

Coronavirus: £100m Zoo Animals Fund opens for applications

The £100m Zoo Animals Fund, [announced on 27 June](#) , is now open for applications.

The new fund will provide funding for zoos and aquariums which need additional support in caring for their animals following a drop in income caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

From today, licensed zoos and aquariums which are facing severe financial difficulties as a result of the virus will be able apply for government grants of up to £730,000 to pay for animal welfare related costs and essential maintenance.

Grants will be awarded on the basis of need where zoos face a shortfall despite doing everything they can to reduce their costs and raise income. This will include money to pay for veterinary care, medicines and animal feed as well as paying for staffing costs for those directly providing animal care.

The fund also offers grants to support rehoming costs in the event that zoos need to downsize or potentially close, and is open to those zoos which have already received support through the £14 million Zoo Support Fund.

Animal Welfare Minister Lord Goldsmith said:

It has been great to see zoos and aquariums welcoming people back again over the past six weeks, but I know what a challenging period this remains and hope the opening of the fund provides some much-needed relief.

We'll continue to work closely with the zoo community over the coming months, and remain absolutely committed to ensuring that zoos and aquariums have the support they need to provide the best possible care for their animals.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury Steve Barclay said:

Zoos and aquariums have done a fantastic job in reopening safely in challenging circumstances, and it is brilliant to see so many of them busy welcoming visitors to their parks.

However, we remain committed to giving them the continuing support they need to look after their animals over this winter, which is why this fund, open for applications from today, will help zoos maintain their world-leading animal welfare standards.

There are already a number of support schemes available to zoos, including the Job Retention Scheme, VAT deferral, Business Rates Relief, the Business Interruption Loan schemes, the option to reclaim the costs of Statutory Sick Pay and grant funding of up to £25,000 available through the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund.

The Zoo Animals Fund will remain [open for applications](#) until 16 November 2020 and will run until the end of March 2021.