Visitor Infrastructure Improvement Programme

What is the fund?

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has funding available to help plan and install appropriate visitor infrastructure in the Park that assists in delivering the priorities set out in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27 (https://partnershipplan.cairngorms.co.uk) and the related Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan Cairngorms Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan 2023 - 2028.

How much is the fund worth?

The Park Authority can normally contribute up to 70% of total project costs, up to a total value not exceeding £100,000, although in exceptional circumstances a higher intervention rate or costs may be possible.

Application Criteria

Objectives

The Cairngorms National Park Authority is seeking expressions of interest for capital funding to deliver Visitor Infrastructure Improvements, which should help meet the following National Park Partnership Plan objectives:

1. Welcome visitors and provide a high-quality experience while managing their impacts through providing better infrastructure.
2. Stabilise visitor numbers in the peak season, focusing growth on quieter months and on those areas that have the infrastructure and capacity to accommodate additional visitors.
3. Improve path, cycle and outdoor access networks to give outstanding opportunities to experience the natural and cultural heritage of the National Park to the widest range of people, while minimising disturbance to vulnerable species, habitats and sites.

In delivering these objectives projects should also assist with one or more of the following:

- Reducing potential conflicts between residents and visitors and / or between different recreational activities
- Promoting collaboration across land management and organisational boundaries
- Helping provide better opportunities for everyone to enjoy the National Park so the visitor profile will be more diverse, especially with regards to people who are disabled

- Delivering improvements at identified sites across all areas of the Park or improvements that address specific issues that are identified in the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan or Active Cairngorms Action Plan

What are the key dates?

Expression of interest open from 25 February 2026- applicants are encouraged to apply early to enable conversation to start on potential submissions of full grant applications
Expression of interest close on 27 of March 2026
Expressions of interest will then be assessed with full applications open 6 April – 4 May 2026
Application assessment from 11 of May to 22 of May 2026
Grant award letter issued the week beginning the 25 May 2026

Ready to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)

1. Applicants must clearly detail their project proposal, including costings, and demonstrate how it will deliver the objectives outlined above and / or priorities in the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Plan
2. If you would like to discuss your proposal before submitting the EOI, please contact Adam Streeter-Smith, Recreation and Access Manager, on 01479 870539.
3. All projects must be completed, and the grant claimed by 31 March 2027. Projects may be split across the 2026/2027 to 2027/2028 financial year for development and implementation but there is no guarantee of funding in 2027/2028
4. Information will also be stored and collated for expenditure in future years so please submit any relevant information that you think may be useful for follow-on activity.

You can complete an electronic expression of interest form here.
If you required an alterative format please contact us.

How to contact the fund

outdooraccess@cairngorms.co.uk