

Application Form Guidance notes

Currently 25% of the National Park is managed for nature. By 2030, working with a wide range of partners we will deliver 33% of land managed for nature and encourage the remaining 67% to be nature friendly. Through this funding, grants up to £25,000 are available to create, restore and improve ponds for wildlife.

Important information about this funding:

- Projects are more likely to be successful if informed by South Downs National Park Ranger advice, therefore please complete a project enquiry form as soon as possible if a Ranger has not already helped you with the project scope. If they are not able to advise in advance of this application round we may ask you to submit to a future round.
- The funding does not cover organisational costs, training, transport, work already undertaken, recoverable VAT, planning applications or costs associated with fulfilling a statutory obligation or planning consent.
- We will not fund projects that make income for private gain.
- Applications are determined by considering the potential benefits to biodiversity, ongoing management of the pond and the project's value for money.
- We seek advice from Froglife and South Downs National Park Authority staff in determining the applications. If successful, we may share your project details with external partners for the purpose of monitoring the outcomes of your project and publicising the fund.
- We may put your project forward for other funding opportunities available through our Trust and the South Downs National Park Authority where we feel it meets the relevant criteria. This is so that we can maximise the reach of our ponds funding.

Who can apply?

Local Authorities, Parish Councils, CICs, Schools, charities, and constituted voluntary groups can apply. Applications from commercial partners and private landowners will be considered where projects are not-for-profit and show demonstrable commitment through cash or labour/management contributions. Projects with community benefit are more likely to be successful. The applicant must be the landowner or someone with their permission to carry out the project and actions in the management plan.

The site

Sites within the South Downs National Park boundary will be prioritised.

What will it fund?

You can apply for capital costs to create, restore and improve a pond for wildlife. This may include materials, labour and natural capital items like native plants. Where specific tools and equipment are needed to maintain the pond after the project these costs can be considered but will not be funded in isolation.

Match Funding

Due to demand for this funding we are unlikely to provide grants above 80% of the project value. You should provide a cash match and/or materials and labour which would reduce the grant request. See Part 3, application form notes, for more information.

Funding conditions

If successful, we will issue you with a formal offer setting out terms and conditions. Payment stages will be linked to the project plan set out in your application. Grant offers include but are not limited to:

- Carrying out the work and maintaining the site as per your project plan
- Obtaining planning permission before commencement of the work
- Confirming receipt of all match funding before commencement of the work
- Maintaining equipment and built infrastructure for a minimum of 5 years
- Displaying South Downs National Park, South Downs National Park Trust and Partner logos in press and publicity about the project.
- Submitting monitoring information at intervals over an agreed period not normally less than 5 years.

Application form notes:

Contact your local planning office as soon as possible to find out if permission is needed. They will also consult with the County Archaeologist if necessary. Find out more here: [Do I need planning permission? - South Downs National Park Authority](#) A grant may be offered before planning permission where there is evidence of pre-application correspondence or application submission. Find out more about consent for nature projects here: [Advice on Consents, Permissions, and key considerations for ReNature projects \(southdowns.gov.uk\)](#)

What do you need?

- Advice from a South Downs National Park Ranger. Please complete and return a project enquiry form if you have not spoken to anyone.
- For registered companies and charities – your reference number. For smaller, unregistered organisations a copy of your governance document and latest accounts
- A marked - up site plan showing where the work will take place
- One or two photographs of the site.
- Comparable quotes for expenses valued at £5,000 or more
- Where the applicant is not the landowner: landowner permission to undertake the work and their agreement for relevant parties to undertake the management plan.

Part I - Site and applicant details

Site grid reference – Please use <https://gridreferencefinder.com/> to identify the grid reference at the centre of the site. If this application is for a group please provide all grid references with other site details in an attachment.

Instructions for using Grid Reference finder:

1. Access the website; enter whichever location details you have into the search bar on the left of the screen and click "go".
2. Ensure that you have the correct location selected by checking the location using the map which is represented by a drawing pin.
3. If you would like to create a new drawing pin closer to the actual location Right Click on the desired location
4. Details of the location will appear when you hover over the drawing pin. The X and Y coordinates are the Easting and Northing coordinates.
5. Copy both sets of the 6 digit accurately and insert them into the Easting (X) and Northing (Y) fields in the form.

Please share the applicant charity reference number or companies house number, where applicable. This is so that we can verify your organisation/company, financial resource and governance. If you do not appear on these registers, please send us a copy of your governing document and latest accounts, or a website link to this information. For private landowners there will be greater consideration of your financial contribution and commitment to the project when weighing up the value and risks to offering you funding.

If you are not the landowner you will need to append their permission to carry out the work and the actions in your management plan.

Please tell us if you are able to accept National Lottery funding. This answer does not disqualify you from Pounds for Ponds funding but will help us identify suitable funding opportunities for you.

Current site use and management - In a few sentences, please tell us what the site is used for and how it is currently managed. For example: recreational space, grass cut once a year.

What habitat and species are there currently? – The SDNP Ranger may have been able to help you with this. If you have a report from another professional, like an ecologist, please refer to this and send with your application.

Part 2 – Project Plan

Please note that your project title and summary may be used for publicity purposes.

Breakdown of activities – Autumn is usually the most suitable for pond works. Froglife guidance can help you design your project <https://www.froglife.org/info-advice/frequently-asked-questions/creating-or-improving-ponds/>The SDNP Ranger team may also be able to inform your project including inputting on briefs or specifications for contractors. If funded your payments may be linked to the dates in this table.

Please tell us where planning permission will be needed and summarise any pre-app discussion that has taken place.

Part 3 – Cost

Please list proposed expenditure including:

- Contractors and hired labour as well as specialist expertise such as ecologists
- Purchase of materials, tools and equipment where essential to establish and maintain the site although you may put these forward as your contribution to the project.
- Hired equipment (please specify length of hire)
- Natural capital items such as plants. (Include species types in notes)
- Built capital items such as pond linings and fencing. Please include images or a specification for these with your application form.
- Non-recoverable VAT
- Costs associated with establishing the habitat over the first year of your management plan E.g. mowing. If you are a Wildlife Trust, commercial or private landowner you are advised to include these costs as part of your contribution.
- Reasonable provisional sums or contingency for areas of risk

This list is not exhaustive – please contact the Grants Officer at grants@southdowns.gov.uk if you have a question.

If you are a farmer or landowner and will carry out a portion of the work yourself (e.g. digging, fencing) please give a cost estimate if you are going to include this as part of your contribution later on.

In the notes section make us aware of quantities and/or no. of days labour. Refer to appended quotations.

Quotes for the work: For individual expenses over £5,000 you should submit 3 comparable quotes. By comparable, we mean that each contractor will have been approached with the same pricing proposal. This proposal should be fully completed by someone in their company with the authority to provide the quote. It is advisable to ask them to price for the anticipated date and season of the work.

This grant is unable to fund the items below however you may wish to note these in the Additional Information to Support your costs section so that we are fully aware of contributions outside of the work you are requesting funding for:

- Organisational costs such as staff and overheads
- Training
- Transport
- Equipment and activities already funded by a SDNPT grant.
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Recoverable VAT
- Work already undertaken or purchases already made.
- Costs associated with obtaining planning consents and permissions.

Project income

In the table please tell us about income towards the expenses in your form including:

- Other grants

- Community Infrastructure Levy funding
- Local fundraising
- Cash from landowner, businesses or your organisation, donations
- Estimated cost of labour from applicant e.g. farmer or land manager where you are undertaking some of the work yourself and have included this as a cost
- Other in-kind contributions. This could be use of equipment like tools, volunteer days or donated plants. Be specific about how many days' time and quantities where possible. Record this cost as zero in the table.

Will the applicant generate an income? – we will not fund applications for private gain therefore any income incurred will need to be used to increase the scope of the project or maintain the pond going forward.

Additional information to support your costs- Use this section to justify value for money if you do not have comparable quotes. This could be because there is a local supplier with specific expertise or knowledge or because you did not receive three quotes returned. You may want to explain costs you will incur that are not included in your application e.g. planning application fees, loss of income through change of land management.

How much grant funding are you requesting? – Your grant request and project income should be equal to the project cost.

Part 4 – Outcomes

Why and how will your project impact on biodiversity? Note particular species or levels you will be monitoring. Note where the site area connects to other wildlife sites.

Tell us about additional outputs, for example: volunteering opportunities, publications, educational visits, studies. When will they take place, by whom and how will the outcomes be measured?

Please note that if funded you will be asked to complete a project completion report recording key data against our Trust's impact goals such as the number of volunteers involved where applicable and number of hectares restored for nature.

Declaration Ensure you have read and signed before returning to grants@southdowns.gov.uk **by 30th April 2025**