

Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF): Colchester City Council

Guidance Notes for completing an Expression of Interest for a Large Capital Grant

This guide explains how to complete an Expression of Interest (Eoi) form for Colchester City Councils Rural England Prosperity Fund.

Before you start

Before you fill in the form read the *REPF CCC Delivery Plan & Guidance Notes for Applicants* that sets out the Priorities and Objectives for the area.

Explain things clearly. It will help your application if you answer the questions on the application form as fully and clearly as possible. Make sure that the information you give us is focussed and factual and be realistic when describing what your project will achieve.

Don't ask for the full amount if you don't need it: Just because you can get (say) 50% of your costs covered, don't ask for that amount if you don't need it. As long as you stay below the maximum, you can tell us what grant rate you want. (It's better value for taxpayers' money.)

When to send your form

All Eoi applications for grants above £25,000 will have to be submitted by 5pm on Monday 17th July 2023. You must ensure that your application is received by this date. If you are requesting grant for less than £25,000 you do not need to complete this form, only the Small Grant Application form.

How to send your form

You must email your completed full application form as a Microsoft Word attachment only to the email address: REPF.Applications@Colchester.gov.uk

Please note that we are unable to accept electronic applications submitted in other formats other than Word. We will not accept handwritten, scanned or PDF application forms.

If an agent or consultant sends the form for you, they must copy you into the email (using the email address you give us in section 2 of the form).

When CCC have approved this Eoi application and notified you formally you will be issued with a full application form.

Filling in the EoI Form

Complete every section. You must fill out every section on the form, unless the instructions say you can either write 'N/A' or move to the next question.

Eligibility Checklist

Before completing the application, you must confirm eligibility to apply by answering the questions beneath the eligibility checklist. These questions are designed to ensure that you do not invest time in completing the application if either previous funding received, or the location of the project, makes the project ineligible.

1.1 Confirm if you have received funding for this project from any of the DEFRA schemes listed. If you have, please contact the REPF team at REPF.Applications@colchester.gov.uk before proceeding any further.

1.2 Please provide the location details of the proposed project. It may be different to, you, the applicant's location. Only projects taking place in locations defined as rural will be considered. For guidance on how to ensure your project sits within the eligible area, please refer to the ***REPF CCC Delivery Plan & Guidance Notes for Applicants***. If you do not know the location of your project or are unsure whether it sits within an eligible area, please contact the REPF team at REPF.Applications@colchester.gov.uk before proceeding any further.

Section 1: Rural England Prosperity Fund Scheme Details

1.1 Select the priority from the drop-down menu that you think that your project comes under. Further information relating to the two national priorities can be found in your CCC REPF Delivery Plan. If you are unsure of the most relevant priority and objective, choose the one you think your project best fits in. The programme team will change it if they believe your project fits in another priority area.

1.2 Timescales: We need to know your proposed project timescales – input the proposed start date of the project (which is the date you intend to start work on your project and start incurring eligible costs) and the proposed financial completion date (which is the date you will have completed your project, incurred all costs and have submitted your final grant claim).

When considering the project timescales, please be realistic in how long the project will take. This is a common area where applicants underestimate the project timescales. **However, you should aim for your project to be finished and paid for, and all grant claims submitted, by 31st March 2025.** You must ensure that your project can be completed and paid for in full within these timescales.

Section 2: Applicant Details

2.1 Please give us the details of the main contact for this application.

If you're a sole trader, give us your details. If you're filling out this form on behalf of a larger business or organisation, we'd normally expect you to be a director or partner.

Section 3: Business organisation details

3.1 Please tell us the **full name of your business or organisation**. For registered businesses, use the full registered name of the business (this is the name used in the annual financial accounts.)

3.2 Please give the **full address of the business or organisation**. If the business has more than one address, give the postal address – we'll use this if we need to post anything to you.

3.3 **Email address** – we will use email as our main way of contacting you. Please provide an email address that you check regularly.

3.4 Choose the best fit for your **legal status of your business** from the drop-down menu list.

3.5 What is the **size of your business**: To check the size of your business please see below:

The size of your business depends on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees it has and its financial performance.

- What is a 'full-time equivalent' (FTE) employee?
 - Anyone who works a minimum of 30 hours per week counts as 1 FTE employee. A person working 30 hours a week for 3 months of the year would be 0.25 FTE employee.
 - FTEs include business partners and directors. If a business partner or director works more than 30 hours per week they still count as 1 FTE employee.

The table below shows what qualifies as a medium, small or micro business.

Business size	Number of FTE employees	Annual turnover or balance sheet total	
Micro	fewer than 10	and	£1.7 million or less
Small	fewer than 50	and	£8.5 million or less
Medium	fewer than 250	and	£42.5 million or less annual turnover OR £36.5million or less annual balance sheet total

3.6 Please provide the turnover and balance sheet total from your most recent accounts. If the business is less than 1 financial year old, and so has not filed any financial accounts yet, you can leave this blank.

3.7 Is your **business 'linked'** to other businesses?

If your business is linked to other businesses, this might mean you exceed the business size requirements and the funding limits.

The most common circumstances under which businesses are considered to be linked are:

- one business holds a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another business.
- one business is entitled to appoint or remove a majority of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another.
- a contract between the business, or a provision in the memorandum or articles of association of one of the businesses, enables one to exercise a dominant influence over the other.
- one business is able, by agreement, to exercise sole control over a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in another.

Who can't apply?

- Government departments are not eligible for any of the grants.

3.8 Choose the best fit for your **type of business** from the drop-down menu list.

3.9 **New business?** Select 'Yes' if your business has been trading for less than two years, or if you're not trading yet.

3.10 Please provide these numbers if your business has them – if not, write 'N/A' in the boxes.

Section 4: Previous grant funding received.

4.1 Please tell us if your business or the project you're applying for funding for has had any public funding since 2019/2020.

This does not include Single Payment Scheme or Basic Payment Scheme payments.

This does include funding from organisations such as your local authority or Local Enterprise Partnership

It also includes EU funding, such as from:

- European Social Fund (ESF)
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Growth Programme
- Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF)
- Forestry Commission
- LEADER

If your business has previously had public funding, please give the details in the table.

De minimis. You will know if a previous grant was awarded under industrial de minimis because it will say so on your grant agreement, or in other paperwork relating to that funding.

Section 5: Project Details

5.1 Please give the name of your project that will be included in correspondence and in any publicity. This should be concise and clear, and ideally no more than 50 characters.

5.2 Provide a brief description / summary of your project beginning with the words, 'This project will...'. You should aim to use no more than 200 words. In drafting consider this as a summary to key parts of the project and how the funding will develop and grow your business/organisation.

5.3 Read the **REPF CCC Delivery Plan & Guidance Notes for Applicants**, which will tell you what the priorities and local objectives are in Colchester City Council area. Explain which of these priorities and objectives your project will meet, and how it will do that.

5.4 Please tell us the project timescale with an expected start and completion date. It's helpful if you can try to be as accurate as possible. Do consider:

- Project start date – when do intend to start work on your project? You **cannot start** until you have signed a formal contract with CCC.
- Project completion date – this is when you expect to have completed the project works, paid all invoices and submitted your final claim for grant. This must be by **March 31st, 2025**.

5.5 'Outputs' are what will result from your project – you must be able to measure them. Please indicate by ticking the relevant boxes (and providing a projected quantity/number/value) which outputs you expect this project to deliver. Please complete only one table, depending on whether you are applying for business or community support.

Section 6: Project Costs

6.1 Total project cost: Enter the total cost in £. This is the estimated total expenditure of your project. This should be the total net cost.

6.2 Total REPF CCC grant funding sought: Tell us how much grant you are applying for in £ (this should be to 2 decimal places for example £40,000.00). Please make sure this is within the minimum and any maximum grant amounts set out in the **REPF CCC Delivery Plan & Guidance Notes for Applicants**.

6.3 Percentage of grant expenditure in 2023/24 vs 24/25: You can apply to split your total grant allocation across the two financial years (23/24 and 24/25) or you ask for 100% of your grant allocation in one year (either 23/24 or 24/25). Funds must be spent within the relevant financial year.

6.4 We expect an estimate of costs here, and not a highly detailed breakdown. You can add any more rows to the table if you need to.

Please fill in the table, which is divided into 2 sections:

- Grant funded project costs (top section) – costs you want to use the grant for

- Non-grant project costs (bottom section) – other costs relating to the project but which you are not applying for grant funding for

1. *'Type of cost'* column – tell us what the cost is for. Group similar costs under one heading. For example, group together all costs relating to building works, including materials and labour.

2. *'Grant rate %'* column – tell us what percentage of those costs you would like the grant to cover. All the grants have a maximum percentage of eligible costs that they can cover.

The maximum intervention for projects is as follows:

Type of project	Maximum percentage
Commercial, profit-making project (such as a tourist attraction)	up to 50%
Makes some income to offset costs but is not intended to make a profit (such as small buildings for tourist information; festivals)	up to 80%
Generates no income (such as a new cycle path)	up to 100%

3. *'Eligible project expenditure'* column – tell us the total amount of that cost.

4. *'Date expenditure will be incurred'* column – tell us when you expect to have to pay that cost.

5. The minimum and maximum grant interventions are as follows:

Grant size		Min £ Intervention	Max £ Intervention	Max grant rate	Application Process
Large	Business support	£25,000	£150,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% (Commercial, profit-making project) 	Two Stage: EoI and Full
	Community Support	£25,000	£80,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% (Makes some income to offset costs but is not intended to make a profit) • 100% (Generates no income) 	

6.5 If you get a grant, will you also be claiming for VAT as part of the costs? If not, select 'No' in the drop-down box and go to question 7. If so, explain why.

This is normally if your organisation is not VAT registered. Please note that at full application stage you will be expected to provide a letter from a suitably qualified independent accountant to confirm that you are not VAT registered or are making exempt supplies.

VAT can be a complex area. This table may help you decide whether you can include VAT in your project costs or not. Use this to explain why you have included VAT if applicable:

Status	Outcome
You are registered for VAT and making regular returns of VAT to HMRC	You will NOT be able to include VAT in your project costs or grant request because it is recoverable in full on VAT returns
You are not registered for VAT because your business is below the threshold for supplies	You will be able to include VAT in your project costs and grant request provided this status can be verified by RPA
You are not registered for VAT because you opted to join the Agricultural flat rate scheme instead	You will NOT be able to include VAT in your project costs or grant request because the flat rate scheme you have chosen to join is a simplification instead of registering for VAT. The terms of the scheme mean that you receive compensation for not being able to recover VAT paid by your business by retaining a Flat Rate Addition (FRA) added to sales invoices in respect of supplies made to VAT registered customers
You are registered for VAT, but you have also opted to join a flat rate scheme	You will NOT be able to include VAT in your project costs or grant request because the flat rate scheme you have chosen to join is a simplification which compensates you for not being able to reclaim input VAT. In addition, you are able to reclaim input VAT on certain capital assets costing over £2,000 through your VAT returns
You are registered for VAT and making exempt supplies meaning that not all VAT paid can be recovered on returns of VAT to HMRC	You may be able to include SOME of the VAT in your project costs or grant request providing the extent to which your business cannot recover VAT can be verified by CCC

Section 7: Permissions

Tell us if your project needs planning permission, when you will apply for it or if you already have it.

7.2 You must choose 'N/A', 'Yes' or 'No' for each question. Use the comments boxes to give more information about your answers, if you need to.

Declarations

Please read this section and make sure that you are in agreement with and can meet the requirements set out in it. By submitting and/or agreeing to the submission of the expression of interest form, you will be agreeing to the declaration.