

Fisheries and Seafood Scheme Funding Round: Protecting (to conserve, enhance and recover) the Marine Environment

1. Introduction

The Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FaSS) is designed to support England's seafood sector by providing financial assistance for projects that deliver sustainable growth in the catching, processing and aquaculture sectors, and that conserve, enhance and recover the marine environment.

This guidance explains the types of projects that can be funded and how to apply for funding through the **protecting the marine environment funding round**.

This is a time-limited competitive funding round which will be open to applications from the **25 August 2021**, the deadline for application submission is **6 October 2021** and a panel of experts will be convened week commencing **25 October 2021**.

When applying for funding please ensure you apply under measure:

- M13 Support for the design and implementation of conservation measures**
- M14 Innovation linked to the conservation of marine biological resources**
- M15 Protection and restoration of marine biodiversity**

Government financial guidelines state that this award of funds is only valid in the Financial Year in which it was approved. Therefore, all claims must be submitted and paid by March 2022.

Funding through this round will be delivered under the subsidy principles in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

2. Projects You Can Apply For

Protecting the marine environment is one of the strategic priorities of the FaSS. The target outcomes of this funding round include:

- improving the management of the marine environment, including through the design and implementation of conservation measures, improved environmental monitoring, innovation linked to conservation and techniques and/or equipment to protect the marine environment.
- protecting and enhancing marine habitats and species, and the restoration of marine habitats, thereby contributing to Good Environmental Status (GES) as required by the UK Marine Strategy and the Fisheries Act 2020
- supporting climate change adaptation, resilience and mitigation, contributing to net zero by 2050.

Projects receiving financial support through this funding round must deliver one or more of the outcomes set out above.

3. Who Can Apply?

This funding round, like the rest of the FaSS, is available to applicants whose businesses and/or vessels are registered in England. To be eligible for funding, applicants must be one of the following:

- an individual or business engaged within commercial, aquaculture or processing;
- a public body/local authority in a local community that has a focus on fishing/aquaculture activities (including trust ports and local authority ports, and public bodies, using funds for environmental improvements/management of fisheries);
- a university or research institute;
- a new entrant to the industry or unemployed individual that could benefit from knowledge/skills in fishing/aquaculture activities.
- an NGO

Applicants will be required to declare if they fall into the category of micro-entities, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) or larger enterprises.

For full details on eligibility please see the 'eligibility' section of guidance on the MMO's website [here](#).

4. Funding

This funding round will be run as a competitive process.

All projects supported through the FaSS require match-funding. To be eligible for financial support, the applicant must have funding available to make up the remaining cost of the project:

- small scale coastal fleet organisations¹ can receive up to 80% FaSS funding;
- public bodies, producer organisations, fishers associations and cooperatives can receive up to 75% FaSS funding;
- micro, small, or small-medium enterprises can receive up to 50% FaSS funding;
- all other private applicants can receive up to 30% FaSS funding.

In line with the general guidance for the FaSS, you cannot apply for and receive funding if you have:

- been convicted of fraud under any other fisheries scheme;
- been convicted of an offence that the MMO considers to be a 'serious infringement²' or fraud, in the 12 months before applying.

It is your responsibility to source and provide suitable funding, through business loans or cash resources. You must state the source of funding when applying. Before committing any private resources, we recommend you seek independent financial advice.

¹ **Small-Scale Coastal Fishing (SSCF)** means fishing carried out by fishing vessels of an overall length of 11.99 meters or less and not using towed gear/trawling.

² Including any illegal, unreported fishing

5. What You Can Apply For

Projects can include:

- increasing environmental awareness, involving industry, with regard to the protection, management, enhancement and restoration of marine biodiversity, and climate change adaptation, resilience and mitigation;
- actions aimed at maintaining and/or recovering biodiversity, ecosystem services, and climate change adaptation, resilience and mitigation, such as through the restoration of marine and coastal habitats, including their scientific preparation and evaluation;
- contributions to the better management or conservation of marine environments: including improved understanding of fishing activities and their impacts on the marine environment;
- the preparation, including studies, drawing-up, monitoring and updating of protection and management plans for fishery-related activities;
- the management, restoration and monitoring of Marine Protected Areas; and protected, endangered and threatened species that are impacted by fishing activity;
- the design, development and monitoring of technical and administrative means necessary for the development and implementation of conservation measures;
- projects aimed at developing or introducing new technical or organisational knowledge that reduces the impact of fishing activities on the environment, including improved fishing techniques, aimed at achieving a more sustainable use of marine biological resources and coexistence with protected predators.

Funding will not be provided for:

- Direct restocking of species
- Net revenue generated by the participation of the fishing vessel in the project must be deducted from the eligible expenditure of the project

6. How to Apply

Once the funding round opens for applications you should apply online using the [Fisheries and Seafood Scheme E-System](#).

You will need your business details such as your accounts, business registration number and VAT registration number to hand to complete the application.

More information on the supporting documentation needed is available within the [General Guidance](#) document.

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7. How Awards will be Decided

The funding round will be open from **25 August 2021**, closing for submissions on **6 October 2021**. A panel of experts will be convened week commencing **25 October 2021** to assess and score projects against the criteria set out in the section 'Project specific criteria'. The more closely aligned your project is to the specific criteria, the more likely your project will be to receive funding.

The assessment panel will also take into consideration the benefits that can be achieved directly by the project. This will use information submitted through result indicators and will contribute to ongoing monitoring and evaluation if a project is successful.

All panels will be comprised of expert members from a range of disciplines. Members will be required to declare any vested associations/interests with proposals submitted. If conflicts of interest arise, members will not be allowed to sit on the panel.

Please note that this is a competitive process; meeting any or all of the criteria does not guarantee your project will receive funding.

8. Project-Specific Criteria

The following criteria will be used by the panel to assess applications:

Conservation

Your project could contribute towards sustainable fishing, managing our exploitation of marine stocks at levels that restores and maintains populations of harvested species above biomass levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield. Your project could contribute towards the protection of protected and vulnerable marine species. This could include technological approaches that allow for area-based management measures, and effective monitoring of UK catch.

Contributes towards Good Environmental Status (GES)

Your project could contribute towards the sustainable use of marine resources, ensuring their continuity and productivity for future generations. This could include the protection of ecosystems, preventing the decline and/or promoting the recovery of biodiversity, and reducing the impact of human activities on the marine environment.

Mitigating and/or adapting to Climate change

Your project could contribute towards ensuring the fishing sector's impact on climate change is minimised and that fisheries management adapts to take account of the impacts of climate change. This could include the decreasing of vessel and onshore emissions, decreasing export emissions through local selling, responding to climate change-induced changes in stock behaviour and weather patterns, and improving understanding of the impact of fishing activities on our marine carbon stores.

Contributes towards wider government priorities

Your project could contribute to wider government priorities, particularly the 25-Year Environmental Plan, the Fisheries Act, the Environment Bill, Carbon Net-Zero, and Seafood 2040.

Longevity

Your project should provide enduring and potentially scalable solutions that contribute to the long-term protection, recovery and enhancement of the marine environment.

Achievability

You will need to demonstrate how you expect to deliver the project successfully in the short to medium term and how you will deliver benefits at pace. A clear management plan describing the project will help.

Approach

All project stages should be outlined. Where appropriate, methodological and analytical approaches should be justified and described in detail. Rigorous approaches are more likely to be selected for funding. Where applicable, ethical procedures should be documented.

All projects should account for quality control, delivery risks and demonstrate value for money.

Potential impact

The panel will assess projects directly on their potential for impact. The novel nature of the approach will be considered where appropriate; but methodologies that mainstream existing approaches through adapting them for new situations will also be assessed favourably. Projects with strategies for upscaling impact are more likely to be selected for funding.

Value for money

To receive financial support through the funding round, the project must illustrate how it will be good value for money. Applications should clearly provide a clear and detailed outline of how government funds will be spent. The application should also show evidence of how your project will help you achieve one of the target outcomes of the funding round.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Demonstrating the impact of your project through the benefits realised will be essential. Derived benefits will be assessed through result indicators which will also contribute to the ongoing monitoring and evaluation if a project is successful. The following indicators are applicable to this funding round and the most appropriate for your project should be chosen and identified in your application:

Protecting the marine environment	
Indicator	Information you must provide
Area of marine or coastal habitat that has been protected, recovered, or enhanced as a result of project actions (m2)	In your application please provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The expected area in m² that the research/data collection will cover
Number of people engaged in activities that increase environmental awareness	In your application please provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of active participants that will be working on the project
Number engaged in adapting, mitigating or improving resilience to climate change	In your application please provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of active participants that will be working on the project

In addition to the indicator(s) listed above, successful projects will be expected to contribute to monitoring and evaluation through additional indicators which will demonstrate the project's outcomes and evidence a good use of public funds. These indicators will be developed on a project specific basis once a project has been successfully awarded.

Following the receipt of financial support, we will continue to monitor the progress and outcome of the project to ensure that the funding is being used correctly and in-line with the original proposal.

9. Funding Available

The minimum and maximum funding available for measures relating to shore-based facilities are outlined below:

Limits of Funding Available in FaSS Measures		
FaSS Measure	Minimum Grant Value Available (£)	Maximum Grant Value Available (£)
M13 Support for the design and implementation of conservation measures	500	250,000
M14 Innovation linked to the conservation of marine biological resources	500	220,000
M15 Protection and restoration of marine biodiversity	500	250,000

10. Funding Required by You

It is your responsibility to source and provide match funding, such as business loans or cash resources. You must state the source of funding when applying. Before committing any private resources, we recommend you seek independent financial advice.

The amount of money you can apply for will depend on your business or organisation type. There are maximum allocations allowed for each applicant are outlined below:

Funding Rates for Eligible Applicants in FaSS				
Applicant Type	Funding Rates as Percentages of Eligible Costs			
	FaSS %	Other national funding %	Total public money %	Private %
Public	75	25	100	0
Private (SME)	50	0	50	50
Private (Non-SME)	30	0	30	70
Private (SSCF)	80	0	80	20
Private (Fishermen's associations)	75	0	75	25
Private (POs)	75	0	75	25

Grant Rates Key; SSCF Small scale coastal fishing – vessels under 12m and not using towed gear; PO Producer Organisation; SME Micro, small and medium enterprises; Other national funding – funding from other public funds – see General Guidance note for further advice.

11. Project Requirements

Projects **must**:

- be compliant with all relevant legal requirements, including fishing and environmental health regulations. You may need to confirm the environmental health regulations applying in your area with your local authority;
- consider all relevant health and safety requirements relevant to your project and describe how you will ensure you are compliant;
- be compliant with the eligibility criteria found in the FaSS [general guidance document](#).

If successful

If your project is approved, we will send you an offer letter stating:

- the conditions you must follow when completing your project – if you do not meet these we can withdraw or change the offer, and
- the amount of money you have been awarded – in some cases you may not be awarded the total amount you applied for.

If you decide to accept the offer letter and its conditions you must do so within 14 days. You should also make a copy of the offer letter and keep it for your records. When you have completed all or part of your project you will be able to submit funding claims via the E-system in line with your claim schedule.

We will only pay funding in arrears. To support your claim you will need to submit invoices and proof of payment in order for us to verify the costs incurred.

Please consult the FaSS [Post Application Guidance](#) for advice in this area.

If unsuccessful

The FaSS protecting the marine environment funding round is a competitive process. A panel will convene to assess and score applications in order to decide which projects best meet the priorities of the scheme. Panel decisions will be communicated to applicants following the panel meeting. If your application is unsuccessful you will be notified of this decision in writing.

12. Further assistance

If you require any further assistance throughout the application process, please contact the MMO Grants Team:

Grants Team
Marine Management Organisation
Lancaster House
Hampshire Court

Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 7YH

Telephone: 0208 0265539

Email: FaSS.queries@marinemanagement.org.uk

MMO is committed to providing good customer service. If you are not satisfied with our service please let us know and we will do our best to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

For complaints about the quality of customer service, please contact us using our published [customer complaints procedure](#).