

Expression of Interest: Nature Towns and Cities

01/10/2024

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We ask all applicants requesting a Nature Towns and Cities grant of £250,000 to £1million to submit an Expression of Interest before making an application.

Important

We are no longer accepting Expressions of Interest (EOI) for Nature Towns and Cities. We aim to be in touch with all applicants by 31 January 2025 to let you know the outcome of your EOI.

You must complete our standard Expression of Interest (EOI) to allow us to review the potential of your project to achieve the ambitions of the Nature Towns and Cities strategic initiative.

Important: The National Lottery Heritage Fund uses the same forms across a variety of programmes that we deliver. When completing your application, you must follow the guidance below as some questions need to be answered differently for this funding.

The EOI word count is deliberately short (maximum 1,000 words) to minimise the time and effort for you to complete this stage.

The deadline to submit an EOI was 12noon on 12 November 2024.

Additional supporting information

In addition to submitting an EOI, please email us a Word document containing the following information:

- a list of partners and organisations you intend to work with
- An Ordnance Survey type map of the total area across which you intend to work shown by a red boundary line. Please provide the map as an image pasted into a Word document rather than a link.
- an estimation of the total area of public green space that you intend to work across in hectares and as a percentage of the overall project area
- the total population that lives within your project area

The document should be no longer than two A4 pages. Please email it to: NTC@heritagefund.org.uk.

Before submitting

Make sure you have read:

- the [ambitions for this initiative on the Nature Towns and Cities website](#)
- the [application guidance for Nature Towns and Cities](#)
- the [application guidance for National Lottery Heritage Grants: £250,000 to £10m](#)

How to submit

When you are ready, please complete the Expression of Interest on our [Get funding for a heritage project service](#).

You will need to register an account for yourself and for the organisation you are applying for if you do not have one already.

Expression of Interest questions

You can read the questions on the Expression of Interest below.

Have you spoken to anyone at the Heritage Fund about your idea?

Tell us if you have spoken to anyone at the Heritage Fund and our partners or staff from the following organisations:

- National Trust
- Natural England
- NatureScot
- Natural Resources Wales
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Tell us their name, job title and organisation.

Describe what you will do during the project.

You have 200 words.

Tell us why a new ambitious plan for your public green and blue spaces is needed and what challenges and opportunities it will address.

Tell us about your strategic vision and ambition for urban parks and green spaces.

Do you have a title for the project?

This can be changed at any time.

Your project title must start with #NTC to help us identify that you would like to apply for a Nature Towns and Cities grant.

Please outline how your project will respond to our four investment principles.

You have 300 words.

When thinking about the Heritage Fund's four investment principles tell us how:

- your project will support urban nature recovery at scale across your area
- you will work with local communities across your area to help people have better and more equal access to public green spaces near where they live
- your project will use nature-based solutions to improve health, prosperity, community connection, pride in place and climate resilience

- your project will help you design new operational and funding models to unlock future funding

Tell us about the heritage of the project.

You have 100 words.

For this initiative tell us about areas of existing public green space and areas where you see potential to convert grey spaces to green spaces.

Tell us about the geographic area your project will focus on, for example:

- local authority administrative area(s)
- a city-region
- a group of towns

Tell us about the types of spaces. For example:

- historic parks
- community green spaces
- linear green routes
- new spaces

You are asked to provide a map of the area boundary and approximate total areas in a separate document.

What is the need for this project?

You have 200 words.

Describe any preparatory work you have already begun to understand the needs of local people and the potential of the area where you will work. Tell us if this project will build on or connect to other strategic work relating to public green space.

How long do you think the project will take?

You have 50 words.

Assuming a start date of July 2025 tell us how long your project will take to deliver.

How much is the project likely to cost?

You have 200 words.

You can apply for a grant between £250,000 and £1m towards the cost of your project. If you know them, tell us about the key costs you expect to incur. These can be estimates.

How much funding are you planning to apply for from us?

Submit an amount. You can apply for a grant between £250,000 and £1m.

When are you likely to submit a funding application, if asked to do so?

You do not need to answer this question. If you successfully pass the EOI stage, you will be invited to submit your application by Friday 7 March 2025.

Hearing back from us

We will aim to respond to all EOIs by 31 January 2025.

If successful, you will be invited to submit a full application from February 2025.

Further information on how to apply will be provided if your EOI is successful.

Funding decisions will be made in summer 2025.