

Eligibility questions regarding RFS and RSFS membership

- How long do I have to have been a member? **There is no eligibility criteria relating to how long you need to have been a member.**
- How long do I have to stay a member after receiving the grant? **You must remain a member for at least the duration of your grant contract (typically two years).**
- We are corporate members. Can we apply on behalf of clients? **The person or organisation who is accountable for delivering the project as per the *Standard Terms for Grants* must be a member or corporate member.**
- I'm a consultant can I apply on behalf of clients? **The person or organisation who is accountable for delivering the project as per the *Standard Terms for Grants* must be a member or corporate member.**
- I'm a trustee of a community wood. Can we apply? **Yes, so long as you have permission from the Board to do so.**
- I am a tenant, can I apply? **Yes, so long as you have permission from the landowner to do so.**
- If I join either RFS or RSFS now, can I apply? **Yes. But you must remain a member for at least the duration of your grant contract (typically two years).**
- Can I apply and then join if I receive a grant? **No. You must be a member to apply.**
- I am a student member and involved in planting with other organisations. Can I apply on their behalf? **The person or organisation who is accountable for delivering the project as per the *Standard Terms for Grants* must be a member.**

Other funding sources

- I already have a grant scheme approved, can I add extra trees? **If you would like to add extra trees once your grant has been approved, you must submit another application but state in your covering email that this is an extension project. The total number of trees planted with this grant must not (unless otherwise agreed) exceed 20,000.**
- Do I need to declare if the area was grant aided previously and failed? If so how long ago after the original planting before I can apply for these grants? **In order to fulfil our obligations to our partners and to prevent double funding, each 50p of funding provided by this grant must be directly attributable to one tree planted. You cannot use this grant to fulfil the terms of a grant from another funder, unless the grant you would receive from us constitutes no less than 51% of the total funding you have already and will receive for the cost of purchasing the trees.**
- Can I apply for this grant if I've applied to other grants in the past and received no funding? **Yes.**

Pre planting planning and application details

What exactly is used in calculating what the 50p is 51% of? You may use this grant alongside other sources of external funding if you can confirm to us that:

- a) You are receiving no additional external funding towards the cost of purchasing the trees (i.e. any other grants or funding received is for other tree planting activity, for example deer fencing, tree guards or ongoing care);
- b) The grant you would receive from us constitutes no less than 51% of the total funding you will receive for the cost of purchasing the trees between the start and end date of the project.

Where other external funding does not specify what proportion of the grant is to be used on purchasing the trees, you should confirm that the grant you would receive from us constitutes no less than 51% of the total funding you will receive for the cost of the tree planting operation between the start and end date of the project. In this case, you can remove any proportion of any external funding from this calculation that can be directly attributed to any activity that is not purchase of trees (i.e. if other external grants, or proportions of these grants, could be used to purchase trees, you must confirm that the grant you would receive from us constitutes no less than 51% of the total).

- Is it just the cost of the plants? See above. With or without VAT? Where VAT is paid and cannot be reclaimed, it should be used in calculations.
- What evidence do you require to demonstrate that? You are asked to self-certify that you comply with our terms for using the grant with other sources of funding. You are required to read our terms carefully before applying and note that any incomplete, incorrect or misleading information provided can lead to immediate termination of your grant contract and a requirement to repay any claimed grant.
- What happens if the costs change between the estimate in the application and buying the trees? You must notify us if your eligibility for a grant changes for any reason (including if you fall below the 51% of costs threshold).
- Can I use trees from any source? You can use trees from any source but you must show how they will be responsibly sourced and tell us this when you apply. For example, Plant Healthy certification will help to show that you have considered biosecurity when you sourced your trees.
- What size must the trees be? Your trees can be any size. You will need to tell us how you plan to care for your trees when you apply.
- Is there a minimum or maximum number per hectare? To encourage innovation and experimentation, there is no minimum or maximum number of trees per hectare.
- Does natural regeneration count if I transplant it or respaced it? Transplanted or respaced natural regeneration is eligible if you can show us how you will protect and care for each tree seedling.
- I'm raising my plants from seed I've collected, can I claim for these? Plants raised from seed are eligible if you can show us how you will protect and care for each tree seedling.

- What about agroforestry, short rotation coppice, Christmas trees, orchard trees, arboreta, green burial sites? Will these be eligible? **We will consider all types of schemes where we can directly attribute each 50p of grant to a tree in the ground and where the aims and objectives of the scheme are focussed on sustainability and resilience. Projects should be diverse (in species, structure, or tree genetics), experimental, or innovative in another way and have resilience at the heart of their aims.**
- Would a tree belt/ hedge qualify? **Yes. So long as you are planting trees for resilience, your scheme is eligible.**
- Do I need to show I've checked for constraints like archaeology or biodiversity interests? **We need to be sure that whatever you propose to put in place is designed to make improvements for resilience and sustainability. Schemes that do not adequately take into account constraints and existing benefits of land use will not be funded.**
- Do we have to inform the forestry services? **Yes – if you are required to do so by law.**
- Do I need to supply a map? **OS? You will need to tell us exactly where you plan to plant your trees. If you cannot provide a six figure OS Grid Reference, you will need to find another way to tell us where you are planting your trees (for example, what3words or nearest postcode). If you are applying for 5,000 trees or more, you will need to provide a map.**

Submitting the Application

- Is there a deadline? Application window? **There is no deadline or application window. You are free to apply anytime. Please be aware that we have a limited amount of funding and so we may need to temporarily close the scheme once all current funds have been allocated.**
- When will I hear if I'm successful? **We aim to get back to you within six weeks of your date of application (the date your application arrives with us).**
- When do I get the money? **In order to fulfil our obligations to project partners we will ask you to reassure us that you are committed to planting your trees by submitting evidence before we can release your grant to you. For example, you could submit a copy of your invoice or order from your tree supplier or you could write us a letter stating where you ordered your trees and when you expect them to arrive on site.**
- If I'm not successful this year can I apply next year? **Yes**
- If I'm not successful will I receive feedback and can I apply again? **Due to the limited availability of grants, we may not be able to fund all eligible projects. We will try our best to provide feedback on projects which we feel have merit but due to limited capacity to administer grants, we reserve the right not to comment on applications.**
- Can you make more than one application for the same woodland? **Yes but applications should be significantly different in their aims and objectives. We will not award more than one grant to the same planting scheme.**
- Who will assess the applications? **The RFS will appoint a suitably qualified contractor to assess the applications. This person (or organisation) will have suitable experience of UK Forestry.**

Grant payment conditions

- Do you need invoices for trees purchased? **Not always.** For example, you could submit a copy of your invoice or order from your tree supplier or you could write us a letter stating where you ordered your trees and when you expect them to arrive on site.
- Does the grant include vat and/or delivery? **No.** The grant is paid at a flat rate of 50p per tree, regardless of what you paid for the tree, VAT or delivery costs.
- How long must I look after the trees? **Your application will be assessed on your stated commitments and available resources to care for the trees throughout their life cycle.**
- What happens if the trees die? **If more than 15% of trees fail in the first four years, we may ask you to provide evidence to show that these deaths were outside your control or as a result of agreed experimental practices. We reserve the right to audit your tree planting scheme (undertake a visit) up to 4 years after the date you claim your grant. If trees have died (in our view) through neglect or negligence, we reserve the right to reclaim some or all of the grant paid.**
- Can I claim for beating up of these trees? **This grant does not currently provide for beating up or otherwise replacing trees.**
- Do you charge interest on repayment of the grant? **No.**
- What happens if I sell this area? Do I have to repay? **If the land is sold within the first four years of the project and this sale results in the removal or death of the trees, we would expect the grant to be repaid in full or in part. The grant is designed to be simple and straightforward and so we are not placing onerous covenants on land owners through grant contracts. In the spirit of the grant, we expect applicants to do their best to ensure the future health of the trees they plant.**
- Will the planting area be inspected and what reporting is required? **Not always. We reserve the right to audit your tree planting scheme (undertake a visit) up to 4 years after the date you claim your grant. You will need to provide evidence that you have planted your trees (e.g. photos) and you will need to fill in a project completion form at the end of the project.**
- Do I need to put up signs acknowledging this funding? **No. No signs are required.**
- Will Trainhugger want to know where the trees have been planted so they can tell their customers? **Yes. Trainhugger, the RFS and the RSFS will record the location of planted trees and this data will be made publicly available. These data will not be published at any higher resolution than the nearest 10km square without permission from the grant applicant. Names of sites will not be published without the permission of the grant applicant.**
- Will details of grants be published, and if so, where? **We will not publish details of individual grants without permission from the grant applicant. We do, however, reserve the right to use images provided to us as evidence to promote the project.**

Miscellaneous

- Will there be a discount on Train Tickets for RFS and RSFS members? **No. Trainhugger cannot influence ticket prices and are therefore, unable to offer a discount to RFS and RSFS members.**
- Will there be a difference in criteria between the initial pilot project and the longer term partnership. **This is a pilot project and we will review feedback to improve the scheme going forward.**