

G R E A T
C O R N I S H
F O O D

Guidance Notes Agrifood Grants Scheme



Funded by
UK Government



**CORNWALL
COUNCIL**
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Council of the
ISLES OF SCILLY



**GOOD
GROWTH**
CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY
SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

Overview

The Great Cornish Food - Raising the Bar programme includes a small grants scheme.

The grants are financed through the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), which is aimed at:

- Boosting productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.
- Spreading opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.
- Restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost.
- Empowering local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.

The grants are intended to provide an easy-access cash injection to food, drink, farming and fishing businesses in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS) to help them achieve one or more of those aims.

Please read these notes carefully to find out more about the scheme and ensure your application is completed correctly.

1. Who can apply?

The scheme is open to any business or organisation registered in Cornwall or the Isles of Scilly connected with farming, fishing or the production of food or drink.

2. How much are the grants and do I have to find any of the money?

The minimum project cost is £2,500 and the maximum is £10,000.

However, the maximum amount of grant available is 50% of the project cost. You will therefore need to find the remaining 50%. This is known as match funding.

Match funding can be from any other source apart from funds originating from the SPF.

You will need to demonstrate that your match funding has been secured or committed at the time of your application.

Match funds need to be in money; this scheme does not have scope for any form of in-kind match.

3. What is the timescale?

This grant scheme is open for applications between 6th May 2025 and 29th June 2025.

Applications will be assessed and successful applicants notified by 9am on Monday 14th July 2025.

Projects, and relevant expenditure, must be completed by 30th November 2025 in order for us to award all grant monies before the Raising the Bar programme closes.

4. What can I buy?

Your project should help your organisation achieve one or more of the strategic aims of the Raising the Bar programme. It should therefore be something that enables your business to:

- Increase productivity
- Raise standards
- Overcome hurdles
- Reach new markets
- Develop new products
- Bring new skills, knowledge or technology into the business
- Smooth out seasonality
- Become greener and cleaner
- Become a better or more inclusive employer.

Your grant application could therefore include the cost of a piece of equipment, or of obtaining external expertise, or conducting research or product development, for example. If there is something holding your business/organisation back, which this cash injection could help overcome, you are encouraged to apply.

Please note that the grant cannot cover the cost of wages and salaries or of 'business as usual' expenditure.

5. Can I apply for more than one grant?

As the fund is limited and intended to reach as many businesses/organisations as possible, an applicant can only apply for one of these grants. However, if there are several things you need to purchase and the total expenditure is within the limit, you can include everything in one application.

If you have received a grant from this scheme in the period April 2024-March 2025, you may apply for another grant. However, it must be for a project that is substantially different to the previous project, and other applicants who have not received a grant from this scheme previously are likely to be given priority.

6. When do I get the money?

The project expenditure must be completed before the grant can be released. Therefore **you will need to complete and finance ALL of the expenditure before you claim the grant.** You will need to show that you are able to do that in your application.

7. Will every applicant be successful?

After the closing date, all applications will be reviewed to ensure they are eligible. Consideration will be given to the amount of positive impact each project will have on the applicant's business and on the local economy, in other words, its value for money. We will also need to be assured that projects will be completed within the allocated timescale.

If the scheme is oversubscribed, the lower scoring applicants will not be successful.

Applications will not be successful if the applicant has already reached the Minimum Financial Assistance threshold for public subsidy.

8. Can I apply jointly with another organisation?

Each grant can only be paid to one business or organisation. However, if multiple businesses/organisations would like to collaborate on a joint project, their grants can be combined and used to contribute towards expenditure of a higher value than one grant would be able to cover. Where this demonstrates better value for money, this could increase the project's chances of success. However, the match funding requirement still applies to each applicant. Please get in touch if you would like help with a collaborative project.

9. Will I have to pay it back?

As the money is a grant and not a loan, you will not have to repay it unless you are found to have obtained or used the grant dishonestly or unlawfully or not complied with the terms of the signed offer letter.

10. Can I get any other help with my project?

If you are looking for a specific type of expertise and are unable to find it, the Great Cornish Food team may be able to help identify the skills and expertise you need and put you in touch with the right people. The cost of using those sources of expertise can be included in your application.

There are many other elements to the Great Cornish Food – Raising the Bar programme designed to improve business performance and success. More details are available from the [website](#).

11. Who will assess my application?

Applications will be assessed by the Great Cornish Food team, with input from representatives of Cornwall Council and the Cornwall and IoS Food Board. Any potential conflict of interest or commercial confidentiality between an applicant and any member of the Food Board will be identified and averted.

12. How can I improve my chances of being successful?

As well as demonstrating that your project represents a worthwhile investment of public funds, helps your business become smarter and stronger, and can confidently be completed within the timeframe of this scheme, applications will be assessed on whether:

- All questions on the application form have been answered and the necessary information and supporting documentation supplied.
- The project is straightforward. For small grants such as these, which need to be completed in a limited timeframe, projects likely to involve numerous suppliers of goods and services or numerous transactions are generally classified as being at higher risk of failure or encountering difficulty.

13. Making the application

To help us capture all the necessary information about your project and your capacity to deliver it, you will need to complete two forms:

- 1) The Application Form (a Word document)
- 2) The Cost and Finance Form, (an Excel workbook).

Please complete all sections of the forms to help us appraise your project thoroughly.

If you state in the Application Form that you have received public funds in the past three years we will send you a separate Subsidy Control Declaration to complete.

If you need help, please email grants@greatcornishfood.co.uk with your question(s).

The help we can provide does not include writing the application itself but will support applicants to complete all the necessary sections of the forms.

Before you start

Make sure your responses to the three statements below are YES. If you do not answer yes to all of these questions, the application will be rejected.

- YES the project location is in Cornwall and / or the Isles of Scilly
- YES the organisation / business currently pays the Real Living Wage to all employees and is able to evidence this now OR intends to pay it by 1st January 2026 (evidence of this needs to be submitted by March 2026). Exceptions to this are only applicable where an organisation is bound by national pay scales.
- YES the project will be completed (i.e. the grant money spent) by 30th November 2025.

13. Completing the application form

Section 1 – Organisation Details

a) This should be the legal name and address as registered with the Charity Commission / HMRC / Companies House etc. Please also include your trading name if this is different.

b) This should be the address where the project will take place. This may be your registered address, or you might have other premises, or it could be that this address is not one usually associated with your organisation/business, we just need to understand where the project will take place.

c) Will we use this information to let Cornwall Council know how much funding has been allocated / spent in each constituency.

d) Please provide the website address, or social media account if you don't have a website that you use for your organisation/ business if you have one, or indicate that you do not have one. We do not expect you to have a website specific to your project.

e) Please select from the drop-down list which option best represents the legal status of your organisation / business. If none are applicable, use the 'other' option and subsequent box to let us know the status of your organisation / business.

f) As grants can only be awarded to registered organisations / businesses, this information will help to assure us of your status. If you do not have a company number please provide your Unique Taxpayers Reference (UTR) or Tax Reference as registered with HMRC for yourself and each partner of the Partnership as applicable (this is a 10- digit number). If more than one of these apply to you or your organisation / business, then use this space to provide details of both.

g) If the answer to any of these questions is yes (historically or currently) then the additional information you are able to provide will help us determine whether we can proceed with the grant or not. You can contact us directly at grants@greatcornishfood.co.uk to discuss this before proceeding with the rest of the application if you wish.

h) So that we can ensure you have given us accurate project costs we need to know whether your business / organisation is VAT registered or not. **If your business / organisation is registered for VAT, you will normally only be able to request support for costs net of VAT.**

If you are not VAT registered you can apply for gross costs, i.e. inclusive of VAT. If you're likely to apply for VAT registration during the delivery of the project or shortly after its completion, you should apply for net costs. You will need to complete all parts of this question:

- confirm by picking from the list whether you are VAT registered or not,
- confirm by picking from the list whether you are claiming for net costs or not and entering your VAT number if you are VAT registered.

i) Please select from the drop down list the approximate length of time your organisation/business has been trading. If you are not yet trading, to be eligible you must have already set up the trading entity e.g., registered a company/registered with HMRC.

j) This information should be about your organisation / business and what it does. Information about your project activity will be collected later in the form.

k) A FTE (full time equivalent) is a person working the number of hours considered full-time by your organisation / business.

For example, if full time is 36 hours a week, then two part-time employees working 18 hours a week would together make 1 FTE as they are half a full post or 0.5FTE each. You need to add together individual FTE numbers for all your staff to give you the total. This number may differ from the actual number of employees you have, e.g. the example above of 2 part time staff would give you a total FTE number of 1 but would be 2 employees.

l) It is a commitment of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) to support organisations / businesses that are paying their employees at least the Real Living Wage so we need to know whether your organisation/business already does. You will be asked to provide evidence of this if your application is successful. If your response to this is no, you will need to complete the answer question (m) to indicate whether you are working towards it or not. If your response to this and the following question are both no, this will result in your application being unsuccessful.

m) If you have ticked no under question (l), you need to complete this question to confirm if you will be paying all your employees the Real Living Wage by 1st January 2026 and able to evidence this before March 2026, or if you are covered by an exception (where your organisation does not set its own pay levels as they are subject to national agreed pay scales). If your application is successful, you will need to evidence this through the submission of payroll information as a condition of any offer letter. If your response to this and the previous question are both no, this will result in your application being unsuccessful.

n) If your organisation / business has received any Public Sector funding or support over the last 3 financial years under De Minimis (€200,000), Small Amounts of Financial Assistance -SAFA (325,000 XDR) or Minimal Financial Assistance - MFA (£315,000) schemes you must let us know.

This could be a grant or other form of support e.g. subsidised training, advice/mentoring support, free advertising, NI Employment allowance etc; and would include but is not limited to:

European Funded grants or support
e.g. ERDF, ESF

Small Amounts of Financial
Assistance (SAFA)

Might be classed as 'De Minimis' aid but the award may have been made under other state aid categories such as 'GBER'. Public funded grants or support awarded after 1st January 2021 (including local authority and National Lottery).

Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) Public funded grants or support (including local authority and National Lottery) awarded after 1st January 2023.

We will contact you for information about this funding to make sure you have not exceeded the State Aid/Subsidy Control maximum entitlements.

Section 2 – Contact Details

a) This will be the contact information for the **project lead** within your organisation / business, this will be the person all correspondence / queries will be addressed to.

Section 3 – Project Details

a) This should be the name of your project; it should be different to your company name. It could be 'Purchase of', 'Development of', 'Improvements to' etc. Please keep this short i.e., maximum of 7 words or less. This enables us to identify your project.

b) You will have already provided us with information about your organisation / business. This section is where you tell us about your project; what it is you want to do and how it will be achieved. Will you be buying something, getting consultancy support to develop an idea etc? Who will be involved? It's important that we fully understand your proposal but please be clear and as succinct as possible so someone unconnected with the project / your business will understand it. Feel free to submit any photos, drawings, plans to support your application if relevant.

c) Tell us why your project is needed, and why now is the time to do it. Please describe the problem / barrier / issue that the project will tackle / overcome.

d) Tell us what the impact of your project will be on your business. What will it help it achieve? Have you completed any research to show the difference it will make?

e) Tell us the name(s) of any other businesses or organisations that will be involved in delivering the project. What is their role? Why are they involved? Will they receive any commercial or other benefit?

f) We need to understand how critical it is to your organisation to receive the grant and therefore what would happen if you received only some, or none, of the monies. Please complete both parts.

g) Public funding support is intended to provide 'last resort' investment. Therefore please tell us what other attempts you have made to cover the cost of your project.

Section 4 – Strategic Fit

a) All applications need to fit at least one of the objectives of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Agrifood Strategy and Action Plan. Tick any that apply to your project and then provide a brief description to explain how your project does this.

b) All projects should also fit at least one of the strategic aims of the Good Growth Investment Plan 2022-25. Tick any that apply to your project and then provide a brief description to explain how your project meets them. This response should be

commensurate to the value of your grant, and it is not expected that all projects will contribute to all benefits.

c) Please indicate by ticking the relevant box if your project will achieve any of the other strategic benefits listed here.

Section 5 – Project Costs

a) Your project should only be requesting grant to pay the value of project costs that you are unable to cover from your own resources and other contributing sources. It may be that you have an opportunity that requires larger investment than the funds you have available at the moment. It may be that you cannot obtain a bank loan. This information may be compared to any bank statements and accounts provided with your application.

b) If the costs of any element of your project increases following the issue of your project approval this increase would need to be covered by your organisation / business. Please tell us what resource you would use.

c) As the grant will be paid retrospectively, up to 30 days after your project completion, you need to be confident that the time between paying for the costs and receiving the grant will not cause you any financial difficulties. We need to know if your organisation / business has the means to cashflow the project costs until the grant is received. When you complete the claim form to receive your grant you will need to evidence the project expenditure by providing copies of bank statements showing the relevant transactions. It will not be acceptable to provide credit card transactions/statements as evidence of payment.

d) For the purpose of this grant scheme, your procurement process needs to comply with the following requirements:

For purchases up to £2,499 in value: one quote or price to be obtained.

For purchases between £2,500 and £5,000 (maximum for this scheme): written quotes or prices to be obtained/sought from THREE different suppliers of relevant works/services/products.

It will be your responsibility to follow a compliant procurement process and evidence this. There could be claw back of grant paid if procurement is found to be non-compliant.

e) Grant funds can only be paid into a business bank account. You will need to send us a copy of your most recent full business bank statement. This should be the account that all project costs will be paid through.

Section 6 – Benefits and Impacts

a) There may be impacts (both positive and negative) or benefits of your project, that are not listed in your previous answers. Let us know about any you have considered.

b) How will you know if your project has achieved what it set out to do? Tell us what processes you will use to capture this information, either throughout the project or at the end.

c) All applicants should already have these policies in place or at least be working towards having them. If they are not already in place, if the project is approved you will be required

to submit copies as part of the contract conditions on the project. Templates for these policies can be downloaded from the Growth Hub website.

<https://www.ciosgrowthhub.com/skills-toolkit/equality-and-diversity>

<https://www.ciosgrowthhub.com/skills-toolkit/environment-and-sustainability>

Section 7 - Permissions and Consents

Each project will be different and will involve its own individual requirements for permissions, licences and regulations. We will rely on the applicant to have investigated the requirements for their project but will expect to see any permissions granted or correspondence confirming that permissions etc. are not required. All projects will be required to comply with all permissions, licenses and regulations in place within English law.

Section 8 – Deliverability

a) The response to this question will vary depending on the size and nature of your project. If you are simply buying something the method for delivery will be fairly simple, if you are carrying out works the process needs to be described in more detail.

Once we agree your grant and you start work on your project, you will need to make sure that the costs agreed in your offer letter are the only ones that appear in your claim. Other things may crop up during the delivery of your project; as these will not be eligible for your grant, how will you make sure that only the approved items are claimed for? 20

b) Tell us about any experience you or your organisation has of managing projects and/or grant funding.

Section 9 – Risk

a) You should consider the risks to your project. Any risks identified should be specific to your project, rather than to your organisation / business. You will need to consider and score the likelihood of them occurring and the impact. Tell us what the consequence of each would be and what actions you will take should they happen. Example risks could be – cost increases, supplier issues, time overruns, loss of key staff, failure to achieve expected results etc.

Section 10 – Timescales

a) This is the date you hope to start your project. This date cannot be before the grant application is approved.

b) We also need the date you aim to have completed your project. This means the date you will have bought all your items, completed all the work, paid for everything and be able to evidence this.

Section 11 – Declarations and Signatures

Read these declarations carefully and then tick the box at the bottom of the section to confirm you accept them all.

Sign and date your application before submitting it to us. **The person signing the form should be the owner, director or shareholder of the organisation/business, i.e. they must have the authority to sign on behalf of the applicant business/organisation.**

If you are submitting your application via email, you can simply type your name in place of your signature, we will then use your email as your signature. It is therefore important that the email comes from the person listed on the form, this may be different from the contact person for the grant application.

Please submit your completed Application Form, Costs and Finance Table and any supporting documents to grants@greatcornishfood.co.uk.

You will receive an email acknowledgement of receipt within 5 working days of submission.

Your submission will initially be assessed for completeness, before being passed to the appraisal team for a decision once applications have closed. We will be in touch with the named contact person if we have any queries during this process.