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HS2



HELP NOTES – BIODIVERSITY INVESTMENT FUND (BIF) - STAGE 2 APPLICATION

The aim of these notes is to help you complete your application form online. We'll explain how to start using our online system as well as provide you with a guide to the information you must give us about your project. We will also tell you why we're asking for certain information and how we use the information you give us.

If you have any further queries, please contact Groundwork UK by emailing HS2BIF@groundwork.org.uk.

You should only complete the Stage 2 Application Form if your Stage 1 application to the Biodiversity Investment Fund (BIF) was approved and you have been invited to submit a Stage 2 application.

An overview of the full application process can be found here <https://hs2funds.org.uk/biodiversity-investment-fund-application-process/>

Please note that approval at Stage 1 and being invited to submit an EAMP and Stage 2 Application Form does not guarantee that funding will be approved towards your project.

Alternative and Accessible Formats

Sometimes there are particular reasons why people find it difficult to apply for funding or access our services. If you experience or anticipate any barriers with our application process, require help to make an application, or access our services and information, please contact Groundwork to discuss the type of support we can provide. Please email HS2BIF@groundwork.org.uk.

Applying Online

When you're working on your application online it's useful to remember:

- You can fill in your application in one go or work on it at different times, but you will only be able to submit your application when all of the sections are complete.
- If you have your application form open on your computer, but do not work on it for 2 hours, you will automatically be logged out of our online system. Any

work that you haven't saved by then will be lost. Please save your work regularly.

Getting Started Checklist

Make sure you have read our Guidance document before starting your application form, which can be accessed here <https://hs2funds.org.uk/biodiversity-investment-fund-guidance>

Organisations that have previously received a CEF or BLEF award are eligible to apply. However BIF awards will be made after consideration is given to CEF/BLEF, the HS2 Woodland Fund and any Additional Mitigation/enhancement packages, which have been approved through the hybrid Bill process, to avoid any duplication. The Additional Mitigation packages, CEF/BLEF, the Woodland Fund and the Community Investment Programme (CIP) via contractors are separate to the BIF, though are aligned to avoid duplication of funding or double funding.

The application form will ask you to confirm if you have previously received funding from HS2 and if you have, to provide more details.

Have you got everything you need to complete your application form?

- Your organisation's contact details and information
- Your organisation's governing document e.g. Constitution, Memorandum and Articles of Association (if this has changed since you submitted your Stage 1 application)
- The most recent copy of your organisation's Annual Accounts
- Your project location/s and postcode/s
- Your project budget
- Your Ecological Assessment and Management Plan (EAMP)
- Evidence of security of tenure for your project site e.g. freehold or leasehold document (if this has changed since you submitted your Stage 1 application)

Section 1: About Your Organisation

In this section we're asking you to tell us some basic information about your organisation.

- **What is the name of your organisation?**
We need to know the name of your group, this should be the name of the organisation that is applying for funding and match with the information on your bank statements and governing documents i.e. constitution, Memorandum and Articles of Association etc.
- **What is the nature of your organisation?**

For monitoring purposes, please tell us what type your organisation is.

- **Do you have a Charity Registration number?**
- **Do you have a Company Registration number?**
- **Does your organisation have public liability insurance?**
You do not need to provide evidence of Public Liability Insurance, however, we reserve the right to ask for this at any point during the application process or project delivery.
- **If there have been any changes since you submitted your Stage 1 application, please upload a copy of your organisation's governance document.**

The following organisations do not have to provide a copy of these documents:

- **Local Authority** (county councils, metropolitan district councils, unitary authorities, district councils)
- **Local education authority or other public sector statutory bodies** (parish and town councils)
- **Have you previously received funding from HS2?**
If yes, please provide details (word count 150).
Please confirm what funding you have received from which programme and confirm the Unique Reference Number of your application.
- **Are you working with a partner or partners to deliver this project?**
Some organisations may decide to work together, but any application to BIF must be made by an organisation which has a legal entity. The applicant must have authority to apply on the behalf of their partners.

You will need to provide full details of your partner/s organisation/s (including their legal name as it appears on their governing document). If you already have a draft or signed partnership agreement in place you can upload this at this stage.

You must provide information on the partnership working arrangements and roles for all parties for both the application process and project delivery should your application be successful.

Please enter any contacts associated with this application.

The main contact should be a key person involved in your project and must be from the applicant/lead organisation. They should be able to talk about your project and provide further information if required. It is very important to us that you provide the correct email address and daytime phone number so that we can communicate updates and decisions on your application.

A second contact will need to be provided. You should ensure that the second contact is aware that their details have been included in the application and like the main contact understand the details of your project. Your second contact should be a senior contact from your lead organisation (for example, Director, CEO, Treasurer, Company Secretary).

Please let us know if the main contact has any particular communication needs. We intend to use email as our main means of communication for environmental reasons. If this will cause problems for you please ensure you let us know your preferred alternative. Groundwork UK is an environmental charity and we aim to save paper wherever possible, so it is very important that your email addresses are correct and the email account is active and checked regularly.

If your application is successful, the decision and any grant offer will be emailed to the main contact. They will be responsible for all aspects of the project during the lifetime of the project and for sending us an update once the project has ended. If your contacts change throughout the lifetime of the project it is your responsibility to confirm any changes, we will not be able to discuss the application with anyone who is not a named contact on the application form.

One of your contacts must be one of your bank signatories. The exception to this is Local Authorities (county councils, metropolitan district councils, unitary authorities, district councils), other public sector statutory bodies (parish and town councils) and institutes of further and higher education.

Section 2: Annual Account Information

- If your organisation is required to provide a copy of the accounts, please upload a copy of your most recent accounts.

The following organisations are not required to submit accounts.

- **Local Authority** (county councils, metropolitan district councils, unitary authorities, district councils)
- **Local education authority or other public sector statutory bodies** (parish and town councils)

Section 3: Organisational Governance

- **How many people are on your Governing body / Committee / Management Board?**

You must have at least 3 unrelated or non-cohabiting members of your committee in order for your organisation to be eligible to apply. For charities this would be trustees, for community interest companies this would be directors.

- **How many volunteers?**

Please give us an idea of how many volunteers are involved in the running of your organisation.

- **How many paid staff?**

Please give us an idea of how many paid staff are involved in the running of your organisation.

Section 4: About Your Project

In this section we're looking for:

- Where your proposed project will take place, including details of any additional sites. You will need to provide a location plan for each site with defined boundaries and co-ordinates if there have been any changes since you submitted your Stage 1 application.
- Details as to whether your project will need to commence at a certain time of the year.
- You will need to upload a copy of your EAMP.
- Details of the benefits to biodiversity that you plan to achieve through your project including the types of habitats you primarily expect to benefit.
- How your project is linked to either temporary or permanent disruption from construction of Phase 2a of HS2 to biodiversity. Please refer to the programme guidance notes for more information on disruption.
- How your project meets the programme outcomes.
- Upload any letters or statements of support that you have for the project.

- **What is the title of your project?**

At this stage a project name is essential. If you use any abbreviations, tell us what they stand for. You do not need to include your organisation name in the title of your project.

- **Project start date**

- **Does the project need to start at a certain time in the year?**

- **Project end date**

Please give us an indication of estimated dates of when your project might start and finish or whether your project has already started. Please note work should be able to start within 6 months of an award being received. Your start date should take into consideration the timescales for a decision on your Stage 2 application and any consideration as to whether your project will need to start at a certain time of the year. We expect to notify successful applicants at Stage 2 in April 2023 and projects to start within 6 months. Your project end date is once

your habitat has been created or restored. Once this work is complete then the long-term monitoring will begin.

- **Project address**

Please provide the full postal address, including postcode of the location where your project will be delivered. If your proposed project takes place across a number of sites or venues, please provide the full address(es) and postcode(s) for the additional sites. If there is no postcode for the site, please provide the postcode of the nearest building. You must also provide a clear location plan with defined boundaries and co-ordinates if there have been any changes since you submitted your Stage 1 application.

- **Please state how your project relates to / is associated with either temporary or permanent disruption from the construction of Phase 2a of HS2 (word count 350).**

The application needs to reference disruption from the construction of HS2 Phase 2a (Staffordshire and Cheshire East). There are two potential types of disruption:

- Effects which have been recognised within Environmental Statements, but which have not been addressed through formal mitigation. Please review the Environmental Statements relevant to your project areas. There is a report for each section of the route:

Phase 2a Environmental Statement;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-2a-environmental-statement>

Phase 2a Additional provisions;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-2a-additional-provision-and-supplementary-environmental-statement-and-march-2018>

There may also be additional information on what construction work is happening in your area on the HS2 local community webpages -

<https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/local-community-webpages/>

An interactive map which shows what current and upcoming works are being carried out can also be found here <https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/map/>

- Perceived disruption not identified within the Environmental Statements - this could include a range of community and local economy effects, and anything unforeseen which may emerge through the course of the construction period.

- **How many kilometres from the nearest point of the HS2 route or off route related work sites, will the project be taking place?**

Please select one of the options. If your project takes place across a large site or multiple sites or venues, you should use the point of the project site closest to the HS2 route. You may find the interactive map of the planned construction helpful:

<https://www.hs2.org.uk/where/route-map/#10/52.5731/-1.6938>

Priority will be given to projects that are based within 1km (0.62 miles) of the high speed rail line.

Section 5: About Your Project (continued)

In this section, we will ask you about your project and the benefits to biodiversity that you plan to achieve. Some of this information will be included in your EAMP, however it is helpful for us if you can also provide the requested information for each of the relevant questions in your application form.

- **Please describe your project and identify what benefits to biodiversity you plan to achieve in order to meet the primary outcome of the Fund.**

We would like to know about the changes that happen because of our funding. We call these changes 'outcomes'.

The Biodiversity Fund primary outcome is:

- To improve biodiversity along the line of the Phase 2a route through the restoration of existing habitat and/or the creation of new habitat.

You have up to 750 words to give us an overview of your project and identify what benefits to biodiversity you plan to achieve. As well as background information on your project, please be as specific as possible in terms of what your project aims to restore in relation to existing habitat or the creation of new habitat or a combination of both. The project description should be clear and concise and contain relevant information to give a good understanding of your project and what you hope to achieve. A good project description will include:

- an overview of the project
 - what the funding will be spent on
 - a description of the physical features or improvements that will be installed or activity sessions that will be delivered
- **Which types of habitats do you primarily expect to benefit?**
Please use the tick boxes to select the different types of habitats expected to benefit and do provide details of any additional habitats not listed by completing the 'other' textbox. Please include if any of these have been identified as priority habitats / habitats of principal importance (HPI).
 - **Will the project result in benefits to specific species (plant and/or animal?) (250 words)**
Please advise if the project is likely to result in benefits to specific species (plant and/or animal)? If it does please advise if any of these qualify as priority species under the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) or are species of principal importance.

- **Ecological Assessment and Management Plan (EAMP).**
An EAMP is required to be produced in support of any application to the Phase 2a Biodiversity Investment Fund and must be submitted at Stage 2 in the process.

Please follow the link to the EAMP requirements and guidance
<https://hs2funds.org.uk/bif-emap-guidance/>

- **If the project includes the restoration of a habitat which is legally protected, please provide additional details. (200 words)**
This could include Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, if sites are listed as important at a local level as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) or if notable species are identified.
- **Please can you confirm your plans for apportioning the Biodiversity Units as a result of your project. (250 words)**
All Biodiversity Units gained as a result of funding from BIF towards your project should be apportioned to HS2. If you have match funding, units generated must be apportioned fairly between HS2 Ltd and the match funding organisation(s), based on the percentage of the financial contribution between parties.
- **Secondary Outcomes**
Please select any secondary benefits that your project will deliver alongside measures to improve biodiversity.

For each of the secondary outcomes you select, please provide information about how your project will contribute to bringing about these changes. Please also tell us about the need for these changes, how they will be delivered and achieved and how they will be sustainable or leave a lasting legacy.

For example, you should consider the following:

- Will your project create or improve public access to open space?
- How many hectares of public open space will be created or improved?
- How many km/m of cycle or walking routes will be improved?
- Does your project provide for disability access?
- Will the setting of a building with a heritage value be improved or enhanced as a result of the project?
- Will a natural environment with a heritage value be enhanced or maintained as a result of the project?
- Are local schools involved in the project?
- Are residents involved in the project?
- Are local wildlife groups / conservation interest groups involved?
- Will any health and wellbeing facilities be created or maintained as a result of the project?
- Will the project create or improve any formal or informal sport and/or recreation space?
- Will training courses be delivered as part of the project and how many?

- How many people are expected to attend courses and will this result in qualifications?
 - Does the project include any partnerships with educational organisations (schools, colleges, learning centres etc)?
 - How many volunteers will be involved in the project and what roles will they undertake?
 - Have you considered the appropriate management and risks for all outcomes?
 - Will ecological monitoring data be collected from each site for submittal to a Biological Records Centre?
 - Will the project include the reuse or recycling of materials?
- **Please upload any letters or statements of support that you have received for your project.**
This may include statements or letters from local authorities, relevant agencies or other strategic or local bodies within the public, environmental, community and voluntary sectors.

Section 6: Finance Details

- **Are you requesting funding for Capital, Revenue or Both**
Capital funding covers capital infrastructure costs, including, creating/restoring a site, the installation of structures such as nesting boxes, fencing and gates, enhanced access and landscaping.

Revenue funding can be used to cover running costs, staffing and project delivery costs that relate directly to the project. Further information about revenue funding can be found in section 16 of the BIF guidance document.
- **Amount being requested from BIF? (£)**
Please refer to your Stage 1 decision letter. The amount your request must be the same as stated in this letter. If there is any change, you must contact us first.
- **Total cost of your project ? (£)**
Please tell us here what the total cost of your project will be.
- **Is your organisation able to reclaim VAT?**
If you can reclaim VAT, you must not include VAT in your budget breakdown. If you cannot reclaim VAT, you must include VAT in your budget breakdown.
- **Will your project include match funding?**
We encourage applicants to include partnership funding, however, this is not a requirement of the BIF.
If your project does include match funding, potential sources of match funding can include contributions of both cash and non-cash (also known as In Kind). For more information about match funding contributions, please see sections 22 and 23 of the BIF guidance document.

Please outline any funding that you have applied for or have secured towards the project, who it is from and if there are any restrictions on the funding in terms of what it can be spent on or related to project timings.

If your match funding is not secure we will need you to upload a document that outlines how you plan to raise the required match funds or what contingency you have in place should match funding not be secured.

- **Please provide a full breakdown of the costs associated with your project.**

Please list each cost element individually. The budget table will allow you to edit and add additional budget item lines.

Each budget line must show how much is being requested from BIF, how much match funding will contribute and the total cost. All staff costs must be shown as separate lines in your budget along with rates of pay, number of hours etc. included in the description.

If you are unsure how to set your budget out, please contact us.

- **Capital projects and security of tenure**

You do not formally need security of tenure as the applicant. If you own, lease or have a licence for the land, you must supply a copy of your leasehold/licence or freehold document with your application. If you do not own the land, you must provide a Landowner Permission Form <https://hs2funds.org.uk/bif-landowner-permission-form/> signed by the landowner and provide a copy of their freehold documents. Whether you own the freehold or have a lease/licences, the name that appears on the document must be the same as that which appears on your governing documents.

If your project has multiple sites, documentation listed above must be provided for each site and separate landowner permission forms will need to be completed for each site by the landowner. If any elements of your project relate to works to buildings (e.g. installing bat roosts) you will need to provide relevant permission forms from the building owner.

By submitting a Stage 2 Application you are confirming that your security of tenure meets/will meet the programme criteria identified in Section 13 of the BIF Guidance document.

- **Is there any further information or documents you wish to provide in support of your project? (word count 250)**

Please use this section of the application form to provide is with any further information that you think will be useful in supporting your application.