

## FaSS POST APPLICATION GUIDANCE

This guidance note explains what to do once we have assessed your application. It explains what happens next, how to claim your funding, what reporting requirements you will need to follow, what to do if anything in your project changes, and how to appeal decisions made about your application.

### 1. Next Steps

#### 1a. Processing times for your application

Once you receive confirmation that your project has been officially acknowledged by the MMO Grants Team, you can begin work on the project, but this is entirely at your own risk. The item, supplier and cost must be the same as in your originally submitted application; any deviation will make the costs ineligible.

We will write to you within 8 weeks to tell you if your application has been successful or not, or if any further information is required.

#### 1b. If your application is declined

If your application is declined, we will send you a letter that explains why. You can appeal this decision if you think that:

- it was based on a factual error,
- it was legally wrong, or
- an error was made in processing your application.

You have 28 days after the date of the letter to ask us to review the decision.

An independent appeals officer will consider your application in full against the selection criteria. We will notify you of the outcome of your appeal within 6 weeks of receiving it.

If your appeal is successful and the original decision is overturned, you will be issued with either an offer letter or a partial offer letter.

If your appeal is unsuccessful, the appeal decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into. However, you can reapply and your new application will be considered without prejudice unless fraud has been committed.

### 1c. If your application is approved

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 sign the acceptance of offer and return the full offer letter to us within 14 days. You should also make a copy of the offer letter and keep it for your records.

## 2. Claiming your funding

If your application is successful, you will be able to submit funding claims via the E-system.

We will only pay for funding in arrears. To support your claim you will need to submit:

- Original dated invoices which show the amount of money paid for each product or service (email invoices can be accepted but they must show the email trail from the supplier to the applicant).
- Proof of payment; this should be a bank statement that clearly shows the transaction between your bank account and the supplier, any unrelated transactions can be redacted.
- A completed SOP7 form, a blank template of this form will be provided by MMO alongside your offer letter.
- A progress update on your project.

We may decline to pay all or part of the funding if the information on the invoices is believed to be inaccurate, or the products or services in the claim do not match what was approved in your offer letter.

Your final claim date will be detailed in your offer letter and will be unique to your project. If you are unable to claim by the date specified, you must contact us to discuss options.

## 3. Reporting

### 3a. Reporting your progress

You must update us on the progress of your project when you make a claim for payment, or every 6 months, whichever is sooner, and you must provide one performance report each year for the first 3 years. We will remind you when these are due.

You should tell us the following information:

- the key project milestones that have been achieved to date,
- progress made towards the FaSS result indicators and evaluation indicators,
- whether the project is delivering on time, and
- any problems or issues you have encountered.

If you do not carry out your project in accordance with the timetable in your offer letter, we will ask you to explain the delay and any impact on your targets and benefits. We could cancel your funding offer or change it depending on the reasons you give.

We will take criminal or civil action to reclaim any money we have paid you if false information has been given in your application, or if you do any of the following:

- break the conditions in the offer letter,
- use the money for a different purpose to that which you stated in your application, or
- commit fraud.

### 3b. Reporting changes to your project

If you want to make any changes to your project after you have returned your offer letter, you will need to justify any changes and inform us by creating a notification of change on the FaSS E-system. Further details regarding the changes you must inform us of can be found in the sections below.

Changes could include:

- the way your project is funded, e.g. how you are paying for your part of the project,
- increases or decreases to the total cost of your entire project,

- using different contractors or suppliers to the ones agreed in your offer letter,
- changing the timetable of your project,
- selling or disposing of any infrastructure item purchased as part of your project,
- stopping any activity that is part of your project,
- changing the location of the activity, or
- adjusting the expected benefits of your project.

If you change your project without telling us, we could cancel your funding award, change it or refuse to pay funding for costs associated with the changes.

### Increased costs

If the total cost of your project increases, we will only award you further funding if we decide you could not have predicted this increase when you were applying. Depending on the thresholds, any increase in total costs may need to be assessed by a panel of experts. We will inform you if this is the case.

### Decreased costs

If the total eligible costs of your project decrease then so will the funding award.

If these changes mean that the targets and benefits will not be delivered as planned, you must inform us as soon as possible.

### Change of supplier

Sometimes suppliers to your project may change, if this is the case you must do the following:

- If you change supplier and costs increase, you must notify us before going ahead with any changes.
- If you change supplier and costs stay the same, you must notify us.

A rationale for all requested changes should be included in your amendment request.

## Change to project manager

If you have a change of project manager within your organisation you should inform us in writing, including new contact details, as soon as possible. If you do not inform us then it could result in your new project manager being unable to access or discuss the project or make a claim for payment.

## Change of Ownership

You should not sell or dispose of any items we have funded within five years of approval of your project. Consumables are exempt from this.

If you do need to sell or undertake any other action that changes the ownership of any funded item from the project within five years, you must inform us in writing. This includes indirect changes – for example, where a premises or vessel changes ownership or where the location of any funded items changes.

The new owners will be required to take on the terms and conditions of the funding for the time remaining up to five years from the date the original offer of funding was accepted. It is your responsibility as the original applicant to inform the new owners of the funding obligations.

If the new owner of the item or items does not accept these terms, recovery proceedings may be started and funding recovered from you as the original applicant.

## Declaring additional funding

If you apply for or receive funding through another scheme, you must:

- tell the organisation that runs the other scheme that you have been offered funding through the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme, and
- tell us that you have been accepted for another type of funding.

We may decide that you are no longer eligible for funding if you receive money from another scheme. This decision will be based on the conditions and amount of additional funding.

If you are deemed ineligible, we can take action to reclaim money from you, or cancel any payments that were due.

## Moving your vessel

You must not transfer a fishing vessel outside the UK for at least five years after spending funding on it – if you do this you will have to give back all or part of the funding you received. The exact amount you will need to repay will depend on when you transferred the vessel.

## 4. Requirements

### 4a. Inspections

You must let our officials visit your vessel or other sites related to your project to check your progress and ensure that the items purchased are in line with what is listed in your application.

The National Audit Office, or another official body, may also inspect your project. You will usually be given at least 48 hours' notice, but this is not a requirement.

### 4b. Records you must keep

If your application is successful, you must keep all documents related to your project for five years from the date of your last claim, including:

- licences,
- consents,
- quotes,
- invoices,
- receipts or other documents which record your spending,
- all accounting documents related to your application, and
- claim forms.

You should also keep your project documentation under a separate accounting system or accounting code to ensure it is easily differentiated from your businesses other accounts and transactions.

## 5. Contact us

**Write to:**  
MMO Grants Team  
Lancaster House  
Hampshire Court  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE4 7YH

**Telephone:**  
020802 65539

**Email:**  
[Fass.queries@marinemangement.org.uk](mailto:Fass.queries@marinemangement.org.uk)