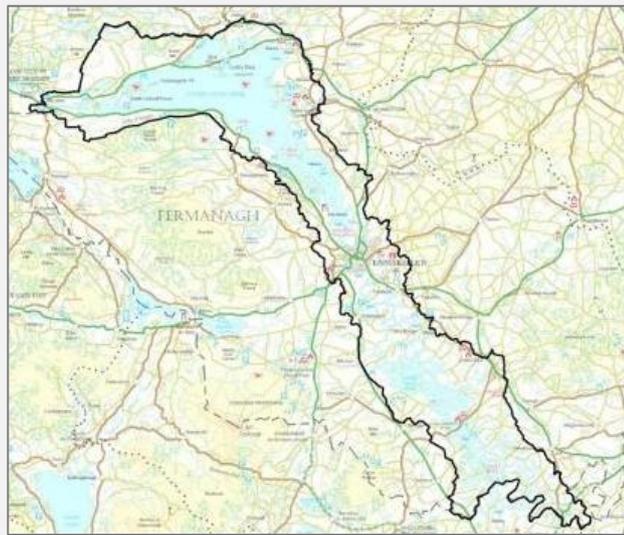


Community Engagement & Farming Fund Grant Guidance Notes

For communities, local business, individuals and farmers

The Lough Erne Landscape Partnership (LELP) recognises the importance of engaging with the communities that live and work around the landscape area. LELP Community Engagement Fund is open to both community groups, local tourism operators and to the farming community. It is designed to help fund and implement exciting new projects within the LELP area (within our existing themes), to build on existing LELP projects and maximise links with the local community. Information on LELP themes and existing projects can be found on the LELP website: www.lelp.org.uk

Communities are keepers of artefacts, oral history and traditions which are crucial in maintaining and protecting and celebrating the heritage of the Lough Erne Landscape Partnership area. Farming is also essential to maintaining and enhancing the Lough Erne Landscape and farmers have a key role to play through good management of built, natural and cultural heritage assets present on their land. There are also significant opportunities within this area to develop sustainable heritage and eco-tourism initiatives.



The Lough Erne Landscape Partnership area indicative boundary is set around the shores of Upper and Lower Lough Erne (- see map). All LELP projects should be delivered within the indicated boundary area (or clearly linked to the area). Groups from outside the boundary can apply for funding for a project to be delivered directly within the boundary area, or projects planned for delivery outside the boundary should be able to demonstrate significant links/benefits to the area. This will form part of the assessment criteria.

This guidance provides details about the grant terms of what LELP will fund, who is eligible to apply, and any restrictions and information needed for the application process.

Key aims of the fund

The Community Engagement and Farming Fund (CEFF) funded projects will provide a mechanism for applicants to:

- Conserve, celebrate, enhance or restore tangible or intangible heritage features. Projects must be able to demonstrate a strong element of the following aspects of heritage: ecological | environmental | historical | archaeological | cultural. ¹
- Reconnect people emotionally or physically with the Lough Erne landscape.
- Help people appreciate the value of their landscape.
- Aim for sustainability beyond the lifespan of the grant.

¹ Further information is available on the LELP website (www.lelp.org.uk) and through the commissioned reports on the Lough Erne Landscape (under the 'Downloads' page).

Application Process

- The LELP team will host information sessions to provide background information on the Landscape Partnership and to offer specific guidance to applicants for each of the four rounds.
- The application deadline is Friday, 15 January 2021 (5pm).
- The eligible period for project delivery will run for 12 months following receipt of signed grant agreement.
- Potential applicants can work in partnership to enable them to enhance their submission; geographically or thematically. (e.g. a historical society linked with a youth group to make a single submission or a tourism provider with a local community group)
- Projects delivered under this scheme cannot be a core part of another LELP funded project already being delivered.
- Groups can only submit one application per annual funding round as lead applicant but can form part of other partnerships as appropriate.

Reporting

- Each successful applicant will be assigned a project officer to provide assistance and support with submitting project highlight reports in line with agreed timeframes.
- Successful applicants will be expected to submit a final report assessing the outcomes of the project and submitting a breakdown of spend, including a calculation of volunteer hours & any matched funding.
- Projects may receive a monitoring visit during each grant round.
- Projects will be required to provide information sought by LELPs external evaluators.
- All successful applicants are required to enter into a delivery agreement with RSPB and that they will become part of a wider group of organisations delivering projects in the area who occasionally meet to exchange ideas, the aim being to develop stronger links and relationships throughout the area.

Project Assessment - A phased approach will be adopted to assess all applications:

Projects will be assessed by a panel consisting of LELP working group representatives and LELP staff. Final grant selection will then be approved by the wider LELP working group who are responsible for setting agreed annual project priorities.

1) Phase 1 eligibility – before you apply you should ensure that your proposed project is eligible:

All projects will be assessed against the following essential criteria before proceeding to the phase 2 assessment:

- Is your organisation eligible? (see page 3)
- Is the project being delivered within the LELP boundary area? (or can you demonstrate significant links/benefits to the area?)
- Will the project be completed within the stipulated timeframe provided?
- Is enough match funding available/secured to ensure successful delivery of the project?
- Does the project meet one or more of the National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes? (see page 3)
- Does the project demonstrate that public gain outweighs private gain?

A due diligence check will also be undertaken to ensure that the applicants' objectives and activities are consistent and compatible with the aims and objectives of the Lough Erne Landscape partnership.

2) Phase 2 assessment

The phase 2 assessment will be used to assess how each project reflects the key aims and objectives of the CEFF fund (see page 1). Scoring categories and scoring matrix provided below:

- Projects are undertaken for sound ecological/ environmental/ historical/ archaeological / cultural reasons as identified in Landscape Conservation Action Plan (25%)
- Projects will need to include an element of wider community engagement and/or partnership working. (25%)
- Outcomes from projects will demonstrate clear environmental, social or economic benefits to the area (25%)
- Demonstrates sustainability beyond the lifespan of the grant (25%)

Grant Structure

- Annual Grant Rounds of £25k per annum will be available for four years totalling £100k.
- LELP /National Lottery Heritage Fund contribution will be 90% and applicants will provide 10% in cash.
- Minimum award £1,000 (excluding match funding).
- Maximum award will not exceed £5,000 (excluding match funding).

Each grant will be contracted directly with RSPB as lead programme partner.

Community Engagement & Farming Fund

For communities and farmers

Eligible groups who can apply:

- Volunteer, Community Groups and NGOs (constituted groups)
- Schools and third level education organisations
- Youth groups and Sports Clubs
- Farming Businesses
- Tourism businesses or individuals and groups who are keen to develop quality heritage and eco-tourism initiatives

National Lottery Heritage Fund outcomes: (more information available here

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/outcomes#outcome-1>)

1. A wider range of people will be involved in heritage
2. Heritage will be in a better condition
3. Heritage will be identified and better explained
4. People will have developed skills
5. People will have learned about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions
6. People will have greater wellbeing

7. The funded organisation will be more resilient
8. The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit
9. The local economy will be boosted.

Notes for all applicants

- Previous projects submitted as part of the LELP development phase are not excluded from the CEFF.
- Projects in this scheme cannot be an integral part of another LELP funded project, however we would welcome links with some of the ongoing LELP projects. Details of all LELP projects can be found on the website: www.lelp.org.uk.
- Projects supported should define how they will provide free public access [physical and intellectual] as part of their offering.
- Consideration should be given to how your project, your activities and outcomes will contribute to the Fermanagh and Omagh 2030 Community Plan (<https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/app/uploads/2015/07/Fermanagh-and-Omagh-Community-Plan-2030.pdf>)

Further Notes for community applicants

- Applicants can be constituted groups, CICs, hold charitable status, or social enterprises.
- Where funding is sought for the development of a commercial activity e.g. tourism product – a clear future rationale for pricing structure should be provided.

Examples of suitable community projects could include (but not an exhaustive list):

- Projects by local history groups (creating publications, safeguarding documentation and artefacts, talks and seminars, history events etc.)
- Projects by local sports clubs, scout groups, any volunteer groups to conserve, enhance or celebrate specific heritage in their local area (could be litter picks, nature survey units, tree planting or wildflower meadows, arts (music, theatre, photography, painting etc.)
- Protection/restoration of a built heritage feature in the community (e.g. temporary roof/waterproofing on a building of historic interest, protection of built heritage features for example walls, wells, arches etc.)
- Resources to enable local communities to access their built, natural or cultural heritage and become an active part in its preservation and celebrating unique local heritage.
- Undertaking feasibility studies to inform the development of future heritage features.
- Intergenerational projects to capture, record and celebrate local culture.

Further Notes for tourism business applicants

- Where funding is sought for the development of a commercial activity e.g. tourism product – a clear future rationale for future pricing structure should be provided as well as a proposal to ensure that part of the offering will enable free public access [physical and intellectual] to ensure that local people have access to their heritage at defined times.
- Any proposal will need to demonstrate that public gain outweighs private gain.

Examples of suitable tourism projects could include (but not an exhaustive list):

- Working in partnership with the local community to develop new eco- or heritage-tourism initiatives.

- Working in partnership with the local community to develop unique visitor experiences that will highlight, celebrate and protect cultural, built or natural heritage features.
- Undertaking feasibility studies to inform the development of future eco and heritage tourism initiatives

Further Notes for farming applicants

The following categories of applicant can submit an application for consideration:

- owner-occupiers
- holder of tenancies with a formal contract period of 10 years or more remaining

Examples of suitable farming projects could include (but not an exhaustive list):

- Projects that opens visual and physical connection to the loughs (selected scrub/tree removal to open access viewing panes)
- Form or extend habitat corridors and extend habitat areas vital to priority species
- Make minor repairs to safeguard buildings at risk (e.g. painting, temporary roof cover, boarding up windows)
- Help to increase/ or enhance physical or intellectual access to heritage sites.
- Resolve issues which affect the farmer and wider community or other local landowners such as fly-tipping or the control of invasive species or access pressure.
- Improve aesthetics of buildings or field boundaries within sight of public spaces such as roads, picnic areas and tourist attractions.
- Farmers/landowners will agree to a ten-year management agreement, lands benefiting from the funding must not be considered a garden attached to an occupied dwelling.

The proposal will need to demonstrate that public gain outweighs private gain and the grant cannot be used to:

- be primarily of benefit to land, livestock or primary food production/management purposes
- conflict with or duplicate state aid from other sources such as the Environmental Farming Scheme or other forestry schemes.

Capital costs

- Capital costs can only be supported within the LELP boundary.

Ineligible costs:

- Recoverable VAT.
- Funding will not be considered for indirect business costs (i.e. wages, rent or other operational business costs)
- Costs for activities not directly related to the aims/objectives of the Lough Erne Landscape Partnership project.
- Goods not central to the delivery of the project i.e. laptops, tablets etc.

Ineligible projects:

- Projects delivering an activity that relates to an existing statutory responsibility.
- Projects not directly benefiting the Lough Erne Landscape Partnership and that are not inclusive in their outcomes i.e. solely for the benefit of one community/group/individual.

Application submission

Due to current restrictions in place relating to the Covid pandemic, you will only be able to submit your application form online (postal applications not accepted). You will be able to fill in an application form on your computer and send it to us electronically (we can support you with this if required).

- **Your application should be received by the LELP team no later than 5pm on Friday, 15 January 2021.**
- All completed and signed application forms should be submitted to: info@lelp.org.uk
- In the subject header of the e-mail please quote: CEFF application 2020 - (and then the name of the project)

Contact and support:

We are keen to support you with your application, and any questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the LELP team.

You can talk to us if completing an application form is difficult or impossible for you. We're happy to talk about alternative ways for you to tell us about your idea.

Make sure to visit the LELP website to access further information and examples of previous projects funded through this scheme. www.lelp.org.uk

Once you have read the guidance documentation and additional information on our website and you want to talk to us about your idea please do not hesitate to get in touch:

- Community Connections and Volunteer Manager: Heather Gott 07738116385 / heather.gott@rspb.org.uk
- Heritage Project Manager: Hazel Long 07548155351 / hazel.long@rspb.org.uk
- Programme Manager: Elmarie Swanepoel 07702508777 / elmarie.swanepoel@rspb.org.uk