

# How to apply

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## Introduction

Applications for the Forestry Grant Scheme are online only.

You must register with Rural Payments and Services and have a Business Reference Number (BRN).

[Find out how to register](#)

You can submit applications for Forestry Grant Scheme funding throughout the year.

Scottish Forestry conservancy staff will assess applications on an ongoing approval basis. The Forestry Grant Scheme is competitive and our aim is to select the applications that deliver the greatest benefits against our budget priorities.

**Important Note:** You must not have undertaken any works you are proposing within your FGS application prior to applying for a grant and you must not commence works until you have received an approved contract.

## Customer charter and approval of contracts

Scottish Forestry staff will process your application according to Scottish Forestry's customer charter. This may include a site visit. We may also request further information from you.

If your application is approved, then you will be sent a contract approved by your local Scottish Forestry conservator.

After the approved contract has been signed by both Scottish Forestry and yourself, you may commence the work.

## Online application guide

Guidance to help you apply online for the Forestry Grant Scheme is available.



[Online application guidance \(PDF, Size: 4.9 MB\)](#)

doc\_external\_url: [https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/0014---fgs\\_application\\_desk\\_instructions\\_for\\_customers\\_final\\_v10\\_310315---SF.pdf](https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/0014---fgs_application_desk_instructions_for_customers_final_v10_310315---SF.pdf)



<https://www.youtube.com/embed/FwoZcey2P9Q>

## Submitting an application online

Once you have logged in to Rural Payments and Services, you will be able to submit an application online.

You can do this by clicking 'Applications' from your customer home page and selecting 'Forestry Grant Scheme' from the dropdown list to start a new application.

Once you have completed your application, select 'Submit Application' and an acknowledgement of your application will appear along with an application reference number.

Please use this number for all communications with Scottish Forestry, and for tracking the progress of your application.

## Assessing and scoring your application

Scottish Forestry staff will assess your application and check it against the option(s) eligibility.

When we assess woodland creation applications, we will give them a score based on how well the application meets current forestry and woodland strategies, together with local considerations such as enhancing local landscapes.

When we assess woodland management applications, we will give them a score based on how well it supports priority habitats and species and contributes to multi-purpose objectives.

## Assessing your financial eligibility

When assessing your application we will consider the potential risks to public finances associated with funding your project, and whether Scottish Government would be able to recover grants paid should the project fail, or partially fail, to deliver the contract commitments.

As part of this process we may ask for information about your business structure and land title in order to be able to assess any potential financial risk.

Where we are concerned about our ability to recover grants in the event of a project failing, for example because of the business structure, land ownership arrangements, or on-site risks, we may request that a standard security in favour of Scottish Ministers is placed on the property title.

We expect that this will be required for less than 1% of FGS applications, and we would normally only consider this approach for projects with a grant value over £250k.

Where we consider this is necessary we will advise you whilst your application is being assessed. SF will determine an appropriate length, ranking and scope of such security as well as appropriate review mechanisms.

These matters shall be objectively determined by SF. They will take into account a range of factors such as the nature and value of the grant, the nature and circumstances of the grant recipient and other circumstances specific to the particular proposed grant.

If your application is approved you will be offered a contract which includes a requirement for the standard security to be in place before you are paid any grant.

Please note that you will be required to cover the legal costs you incur whilst putting the standard security in place.

## Assessing your compliance with SG's Fair Work First Policy guidance

All applications for FGS submitted from 1 April 2024 must adhere to Scottish Government's approach to the Fair Work First (FWF) Conditionality as explained in their [online guidance](#).

If you are successful in being awarded a contract for FGS funding, it is a condition of the funding contract that you, as the contract beneficiary comply with the FWF guidance during the period of the contract's undertakings and that all others involved in the planning, undertaking and maintaining of the activities, contained in the agreed contract, must also comply with the FWF guidance during the period they are contracted to plan, undertake and maintain the works on your (or your mandated companies) behalf.

You and all those planning, undertaking and maintaining the activities agreed in this contract must retain all the relevant evidence (updating as necessary) that confirms you either meet the FWF guidance eligibility or provides you with a limited exception from the FWF guidance eligibility.

In the majority of cases we expect you, the applicant, to self-declare that you do comply and we ask you to retain all your relevant evidence for the life of your FGS contract. However, for applications in excess of £250,000 capital value, we will require a declaration made on the business entity's (BRN) behalf by their accountant / solicitor confirming that the applying entity is compliant and all those planning, undertaking and maintaining the activities agreed in your application and subsequent contract must retain all the relevant evidence (updating as necessary) to confirm that you either meet the FWF guidance eligibility or have the evidence to support a limited exception from the FWF guidance eligibility.

## Assessing your application against the UK Forestry Standard

We will assess your application against the [UK Forestry Standard](#) (UKFS), which is the reference standard for sustainable forest management in the UK. Supported by a series of Guidelines (Biodiversity; Climate change; Historic environment; Landscape; People; Soil; Water), the UKFS outlines the context for sustainable forest management, defines standards and requirements, and provides a basis for regulation and monitoring.

The UKFS recognises that Scotland's forests serve a wide range of objectives: environmental, economic and social. Practising sustainable forestry means managing Scotland's forests in a way that meets present needs but does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

All applications to the Forestry Grant Scheme will be assessed against the UK Forestry Standard and associated guidelines. To be eligible for grant aid, proposals must comply with the UK Forestry Standard.

## Consultation

We may need to consult others about woodland creation applications and may display details on our public register of grant schemes.

[Public register of grant schemes](#)

Please refer to the 'Additional Information' section on the main Woodland Creation page.

[Woodland Creation](#)

## Final approval

We will then contact you with our decision on approving your application.

For more information at any point in your application process, please [contact your local Scottish Forestry conservancy office](#).

## Previous versions

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