

Youth Action Fund Guidance

The Youth Action Fund offers £500–£2,000 grants for projects encouraging 11–25 year olds to take positive action in the South Downs National Park.

These projects will contribute to aims in the national park's Partnership Management Plan. [Partnership Management Plan https://partnership-management-plan.southdowns.gov.uk/2026-31](https://partnership-management-plan.southdowns.gov.uk/2026-31)

Criteria and Scope:

The applicant should be a formal, not-for-profit organisation with a constitution or governing set of rules. You will need to confirm that you have policies in place to keep young people safe before a grant is made – Health and Safety, Code of Conduct & Safeguarding, Data Protection & Privacy – as well as public liability insurance.

Typical school, college and forest school projects are not eligible for funding. These grants are targeted at out of school-time activity outside of statutory curriculum requirements.

Your activities will be conducted in, or within 10km of, and primarily focused on the South Downs National Park.

Activities will allow young people between 11 and 25 years of age to take positive action in support of the National Park, for example:

Nature conservation activities -

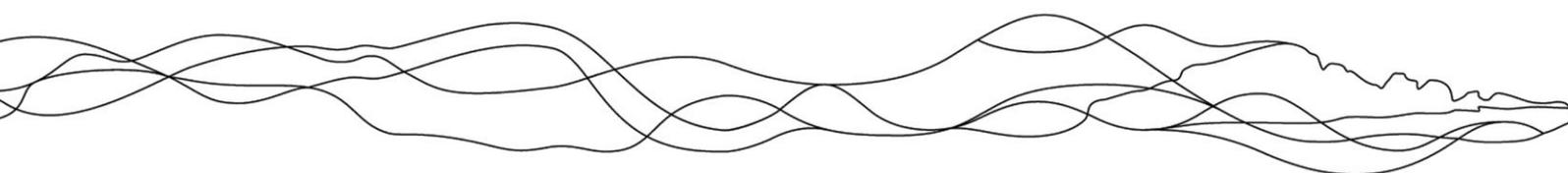
- Creating habitats for wildlife in your local centre/site
- Taking part in practical conservation activities e.g. tree planting initiatives, scrub clearance with conservation organisations, clean-up and dispose activities like litter picking and beach cleans

Skills development and work-related learning focused on the national park's special qualities -

- Environmental, National Park promotion through film making/photography training
- Learning traditional conservation skills such as hedge laying, thatching, flint work
- Species or environmental recording & monitoring to inform others about actions they can take to respond to climate change.

Creative activities inspired by national park landscapes, species and heritage -

- Writing workshops
- Arts based activities e.g. painting, drawing, sculpture about the South Downs



- Creating a mural at your centre to tell the community about making a difference for nature

The fund can pay for: materials and equipment; transport to site; subsistence/consumables; essential training for the young people participating; specialist contractors and other reasonable costs associated with project delivery.

Staff costs will be considered where additional to your usual overheads and directly related to the delivery of the project. Staff costs are unlikely to be funded in isolation without any expenditure related to the young beneficiaries. Please detail why these expenses will be incurred in your application. These will be awarded at SDNP's discretion.

It cannot pay for: usual staff salaries; staff training that is your organisation's statutory responsibility; general overheads and core costs such as building rent and HR services; purchase of vehicles; school projects unless these are part of an extra-curricular activity outside of typical school time.

Note to previous applicants: your application should be for a new project or new cohort of young people. You will need to have sent us evaluation/feedback from your previous grant. New applicants may be prioritised if there is a high demand for funding.

How to apply:

Complete the short application form and create an accompanying project proposal. Send to grants@southdowns.gov.uk by **10 May 2026**.

You will need to have information to hand about your organisation, including relevant policies and website address (where applicable), project costs, activity location and an estimate of the number and ages of young people who will be involved.

Your project proposal can be in your own format (video, audio, powerpoint or written document) and tells us more about what needs the project seeks to address, what outcomes you expect to see, locations (or potential locations) for activities, what the funding would purchase and any ongoing activities that will carry on after the project. Submissions developed collaboratively with young people are received positively!

Applicants will be notified of the outcome by mid-June 2026.

Grant payment will be made up-front on confirmation that any match funding needed is in place, and that relevant permissions from landowners or venues have been granted.

Evaluation is requested immediately after the project close in the form of a video, audio, a Powerpoint Presentation or a written document with images. The emphasis is on providing qualitative data on the impacts and outcomes of the project.

