

Eligibility criteria for Rural Business and Community Enterprise Fund

a) Available to:

- Any organisation with a legal status
- In most cases this will be private sector companies
- Other organisation types will be considered on a case-by-case basis. These could include voluntary organisations, registered charities or local authorities.

b) The type of project that we might fund:

- Equipment that will help a business or community enterprise to diversify, become more productive or grow.
- Refurbishments to existing buildings
- Adaptations to improve energy efficiency
- Training that will support staff development

c) What we will not fund:

- Low level maintenance and repairs
- Retrospective work
- Domestic property improvements.
- The purchase of private vehicles.
- Businesses located outside the eligible Test Valley rural area Projects for which the capital asset would be on land or property not owned or leased by the applicant.
- Projects for which the necessary planning consent has not been secured at the time the work is done.
- Projects or costs where there is a statutory duty to provide them.
- Projects that could be fully funded using private finance.
- Businesses in financial difficulty or that have ceased trading.
- Businesses for whom receipt of the requested REPF grant from the Council will exceed the Minimum Financial Assistance (MFA) threshold for the business as specified in section 36(1) of the Subsidy Control Act (2022). The total amount of 'Minimum Financial Assistance' (MFA) received over a rolling period of three fiscal years should not exceed £315,000 per business including the total amount of MFA received over the relevant period of three fiscal years across all businesses at company group level (including the grant you are applying for).
- Projects which may be construed as radicalising or encouraging people into terrorism, to ensure compliance with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

d) Funding is available for capital and revenue projects (excluding general running costs) Grants are available for up to 80% of the total cost of a project to a maximum proportional contribution of £10,000.

- e) Funding is for one-off expenditure only.
- f) Consideration of an award will take into account if a more suitable and accessible funding stream exists within TVBC.
- g) Work must not proceed until you have received formal notification of the grant.
- h) The following information must be provided:
 - Constitution if a voluntary or charitable organisation
 - A copy of the latest audited accounts if voluntary or charitable organisation
 - Quotes for each element will be required. Please indicate which quote your organisation has chosen for the work. The grant will normally be calculated on the lowest quote irrespective of your preferred contractor unless you provide good reason to the contrary. The number of quotes required are:

Estimated Contract Value	Minimum Number of Written Quotes Required to be sought
Under £10,000	1
Over £10,000	2

- i) A fully completed, signed and dated application form. Payment of the grant will be upon production of invoices or receipts and evidence of defrayal, e.g. bank statements. These must be addressed to the applicant organisation and dated after the date of approval.
- j) Applicants must provide a project timeline that demonstrates deliverability by 31 March each year.

If you meet all the criteria set out in the application, your project will proceed for evaluation and be considered against the following criteria:

Assessment Area	Evidence to be considered
Achievement of Rural Business and Community Enterprise Fund priorities	Fit of project to objectives Evidence of need Anticipated impact – e.g. jobs created, jobs safeguarded, enterprises created, business growth
Value for money* and additionality	Finance plan Engagement with other rural partners
Deliverability	Project plan Project leadership
Contribution to net zero and nature recovery objectives	Reduction in greenhouse gases Fit with 25 year environment plan Wider environmental considerations

*Value for Money:

- Achieving value for money can be described as using public resources in a way that creates and maximises public value.
- Public value is defined as the total well-being of the UK public as a whole. This covers all the economic, social and environmental impacts of a proposal.
- The aim of value for money assessments is to help decision-makers judge whether the expected costs of a proposal are justified by its expected benefits to the UK public as a whole, including both positive and negative impacts of the proposal on the economy, society, environment, and public accounts.

Any activity which may be construed as radicalising or encouraging people into terrorism must be reported. Should any allegation be received, or if the Council has reason to suspect noncompliance, the Council will investigate and may decide to cancel, modify or withdraw any offer or grant made to ensure compliance with the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.