

## Rural England Prosperity Fund

### Colchester City Council

## Guidance Notes for making a Full Application for Small Grant Scheme

### Community Support

This guide explains how to complete a Full Application (FA) form for Colchester City Council's Rural England Prosperity Fund Small Grant Scheme.

#### Before you start

Before you fill in the form read the ***REPF CCC Delivery Plan & Guidance Notes for Applicants*** for Colchester City Council's REPF Programme 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

Applications open on Tuesday 30 May 2023. You must send in your completed application form via email by 5pm on Monday 14 August 2023.

#### 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](mailto:REPF.Applications@colchester.gov.uk). You must also attach the completed full application spreadsheet as a Microsoft Excel document and attachments to the email.

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).

We are unable to return any supporting documents.

Your application will be appraised prior going to an approval panel. You will be notified within 5 working days of the outcome of the panel. Please **DO NOT START WORK** on your project prior to receiving written approval.

### Filling in the Small Grants Application 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. The boxes on the form are expandable.

## Part A: Word Document Full Application Form

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:REPF.Applications@colchester.gov.uk) before proceeding any further.

### Section 1: Project Identification details

#### Section 1: Rural England Prosperity Fund Scheme Details

1.1 **Select the priority and objective** from the drop-down menu that you think that your project comes under. Descriptions of each of the two national priorities can be found in your ***REPF CCC Delivery Plan & Guidance Notes for Applicants***. 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 Name of business/organisation:** Please tell us the full name of your business or organisation. This is the name used on your annual financial accounts and your business bank account.

**2.2 Business/organisation address, including postcode:** Please give the full address of the applicant business. If the organisation has more than 1 address, it should be the address that all postal correspondence should be sent.

**2.3 Applicant name:** Give your title, first name and surname.

**2.4 Role in business/organisation:** Provide your job title or details of your position/role within the business.

**2.5 Applicant email address:** Please provide the email address we should use to contact you if we have any queries regarding the application. We will use email as our main way of contacting you so please make sure you provide an address that you check regularly. This should be your email address and not one for your agent or manager, whose details you can give at Section 3.

**2.6 Applicant mobile phone number:** Please provide your mobile phone number in case we need to speak to you directly.

**2.7 Business/organisation telephone number:** It is helpful for us to have 2 different telephone contact numbers should we need them.

**2.8 Directors / insolvency register:** Please complete the table with yes/no answers to each question and provide details relating to any 'yes' answer. Business 'principals' means an owner, partner or director. Please note that a 'yes' answer will not automatically exclude you from receiving grant funding.

## Section 3: Applicant organisation details

- 3.1 Choose the best fit for your **legal status of your business** from the drop-down menu list.
- 3.2 Choose the best fit for your **type of business** from the drop-down menu list.
- 3.3 **New business?** Select 'Yes' if your business has been trading for less than two years, or if you're not trading yet.
- 3.4 Please provide these numbers if your business has them – if not, write 'N/A' in the boxes.

## Section 4: Agent details

**4.1 Agent/consultant/business manager:** Please tell us if you have used an agent, consultant or business manager to help complete your application. If you would like us to include them in discussions about your application, please provide their contact details at questions 4.2 to 4.6.

## Section 5: Other funding received.

**5.1 Other public sector or European funding:** Please tell us if you or your business/organisation has received any other public sector funds and if you or your business have received or applied for any other public sector funds for your proposed project.

5.2 Use the table in the application form to provide details of the funding.

This should include details of any other grant applications you have made and not yet heard the outcome. This does not include Single Payment Scheme or Basic Payment Scheme payments.

This does include funding from public sector organisations like your local authority, Big Lottery, levy board funds or other Government grants.

You will know if 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 6: Project details

**6.1 Project name:** Please provide the name of your project that will be included in any correspondence and in any publicity. This should be clear and concise, and preferably no more than 50 characters. Ideally, the project name should be your business name followed by up to 5 words describing the project – for example, A Smith and Son: Farm Shop development.

**6.2 Business/organisation background:** Please provide us with detail to show how your business/organisation has developed and how and why the proposed project has been identified. What is the history of the business and how does this project fit within future

plans? If your business is not yet trading or has been trading for less than 2 years, explain the business structure and describe what stage it is at in terms of establishment and growth.

**6.3 Project description:** In a maximum of 500 words, please describe exactly what the project is, what it will do and what it will achieve. Tell us what you are going to do, buy, build, install or create with the grant funding.

**6.4 Fit to REPF Priorities:** Please explain how your project will meet one or more of the REPF Strategic Objectives:

Strategic Priorities	CCC Strategic Objectives
P2: Supporting rural communities.	2.1: To provide investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities
	2.2: To provide investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups
	2.3: To create and improve local rural green spaces
	2.4: To support and enhance existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer
	2.5: To stimulate local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities
	2.6: To support active travel enhancements in the local area
	2.7: To promote and generate a rural circular economy.
	2.8: To support volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.

**6.5 Need for project:** Please explain why the project needs funding to enable it to go ahead; in brief what options you have considered and what would happen if grant was not offered. Describe the market need, demand and explain who your target markets are and how you will supply to them.

**6.6 Competition and displacement:** *Do other businesses/organisations offer the same or similar service/product/activity as proposed by your project?* Identify any other business offering the same or similar activities, services or products proposed by your project. Depending on the nature of your project, competitor businesses could be local, regional or national. In some cases, you may be competing internationally. Please provide the location, name and nature of all similar competitors serving the same target market. You must demonstrate that you have fully researched and considered all possible competitors to your

project. Explain how you have defined your market area, for example if your target market area is a 25-mile radius, why and how have you decided that?

*What impact will your project have on them?* Tell us if your project will offer something different to what is already available or whether it will generate new trade and not simply displace their business. Explain whether you have contacted any of these competitor businesses to discuss your project with them. Projects that displace custom from other businesses will not be supported.

## Section 7 Project Outputs and Milestones

**7.1 Outputs:** are the actual and real benefits that will result from your project which are used to evidence its success – you must be able to measure them. Please use the tick box to indicate whether you expect your project to deliver an output. If you have ticked the box, please then provide a number or quantity to indicate how much of that output is expected.

**7.2 Milestones:** Complete the table in 7.2 with the key project specific outputs and milestones/stages for the implementation of the project and the dates they have been or are expected to be achieved. Examples might include:

- the start of the construction work.
- key stages in construction e.g., completion of ground works.
- recruitment of new employees.
- achieve \* rating for accommodation.
- obtain food hygiene certification.
- the start of delivery.
- key deliverable project specific outputs (including any that are not listed in REPF Outputs); and
- dates payments are complete.

The project milestones should reflect the key steps of your project delivery – what you will need to do and when.

## Section 8: Project costs, funding and quotes

**8.1 Total project expenditure:** Enter the total cost in £. This is the total expenditure of your project. This should be the total net cost, unless your business is unable to reclaim full VAT and you wish to include VAT in your grant request. For further guidance on VAT, see 8.7 below.

**8.2 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 £20,000.00). 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***.

**8.3 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.

**8.4 Detailed costs of your project:** please provide details of all costs for your project (both grant funded and non grant funded). Wherever possible, group the costs into subheadings, for example building costs, ground works, processing equipment etc.

**8.5 Sources of project funding:** Describe the sources of all the project funding you have secured or have conditional agreement for (subject to grant being awarded for the project), their status and the amount.

You'll need to provide evidence of the match funding part (sub point 1 above) with your application. This could be an email, letter or copy of the agreement to support this which must show:

- where the funding is coming from (a named person or organisation);
- how much the funding is for;
- that the amount is sufficient to fund the project.
- who the funding is being offered to; and
- the date of the offer.

If you're funding the project from other sources, such as savings, personal loans from family/friends, director's loans or cash reserves within the business you must also be able to demonstrate where it is coming from, how much it is for and that it is sufficient to help fund the project, for example a bank or building society statement that shows the funds are available to the business. If the funding for the project is part of a larger mortgage or loan, please explain how you will be able to make use of this facility and demonstrate that there are sufficient funds available for the project.

**8.6 Irrecoverable VAT:** Where VAT can be recovered from HMRC, it should not be included in your project costs. Please explain here if you have included VAT in your project costs and why it is not recoverable. This would normally be if your business is not VAT registered.

If you are including VAT in your project costs and grant request, you will need to provide a letter from HMRC or a professionally qualified independent accountant to confirm that you are not VAT registered or are making exempt supplies.

A professionally qualified accountant is defined as: a member of CIMA or the CCAB constituent bodies (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants); or Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales ICAEW, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants ACCA, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy CIPFA, Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland ICAS, and Chartered Accountants Ireland).

This table may help you decide whether you can include VAT in your project costs or not.

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 with your full application
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 at full application and claim stages

**8.7 Evidence of costs:** You must provide the required number of quotes or references to catalogue listings for every item included in your application to demonstrate how you will get best value for it.

You must provide details of all the evidence of costs on Tab B 'Costs and suppliers' in the FA spreadsheet.

This table explains how many quotes or catalogue references are required, depending on the value of an item.

Value of item or service	How to show value for money
£1,500 or less	2 quotes or references to 2 catalogue listings (including online suppliers)
>£1,501 to £10,000	3 quotes or references to 3 catalogue listings (including online suppliers)



>£10,001 - £50,000	3 quotes or 2 quotes and a reference to a catalogue listing (including online suppliers)
>£50,001 or more	3 quotes

If you have not provided the required number of quotes or references to catalogue listings for any item included in your project costs, please explain why. Are there no other suppliers available, either domestically or globally? You also need to explain how you have ensured that the cost of the item represents value for money and provide evidence of this with your application.

**All quotes or tenders must:**

- come from different, independent suppliers who are not linked to each other or to your business through shared ownership or control.
- be sourced independently by you or your agent. A supplier cannot source quotes from other suppliers on your behalf; and
- meet the detailed requirements set out below.

**The quotes or tenders must:**

- include a detailed and itemised breakdown of costs.
- include the supplier's business name, address (including postcode) and telephone number.
- be comparable with each other in terms of quality, size, quantity, units and specification for every item.
- have been obtained within the last 9 months and still be valid; and
- be addressed to the applicant business or agent (containing the business name, business or project address, if different, and postcode). If the quote is addressed to your agent, it must clearly reference the project and its location.
- If the quotes or tenders don't meet the requirements shown above, you may need to submit revised quotes or tenders that do. Ultimately, we may remove the item from consideration if it is not supported by valid quotes or tenders.

**Cheapest quote**

We expect applicants to use the best value quote – that means getting the best value on the market and so you are expected to use the cheapest supplier for each project item. Where a more expensive quote has been selected, we will base any grant on the value of the cheapest quote only. You can still use a more expensive supplier but will be expected to fund the difference in cost yourself and explain your rationale.

**8.8 Second hand items:** Provide details of any project items that you intend to purchase second hand and why you wish to do this. When you request quotes for the second-hand item, you will need to ask the supplier to confirm the following points (provide a copy of the email with your application):

- detail of the origin of the item and confirmation that during the previous 7 years the item has not been purchased with public funding. If you are unable to obtain this confirmation from the supplier you should make your own enquiries and provide us with a declaration to confirm that to the best of your knowledge, the item has not previously been grant funded;
- that the item meets health and safety legislation.
- that the item doesn't cost more than the market value for new equipment; and
- that the item is operational and fit for the purpose of the project as described by you to them when you get the quote.
- You will also need to confirm that the item specification is equal to or better than a new equivalent version, that it meets the requirements of the project and is expected to last for the duration of any grant agreement that might be offered to you.
- You will also need to confirm that the description given to the supplier was consistent with the purpose for the project as set out in your application (you could supply any email you sent to all prospective suppliers asking them to provide a quote that sets out what you want to use the equipment for).

If you are unable to obtain the supplier confirmation with the quote, you must explain why and tell us how you know that the item will meet the criteria as set out above. What other evidence do you have? Please bear in mind that if you do not provide confirmation from the supplier that meets these requirements prior to claiming any grant, we will be unable to make payment. If your second-hand item is no longer available at the time we approve your application, you can make a request to use a different supplier and will need to provide the confirmation from that supplier as set out above with the new quote.

You do not need to obtain 3 quotes for second hand items. It is acceptable to submit 1 quote for the second-hand item and 2 further quotes for new items as long as they are comparable with each other in terms of item specification and the cost of the second-hand item is cheaper than the cost of a new item.

## Section 9: Permissions and licences

**9.1 Rented/leased/tenanted land or premises:** Confirm here whether the project will take place on land or in premises that are rented, leased or tenanted.

**9.2 If yes,** you will need to provide details of your rental, lease or tenancy agreement including end dates of the current agreement, where applicable in the table.

You don't need to send us a copy of the whole agreement at this point, but we may ask for it in the future. We will need to see a copy of the sections containing the property address, tenant, landlord, signatures and the tenancy term for fixed term arrangements.

If your application is approved and a fixed term arrangement is in place but has less than 6 years to run, you will need to provide evidence that a new agreement is in place and provide the above details when your current agreement ends.

If you have an oral tenancy agreement, you should provide written evidence from your landlord confirming that you have security of tenure for at least 6 years.

**9.3 Planning permission:** Please tell us here if planning permission is required for your project. If it is, please complete question the table.

Please provide your Local Authority reference number and the date of approval, or the date you are expecting a decision. You will need to have full planning consent in place before a decision can be made on your application. You must provide a copy of the permission document to show this. You must make sure that the planning consent is consistent with the proposed end usage as set out in your application.

If you have not yet submitted your planning application to the CCC, do not submit your full grant application until you have done so.

This is a competitive scheme, and we are unable to commit funds to projects that are dependent on planning permission to proceed.

We would normally expect planning permission to be required for all projects that involve building work or a change of use of existing buildings. Where your project falls into one of these categories but planning permission isn't required, you must explain why and provide written confirmation (a letter or email) of this from CCC.

## Section 10: Governance and delivery of the project

**10.1 Successful delivery of project:** Explain how you intend to manage the project successfully from when funding is agreed to date of final claim. Please explain what the project management team are with any relevant skills and experience of delivering similar projects.

**10.2 Post grant funding:** Explain how the project will continue post project completion.

**10.3 How will you monitor the success of the project:** Please explain how you will know if your project has been successful and how you will monitor and manage this success.

**10.4. Risk:** what are the risks to the delivery of the project? Explain how you will mitigate them. What are the risks post project completion. Complete the table at 12.4.

## Section 11: Environmental, diversity, equality and community cohesion impacts

**11.1 Environmental impacts of your project:** All applicants should seek to ensure that the project activity does not have adverse effects on the environment. Possible negative impacts should be minimised, and any positive impacts should be enhanced wherever possible. Explain how any impacts have been taken into account in the design and delivery of the project.

*Positive environmental impacts* could include improvements in energy efficiency and reduction of carbon emissions which help reduce the impact of climate change, enhancements of natural habitats, eco-systems and biodiversity or investments to help reduce

the loss of biodiversity, reduction in waste generation, use of recycled materials or consideration of sustainable transport. Identify any environmental benefits that the project will deliver and achieve and explain how any positive impacts will be maximised.

*Negative environmental impacts* could include visual impact, significant increases in traffic, pollution (including noise and dust) and impacts on wildlife habitats and biodiversity. These might be short term impacts (for example, during a construction phase) or longer-term impacts from the ongoing presence and use of a facility with for example increased footfall and more vehicles in the area.

*Describe what actions will be taken to mitigate or minimise these impacts*, for example tree planting to screen development, environmental or natural habitat enhancements, offsetting environmental areas, road improvements etc.

**11.2 Equality and diversity impacts:** Explain how you have considered any equality and diversity impacts and how these have been taken into account in the design and delivery of the project. What steps have you taken to understand the potential impact, both positive and negative, of the project on different equality groups and communities including race, gender, age and disability? Equality should be integrated into all aspects of project planning, development and implementation.

**11.3 Community cohesion impacts:** Explain how your project will improve local community cohesion for people. Is the local community in support of your project? Is the community the project will benefit proactively involved in the development and implementation of the activity? Is the community the project will benefit proactively involved in the development and implementation of the activity? Are they working in partnership with the project applicant? Are they working in partnership with you, the project applicant?

## Declarations

Please read this section and make sure that you are in agreement with and can meet the requirements set out in it. The declaration must be acknowledged by all business owners, partners or company directors unless the main applicant is authorised to sign the form on their behalf. In this case, you must make sure the person who agrees to the declaration has the authority to do so as we may ask to see evidence of this.

By submitting and/or agreeing to the submission of the full application form, you will be agreeing to the declaration. Please remember to agree to the agent authorisation section if you want them to act on your behalf and liaise with us regarding your application.

When agreeing to your declaration, you need to be aware than in certain scenarios grant support may be refused or withdrawn in full. These are when it has been determined that:

- a serious non-compliance by the grant beneficiary has occurred.

- the grant beneficiary has provided false evidence; or
- the grant beneficiary has failed to provide the necessary information due to negligence.

The withdrawal of grant support may be applied for the calendar year of notification plus the following calendar year. In addition, support may be refused for other Rural Development schemes. Grant Beneficiaries will be notified and will have the right of appeal against such a decision.

### Supporting documents checklist

All supporting documents that you need to submit to support your application are listed at the back of the application form. You need to review this list and tick the box to confirm you have included the document with your application. There is a comments box for you to provide an explanation if necessary.

If we don't receive all of the supporting documents required for your project, we won't be able to assess it. This may impact on your project timescales. If you don't provide these documents when we request them from you or they don't meet our requirements, your application may be rejected.

Please make sure your supporting documents meet the following requirements:

#### Full application and spreadsheet

Detailed instructions on how to complete the FA appendix spreadsheet are set out at Part B below. This must be fully completed and saved in the correct format.

#### Applicant business accounts

We require the most recent year of full audited or unaudited accounts. You must make sure that you send a full set of accounts, including profit and loss, balance sheet and the cover, title and introduction pages. Include the pages which disclose all the Notes to the Accounts if there are any. Do not send 'abbreviated accounts' as these will not be accepted.

Please use the comments box on the application form to tell us if your business/organisation accounts do not meet these requirements. For example, some small businesses may not produce full sets of accounts, but we would still expect to see a profit and loss and balance sheet summary.

Please note that we are unable to accept only 'Abridged Accounts' from small or micro companies and Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) as they do not contain fundamental information on turnover that we need to assess eligibility and financial viability. If you produce 'Abridged Accounts' you must provide a statement to accompany them which discloses turnover, cost of sales/direct costs and gross profit for the 3 most recent accounting periods. This statement must be endorsed by an independent and suitably qualified accountant.

### New businesses or self-employed applicants

If you do not have a set of accounts reporting at least 12 months trading performance, you will need to provide your latest tax returns, management or draft accounts or an opening statement from an independent accountant that includes expected income and operating expenses.

### Consents and permissions

If your project requires planning permission, you must provide a copy of the full consent document with your application if it has been approved. If it has not yet been granted, you must provide the full planning consent as soon as it is available. If planning is not required, provide written evidence from your CCC Planning Department that confirms this.

If you are a tenant, include the relevant sections from your agreement as set out on the form.

If you have obtained any other consents, licences or permissions for your project, forward copies to us.

## Part B: Spreadsheet Small Full Application

### Tab A: Application Details

Please enter the project name and applicant business/organisation name as entered onto the application form.

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 must have your project to be finished and paid for, and all grant claims submitted, by **31 March 2025**.

You must ensure that your project can be completed and paid for in full within these timescales.

### Tab B: Costs and Suppliers

For each item of project expenditure, provide the supplier's name, the quoted amount (both excluding and including VAT) and the supplier's VAT number and company registration number (where applicable).

You must show all costs that are being included in your grant application. Wherever possible, group the costs into subheadings, for example building costs, ground works, processing equipment etc.

You need to provide these details for each supplier, starting with your preferred supplier and moving to the right to complete each row for the second and third suppliers.