

PARTNERSHIP GRANTS SCHEME GUIDANCE NOTES

This document provides an explanation of the overall Partnership Grants Scheme. Before making an application, we advise that you take time to **read these guidance notes fully**, taking care **to ensure that your project meets our criteria**.

In a change from the guidance provided in 2019, both themes will be considered by the Board in the same round, outcome expected December 2020. All shortfall funding must be in place before submitting an Expression of Interest and projects must be ready to start by February 2021.

OVERVIEW OF LANDFILL COMMUNITIES FUND (LCF)

RSWT

Biffa Award is managed by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts. As well as operating as an umbrella group for the 46 local Wildlife Trusts that have been formed across the UK, RSWT has a dedicated grants team that manages several different funds, covering broad environmental themes. The team does this on behalf of organisations, such as Biffa Group Limited, The National Lottery Community Fund and Network Rail.

ENTRUST and Environmental Body

Biffa Award's money comes from landfill tax credits, reclaimed from the Government through the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF). The LCF regulator, ENTRUST, ensures that landfill tax credits are awarded and managed according to Government regulations. To be able to be awarded, and receive landfill tax credits, applicant organisations must enrol with ENTRUST as an Environmental Body (EB). A small administration fee, currently £100 is payable to ENTRUST for this. Biffa Award requires all grantees under its Partnership Grants Scheme to enrol as an EB and to register the project for which funding is sought, to ensure organisational and project compliancy. Confirmation of these registrations will be required as a condition of any grant offered after Biffa Award Board approval. For further information on registration, please access the ENTRUST [website](#) or call the helpline on 01926 488300.

Third Party Contributor

Under LCF regulations, **only 90 per cent of a grant can be paid by us using landfill tax credits**. The remaining **10 per cent needs to come from another source**. Therefore, you need to find someone (an individual or another organisation) who is willing to contribute the remaining 10 per cent. This cannot come from your organisation's own funds or general reserves. The 10 per cent is then paid to Biffa Group Limited, which allows us to release 100 per cent of the grant to you. **Third Party Contributions are completely separate from match funding**. Further details about this can be found on the ENTRUST [website](#).

ELIGIBILITY – Built or Natural Environment

The Biffa Award Partnership Grants Scheme is aimed at organisations that need funding to improve either a **Built or Natural** environment which is of **regional or national significance**. The scheme provides funding for **site-based capital expenditure** to create/improve an amenity or habitat for biodiversity. Between **£250,000 and £750,000** can be awarded to projects that are within 15 miles of a significant Biffa Group Limited operation or active Biffa Landfill site. In addition, **all projects** must also be within 10 miles of a landfill site (this does not necessarily have to be owned by Biffa Group Limited) in England and Northern Ireland. All projects must fit within one of the two themes.

In common with most funders, Biffa Award receives far more applications than it is able to fund. **We strongly recommend that you only apply when the project is in a position to start quickly.** We will give preference to projects where Biffa Award is the **majority funder, or projects that have already secured all shortfall funding needed** to deliver the project. The Board may delay a decision or reject an application outright if it feels that the application is premature.

We require that a project can start and make their first financial claim within three months of being issued a Formal Offer Agreement (five months following notification of a successful Board outcome). All projects are expected to complete and submit their **final claim within one year of receiving a Formal Offer Agreement.** Extensions may be offered at the discretion of the Board.

Please note that up to a **maximum amount of 7.5 per cent** can be claimed as management costs, and only against directly delivery work (not including staff time). Applicants are however discouraged to apply for management costs.

THEMES

Built Environment

The Built Environment theme aims to **restore, modernise and improve facilities** such as cultural, heritage or visitor centres, attracting tens of thousands of visitors each year.

These facilities should aim to **educate and engage the public**, as well as providing and encouraging community enjoyment and involvement. Projects should be **inspirational, creative and innovative** and are expected **to be of national or regional significance**. It might be a theatre, gallery, museum, concert hall, arts or heritage centre, lighthouse, windmill etc, open to the public for published periods each year (minimum of 104 days) and **attracting tourists or day visitors**. Projects should be inclusive and **inspire and promote learning, creativity and participation**. The site should offer the widest, most appropriate forms of access, collections, expertise and facilities, whilst overcoming physical, intellectual, cultural and financial barriers its visitors may have.

Biffa Award is extremely proud to have funded some truly inspirational, creative and innovative **Built Environment** projects over the last five years. Thanks to Biffa Award funding, a hands-on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) experience will excite children at [Winchester Science Centre](#); the sacrifice made by 57,861 people who lost their lives, together with over a million others who served at Bomber Command during the Second World War are being remembered at the [International Bomber Command Centre](#) in Lincolnshire; and a world-class exhibition at the [Chatham Historic Dockyard](#) now houses over 4,000 maritime models, evoking powerful stories of Britain's maritime past through trade, war, migration, exploration and science.

Please note that preference will be given to projects that demonstrate a strong element of public access, inclusion, and volunteer involvement. Projects that fall within this project theme will be registered by ENTRUST under category D.

Natural Environment

The Natural Environment theme aims to **restore and or improve the natural environment and the natural systems and habitats that it supports**; land purchase will be considered where there is a real need to protect a site or extend an ecosystem. Projects must be working to [Biodiversity 2020](#): A strategy for England's Wildlife and ecosystem services; its successor, as agreed in the 25 year plan; or a Local Biodiversity Action Plan target. **Research and surveying costs will not be funded.**

The theme supports a variety of living things including species of plants and animals and the natural systems (or habitats) that support them. It is important that they are created and or protected and that the environment can adapt to threats including climate change. Biffa Award will for the submission of a list of habitats and species being conserved or protected as part of the application process. Projects invited forward for land purchase must be able to demonstrate the benefits to biodiversity and the natural environment, as well as other previously mentioned considerations defined above, including legal stipulations and value for money.

Biffa Award is extremely proud to have funded a large number of **Natural Environment** projects that have made a significant difference to nature conservation and promoting nature's recovery for hundreds of animal, bird, plant and invertebrate species. Beavers have been reintroduced to [Knapdale Forest](#) in Scotland; 100 hectares of [peatlands have been restored](#) in the North Pennines; 200 acres of rich [pollinator habitat](#) has been created across England; the underwater ecology has been rebalanced at two [Norfolk Broads](#) to allow rare species to flourish; and the future of [Attenborough Nature Reserve](#), home to over 160 bird species and 450 plant species, has been secured for future generations.

Please note that preference will be given to projects that have a strong element of public access, inclusion and volunteer involvement. Projects that fall within this description will be registered under the ENTRUST category DA.

We do not fund:

The following list is **not exhaustive** but contains important details about **what we do not fund**. We strongly advise that you check that your project meets our criteria and is eligible for funding **before** you send in your application.

- Individuals, profit-making or local government organisations (including Community Councils) and organisations that are not able to register as an Environmental Body with the regulator ENTRUST (please visit the ENTRUST website for details on eligibility www.entrust.org.uk or call the helpline on 01926 488 300)
- Projects on sites that are owned and or maintained by borough, county, city, district, parish or town councils, unless a formal lease, with a minimum term of no less than 25 years, is formally in place with the applicant
- Projects where no formal lease in place
- Projects with less than 25 years remaining on a formal lease
- Projects more than 15 miles from a significant Biffa Group Limited operation or Biffa Group Limited landfill site
- Projects more than 10 miles from a licensed landfill site (owned by any company)
- Core costs of an organisation, office equipment and furniture or, elements that directly benefit staff
- Improvements to car parks, offices or new services
- Alterations to buildings in order to meet Disability Discrimination Act requirements
- Portable items that will not be permanently kept at the address listed as your project location
- Projects within school buildings or on school grounds, on the premises of hospitals, hospices, medical centres, day-care centres, charity offices, or for allotments
- Sports related projects e.g. floodlighting, pitches, changing rooms, cricket nets
- Projects which are for fencing (unless Natural Environment application)
- Events, excursions, CDs and websites, publications and marketing materials
- Church fabric repairs, e.g. to bell towers and church spires
- Storage containers
- Feasibility studies, research, tender costs, building consents and planning permissions, preliminaries or recruitment costs
- Enhancement of town or village centres, e.g. signage, seating, memorials, dog waste bins and seasonal bulbs
- Energy saving or green technology-based projects which could derived an income, e.g. the purchase and installation of solar panels
- Retrospective funding – work that has already taken place before any grant has been awarded

If necessary, we may revise the amount of funding available and make changes to our published criteria, as well as updating the list of significant Biffa operations. As soon as any changes are known, we will post them on our website and other social media platforms or be in touch with you directly if you have an application that is being considered by us. Where possible we aim to give three months' notice about any changes.

Creativity, innovation and sustainability

We want to see **exciting, innovative and creative solutions** incorporated into your project ideas. Your application should outline how you intend to ensure the project is sustainable following completion. It is essential that you outline how you will maintain, publicise and develop the project following completion of the project.

Established Need – Built Environment

We like to see evidence of wider community consultation and involvement in an application. This could be in the form of letters of support, evidence from open day's, questionnaires or development plans. **Evidence should include consultation and analysis of the results as well as priorities for improvement.** Community involvement should be widespread and include the full diversity of possible beneficiaries. Projects must provide evidence of how they have investigated the needs of the people and who will benefit from the project. This will make your application stronger.

Established Need – Natural Environment

An up to date site survey and management plan, photographs of the site's condition and a clear rationale for the habitat management techniques, employed to fulfil the project's aim and outcomes, should be outlined. The **project should meet with Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's Wildlife and ecosystem services Section 3; its successor, as agreed in the 25 year plan; or a Local Biodiversity Action Plan target.** All projects must report into its Local Environmental Centre.

Where, and if applicable, we would like to see how you have established the needs of the people who will benefit from the project and provide details of any community consultation carried out. This could be in the form of letters of support, evidence from an open day, questionnaire or development plan. **Evidence should include consultation and analysis of the results as well as priorities for improvement in the community.** Community and volunteer involvement should be widespread and should include the full diversity of possible beneficiaries, where possible.

WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN AN APPLICATION

Please be concise and provide as much relevant detail as you can for all sections, working within any word limits.

A project specific business plan must be submitted with **all full applications** and should include:

- objectives
- targets
- tangible outputs
- marketing plan/dissemination
- evaluation processes
- timescales
- full budget, specifications and costings
- plans for monitoring the project during and after the period of funding

- a summary of your organisation's track record of delivering similar projects
- future management plan

An up to date and relevant management plan should be submitted for Natural Environment applications.

Please note that in addition to providing your business plan or management plan, you must also **produce a short film** (five minutes maximum) with your full application outlining the project idea, the changes you wish to make, the expected outcome post completion and most importantly, **what makes it stand out from the rest!**

IF SUCCESSFUL

Expression of Interest submission

We will give you a **decision within three weeks of the closing date**. If successful, you will be invited to submit a Full Stage Application, which must be received by us within the timescale provided on our Invitation to Full Application email. Your application will be assessed and considered at the next relevant Board meeting; outcomes in August and December for both themes, with the exception of the 2020 meeting. Please bear in mind that Biffa award receive a large number of eligible applications and competition for funding is extremely competitive.

An Expression of Interest will not be processed without the required information and supporting documentation, where required. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant along with guidance on missing information, for resubmission within five working days. **Please note that we will not accept Expressions of Interest from any organisation if planning permission has not been submitted for a decision or granted, if required.**

Full Application submission and Supporting Information

Ensure that answers to questions are completed in full, do not simply refer to a business plan or another section within the supporting documentation.

A Full Application will not be processed without the required information and supporting documentation. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant along with guidance on missing information, for resubmission within five working days.

Please read the checklist below and provide all supporting documentation required.

You must provide the following information as part of your application. These documents (size limit for each attachment is 15mb), should be uploaded to your application form in the online portal. Please note that **project applications may be rejected if they do not meet the Biffa Award first stage checks or it is felt to be premature.**

All full stage applications must include:

- A **video** (five minutes maximum) outlining the project idea, the changes you wish to make, the expected outcome post completion and what makes your project stand out from the rest, submitted by WeTransfer to: biffa-award@wildlifetrusts.org
- Your organisation's **signed constitution/governing document**
- **Signed** copies of your organisation's accounts for the last two financial years
- **Letters of intent** from community groups expressing their wish to use the facilities upon completion of the project (Built Environment theme)
- A copy of your organisation's **environmental policy**
- Detailed and project relevant **photographs to evidence need**
- **Three recent quotations** or tender documentation for any single item/works costing more than £1,000
- Proof that **match funding has been secured**
- A **milestone and payment schedule** for the project
- A copy of your **planning permission approval** documentation
- **Formally signed lease or landowner agreements** (minimum 25 years) for the land or buildings where the project will take place
- At least three recent and **signed letters of support** from direct beneficiaries and any wider partnership organisations involved in the project
- Further evidence of **community consultation** i.e. results of other consultations or surveys
- Schedule of **visitors/occupancy** to include any existing regular groups already using the facility, average user numbers/visitors
- **Site plans** or drawings of the facility
- A **five year forward plan**, outlining the financial sustainability and maintenance plans for the project

Natural Environment applications must also include:

- Copies of all **formal landowner agreements** agreeing to **access for a minimum of 25 years** post completion of the project
- Signed headed letter of **support from your lead partner**
- **Management plan** for the site/s
- **Job descriptions** for any posts to be funded for direct delivery work

The following information is not mandatory at application stage but will be required as a condition of your grant if you are successful.

- Your organisation's ENTRUST EB registration document and certificate
- ENTRUST project detail submission
- ENTRUST project registration confirmation letter

Promotion and publicity

We would love to receive photographs, videos, social media posts and any other communication about how your project is progressing. Sending us regular updates of your progress will keep us informed and allow us to maximise any publicity opportunities, as well as help with any hurdles that you come across along the way.



Building communities. Transforming lives.

Once you have completed your project we will ask you to send a **short film** about your completed project (no more than five minutes), **showcasing what we have funded and the difference it has made to the community or environment.**

One condition of the grant will be to acknowledge Biffa Award on the project site, we also expect to see our **funding celebrated creatively and widely promoted.** Previous recognition has included tree planting days, official opening ceremonies (attended by members of the Biffa Award Board and other dignitaries), digital marketing and inclusion on websites, Biffa Award plaques, banners and including the Biffa Award logo on interpretation or signage boards. Our media team will be in touch to discuss brand recognition in more details once your project gets underway.

Please note that you will need to obtain our permission before publishing anything that uses our logo. It is expected that at least one Biffa Award plaque is permanently displayed at the project site.



STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO APPLICATION PROCESS

Expression of Interest Form submitted through online portal and acknowledged automatically upon receipt. Those invited forward to full application will be done so by email.



Full Application form to include all supporting information and a five minute video to be submitted on or before the deadline date provided; acknowledged automatically by email upon receipt.



First stage checks completed by the grants team. If the application passes all checks, a Grants Officer (GO) will be assigned to assess the project. The GO will contact the project applicant lead for any further information or clarification.



Applications will be considered at the relevant Biffa Award Board meeting and the applicant will be provided with a decision within 14 days of the meeting. If successful, a Conditional Offer Letter will be sent by email. If unsuccessful, a letter of rejection will be provided by email.



Successful projects will receive a Conditional Offer letter and be given a maximum of two months to meet all conditions listed. A Formal Offer, along with media guidance, bank account detail requests will be issued once conditions met, for return within two working weeks.



Payments are made in arrears; a first claim must be submitted within three months of receipt of Formal Offer and should include supporting invoices, evidence of defrayed expenditure and photographs of project progress.



The End of Grant Claim Report Form, supporting invoices, evidence of expenditure, completed customer care survey, a project video, photographs of the completed works, any assets that have been funded and a picture of the Biffa Award plaque or logo, displayed prominently on site must be submitted within one year of the date of Formal Offer.