



## MAIN APPLICATION FORM APPLICATION GUIDANCE

The Main Application Form is reasonably straightforward to complete, building on the First Stage Application Form, with many of the same questions but giving the opportunity to provide much more detail. These Application Guidance notes should help you if you have any queries.

The Main Application Form will be sent to the two appraisers (& a technical appraisal in some circumstances), and then to the Executive, so is an important part of the funding decision process. So it is important to be as clear as possible, and avoid making assumptions about how much people will know, even if the project has already been through the Local Action Group!

### Section A – Applicant Details

Qu 1. The name by which the project is commonly known.

Qu 2. Please give the name of the main contact for the funding application.

QU3. Please give all contact details where possible. If an agent's address is used for correspondence, the address should begin 'c/o (agent's address)'.

Qu 4. What is your role in the organisation, e.g. as manager, Trustee, volunteer, agent.

Qu 5. Please state what role you will have in the project, if any

Qu 6. Please identify what type of organisation is applying, giving a Charity number and Company number if applicable, and your Rural Payments Agency number if you have one, and clarify whether you can reclaim VAT. For State Aid rules, we will also need to know if your organisation has received public funding in the last three years, and from which sources, including European funding.

### RPA Registration

You must complete the accompanying CReg16 - RPA registration form (OM 13) and return it directly the RPA prior to submitting your full application, even if you are already registered. The Local Action Group will only be able to pay grants to successful applicants if they have managed to successfully register. CReg16 forms are issued along with full application forms/guidance. Further details of how to complete and submit are contained within the form itself. Please contact the programme manager for further assistance if necessary.



## VAT

It is important that you check whether or not your organisation can recover VAT on the costs of your project before submitting this application. If VAT is unrecoverable make sure that you include it when you develop your budget. The amount that you request should only include VAT where it cannot be recovered at a later date. If you later find VAT claimed under the grant is recoverable this must be repaid. You must complete the VAT Declaration form (OM 12), if you have not received on please contact the programme manager.

## Constitution

If your organisation is formally constituted, please provide a copy of the constitution with the completed application form.

## Sign Off

It is essential that your completed EOI form is signed off by an appropriate member of your group/ organisation/ business.

## Section B – Project Details

This section provides an opportunity for you to tell us about your project in your own words. Please answer the questions as succinctly as possible.

Qu 7. Sowing SEEDS funding must deliver a benefit within its area. Projects which are located outside the area, or are based in the area but deliver a benefit to a wider geographical area may still be eligible for grant support if the project benefits those within the Sowing SEEDS area, with funding likely to be considered on a proportional basis.

Qu 8. When will the project realistically start, taking into account factors such as the Sowing SEEDS project assessment and approval timescales, other fundraising, securing permissions, etc

Qu 9. When the project will realistically be completed? Please note the programme ends in December 2013, and cannot fund beyond that date; final claims will need to be submitted a few months before then to ensure payment, audit, etc before the programme closes.

Qu 10. It is really important to explain clearly here what the project will do, so anyone reading the application has a clear idea at the start of what the project will actually do, even if some elements may be repeated in subsequent questions.

Qu 11. You will need to be able to identify what problem you are tackling, and that there is a need and demand for what you will be providing, and how you identified this need, e.g. if running training courses, how do you know there is a need and a demand for the training courses, and how can you provide evidence, e.g. through surveys.

Qu 12. It is important to be clear about what the project will produce, e.g. promotional activities, collaborative work, demonstration renewable energy project, a new market.



Qu 13. Sowing SEEDS is interested in funding projects which will continue to have a lasting impact into the future. You must be able to demonstrate how your project will continue to do this. Your project should be 'making a difference' in the long term, and you need to explain what this 'difference' or impact is. To explain how this will be achieved through the project, you can build up your explanation, e.g. increased income and safeguarded jobs through direct marketing leading to the long term impact of helping businesses in the sector to be more sustainable.

Qu 14. It is important to identify who will be benefit from the project. This can be by area, community, groups, business sectors, etc. It is also useful to identify age ranges, e.g. if a project particularly benefits young people. It is important at this stage to give an estimate of the numbers of people who will benefit, and the more accurately you can estimate this, and show how it has been estimated, the better. If a project benefits people outside the Sowing SEEDS area as well as people inside, please give some guide to the proportion; projects which deliver a benefit to a wider area may still be eligible for grant, with funding likely to be considered on a proportional basis.

Qu 15. Where a project is anticipated to continue after the Sowing SEEDS Local Action funding period, it must be clear how the project will be sustained and funded, what it's 'Exit Strategy' is. If the project will be relying on unconfirmed funding from other sources to continue after the grant period, this will not be considered sustainable, and the programme may be reluctant to support the project. Although some projects will be testing new ideas, and the programme is able to take some risk, being clear about how the project can be sustained once Sowing SEEDS funding ceases is very important.

Qu 16. Links with projects: it is important to promote co-operation, and it is useful to understand how your project links with other projects and initiatives, either in the local area or in the same field of work. It is also important avoid duplication with existing or planned similar projects.

Links with strategies. If your project fits with any strategies, this will help reinforce how it fits with overall rural development in the area. Relevant strategies could include the Local Authority Economic Development and other strategies, AONB Management Plan, Market town area Community Plans, the Local Community Plan for the County, and any strategies specific to your sector. Other plans such as Parish/Town Plans are also worth including.

You need to do your own research! You can include any website links that are relevant in this section. The Sowing SEEDS programme manager, AONB Officers and Community Development Workers in North Dorset may be able to help you identify other relevant projects and strategies.

Qu 17. Community support and involvement is a crucial element of the Sowing SEEDS programme, so it is important to show what level of community support and involvement your project has, and the extent to which the project has been initiated from the community. This can be evidenced by letters of support, surveys, etc. The community can be a community of area, e.g. the local community, or a community of interests, e.g. a group of businesses.

Qu 18. If you have partners in your project, it is important to outline their roles, what they bring to the project (e.g. a group of businesses, skills) and level of involvement (e.g. equal partner, on Steering Group, contractor). It can also be useful to clarify how the relationship will be set out, e.g. Terms of Reference, Partnership Agreement, Service Level Agreement, contract.



Qu 19. It is really important that your project has the capacity, experience, governance structures and systems to manage and monitor the project effectively, as you will be entering into a contract with Sowing SEEDS Local Action to spend public money. Some projects will have managed similar projects and if this is the case please include this experience. For some projects, this will be a development or a new area of work, so it is important to show that you have the capacity, structures & systems even if the project does not have the experience yet. This section will also need to include information about who will be responsible for progress reports, submitting claims and the overall management of the project.

**N.B.** Please note that monitoring and reporting requirements for RDPE funding can be quite substantial and it is important that your organisation has the expertise and capacity to effectively deal with such work. Further details are set out in the Project Holders Guide (OM32), which sets out the requirements for all aspects of managing RDPE funds. Should you need to gain a more detailed understanding, prior to making an application, please ask the programme manager for a copy if you do not have one.

Qu 20. Examples of relevant permissions include planning permission, Environmental Health, Environmental Impact Assessments, lease agreements, landlords consent, access agreements, etc, as applicable. It can often take time to secure relevant permissions, which will also affect timescales, so please let us know when you would expect the relevant decisions to be agreed. Please enclose copies of key permissions, such as planning permission, with your application. **We will need evidence that planning permission has been secured before any funding can be released.**

Qu 21. You will have set out in Qu 12 & 13 what the project will achieve, and here you will need to explain how you will know that your project has been successful. To help this, you will need to explain how you will monitor progress, e.g. recording activities, numbers, project timetable & milestones, etc, in a way that can be backed up with evidence. You will also need to be able to evaluate the project, assessing whether it is achieving the planned impact, e.g. through a survey of participants, partners and other stakeholders, or an independent evaluation. Evaluations will need to be very honest, as there is as much to learn from what went wrong as from success.

Qu 22. All projects will involve risk, and the Sowing SEEDS Local Action programme, which supports innovation, is able to take risk, rather than avoid risk. However, the risks need to have been identified, and you will need to consider the **economic, environmental, legal, technical, financial and management risks**, and show how these risks can be managed. For big projects, a Risk Assessment would be part of a Business Plan, but if yours is a smaller project, please identify the main risks and how you will minimise and manage these risks. If you have not done a Risk Assessment before, contact the programme manager who can help with a simple format to work through.

There are several ways of managing risk. For example, you can:

- Reduce risk: by demonstrating that the probability of something happening is small
- Show that the impact of the event would not damage the enterprise seriously
- Explain how you would respond to adverse circumstances - make contingency plans
- Transferring risk to others – e.g. Taking insurance to cover fire or theft. Remember this doesn't minimise the likelihood of project failure, but does mitigate potential financial losses



Qu 23. If Sowing SEEDS Local Action was not able to fund the project, would it still be able to continue, continue but scaled back (what would still happen and what would be dropped) or not proceed at all. Please also explain why, as this helps clarify what difference the Sowing SEEDS Local Action funding actually makes to the project.

Qu 24. Each project needs to demonstrate that they can deliver under one or more of the Sowing SEEDS strategic objectives. Please see which of the programme's objectives your project fits. Your project will not be assessed against the number of objectives that you tick so be realistic when completing this section.

Qu 25. It's relatively easy to tick boxes in Question 24! However, you need to explain how you think your project meets the strategic objectives you have identified. Before you attempt to answer this question, please make sure you have read the Delivery Plan Objectives and Outcomes (OM16). You must clearly identify how your project fits into one or more of the over-arching **Strategic Objectives** and justify how you then meet the **Specific Criteria** and **Outcomes** within each Objective. If you have not got a copy then please ask a member of the Sowing SEEDS team.

Qu 26. These activities are the Measures and Output Indicators used by the European Union and therefore Defra to record the outputs of activities across the Local Action programme across England & Europe (which explains the language used). The years are financial years, i.e. April to March. Please tick the box (**one box only**) for the Activities which you think your project delivers, and estimate the Output Indicators for each year the project will be running. The estimates need to be realistic as possible, but it is accepted that such projections can be difficult. **Please work with the programme manager to identify which measure your project fits.**

### Section C - Finance and Monitoring

Qu 27. The costs here are the actual amounts that you expect to pay during the project. The costs need to be as accurate as possible at this stage, based on **financial years**, i.e. April to March. Please insert additional rows if needed.

- You will not be able to include costs already incurred, as the programme cannot fund retrospectively.
- You will need to include VAT if you cannot reclaim VAT, but exclude VAT if you are able to reclaim VAT.
- Contributions in kind are also allowed but you will need to keep detailed records and be able to justify the value of in-kind contributions.
- Please include evidence of costs where relevant, e.g. quotes for capital equipment.

**Capital costs.** This could be money spent on improvements to buildings and land, including major repairs or new construction. It can also include fixed assets or equipment with an expected life of more than one year (e.g. machinery).

**Revenue costs.** This is money that is needed to support the running costs incurred by the project, such as salaries, rent, rates and stationary.

**'In kind' contributions.** 'In kind' contributions are non-monetary contributions such as professional time, volunteer labour, gifts of materials, use of facilities and equipments. In some instances 'in kind'



contributions will be acceptable as match funding. All 'in kind' match funding will have to demonstrate good value for money, a cost will need to be identified e.g. a going hourly rate or identified cost of equipment of comparable age and condition. Evidence will need to be provided of 'in kind' contribution e.g. timesheet. If you require further clarification please speak to the programme manager.

Please note that additional in-kind funding contributions will always be welcomed by the LAG and will increase the likelihood of securing funding. Local Action greatly values in-kind contributions, particularly where this demonstrates commitment from the community to turn their ideas into reality **however it is difficult to assess and substantiate in kind contributions and you should not underestimate how much actual cash is required for your project.**

Qu 28. How much grant are you seeking from the Sowing SEEDS programme, and what percentage is it of the total project cost.

Qu 29. Please list where the balance of funding (match funding), as grant or in kind, is coming from, again based on **financial years**, i.e. April to March. Please also confirm the status of the funding decisions have they been made or awaited and what is the anticipated date of decision, and include evidence with the application, such as grant offer letters, with the form.

Please note that the **Total Grant Funding Requested** (Qu 28) and the **Total Other Income** (Qu 29) must add up to the **Total Cost** (Qu 27). If there is a gap in funding, then you need to identify how you plan to fill this gap.

**Match funding.** The level of RDPE funding will be dependent on the type of activity and the status of your organisation. The Programme team should be able to provide you with advice and guidance on the level of funding that will be available to you. If you are a business the maximum amount of RDPE funding you will be eligible to receive will be up to 60% of the total project costs. If you are a social enterprise, a charity or a not-for-profit organisation, you will be able to apply for up to 80% of funds. Your project should ensure that match funding is sought before approaching your LAG for funding.

It is important that you provide information on where your match funding is coming from, e.g. a bank loan, personal savings, local authority or a charitable body. It is also important to provide information on the status of the match funding (i.e. - whether it has been approved or only applied for). If the funds are in place, please attach evidence (e.g. a copy of the offer letter) to your EOI.

Qu 30. The Sowing SEEDS Local Action programme can only pay retrospectively on a quarterly basis and all grants will only be paid on defrayed expenditure (i.e. money that has already been spent) and evidence of payment will be required before claims can be authorised. This could create a cash-flow issue for your project. Please explain clearly how your project will manage any cash flow shortfall.

Qu 31 & 32. Previous Grants – Please provide details of any grants that your organisation has received since 2000, including amounts.

Qu 33. Please indicate if your project will generate any revenue, if it does please give details of how much.



Qu 34. Please set out a timetable for your project, including milestones (key events such as first joint promotional initiative, timing of training courses, etc) and when you anticipate achieving outputs, which you will have identified in Qu 12. This timetable will be an important tool for monitoring progress of the project when up and running. Indicators will depend on the type of project you are proposing, in addition to those above, here are some other examples:

- Building work completed
- Job vacancies advertised
- Employees recruited
- Advertising campaign launched
- New product launched
- Equipment installed

If you have any queries, please contact Sarah Dyke-Bracher, Sowing SEEDS programme manager:

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Visit the Sowing SEEDS website for more information [www.sowing-seeds.org.uk](http://www.sowing-seeds.org.uk)

