collaboration and connectedness with others in their local area and identified a clear need for the project within their own community and further afield





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Previous projects we have supported under the two themes:

Holy Island 2050: Long Term Vision & Strategy

This project addressed the significant issues facing the Holy Island community by bringing together local residents to develop a strategy and long term vision for the area. Led by and for local people, this set out a plan for creating a sustainable and positive future where the community and island could thrive.

What we liked about it: The project involved setting up working group meetings for the community to get to know each other, helping create the building blocks for active governance and strengthening community cohesion. Information and evidence documented by the report has since led to successful applications for further funding to explore the feasibility and need for a community housing project and has provided a clear agenda for the island to decide on priority projects to implement and action, helping to secure their long-term sustainability.

Transition North Ronaldsay: This project created a new community enterprise to turn their island's plastic waste into useable products that benefit the community. The products are developed with the community and can be traded in for remanufacturing, creating an innovative circular economy on the island whilst removing litter from the coastline.

What we like about it: a particularly innovative project with a strong business plan and clear long-term vision. They also demonstrated additional economic, environmental and social benefits, including supporting employment and protecting biosecurity.





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Previous projects we have supported under the two themes:

Colintraive & Glendaruel Development Trust

This project aimed to provide vital services to a rural, under-served population with the goal of establishing a Sustainable Local Food Ecosystem. This included the introduction of an innovative Vending Machine Market, where local producers and makers could sell their produce; regular farmers markets; and growing of produce by the community for use in community food programmes.

What we liked about it: The organisation identified a clear gap in provision in the community and created the innovative solution of the vending machine market to address this. The VMM demonstrates multiple benefits, supporting local producers as well as the community, helping to increase food security and reducing the miles the community have to travel to buy food. The concept of the project is highly replicable and could be rolled out to other rural communities facing similar challenges.





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What we expect from you

If successful, you will be expected to:

- Have an initial 'kick-off' meeting with our team to talk through next steps and finalise details for project delivery
- Host some of our team for a visit to your project during the agreement period
- Submit a report halfway through the project outlining
 - **Spend**
 - **Impact** - tell us how you have made progress towards the intended impact for the project
 - **Learning** - tell us more about what you have learnt, what changes you have made
 - **Partnerships** - tell us more about your connection to stakeholders locally – what is working well or not, and if the project has joined or created any networks.
 - Tell us about any **issues, challenges or risks** identified during the delivery of your activities.
 - If anything has changed
- Submit an end of project report outlining:
 - **Spend**
 - **Overall impact**
 - **Learning**
 - **Partnerships**
- Keep us up to date throughout the project with emails/general correspondences
- Actively participate in marketing the award – through interviews, media content and social media contributions
- Attend any events, stakeholder meetings or open days related to the award.





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What you can expect from us

- **Open communication** and support from our team with any queries you may have
- **Support** in promoting your project and news of the funding
- The opportunity to join our **Confident Rural Communities Network** - aimed at enabling rural community organisations supported through our programmes to network, exchange ideas and share solutions. A space where communities can thrive by learning from each other, working collaboratively to tackle challenges and identify opportunities to increase self-sufficiency and long-term viability.
- Invitations to events and meetings





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Guidance for completing your video submission

What to include

Please submit a short video with your application. We want to hear your story – who you are, what your organisation does, what the project is you'd like us to support. It would be great to hear more about:

- *where you are based*
- *the main activities and objectives of your organisation*
- *what you'd like to do*

How to make your video

The video can be taken on a phone/tablet - the quality of the video will not be taken into consideration. The video must:

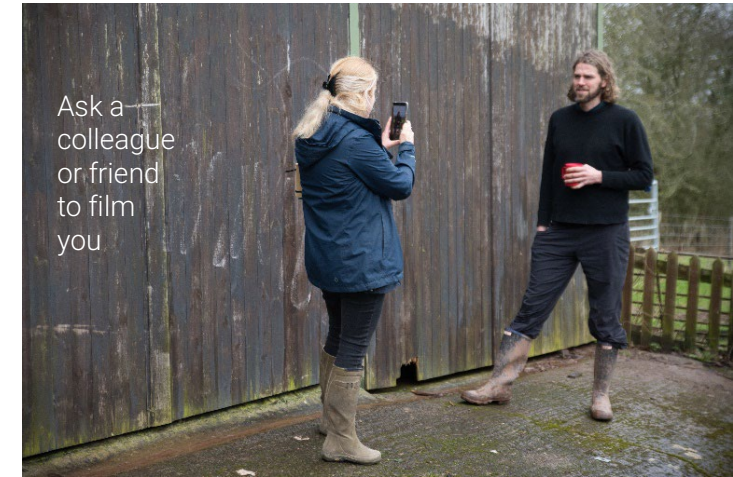
- Be between 1 to 3 minutes long
- Be uploaded to a hosting website e.g. Dropbox, Google Drive or YouTube or sent via whatsapp to 07825165340. If sending via whatsapp, make sure to send your name, organisation name and email address with your video.
- Videos can be portrait or landscape. Please only submit **one** video, not multiple. Don't worry too much about the style or editing of the video. We just need the sound to be clear and be able to hear what you're saying.
- Avoid filming in places with too much background noise like outdoors, in a busy café or office. A quiet empty room's a good place to film in.
- Please enter the full website address (URL) for your video in **question 2.1** on your Expression of Interest form. Make sure the website address is correct so we can watch your video. The full website address will include all the letters and symbols at the beginning of the URL. This includes the http:// or https:// at the start. If you're using YouTube, choose an unlisted YouTube video, as this will not be seen publicly

Consent

If you're going to take videos of people taking part in your project, make sure you get their consent first. You'd normally do this with a consent form. Find information about consent from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

You can view an example video we have filmed on our website.

Please note, if you aren't able to upload a video, or have trouble with this part of your submission, please contact us with your name, email and phone number on grants@countrysidefund.org.uk and we can assist you with this.





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Guidance for completing the Expression of Interest Form

Applications close on Thursday 26th September 2024 at midday.

The online form will be taken down at midday on the closing date. We are unable to accept applications in any other format. We therefore recommend you get your application in as soon as possible.

Please answer all questions on the application form as openly as possible. We are expecting a great deal of interest and will rely on the information you've given us. Please do not send us any supplementary information other than that which is requested in the online application form, as this will not be considered.

You may save the application as you go along and come back to it, however, we **recommend drafting your responses offline** just in case. If you choose to save your application, you will be asked to enter your email and create a password. A link will then be sent to your email which you can use to log back in. Please ensure you have filled out your Organisation Name, Postcode, and Contact email before you click Save.

1) Click here to save your form



Expression of Interest Form

Page: 1 2 3 4

Save my progress and resume later |

2) Enter your details as shown. **Please make a note of the password** chosen as you will need this to access the form

Save my progress and resume later |

Resume Later

In order to be able to resume this form later, please enter your email and choose a password.

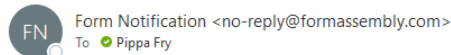
Your Email:

A Password:

Confirm Password:

3) Go to your email to resume your form. You may need to check your junk, in case the email has gone into there

Your response to Supporting Rural Communities in Northumberland EOI has been saved.



Thank you. Your response to Supporting Rural Communities in Northumberland EOI has been saved.

You can resume this form at any time by going to <https://app.formassembly.com/forms/resume/5126804>.

IMPORTANT: Your submission is considered incomplete until you resume it and press the submit button.



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Guidance for completing the Expression of Interest Form

1. **Eligibility Quiz:** Fill in the quiz to check you are eligible to apply for funding.
2. **Section 1: Applicant Details:** This section is to collect all the relevant information about your organisation, the senior contact who will be legally responsible for the funding and the main contact who will be our day-to-day contact for the project.
3. **Section 2 Activity Overview:** This section is your opportunity to tell us all about your project, including the outcomes, and how you will deliver it.
4. **Review & Submit:** Once you are happy with all your responses, please press 'Review & Submit'. Please note, your application will **not be submitted** when you press 'Review & Submit'. You must review your application and submit on the next page.

Once you are happy with all your responses, please press 'review & submit'. This will take you to a page where you can review your entire application and save a copy by pressing 'print' at the bottom.

Please note, your application will not be saved or submitted when you press 'review & submit' below. You must review and submit on the next page.

Previous Page


Review & Submit


5. You will be alerted if any questions have been missed. You will then be taken to a page where you can review your entire application and save a copy by pressing 'print' at the bottom.
6. On the 'Review your Response' page you **MUST click the 'confirm'** button at the bottom of this page to finalise your response, otherwise your application will not be submitted.

Please review your response and confirm.

You **MUST** click the **confirm** button at the bottom of this page to finalise your response. If you want to print this page for your record, you may do it now.

Confirm

 Make a correction

 Print this page

7. You will receive a notification on screen and an email once your application has been received (please check your spam/ junk folder)