

**Water Environment Fund**

**Grant application form guidance notes**

**Please read these Guidance notes carefully before completing your application form.**

The question numbers shown refer to those on the application form.

It is important that you answer the questions on the application form and that you give us supporting information where we ask for it. Forms without the requested level of detail may be returned and would then need to be re-submitted. We will not be able to consider applications unless you send us all the information we ask for by the application closing dates.

We prefer submissions but email, but you can submit a hard copy application if necessary. You can attach extra pages if there is not enough space on the form. Clearly mark on the extra sheets your name / organisation and which question the additional information refers to.

If you need help to fill in the form or advice on any part of the form itself or these guidance notes, please contact [restoration.proposals@sepa.org.uk](mailto:restoration.proposals@sepa.org.uk)

**Application deadlines**

Applications for under £10,000 will be considered at any time during the year and we aim to respond within six weeks of receipt of application.

Applications for greater than £10,000 are considered three times a year (the dates are on our website). We aim to respond within six weeks of the closing date for each round.

**Be aware that projects funded must be completed by the 1st March for the financial year in which funding was awarded.** Please send completed applications, hard copy and / or email, to:

**Sarah Altman  
SEPA  
Dingwall Office  
Graesser House  
Fodderty Way  
Dingwall Business Park  
Dingwall  
IV15 9XB**

Phone: 01349 860370

E-mail: [restoration.proposals@sepa.org.uk](mailto:restoration.proposals@sepa.org.uk)

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**What is the Water Environment Fund?**

The Water Environment Fund provides funding to projects to help restore Scotland’s water environment including rivers, lochs and coastal waters. The primary focus of the fund is to tackle impacts on the physical condition of the beds and banks of water courses. Funding of £2 million is available annually by SEPA and the Scottish Government. The fund is managed by SEPA, with support from Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission, and Scottish Government.

**Who is the fund for?**

We welcome applications from all, including individuals, charities, non- governmental organisations, local authorities, and companies. Funding will only be provided to projects that go beyond an applicant’s duty or regulatory responsibility.

**What is the fund’s purpose?**

The fund aims to restore the physical condition of Scotland’s water environment where historical activities have left beds and banks damaged.

Projects funded will:

* restore the physical condition (morphology) of the water environment;
* remove barriers to fish migration;
* control invasive non-native species

Those water courses that need restoration are set out in the river basin management plan (http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river\_basin\_planning.aspx).

Section A: About you

**Question 1**

This should be the main contact for the project and the person who can talk about the project in detail.

**Question 2**

This should be your organisation’s **full** name, e.g. Scottish Environment Protection Agency, not SEPA.

**Question 3**

We will use this address in all our contact with you. It is important that you give your full postcode. Remember to include your full phone number, including dialling code.

**Question 3**

A conflict of interest is a set of circumstances that creates a risk that professional judgement or actions regarding a primary interest will be unduly influenced by a secondary interest. *Primary interest* refers to the principal goals of the profession or activity, *Secondary interest* includes not only financial gain but also such motives as the desire for professional advancement and the wish to do favours for family and friends. If you or any member or your organisation may have a competing professional or personal interest you should detail the relationship.

**Questions 6, 7 and 8**

We may check your charity status, your company registration and VAT registration with the relevant authorities.

**Question 9**

Please fill this in if an agent is applying on behalf of the person or organisation named in questions 1 and 2, or if your contact details are different from the address shown in question 3. Tick the box at the end of this question if we are only to use this contact point for claims and financial queries.

Section B: About your project

**Question 10**

This should be a short accurate description of the project. i.e. weir removal at Dungavel Dam.

**Question 11**

This should describe an overview of the project i.e. what do you wish to achieve with this project? Will the project look at improving the physical condition of the river or to improve fish passage across a barrier such as a weir? Will it scope initial options on a river or is it for design of a project or physical works?

**Question 12**

This should be the name of the river, loch or coastline as used on Ordnance survey maps and not a local name if different.

**Question 13**

This should be a 6 digit national grid reference. If you are working on a stretch of river or coastline please give a grid reference for the start and end of the project and a length of the stretch to be worked on.

**Question 14**

What leads you to believe that the project is required? This section should include what data you have gathered that has led you to believe there is a need for restoration. It should also let us know where you got that data from. The project should also meet the aims of the Water Environment Fund and adhere to our key funding principles as listed below. You should comprehensively explain why you consider your project is needed. For example, if the project is to remove a barrier to fish, you must explain how you know there is an existing lack of fish passage to upstream of the barrier, detail the estimated length/amount of suitable habitat above the barrier and detail how these works link strategically with other works in the area e.g. on other barriers. How will your project affect the morphology (i.e. the condition of the banks, bed and shore) of the river? How will it restore natural river processes? Will it remove historical engineering or river straightening?

**Question 15**

There over 900 non-native species recorded as released or escaped into the Scottish environment.  Most of these cause few or no problems, ecologically or economically. Some though, have great potential to damage habitats and species.  These are generally referred to as invasive non-native species or invasive alien species. It is important that when developing a restoration project that consideration is given to the potential that your project may promote an increase in invasive non-native species in the local environment. In this section of the application form you should outline any specific issues that may be encountered by the project in relation to invasive non-native species and how you intend to mitigate the impacts. This can be discussed with your case officer prior to you submitting an application to the Water Environment Fund.

<http://www.sepa.org.uk/science_and_research/what_we_do/biodiversity/invasive_non-native_species.aspx>

**Key funding principles**

Principles are summarised below. For detailed guidance and examples please view the funding principles guidance document available at http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/water\_environment\_fund/funding\_processes\_\_principles.aspx

1. **Catchment approach -** Applications which contribute towards or support catchment approaches will score more highly during the prioritisation process

**2. Multi-year projects -** We can offer funding in principle on multi-year projects, and depending on the project, we may be able to guarantee future years’ spending. You will not have to resubmit an application form for successive years’ funding for a multi-year project.

**3. Design and monitoring studies -** Where we or a partner organisation has identified an impact through an environmental monitoring program, we will fund further studies to identify and design costed restoration option where specialist input is required e.g. Geomorphologist or engineer. Where possible the applicant should carry out the further studies as a contribution in kind.

4. **Other funding sources -** We work with other funding bodies to avoid any risk of double funding a project. It is legitimate for two funding streams (except SRDP) to fund the same project so long as the funding streams complement, not duplicate, each other.

5. **Interactions with regulations and duties -** We would not normally allocate funds to restoration activities where the measures are already part of an individual’s or organisation’s responsibility under existing legislation.

6. **Redundant assets -** In cases where there is a redundant asset, the pressure can originate from many years ago and the responsible person cannot always be identified. Consequently we would, in most instances, expect the responsible person to undertake the necessary mitigation measures. However we will consider applications for restoration funding if the responsible person has inherited a structure with no associated commercial or economic activity.

**7. Economic activity -** If an activity or structure causing an environmental impact also delivers an economic benefit to the owner or operator then they should fund any work required to mitigate the environmental impacts (e.g. hydro power scheme, trunk road, rail culverts). If funds are awarded but a structure is put into economic use within 5 years then SEPA will act to reclaim that money from you.

**Question 16**

What wider benefits to the environment, social or economic gains will this project bring. Are you working in partnership with other groups or organisations i.e. community groups, fisheries, charities, local authorities, or organisations such as Scottish National Heritage? Will the project improve water quality or flood defence? Will it improve access? Will it raise education and awareness of the environment?

**Question 17**

We need an estimation of how long you think the project will run for. You should tell us when you hope to start your project and when it will finish. We understand that this may depend on you receiving funding for your project and that you may not be able to give actual dates. In such cases, give your preferred start date. Please use the format dd/mm/yy for all dates. Please consider that how your project runs in terms of financial years (April-March).

**Question 18**

You may be eligible for a further grant award for a project that we have already supported, as long as it meets our current priorities. We will consider the success of your earlier project when we assess your current application

**Question 19**

Please give full details of any other parties involved in your project and what level of contact you have had with them.

**Question 20**

You must tell us your relationship to the site. If you are not the owner, you must enclose a copy of the owner’s permission in writing with your application.

**Question 21**

It is a condition of our grant that your site could be used as a demonstration of best environmental practice. SEPA may use figures, images and photographs from the application, any of the stages of the project and final completion details to promote the Water Environment Fund and its work. This may involve inclusion in papers, publications, websites, visual or social media.

**Question 22**

There may be a requirement for long term maintenance or monitoring of a project site once works have been completed. Should this be required you should give details of who will carry out this work and how it will be funded. WEF is not able to fund monitoring works where they are a duty or undertaking of another party.

Section C: Access and Permissions

It is important to note that access and permissions are a critical part of any potential restoration project.

It is possible that at an early stage of a project that you may not have all the relevant permissions in place to allow a project to be fully realised. If this is the case you should outline that in this section.

Early stakeholder engagement is fundamental to ensuring that a restoration project goes ahead smoothly and case officers from the Water Environment Fund will be happy to advise you on this.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all relevant permissions/authorisations/permits have been sought and are in place prior to the commencement of the project.

**Question 23**

It is important that the relevant land owner permissions are sought in order to allow works to commence. If your project is at the initial scoping stage and you have not gained or discussed access yet with the relevant landowner, you should make that clear in this section of the application.

**Question 24**

It is important that you confirm the status of any consent or permission you need to continue with the project. We require written confirmation that planning is not required. We cannot fund any work that is a condition of planning permission or any other statutory consent.

**Question 25**

You must ensure that your project has or has begun consultation on the appropriate authorisation process by the time you submit this application. Contact your local SEPA office in the first instance. You can find contact details for all our offices at http://www.sepa.org.uk/about\_us/contacting\_sepa/regional\_offices.aspx

Since 1 April 2006 it has been an offence to undertake the following activities without a Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (CAR) authorisation:

• discharges of polluting matter to all wetlands, surface waters1 and groundwaters (replacing the Control of Pollution Act 1974);

• disposal of waste sheep dip and waste pesticides;

• abstractions from all wetlands, surface waters and groundwaters;

• impoundments (dams and weirs) of rivers, lochs, wetlands and transitional waters;

• engineering works in inland waters2 and wetlands.

For a more detailed overview of CAR and its provisions, please refer to:

• *Introduction to the Controlled Activities Regulations:* [www.sepa.org.uk/pdf/wfd/regimes/intro\_car.pdf](http://www.sepa.org.uk/pdf/wfd/regimes/intro_car.pdf)

1Surface waters include rivers, lochs, canals, transitional waters and coastal waters.

2Inland waters include rivers, lochs and canals but not transitional and coastal waters.

**Question 26**

Please be aware that the project could require a number of different potential authorisations/permits depending on the works being undertaken and the area they are happening in. Undertaking physical works that could impact or cause disturbance to certain species, such as otters or bats, may require a licence or consent. Your local SNH Office will be able to advise on this.

**Question 27**

If yes please give full information and identify relevant documents/parts of documents.

**Question 28**

Are the works within a European or Scottish designated protected area? For example, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Special Area of Conservation (SAC). If your works are to be undertaken within a protected area, have SNH been informed of the project?

Section D: Project Costs

**Question 29**

List all costs. If your project will last longer than one year, give the costs for each financial year (April to March) and the total cost, less any VAT you can reclaim. It should be noted that SEPA will normally only approve funding for one year at a time but must still see the likely project duration or phases.

You should include any non-cash contributions in the total cost of the project and show the breakdown of these contributions. Non-cash contributions include:

● land donated ● labour ● donated materials provided by you or others.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of voluntary help | Daily rate | Hourly rate |
| General unskilled labour (for example, planting) | £50.00 | £6.25 |
| Specialist skilled labour (for example, operating equipment) | £150.00 | £18.75 |
| Professional services (for example, lawyers and auditors) | £350.00 | £50.00 |

If appropriate, you should give the number of ‘person days’ and their estimated value, for example two days of unskilled labour has an estimated value of £100. You can use the following table to help work out the cost of any voluntary labour

Note: the rates apply to the work being done, not to the skills of the person doing the work.

If you cannot reclaim VAT, or if you can only reclaim part of the VAT, you should show the VAT you will have to pay as a separate cost.

It is important that you tell us whether your project’s costs are fixed or estimates.

If you are applying for support for a capital project, you must show that your costs provide value for money. The list shows what information you should provide, depending on the amount of support you have applied to us for.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Value of grant applied for | Number of tenders or quotes |
| <£1000 | Can buy direct/estimate only |
| >£1000 - <£2000 | One written quote |
| >£2000 - <£10,000 | Three written quotes |
| >£10,000 | Issued for competitive tender |

We accept that in rural areas it may be difficult for you to find contractors for some services and that, for some specialist goods or services, suppliers may be limited. If this applies to your project, you should explain how you have worked out that your costs provide value for money.

If you are a member of a public sector body then you should also be aware of the European Advertisement rules and the public sector procurement thresholds associated with them. (For works >£173,934) If you have any queries regarding this then please speak to your case officer or alternatively follow the Scottish Governments Procurement Journey at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Procurement/buyer-information/spdlowlevel>

If you are a local authority, you should follow your own buying procedures.

**Question 30**

It is important that you tell us whether your project’s costs are fixed or estimates.

If you are applying for support for a capital project, you must show that your costs provide value for money. The list above shows us what information you should provide, depending on the amount of support you have applied to us for.

**Question 31**

Please detail how much WEF funding you are applying for, and over how many financial years you anticipate the project to run

**Question 32**

Please detail how you will use the funding to achieve the projects aims.

**Question 33**

Please refer to the guidance for Question 27

**Question 34**

Give details of any other funders you are applying to for support for your project. You should include details of any other applications you have made to other funders, including those that have not yet given you their decision on your application. If the contribution is a non-cash contribution, please give more details.

**Question 35**

If any of the other funders have put conditions on their funding, you must give details.

**Question 36**

We cannot provide a grant for the VAT if you can reclaim it from HM Revenue and Customs.

Before you send us your application, you should check whether you can reclaim VAT on the costs of the project and adjust your budget figures to allow for this. If you find that project costs increase because you have made a mistake about reclaiming VAT, we cannot guarantee to be able to increase the level of grant to cover this. If you include the cost of VAT in your budget figures and later find that you can reclaim the VAT, you will have to repay some or the entire grant. If you need advice on VAT issues, you should contact HM Revenue and Customs or visit their website at [www.hmrc.gov.uk/businesses/](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/businesses/)

**Question 37**

If you or your organisation will earn any income from this project, give details of your expected income for each year that the grant applies.

You should provide a summary of any income that you receive from facilities relating to this application or that you expect to generate from this project, for example car parking or entry fees. We do not generally support commercial (profit-making) ventures but we will consider applications from businesses where the benefits for the environment and the public are greater than those for any individuals.

For further info or advice please contact:

**Sarah Altman**

**WEF Technical Administrator  
SEPA  
Dingwall Office  
Graesser House  
Fodderty Way  
Dingwall Business Park  
Dingwall  
IV15 9XB**

Phone: 01349 860370

E-mail: [sarah.altman@sepa.org.uk](mailto:sarah.altman@sepa.org.uk)