

Rural West Sussex Climate Positive Viticulture Fund

Application Guidance

Who can apply?

You will be a UK registered company operating as a vineyard, winery or grape distiller within the administrative boundary of Arun, Chichester, Horsham or Mid Sussex District Councils.

Check your Council using your postcode [here](#)

Previous applicants are not eligible for funding.

What can this funding cover?

Qualifying businesses can be awarded up to 50% of their eligible project costs, to a maximum grant value of £10,000. The total funding pot available is £66,500.

Examples could include, but are not limited to:

- **Wine GB Sustainability Certifications:** cases that support achieving SWGB certification (SWGB Guidelines [SWGB-Rule-Book-2023.pdf \(winegb.co.uk\)](#))
- **Biodiversity gain:** Measures that support an increase in biodiversity, such as cover cropping, headland planting and non-plantable areas.
- **Circular Economy Initiatives:** to prevent, reduce or re-use waste, for example asset pooling with other vineyards, nutrient cycling measures, productivity redesign measures.
- **Energy efficiency upgrades:** Energy audits, Energy-efficient upgrades, such as installing energy-saving appliances, energy management systems, LED lighting, insulation, or smart thermostats. Upgrading windows, doors, or roofing materials to improve energy efficiency.
- **Renewable energy installation:** Installing renewable energy systems to generate clean, on-site energy.
- **Water conservation measures:** Implement water-saving measures, examples included (but not limited to) low-flow fixtures, rainwater harvesting systems, remote sensor tech, winery wastewater recycling.
- **Water quality measures:** Additional maintenance and upgrades to septic tanks and private wastewater treatment works to remove phosphorus, inspections to check and correct sewage water connections
- **Green infrastructure:** Green roof systems, permeable paving, or rain gardens, to manage stormwater runoff and improve biodiversity. Air quality improvements through clean emission equipment, CO2 fermentation capture technology

- **Sustainable transportation:** Solutions that encourage zero emission transport, such as cycle infrastructure that connect vineyards or eco-friendly transportation options for wine tourism.
- **Specialist Advice** - Consultants fees such as specialist advice are eligible for consideration where supported by a strong justification.

What cannot be covered by the funding?

- Retrospective projects or work that commenced prior to receipt of a grant offer
- Staff costs and typical business overheads
- Ongoing maintenance and routine repairs. For example to existing buildings, equipment and machinery
- Statutory responsibilities such as health and safety requirements
- Planning fees or work that is required as a condition of an existing planning consent.
- VAT

What information do I need?

You will need to provide information about your business such as your company number, address, company size and details of the most recent annual turnover. The South Downs National Park Trust will carry out some checks of your company accounts to make sure that your business is operating and has not filed for administration or related notices. The size of your company does not disqualify you from making an application. This information is used to consider the benefits and any financial risks to awarding a grant.

You should provide a written projection of resource savings and /or benefits that could be achieved with the funding over the next 5 years. This information should be specific and measurable so that, if funded, you are able to monitor the benefits and report back after the first year. Make sure that you measure/record what the starting point is, so that it will be easy to see changes. This projection is provided in your own format.

You will need to submit evidence of your proposed costs (this could be screenshots from websites or a catalogue). For individual expenses of £5,000 or more you should submit three comparable quotes. By comparable, we mean that each supplier has been approached with the same proposal to price. Local suppliers are preferred. If you do not receive three quotes back, or there is a reason why this item/service should be delivered by a particular supplier, there is space to detail this on the form.

The fund awards up to 50% of the total project costs to a maximum grant of £10,000. You will need to tell us how you will provide the remaining amount from other sources. This could be from your company, other grants or contributions.

Examples have been given within the form to help, but if you have any questions please contact grants@southdowns.gov.uk

Note on planning: Applicants should check whether planning permission is needed for their project as soon as possible. It is not necessary to have planning consent in place before applying, but if awarded a grant it will be a condition that this is obtained before starting work, and grant funds should be spent within 18 months.

Check your Local Authority planning pages for advice on whether planning permission is required. If your site is within the South Downs National Park this may be dealt with by the South Downs

Decisions

The applications will be assessed by a grants panel comprising of members of the Rural West Sussex Partnership who will prioritise projects that demonstrate the greatest environmental impact, value for money, and innovative approach.

What would the grant conditions be?

If awarded funding, a grant recipient would agree to conditions which will include but are not limited to:

- Confirmation that any necessary planning consents will be obtained before starting work
- Confirmation that necessary insurances are in place for the work to take place and to cover replacement of damaged or stolen equipment
- Claiming the grant within 18 months of the grant offer, once expired the fund will be returned to the funding pot for re-allocation.
- Funds being reimbursed (claimed back) upon submission of a grant completion form with proof of expenditure
- Submitting a short 'End of Grant' report within 1 year of project completion to feedback on successes, challenges and evidencing the resource savings made
- The grant funding partners reserving the right to demand repayment in full where a capital funded item has been resold within two years of purchase date.
- That once a grant has been agreed in principle, any subsequent changes to a project must be agreed with the funding panel via a variation request. The applicant must receive written agreement of the variation request from the funding panel to proceed. The decision of the funding panel is final with no right of appeal.

When to apply

Complete applications must be submitted by close of play **1st October 2025**.

This opportunity will be closed early should demand greatly exceed the available funding. Do not delay in completing your application.

Funding decisions will be communicated by the end of November 2025.

Incomplete or late applications will not be validated and will not be progressed to decision stage.