

## REGIONAL FOOD FUND 2025/26 GUIDANCE NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Scotland Food & Drink Partnership Regional Food Fund (RFF). Before you complete the application form, **please read the following guidance notes carefully**. If you have any further questions, please contact the team on [rff@foodanddrink.scot](mailto:rff@foodanddrink.scot)

### ABOUT THE FUND

#### What is it?

The RFF has a total budget of £100k to support the development of regional food and drink projects across Scotland. For the purposes of the Fund, regional food can be defined as being produced/caught and processed within Scotland. Grants of between **£1k** and **£5k** are available (no VAT is added) per successful project

#### The RFF aims to:

- Contribute to the development of regional food in line with the national food and drink strategy, [Sustaining Scotland, Supplying the World](#); [Food Tourism Scotland](#) national action plan and Pillar 2, Connecting Scottish producers with buyers, [Local Food for Everyone](#)
- Provide funding for small-scale regional, collaborative projects and initiatives
- Stimulate creative, innovative & collaborative projects across the regions of Scotland

### FUND CRITERIA

#### Projects/activities must:

- Demonstrate that they contribute to the **promotion and sales** of local/regional produce
- Be **collaborative** - in other words, be a joint project that demonstrate a **collective benefit** to other food producers/communities. There must be **clear and evidenced partnership with, and benefit to, a group** of producers/communities as opposed to single businesses. **Projects that do not demonstrate this collaborative aspect will be ineligible for the grant** (\*see examples of eligible/ineligible projects below)
- **Align with** the Scotland Food & Drink Partnership's national strategy, [Sustaining Scotland, Supplying the World](#), [Food Tourism Scotland](#) and Pillar 2, Connecting Scottish producers with buyers, [Local Food for Everyone](#)
- Demonstrate **funding contributions from other sources**
- Demonstrate **measurable/tangible impact**
- Demonstrate **legacy**/have a plan in place for continuity, sustainability and long-term development and growth (for example, repeat event/new initiative arising/reinvestment in future activities)
- Be based and delivered in **Scotland**
- Be **completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026**

Please note that successful applicants are asked to participate in communications/case studies

**Eligible-** *businesses/groups/destinations working together to deliver:*

- ✓ Creation/enhancement of food tourism experiences\*
- ✓ Markets (physical/online)
- ✓ Collaborative Marketing/promotional campaigns
- ✓ Events/festivals promoting/selling local produce

*(\*Preferably those that have online bookable systems in place)*

Grant money **cannot** be used for:

- ✗ Fees for social media influencers, celebrities, music artists
- ✗ Transport and accommodation
- ✗ Substantial consultancy fees

**Ineligible-** *single businesses wanting to:*

- ✗ Buy a piece of equipment
- ✗ Develop a new website
- ✗ Run a social media campaign
- ✗ Fund new product development

Have a look [here](#) for projects awarded previously, and if you are in any doubt, please contact [rff@foodanddrink.scot](mailto:rff@foodanddrink.scot) before applying

## **OTHER ESSENTIAL INFORMATION**

### **Who can apply?**

As stated above, the RFF specifically applies to **collaborative** projects only, therefore applications can be made by:

- Individual businesses in the food and drink sector, including primary producers, on behalf of a collaborative group or project
- Regional and community groups
- Regional food groups
- Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)
- Individuals on behalf of a collaborative group or project

### **Please also note:**

- As the fund is competitive, with a high demand anticipated, being awarded funding is **not** guaranteed
- The panel also reserves the right not to award the full amount requested
- Eligible costs will be judged on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of an independent assessment panel
- Applicants who have received RFF grants in previous rounds are welcome to apply again where the proposed project differs from the last

## Reporting and payment of monies

- Successful applicants will receive a grant contract which they must return and sign within the requested date. This will include all the terms and conditions of the grant that must be adhered to. No monies will be issued unless this contract is signed
- Applicants will need to raise an invoice for both statements, quoting the PO provided
- Successful applications will receive 50% of the grant upfront, at an agreed date. The balance of funding will be paid upon project completion and the receipt and approval of a satisfactory final project report outlining the tangible impacts achieved
- An interim update will be required by the project team, with full details provided in advance

## Unsuccessful Applicants

- Applicants who are unsuccessful in this round and would like to receive feedback from the panel, please request this within 15 days of being notified. After, this time feedback will not be offered
- Due to the anticipated high volume of applications/queries, please allow 21 days for your feedback request to be answered

## HOW TO APPLY

### What you need to do

- Complete the online application form [here](#)
- Only applications submitted via this form will be accepted
- You can save the form as you go along
- Note the deadline of **5pm, Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025**; late applications will **not** be accepted

### Top tips

- Read the application questions [here](#) and prepare your answers before starting your application online (note that you can save the online application as you go)
- Clearly demonstrate how your project/activity meets the criteria, avoiding vague answers
- Be clear about your **objectives and how you will measure them** – if successful, your project report will need to demonstrate tangible impact
- Think about how you can **mitigate risks** to avoid your project progressing
- Submit your application in good time, if possible, to avoid rushing to meet the deadline

## ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- This is a competitive fund, and applications will be judged in line with the assessment criteria – applications that do not meet the criteria will be discounted at the first stage
- Your application will be acknowledged upon receipt
- The deadline for applications is final and no extensions will be granted
- An independent panel will assess all applications
- All applicants will be notified of the panel's decision in writing within 2-3 weeks of the closing date
- Applicants will be able to request feedback, however due to demand and limited funds available, we are unable to accept appeals for unsuccessful applications as only information provided at the time of entry will be considered
- Successful projects will be published on the Scotland Food & Drink website