

# Forestry Co-operation

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## Aim

Rural Scotland is an integral part of the country's economy, environment and culture. However, for many landowners and communities, issues such as economies of scale and fragmentation are difficult to overcome and delivering projects at a landscape scale has proven difficult to establish.

This option therefore aims to encourage landscape-scale collaborative projects between two or more landowners by providing support for project facilitation and co-ordination. The subsequent management activity can be supported through other options within the Forestry Grant Scheme.

## Grant support

Grant support of £250 per day is available for up to 40 days to support the cost of a project co-ordinator for the following stages of a project:

**Feasibility** – this stage is the initial exploratory phase and focuses on:

- communication between interested parties
- engagement with stakeholders including local communities
- identifying and resolving issues around tenancy, land ownership and eligibility
- agreeing objectives
- discussing and setting outputs, costs, cash flow, commitments and risks
- providing an outline of the project

**Consolidation** – this stage focuses on the detail of the project and includes:

- preparing and submitting a detailed project plan
- co-ordinating and submitting Forestry Grant Scheme applications for individual owners in the project area

Support will be provided for a range of collaborative projects that address issues such as:

- woodland creation projects that improve water quality or mitigate against the risk of flooding (identified through the Forestry Commission Scotland / Scottish Environment Protection Agency opportunity mapping project)
- woodland creation projects that encourage the planting of farm / croft woodlands

- woodland creation projects which deliver landscape-scale expansion of forest habitat networks
- woodland projects to enhance the survival and expansion of black grouse / capercaillie
- native woodland restoration including removal of rhododendron in priority areas identified within the national rhododendron strategy
- landscape-scale woodland deer management
- woodland projects that bring farm / croft woodlands into active management
- woodland projects which support rural communities to increase the contribution of woodlands to the local economy

## Application rounds

Normally, one application round will be run each year. This option will open for applications on 6 October, 2015 with a closing date of 31 March, 2016 for funding in 2016. For future years, the closing date will be 31 January.

## Eligibility criteria

The proposal must be over a landscape scale involving two or more adjoining or nearby land holdings (i.e. Business Reference Number holders).

For woodland creation there must be a minimum of four participating owners with scope for a significant area of woodland creation.

The proposal must be supported by all of the landowners who are included in the area of proposed work. If a landowner will not participate then the project may still go ahead but the proposal must outline if this exclusion will affect the objective of the proposal.

A final project plan, including a map, must be submitted to and approved by Forestry Commission Scotland.

## Eligible applicants

Applications can be submitted by either a facilitator on behalf of a group or a group of landowners / organisation that wishes to appoint a facilitator, such as:

- woodland owners
- farmers
- other land managers
- fully constituted community groups
- non-government organisations
- private companies and organisations

## Supporting information

We need supporting information to help us assess your application and this should be submitted using the template provided.

### [Forestry Co-operation – supporting information template](#)

This must include:

- aims and rationale for the project and how this will support delivery of the Scottish Forestry Strategy and land use strategy
- summary of project implementation including a breakdown of the activities with clear milestones, outputs and timescale
- justification for the days to be used for both the 'feasibility' and 'consolidation' stages
- an estimate of the social, environmental and economic benefits of the project
- details of the project facilitator
- letter of support for the project from all landowners in the proposed project area
- a map showing the location and scale of the proposed project. Individual property boundaries should also be mapped. For advice on how to mark up your map please use the general mapping guidance

### [General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme](#)

Project co-ordinator – it is important that the facilitator has relevant knowledge and experience of forestry and rural land use, and can preferably demonstrate experience of managing woodland management and / or woodland creation projects.

## Scoring criteria

To make sure we achieve the best value for money and to ensure we meet the scheme's objectives we will assess each application using scoring criteria.

We will set a threshold score that an application for any particular option must achieve to be considered for approval. The score will then be used as the basis for allocating funding on a competitive basis through the Forestry Grant Scheme clearing process.

Threshold score = 3 points

### Delivery of option benefits

1 POINT – applications that meet the eligibility requirements but do not deliver any of the benefits detailed below.

3 POINTS – for applications that provide one or more of the following in addition to meeting the eligibility requirements:

- for applications that will help bring forward landscape-scale proposals that will contribute towards native woodland restoration on Forestry Commission Scotland priority designated woodland sites or in priority areas identified within the national rhododendron strategy

Or

- for applications that will help bring forward landscape-scale proposals that will clearly contribute towards sustainable natural flood management in areas, identified in the [Flood Risk Management Strategy](#) (available from December 2015), as being at greatest risk

Or

- for applications that will support landscape-scale woodland creation in the target areas identified for Forestry Grant Scheme woodland creation grants

Or

- for applications that will bring forward landscape-scale proposals for appropriate habitat management and predator control in black grouse and capercaillie [core areas](#)

Or

- for applications that will encourage landowners to bring forward proposals for appropriate deer management over a landscape scale that will help protect or improve the condition of designated woodlands

Or

- for applications that encourage landowners to bring forward landscape-scale proposals to plant or manage farm / croft woodlands

5 POINTS – for applications that meet one of the 3 point criteria above and the criteria below:

- for applications that will help to bring forward applications that will provide significant benefits to the local community

### Scale of delivery

1 POINT – for applications that include a letter of support which is supported and signed by two landowners in the project area who will contribute towards the delivery of the landscape-scale project.

3 POINTS – for applications that include a letter of support which is supported and signed by a significant number of landowners in the project area who will contribute towards the delivery of the landscape-scale project.

5 POINTS – for applications that include a letter of support which is supported and signed by the majority of landowners in the project area who will contribute towards the delivery of the landscape-scale project.

### **Value for money**

Applications that deliver value for money based on the ratio of grant value sought versus the total costs which are eligible for grant support. That is where the grant sought is:

1 POINT – up to 100 per cent of the total capital cost.

3 POINTS – less than 75 per cent of the total capital cost.

5 POINTS – less than 50 per cent of the total capital cost.

### **Supplementary point – additional benefit**

1 POINT – will be awarded, as an additional point, where:

- an application brings forward proposals in the areas where there has been little or no activity in the past

## [How to claim](#)

You can submit a capital claim once we have approved the final project plan.

## [Technical guidance](#)

- [UK Forestry Standard](#)

## [Download guidance](#)

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