

General information for applicants

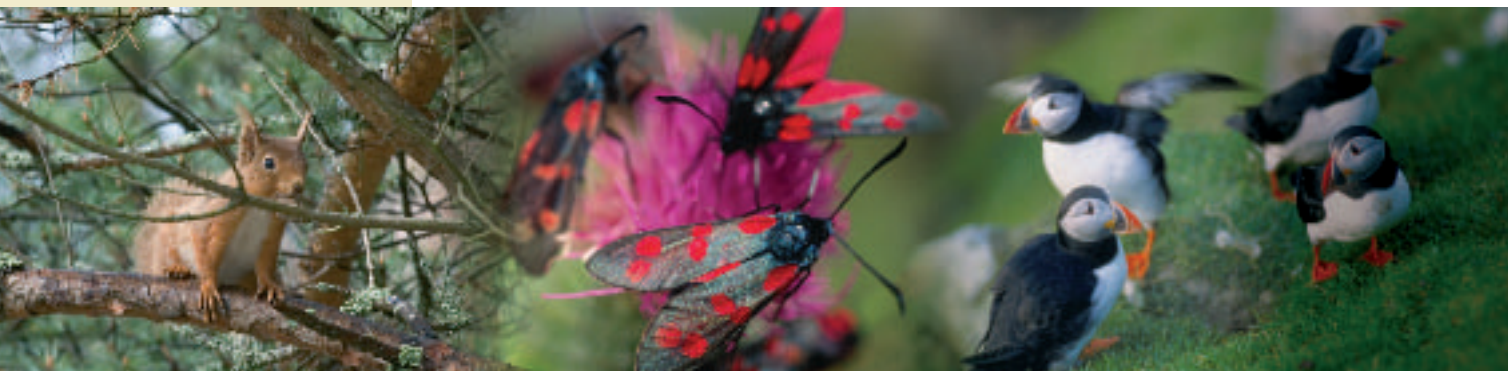
About us

At Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) we are funded by the Scottish Executive. Scottish Ministers appoint our chairman and members of our board. Through our board, we answer to the Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural Development and to the Scottish Parliament. We work with others to:

- conserve or protect and improve Scotland's natural heritage; and
- help people to understand, enjoy and care for the environment in a 'sustainable' way (in other words, in a way that can be maintained without using up natural resources or damaging the environment for future generations).

We offer grants to help individuals and organisations carry out projects that match our aims.





Our grant schemes

We offer grants for a wide range of projects that support the following aims.

- Caring for the natural world.
- Enriching people's lives.
- Promoting sustainable use.

We have the following eight grant schemes.

- Special places
- Supporting biodiversity
- Enjoying Scotland's outdoors
- Paths and routes
- Attractive places to live
- Involving people
- Rural land use – today for tomorrow
- Waters for life

Information sheets in the application pack explain the aims and priorities of each of these schemes and the types of projects we may support. Your project must contribute to the priorities of one or more of these schemes for us to consider it for funding. You will find a list of the grants we gave last year on our website at www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-main.asp.

As well as the types of projects listed in the application pack, we can work with others to take over the ownership and management of important areas of land where this is best for the future of our natural heritage. We do not usually provide most of the funding in these cases, so you should consult more appropriate funders first such as Scottish Land Fund (www.hie.co.uk/scottishlandfund) and Heritage Lottery Fund (www.hlf.org.uk). We look at all applications individually. You should contact your local SNH area office before filling in an application form.

Who can apply for a grant

To apply for a grant, you must be able to show that:

- you have the right to carry out the proposed project; and
- if the project is site-based, you own or manage any land involved or have the owner's agreement.

If you have a formal partnership relationship with us or if your organisation is funded by the Scottish exchequer, you should not use the grant application form. Our local staff will be able to tell you how to send us your project proposals. They will also be able to help you if you are not sure if this applies to your organisation.



When we will not give grants

We are not able to offer you a grant for any of the following.

- Any project outside Scotland.
- Any project for which you need less than £250 in support.
- Research projects.
- Publication of most books or magazines – the scheme information leaflets explain what type of publications we can help fund.
- Most conferences and seminars, unless they are part of a larger community-led project.
- Travel and accommodation costs associated with training courses.
- Student project work.
- Postgraduate projects.
- Expeditions or overseas travel.
- Work on historic buildings.
- Routine or ongoing maintenance (except on long-distance routes).
- Projects that are a condition of planning permission.
- Lobbying or campaigning.
- Projects that benefit an individual rather than the public.
- Commercial ventures in general, although we will consider applications from businesses if you can show that the benefits for the public are greater than those for individuals.
- Projects where the applicant (the person or organisation applying) has a responsibility to carry out the work in question (for example cutting down dead trees next to a highway or public right of way).
- The day-to-day responsibilities of public organisations as laid down by law, such as the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.
- A project on which work has already started.
- Staff who are already carrying out the duties for which you want support.
- A project being carried out by an exchequer-funded organisation.
- Projects or stages of projects that are eligible for funding through agricultural and forestry support or agri-environment programmes. For support for projects like these, you would need to consider other sources of funds such as the Rural Stewardship Scheme or Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme.
- If it would be considered state aid. We will not offer grants that would be considered state aid in the agricultural sector other than through approved arrangements for the 'Rural land use – today for tomorrow' scheme.

If you have any doubt about whether we can fund what you are planning, contact our local staff or e-mail us at grants@snh.gov.uk.

Grant rates

The lowest grant you can apply for is £250. There is no highest value for a project that we may support, but most of our offers are for less than £10,000.

It is up to us who we award our grants to. We will not normally offer more than 50% of the total project costs and sometimes we offer less. We may offer higher rates of up to 75% for a small number of priority projects. Voluntary or community-led projects may qualify for increased rates up to 100% of actual costs. We will also take into account non-cash contributions when we are deciding how much grant to offer. For some projects, such as ranger services, there are standard rates of contribution. We can fund applications over more than one year, but we rarely offer grants for more than three years in a row.

Our local area office can tell you if your project qualifies for a higher grant rate.

Other funders

You may be able to get support for your project from other funders such as:

- European Structural funds;
- National Lottery distributing organisations; and
- other UK programmes.

Other agencies may also provide support, such as:

- your Local Enterprise Company;
- the local authority;
- the Forestry Commission Scotland; and
- the Scottish Executive.

We have included a list of helpful contacts in this application pack.

We consider contributions from other agencies when we set the rate of grant we will offer.

Getting ready to apply

You should discuss your proposals at an early stage with our local staff. You will find our contact details at www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-hq.asp.

Our staff can advise you on whether your project is likely to be appropriate for our grant support and how you should develop your proposals. They can guide you through the application process.

How to apply

You must send us your application on one of our grant application forms. You can download an application pack (as a pdf file or as a Word version) from our website (www.snh.org.uk) or you can call into any of our offices and pick up an application pack. You can also order a hard copy of the pack by e-mailing grants@snh.gov.uk. We cannot accept applications by e-mail.

What to include with your application

Your application has a greater chance of success if you include full and detailed supporting information. The guidance notes to the application form will give you advice on how to answer the questions fully and suggestions about what you should include with your application.



When to apply

This depends on the value of the grant you are applying for.

If you are asking for a grant of less than £10,000, you can apply at any time.

If you have a larger project and are looking for a total contribution of £10,000 or more, we have two application rounds each year. **The closing dates for applications are 15 April and 1 September.** You should send us your application well before the closing date to give you time to provide any additional information that we may ask you for before the closing date.

We will need to discuss your application in detail if:

- you are applying for a larger national grant;
- your grant would apply to more than one SNH area; or
- your grant would involve major funding partnerships.

You should contact us as far in advance of your planned start date as possible.

We cannot award a grant for any work you may do before you send in your application or while we are assessing it.

Where to apply

If your project relates to a particular site or area, you should send hard copies of your application to your local SNH area office (see www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-hq.asp or the list in this pack). If you are not sure whether this is the case, or if your project relates to Scotland as a whole or to more than one SNH area, you should send your application to:

Funding Group
Scottish Natural Heritage
Battleby
Redgorton
Perth
PH1 3EW.

What happens to your application

We acknowledge all the applications we receive. Our local staff will then assess your application. We will look at how your project meets our priorities for the grant schemes that you have applied for. We may ask you for more information or we may want to arrange a meeting or site visit. Using the information you provide in your application, we will assess:

- how well your project matches our priorities for funding;
- whether there is a need for your project;

When you will know if your application is successful

- the longer-term role of your project;
- how your project will be managed both during and, if appropriate, after completion; and
- whether your costs are realistic and provide good value for money.

If your application is for a grant of £10,000 or more, we will first assess its suitability for our support. If we think it is suitable, we will then consider it alongside other applications to decide which projects most closely meet our priorities.

If your application is for a grant of less than £10,000, we will give you our decision within 20 working days of receiving your fully completed application. If you do not provide all the necessary information in your application, we will have to ask you for the missing information so this assessment stage will take longer.

If your application is for £10,000 or more, we will give you our decision within 40 working days of the closing date (15 April or 1 September).

If we approve your application, we will send you an offer of grant stating the amount and rate of grant we are offering and any conditions of our offer.

If your application is unsuccessful, we will write to tell you why we have not awarded you a grant.

When we pay the grant

We normally pay the grant when your project is completed satisfactorily. However, we can arrange interim payments for projects that are completed in stages. Voluntary and community groups may also ask for the grant to be paid as soon as they have accepted our offer. If your grant is £500 or less, you will normally receive a cheque shortly after you accept our grant offer.

Because our grants are public money, we must make sure that we get value for money. We may ask you to report on how effective your project has been and, if appropriate, confirm that you have carried out any follow-up maintenance work. You may need to discuss this with our staff. We may ask you to send us a report with your final claim for payment. Sometimes, we may ask you for 'before and after' photos to show how successful the project has been. Our grant offer will confirm any conditions that you have to meet and, if appropriate, how long we expect you to maintain your project.



Acknowledging our contribution to your project

It is a condition of our grant that you acknowledge our contribution to your project. You will find detailed guidance and suggestions on how you can do this in the application pack.

What happens when your project is complete

To measure the success of individual projects, we may, in the future, send you a questionnaire to ask for information on how well your project achieved its aims.

Also, our staff and contractors working on our behalf may carry out checks to make sure that you have met the conditions we set for your project, and that the project is being properly maintained.

If your project does not provide the achievements for which we provided the grant, or if it has not been properly maintained, we may withhold some or all of the grant, or (if we paid you when you accepted the offer) we may ask you to pay it back.

Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

We are committed to the principles of 'open government' (in other words, greater accountability to the public) referred to in the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

We will keep a list of organisations that we award grants to and publish details of the level of grant we awarded, together with information about the person or organisation we awarded the grant to. By accepting grant support, you are automatically giving your permission for us to do this, including any permission needed under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, we may also have to make public any information that you provided as part of your application or otherwise if we are asked to do so.

You and the law

You should make sure that you or any person or organisation carrying out any activity on your behalf follow the law in force in the United Kingdom. In particular, you or they should not commit any act of discrimination or break any of the terms of health and safety legislation.

Customer care

Once you have filled in and returned your application form to the appropriate office, please fill in the application feedback form and send it back to us. We have provided a Freepost envelope for this form only. (Please do not use this envelope to return your application form.) The answers you give on the feedback form will help us to improve our grant programme materials and processes. Your responses on this form will not affect how we assess your application.

For details about our customer-care policy, visit our website at www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-cc02.asp.

