

Agritourism Investment Scheme (AIS)

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This guidance explains the Agritourism Investment Scheme (AIS). Please read it carefully.

The application window opened on 19 January 2026 and will close at midnight on 13 March 2026.

Introduction

The budget allocation for this application window is £1 million. Please be aware that AIS is competitive and you may not receive the funding you apply for.

The grant you are applying for has a maximum support rate of 40% of the capital investment costs. At the maximum rate of 40%, if approved, it means an application to purchase an eligible item costing £10,000 could receive £4,000 in grant funding towards the item. Please note that the support can be lower than 40% depending on the type of project and objectives achieved, and you will be notified of the agreed rate and offer of grant if your application is successful.

AIS is a capital grant scheme designed to help agritourism businesses in Scotland to be financially sustainable, profitable, and resilient businesses that will play a key role in sustaining the future of Scottish agriculture.

The scheme offers funding to ensure agritourism businesses have access to capital support to allow them to carry out capital investment(s) that will help deliver this.

This guidance explains the aims of AIS, who and what is eligible for the support, the information needed to apply for the scheme and the evidence you will be required to provide if your application is successful, and you are awarded a grant.

The scheme's objectives are:

- to increase the number of farms and crofts offering agritourism or farm retail to 1,000 by 2030.
- to develop Scotland's agritourism on-farm offering based on food and drink and farm experiences.
- to support new innovative products and services in the agritourism sector.
- to attract, develop and retain a skilled, committed, and diverse workforce, made up of both family employment on farm, and employees.
- to create, develop and promote a thriving and responsible sector.

- to provide quality, unique, and memorable market led experiences.
- to assist businesses to become “Travel Trade Ready” and to attract more international visitors to experience agritourism in Scotland.
- to build financially sustainable, profitable, and resilient businesses and to play a key role in sustaining the future of Scottish agriculture.
- for 50% of agritourism and farm businesses to offer a food and drink experience using their own produce.
- to contribute to strengthening rural communities and/or celebrating local heritage including farm heritage.

Please remember: AIS support can only be used for on-farm agritourism capital investments that will deliver the scheme's objectives above – and applications that deliver against more objectives are likely to be looked on more favourably.

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Guidance summary

Applications can only be submitted online using the Agritourism Investment Scheme mailbox (AIS@Gov.Scot), and all communications about your application will be carried out by email. You must therefore have a valid and up-to-date preferred communication email address recorded on RP&S.

The grant you apply for can cover up to a maximum of 40% of the capital investment costs. If your application is successful, you will be made an offer of grant. You will then have a set period of time from the date the offer of grant is made to purchase the items/ services listed in Part 2 of the Schedule 1 of the offer of grant letter and to provide evidence to the Scottish Government (SG) that the investment has been carried out, before the grant is paid.

Capital investments must be retained for a period of at least six years from the date the offer of grant is made. They must not be used for agricultural contracting activities, must be brand new and must be paid for by the business or the person named on the offer of grant.

Your payment will be recovered if:

- you are found to have breached any of the grant conditions and/or provided false information on your application.
- you fail to provide satisfactory evidence of capital investment within the time period stated of being made the Offer of Grant.
- the business or person named in the Offer of Grant did not purchase the capital investments.
- you purchased any capital investments before the Offer of Grant was accepted.
- you have not purchased all the capital investments listed in part 2 of Schedule 1 in your offer of grant letter.
- a capital investment does not meet the scheme objectives.
- it is found that any capital investment is used for contracting purposes.

A helpful checklist of things you must do and must not do for this scheme is provided below.

Must Do	Must Not Do
read and understand the scheme guidance before applying	provide false or misleading information in your application
only apply for the amount of support your business needs to carry out the investment	use the grant support for any other purpose than to carry out investments that deliver on one or more of the scheme's objectives
if your application is accepted, read the terms and conditions of your Offer of Grant carefully	apply for capital items you already own
confirm you accept the Offer of Grant within 14 calendar days of the date of the Offer of Grant letter	order or buy any of the items before you have accepted your Offer of Grant award
ensure any necessary consents, licences and permissions have been granted before you carry out your investment	buy second hand or ex-demonstration items
only use grant support to purchase brand new items that deliver on one or more of the scheme's objectives	use items purchased with grant support for agricultural contracting activities

purchase in full, take delivery of (and install if required) all investments you applied for within the time period stated in the Offer of Grant letter	use HP or finance to pay for any grant supported investment
provide evidence to SG that you have carried out the grant supported investment within the time period stated in the Offer of Grant letter	purchase any items that are listed on the ineligible investment list in the scheme guidance
only use grant supported investments on your own farms/crofts/ agritourism business	refuse to allow SG to inspect grant supported investments or obstruct or fail to give reasonable assistance
keep grant supported investments on your farm/croft/agritourism business, operational and in good repair for at least six years from the date of the Offer of Grant award letter	if you are a crofter, you cannot apply for AIS support for the same type of investment that has already been approved but not yet claimed through CAGS or apply for CAGS support for the same type of investment that has been approved for AIS funding in 2026.
allow SG to physically inspect grant funded items for up to six years after you have accepted the Offer of Grant	
provide SG with any information they require relating to your investment for up to six years after you have accepted the Offer of Grant	

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Eligibility for AIS

You are eligible to apply if:

- your agritourism business meets the definition set by Scotland's National Agritourism Strategy, "A tourism or leisure activity on a working farm, croft or estate which produces food or wool".
- your agricultural business is registered and approved for funding with Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Division (SGRID).
- your agritourism business has a direct connection to an agricultural business that is registered and approved for funding with SGRID.
- where your proposed agritourism/ food retail business offers a food and drink experience, you can demonstrate that it uses produce from the farm (not necessarily exclusively).

You are not eligible if you:

- are a non-departmental public body.
- are a local authority.
- are a crown body.
- are a group of farmers or crofters (including producer organisations/common grazing committee).
- let all your land out.
- are an equine business (including grazing horses).
- are an agricultural contractor.
- are an agricultural business that provided false or misleading information in a capital grant application/claim within the last five years.

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Step-by-step guide to the scheme

Step 1 - read the scheme guidance carefully, ensure you are eligible to apply and understand what you can and cannot use the grant support for. If you are unsure about anything please email AIS@gov.scot

Step 2 - consider what your business priorities are against the [scheme's objectives](#) .

Step 3 – having identified which of the scheme's objectives are your business priorities, think about what agritourism capital investment would help you achieve this.

Step 4 – find out how much your agritourism investment will cost and decide how much support you would need (up to 40% of the total cost) to allow your business to invest in it (but do not order or pay a deposit) and check if any permissions or consents are required.

Step 5 – [submit your AIS application](#) , with the agreed quotes (and business case if required) by midnight on 13 March 2026.

Step 6 – if your application is accepted, SG will issue you with an offer of grant contract that you will need to read carefully and accept by the agreed date.

Step 7 – purchase all investments listed in Part 2 of Schedule 1 in your offer of grant letter, by the time period stated on the offer of grant.

Step 8 – confirm that you have carried out the investment within the time period stated in the offer of grant being made. You will need to provide SG with:

- invoices to show how much investments cost.
- proof of payment (such as bank statements) from the business or person named on the Offer of Grant letter referencing payment of item(s) to confirm expenditure occurred and when it occurred.
- geo-tagged photographs to show the investment is on your agritourism business.

Step 9 – once satisfied that the offer of grant letter has been met, SG will pay you your grant.

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About the grants

How much money can you apply for

The maximum level of support you will be entitled to apply for is £50,000 There is no minimum amount of support that you can apply for.

Requirements	Maximum that can be applied for
One quote	Up to £5,000
Two quotes	Between £5,000 - £20,000
Three quotes and Business Plan with 3 years of financial projections	Between £20,000 - £50,000

Only one application is allowed per agricultural/ agritourism business with Business Reference Number (BRN). You can include multiple investments in the application.

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Guideline for ineligible and eligible costs and items for AIS

Ineligible costs

The following are not eligible costs:

all labour/ fitting/ installation costs	consumables (items which are likely to be used up or depleted)	Value Added Tax (VAT)
delivery costs	running costs	planning permissions
service and fuel supplies – electricity, water, oil, gas, etc	professional fees	training costs
subscription charges	warranties	insurance
computer software and hardware such as PC, laptop, printer, etc	financial charges and bank interest	repair and maintenance costs

Ineligible methods of payment

Payment for goods purchased using AIS support must be made in full for the value of the goods shown on the invoice by the business or person named on the Offer of Grant award letter.

The following methods of payment are not eligible:

part exchange	cash payments
personal bank accounts not connected with the business or person named on the Offer of Grant letter	other public funds

hire purchase or lease hire or any other form of financial arrangement	purchases not carried out by the business or person named on the Offer of Grant award letter
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Examples of Ineligible investments and expenditure (this is not an exhaustive list)

new or replacement roofs	like for like upgrades and replacements	items already owned
second-hand, ex-demonstration and 'try before you buy' items	purchase of land	livestock
replacement items covered by an insurance claim	investments that have already received grant support	quad bikes, ATV's, tractors
on-farm accommodation		

Eligible investments and expenditure (this is not an exhaustive list)

The following are examples of the sort of investment you may consider appropriate for your business to invest in:

industrial BBQ – can be mobile	cooking facilities	sinks
production areas	food storage	toilets – for visitors/ community
farm visitor safety signage	trailers/ seating for farm tours	modifications to buildings to provide shelter to visitors during on-farm experiences
improvements to car parking to support safe access	improvements in enclosure safety between visitors and livestock	improvements in safe accessible paths between visitors and livestock
accessibility improvements		

You can check that your planned investment(s) may be eligible before you apply by emailing AIS@gov.scot. Please note this is advice only, as the final decision is made at committee.

Please be aware: before applying for AIS funding you must check if a consent or licence is required for the work you propose, and this must be in place before you carry out the work being funded through AIS. You should contact the relevant organisation for advice as soon as possible.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the required permissions before carrying out the work being funded through AIS.

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Applying for the AIS

How to apply

Applications are made online via the [AIS application form](#) You can also [download a pdf version \(PDF, Size: 172.1 kB\)](#) .

Applications are submitted by email to AIS@gov.scot using the application form.

We will send all notifications about this scheme via email.

Submit your application by email, using the online application and any evidence requested, which will include returning the questionnaire provided with evidence of criteria being met along with attached quotes.

When to apply

The application window opened on 19 January 2026 and closes at midnight on 13 March 2026.

What information will you be required to provide

You will be required to answer questions relating to your agritourism business, including:

- providing a description of your agritourism venture (no more than 500 words)
- is this to support a new agritourism business
- how long your agritourism business has been trading

- if the head of the agricultural/ agritourism business was under 41 years of age on the 15th of May in the year of application
- is your business island based
- what on farm/croft capital investment you plan to use the agritourism funding for
- how much your capital investment costs
- how much capital grant support are you applying for
- have you sourced a grant in the past three years for agritourism from another source
- what outcomes the grant support will help your agritourism business deliver

If you submit your application and realise you have made a mistake before the application window deadline, you can ask to withdraw your application and submit a new application.

Withdrawning an application

You can withdraw your application at any time before an Offer of Grant has been made. If you wish to withdraw your application, **please email AIS@gov.scot detailing your reasons for withdrawal**. You should include your Business Name and Business Reference Number in your email. If you withdraw your application and the application window is still open, you can submit a new application.

Application assessment

AIS is competitive and you are not guaranteed to be offered a grant. Once you submit your application, it will be checked for accuracy and eligibility by the SG.

With a limited budget there is potential for the scheme to be oversubscribed in terms of support requested versus scheme budget. To allow the SG to manage the scheme budget, applications will be scored against the scheme criteria. All applications will be scored and ranked. The purpose of this scoring is to allow the SG to rank applications against the funding available. A threshold score will be set based on the available budget and the highest scoring applications will be offered grant award letters.

Where applications have equal scores, the lowest value application will be selected first. Where applications have equal scores and are of the same value and rank on the available budget threshold, the SG reserves the right to either select or reject applications, depending on budget availability.

Unsuccessful applications

With a limited budget there is potential for the scheme to be oversubscribed in terms of support requested versus scheme budget.

If your application is unsuccessful, the SG will send you an email to confirm this.

You cannot ask for a review if your application is unsuccessful because the scheme is oversubscribed and did not meet the minimum application score threshold or because your business has an existing debt balance.

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How your application will be assessed

Eligibility review

Each application will first be reviewed to confirm that:

- the business meets the basic scheme rules.
- the proposed investments are eligible and include enough information to be assessed.
- key declarations (BRN, new entrant, young farmer, island-based) match official records.

Applications will then move to scoring if they meet these checks and include enough information to allow a fair assessment.

Assessment and scoring

Applications are scored against the [objectives of the scheme](#) .

Funding request

We look at your total funding request at the application level, comparing it with the total cost of your project with the quotes and/or business case.

Final ranking and allocation

Applications are ranked from highest to lowest, and funding offers are made in that order until the available budget is fully allocated.

Because the scheme is likely to be oversubscribed, even eligible applications may not receive funding if they score lower than other applicants.

When you will hear about your application

Subject to the timings of when the applications have been assessed, grant offers will be made thereafter.

When offers are issued, you will:

- be notified by email at the address recorded in your Rural Payments and Services (RP&S) account at the time you applied.
- have 14 days to accept the offer.

Varying your capital investment

You must purchase all the capital items listed in Part 2 of Schedule 1 in your offer of grant letter. Failing to do so without the written approval of SG will invalidate the AIS grant scheduled to be paid to you.

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How funding will be prioritised

SG will prioritise grant support to applications that are judged to deliver most against the objectives of the scheme.

Priority will also be given to:

- new entrants
- young farmers
- island based businesses

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Inspections

SG reserve the right to enforce the Agritourism Investment Scheme rules.

Your grant funding award may be selected for a physical on-site inspection up to six years from the date the offer of grant was made.

All the details in your application and the declarations you made in submitting the application, the evidence of investment and a physical inspection of the investments you made will be checked at this inspection.

Please be aware: If you refuse to allow a visit or obstruct an SG official or fail to give reasonable assistance, we may recover payments, and you may be prosecuted.

Unacceptable behaviour

Officials, individuals or organisations carrying out duties on behalf of the Scottish Government, should not be subjected to aggressive, abusive or offensive behaviour or unreasonable demands and persistence from applicants or their representatives.

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Retention period for supported investments

Capital investments made with grant funding must be retained in use by your business, operational and in good repair for a period of six years from the date the offer of grant was made. They must also be used

for the same purpose as set out in the original application, for six years (or for their useful life if this is less than six years and correct maintenance has been carried out) from the date of being made the offer of grant. We will recover some or all of the grant if you breach the grant agreement during that period.

Where an item is principally employed outside of agritourism purposes, you will be required to repay all of the monies received as part of the AIS grant award with interest to be recovered at a rate of 2% per annum above the Bank of England base lending rate prevailing at the time of the written demand.

As part of the scheme requirements, officials from the Scottish Government and their representatives may require access to your property to inspect the items at any reasonable time within this six year period.

You must notify SG in advance of:

- replacing or upgrading any of the grant funded items
- any changes in the ownership of the business that applied for grant
- any changes in the ownership of the grant funded items
- the business or grant funded enterprise/ activity ceasing to trade or fundamentally changing the nature of its activities

If any grant funded assets are sold, become redundant, or cease to be used for the purpose for which they were grant funded, the grant will be recovered on a pro-rata basis. This will be effective for six years from the date the offer of grant was made.

We may allow the investment to be transferred to the new owner or require you to repay the grant to the Scottish Government.

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Monitoring and record keeping

Monitoring

It is a requirement that all grant awards are monitored and the effect the grant funded items have had on your business is evaluated.

We will monitor that the items are delivering the schemes objectives for a period of six years from the date the offer of grant was made. When requested, you will be required to provide monitoring information regarding the investment.

You must allow officials from SG, or their representatives, to inspect the items purchased with grant support within this six year period.

It will be a requirement of the grant award that capital items purchased with the aid of a grant must be kept on your holding, operational and in good repair and used for the same purpose as set out in the original application for at least six years from the date of being made the offer of grant as set out in the grant award letter.

Failure to return any monitoring report forms or poor performance of projects may result in recovery action.

Record keeping

You must keep all records and information you need to evidence that you have provided complete and accurate information and have complied with your undertakings for six years from the date you were made the offer of grant.

You will also be required to:

- supply SG with any information about your Agritourism Investment Scheme Offer of Grant letter and supply that information within the period determined by SG.
- make available to SG, its authorised persons or its agents, records, accounts, receipts and other information including access to computer data relating to your Agritourism Investment Scheme grant application and Offer of Grant letter.
- permit SG to remove any such document or record to take copies or extracts from them.

- retain all invoices, receipts, and accounts and any other relevant documents relating to the grant for at least seven years from the date of payment. This is an HMRC requirement to retain documentation.

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Subsidy control

Subsidy control has been considered and grants will be awarded under the Agritourism Investment Subsidy Scheme.

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Fair Work First Policy

From 1 April 2024 a condition of receiving agricultural grants, requires all beneficiaries to pay at least the real Living Wage and provide appropriate channels for effective workers' voice.

If your application is successful, there will be conditions included in your Offer of Grant award letter that you must agree to if you wish to accept the grant offer. These conditions will stipulate that, if you have employees, then you are required to confirm that you pay at least the real Living Wage to all staff aged 16 and over (including apprentices) who are directly employed by your business, and that all staff have access to effective workers' voice channel(s).

It will be a condition of the grant award that you check whether any intended sub-contractors doing the work also pay the real Living Wage (if they have employees) and that you will only engage someone who does.

You will need to retain appropriate evidence of complying with Fair Work First requirements within your own business as well as any contact with any sub-contractors to confirm their compliance.

Please Be Aware: The real Living Wage is completely different to the Agricultural Wages (Scotland) Order. The real Living Wage is calculated annually and announced in autumn. If you employ staff, you have until 1 May of the following year, to implement it.

You should check the current real Living Wage hourly rate on the [Living Wage Scotland website](#) to ensure you are complying.

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Privacy notice

The Scottish Government provides a wide range of grant schemes to help deliver our policies. The Scottish Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide in relation to your grant application or request for grant funding. The information will be processed as part of our public task (i.e. exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Scottish Government) and will help us assess your eligibility for funding.

You can find information on the Scottish Governments Privacy policy through the following link: <https://www.gov.scot/privacy/> .

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Guidance updates

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