

Cairngorms Green Recovery Fund Overview

What is the Green Recovery Fund?

The Cairngorms Recovery Fund has been established to support essential community and business recovery actions following the impacts of COVID19, while contributing to the conservation and enhancement of the nature of the Cairngorms. The fund will seek to cover projects and actions that are not supported from other, existing national programme funds or financial allocations.

How much is the Fund worth?

The Fund has a total of £130,000 available to support projects, made up of £100,000 from the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) and a further £30,000 from the Cairngorms Trust (full name The Cairngorms Local Action Group Trust, a charity registered in Scotland, charity number SC046495). The partners involved in the Fund hope to fund between 6 and 12 projects of varying sizes from the funds they have brought together.

What are the key dates?

- 20 August 2020 – Fund opens
- 20 September – Applications window closes
- 30 September – successful applications announced
- 31 March 2021 – Projects complete

Who is eligible to apply?

The fund is open to a wide range of incorporated and unincorporated groups and organisations. This includes Community Bodies and groups, Registered Charities, Business Associations and Partnerships and Nature/Climate Bodies and Partnerships. Individual businesses may also apply, provided they meet the criteria laid out in the “Green Recovery Fund Principles and Criteria” document.

What it will fund?

The partners in the Fund are interested in supporting the recovery of the Cairngorms economy from the widespread impacts of COVID19, while protecting and enhancing the nature of the national park and seeking to address the ongoing impacts of climate change. To achieve this the partners wish to support Cairngorms communities and the businesses based in those communities, in taking locally led action to address:

- The most significant impacts of COVID19; and/or
- Overcome the most significant local barriers to economic and community recovery.

Projects must address all four principles of the Fund in order to qualify for consideration:

- a) **Partnership:** applicants will work in partnership with others to deliver projects focused on green recovery, well-being and economic growth.
- b) **“Green” focus:** applicants will ensure the project contributes to emissions reductions targets and/or nature conservation.
- c) **Employment/the economy:** applicants will ensure that the project makes a contribution to local employment and through that to the Cairngorms’ economic recovery.
- d) **Cairngorms National Park focused:** applicants will ensure that their project supports the delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan.

You can find out more about the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan at:

https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/170707CNPPP17-22FINAL_SinglePage.pdf

The three headline long-term outcomes of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan are:

- a) **Conservation:** a special place for people and nature, with natural and cultural heritage enhanced
- b) **Visitor Experience:** people enjoying the Cairngorms National Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences
- c) **Rural Development:** A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities.

These three headline outcomes link very closely with the principles of the Fund.

If you are considering applying for money from the Fund, you should also read the “Green Recovery Fund Principles and Criteria” document, which sets out more detail of the criteria against which applications will be assessed.

The “Green Recovery Fund Principles and Criteria” document also gives more information on the specific priorities of the Cairngorms Trust which the charity will use to assess applications and identify project proposals suited to its charitable funds.

How much can be applied for?

There is no upper or lower limit for applications.

The partners to the fund are more interested in the quality of the outcomes which are proposed and the intended achievements of applicants. As an idea of the likely scale of grant funds which we anticipate to award, The Fund hopes to support between 6 and 12 projects of varying sizes. This would suggest an average award of between £10,000 and £20,000. Larger awards will be considered for projects which are considered of exceptional value to achieve the Green Recovery of the Cairngorms and deliver against the Principles and Criteria of the Fund.

When will funds be received if application is accepted?

We understand that cash flow for new projects can be difficult to arrange. For approved projects, we are willing to provide grants on the following basis:

- a) On approval of project and confirmation of start: 40%.
- b) At mid stage (date to be agreed) on basis of reasonable evidence of progress: 40%.
- c) On completion of project and provision of any delivery information required: 20%.

As we are distributing public and charity funds, we may need to see reasonable evidence of need for “upfront” funding at the start of the project in order to justify provision of cash prior to the start of spending on a project. For example a copy of a bank statement showing current cash funds available to the applicant.

If you need any further information on the Green Recovery Fund, please contact the partnership by emailing adminoffice@cairngorms.co.uk or using the contact form available on the Cairngorms National Park Authority’s website at <https://cairngorms.co.uk/contact/>.

We will allocate your contact to one of the Authority’s or the Cairngorms Trust’s members of staff who will be able to help you.

Ready to apply?

If you have read these Guidance Notes and think you have a project that meets with the Green Recovery Fund Principles and Criteria, then please apply using the application form. Notes to help with completing the application form are set out below.

Does an application need to specify if the application is to the Park Authority or the Cairngorms Trust?

No. Just set out your project ideas and proposals and your intended outcomes and achievements from the requested investment in the application form. The partners involved with the Green Recovery Fund will work out which approved applications best fit with the funding available from the Authority and the Trust.

How will my application be assessed?

Applications will be assessed against a scoring system based on the Principles and Criteria. This will be published on our website during week commencing 24 August.

Completing the application form

Please complete all sections of the form. Text boxes can be expanded to accommodate additional text. Failure to complete all sections of the form will mean that we will be unable to consider your application. Where necessary you may enclose additional information with your application. Where additional information is enclosed please label this clearly and

make it clear through a reference at the relevant question what additional information you are sending with your application.

If you wish to discuss your funding application, with regard to eligibility or any other queries, please use the contact methods set out in the Guidance Notes above.

Part 1: Applicant Details

Please provide all details requested.

The applicant is the person or organisation who will receive the grant payment in return for having organised, supervised and paid for the work proposed in this application. They must have a bank account into which grant payments can be made by BACS transfer

Part 2 Project Details

Describe the project that you are seeking funding for. This should include details of the work that a grant from the Green Recovery Fund will support and details of how, when and by whom, the work will be carried out. You may enclose additional, relevant information to support the main application form where appropriate. This could include evidence of need, study reports, site plans etc.

Where planning consent is required for a project to be delivered, the applicant must provide evidence that the necessary permissions will be in place to enable the project to be delivered within the timeframe of the Fund (i.e. by 31 March 2021)

The 4 Principles of Green Recovery Fund are:

1. **Partnership:** support partnerships that deliver projects focused on green recovery, well-being and economic growth.
2. **Green:** ensure that the project contributes to net zero and/or nature
3. **Employment:** ensure that the projects contributes to local employment.
4. **Cairngorms:** support the delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan

Part 3: Basic Eligibility Criteria

All projects must be completed and payments processed by 31st March 2021.

State Aids rules may apply to projects which involve economic activities and / or involve supporting businesses or organisations engaged in economic / commercial activities. We have therefore asked in this section whether you have received any state aid funding over the last three years from any public bodies to help us evaluate the potential implications of our funding for your organisation if your application is approved. You should be aware of this as the public bodies who have funded you in the past will have provided you with a letter setting out that their funding is classed as state aid.

Further information on State Aids rules is available at: www.stateaidscotland.gov.uk/.

Use the contact details set out in the guidance if you need to discuss state aid considerations further with us.

Part 4: Why your project deserves Green Recovery Fund support

This will be a competitive application process and it is expected that the Fund will be heavily oversubscribed. Use this section to explain how your project will deliver against the assessment criteria that will be used to select successful projects. Focus on those that are relevant to your project.

Green Recovery Fund assessment criteria:

- a) **Leverage:** funds sought should lever or match other funding or resources (time, volunteering) into the project. This means that we will consider how much money will be invested in the project from the applicant or from other sources, in addition to the funds requested from the Green Recovery Fund;
- b) **Innovation:** projects should display some innovation in tackling issues which may cover taking approaches seen elsewhere and applying them in a Cairngorms context, and / or demonstrating approaches or activities that may be helpful for others to learn from and/or propose means of tackling new challenges;
- c) **Local economic impacts:** degree to which proposals can be expected to have a positive impact on the Cairngorms economy through investment, employment and indirect support to economic activity;
- d) **Diversification and Expansion:** proposals lead to some diversification and/or expansion of current economic and / or community operations;
- e) **Green:** proposals should contribute to net zero and/or nature based objectives ;
- f) **Capacity:** proposals should address capacity constraints inherent in current economic systems or communities – for example seeking to address a lack of staff or community activists in a specified area, or addressing transport limitations, or addressing an assessed problem in supply chains;
- g) **Longevity of impact:** degree to which the proposals will have a medium to long-term impact.

Cairngorm Trust funding assessment criteria:

- a) Building community capacity to facilitate and support local development through partnership working.
- b) Grow the economy of the Cairngorms National Park, by strengthening existing business sectors, supporting business start-ups and business diversification, and increasing the numbers of workers employed in the Cairngorms. (Note, in order to achieve public benefit, this objective must be combined with at least 1 of the other priorities to be eligible for charitable support.)
- c) Attract, support and retain young people in the Cairngorms.
- d) Improve transport, connectivity and service provision within the Cairngorms National Park.
- e) Protect and enhance the Cairngorms National Park's landscape, wildlife and local heritage.
- f) Support excellence in sustainable tourism and recreation, to enhance enjoyment of the Cairngorms National Park by both visitors and residents.

Part 5: Project Costs

Provide a full breakdown of Project costs.

Where item includes a unit cost or hourly rate, include this to show how total cost for that item is reached. For example:

Purchase of trees: 2000 trees @ £0.68 each = £1,360

Tree planting 10 hours @ £10/hr cost = £100.

You should provide evidence with your application that costs for each item/activity are reasonable. This should be commensurate with the costs involved. So for example reference to supplier list prices, quotes where list prices cannot be obtained or evidence from comparable activity/experience. Evidence from any competitive tendering process should be submitted for higher value projects. Where this has not yet taken place, justification of the costs applied for should be made.

For volunteer in kind contributions, state the breakdown between unskilled, semi-skilled or professional labour and the hourly rates used.

Where evidence on costs is lacking we may contact you to seek clarification.

VAT

We will only cover the VAT costs that an applicant is not able to recover from their usual VAT returns. Therefore, we will only cover costs that fall to an applicant to cover. The application form asks for your VAT status to help us assess what element of VAT costs you may expect us to cover through our grant funds if your application is approved.

If the applicant is not VAT registered input VAT incurred in qualifying costs can be included in the claim.

If the applicant is VAT registered the claim can only cover input VAT to the extent that it is **not** recoverable from HRMC.

Irrecoverable input VAT should be separately identified and included in the detail of project costs disclosed at section 5 of your application form.

While we are happy to give further guidance if you have any questions on this point, all applicants are advised to take appropriate advice from their professional advisors on specific VAT issues if necessary.

Part 6: Declaration

Complete the declaration and return to adminoffice@cairngorms.co.uk by the closing date set out in the Guidance Notes above.