

Fisheries and Seafood Scheme funding rounds open for applications

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has today (25 August) opened four funding rounds for applications to help support the fishing and seafood sector in England.

The time-limited competitive rounds, which are being delivered by MMO on behalf of Defra under the £6.1 million Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FaSS), will match fund projects that deliver sustainable growth in the catching, processing and aquaculture sectors, and that conserve, enhance and support the recovery of the marine environment. They consist of:

- Grants for projects that support businesses trading in Live Bivalve Molluscs (LBMs).
- Grants for projects that contribute towards protecting the marine environment.
- Grants for projects that deliver world class science and technological advancements.
- Grants for projects that support or enhance the recreational sea fishing sector.

Launching the funding rounds, Fisheries Minister Victoria Prentis said:

The Fisheries and Seafood Scheme is an important part of our ongoing commitment to support the seafood industry as it accesses new opportunities outside of the EU. The funding will help create a sustainable and successful future for the catching, processing and aquaculture sectors.

These four funding rounds will support shellfish businesses adapt to new trading conditions, help fishermen safeguard our marine ecosystems, support world-class science and boost our recreational angling sector. I encourage all eligible businesses to apply.

Tom McCormack, Chief Executive Officer of the MMO, added:

The new funding rounds provide another opportunity to support our seafood industries and coastal communities to adapt and thrive as we work together to protect the environment.

We look forward to receiving applications that will result in improved equipment and processes, and innovations in science,

technology and knowledge that will further our shared ambition to see our seas, coasts and communities prosper.

Live Bivalve Molluscs (LBM)

This time-limited and competitive funding round is open to individuals or business engaged within commercial activities in the LBM sector.

Projects applying for financial support through this funding round must contribute towards one or more of the following:

- strengthening the financial resilience of LBM businesses and long-term viability
- supporting LBM businesses seeking to adapt to new trading conditions
- enabling LBM businesses to have access to infrastructure (including depuration and other processing facilities) to enable domestic sales and exports.

This may include depuration or other processing facilities to support adaptation.

This funding round will have an individual grant cap of £150,000 per project. The closing date for submissions is 6 October 2021. A review panel will be convened in late October to assess and score projects against the funding round criteria.

Science and Technology Advancements

Delivering world class science and innovation is one of the seven strategic priorities of the FaSS. The target outcomes of this funding round include:

- Increasing innovative or technological advancements in the seafood sector
- Developing new or substantially improved products and equipment
- Developing new or substantially improved processes, techniques and behaviours
- Increasing partnerships between the science communities and the catching, processing and aquaculture sectors.

This time-limited competitive funding round is available to individuals or business engaged in commercial fishing, aquaculture or seafood processing; public bodies and local authorities that focus on fishing and aquaculture activities, universities, research institutes and NGOs.

Projects receiving financial support through this funding round must contribute towards one or more of the outcomes set out above. Eligible activities include conservation management, protecting/enhancing marine habitats, and supporting carbon net zero.

The closing date for submissions is 6 October 2021. A review panel will be convened in late October to assess and score projects against the funding

round criteria.

Protecting the Marine Environment

Protecting the marine environment is one of the strategic priorities of the FaSS. Applications for this time-limited competitive funding round must contribute towards the following target outcomes:

- improving the management of the marine environment, including through the design and implementation of conservation measures, improved environmental monitoring, innovation linked to conservation and techniques and/or equipment to protect the marine environment.
- protecting and enhancing marine habitats and species, and the restoration of marine habitats, thereby contributing to Good Environmental Status as required by the UK Marine Strategy and the Fisheries Act 2020
- supporting climate change adaptation, resilience and mitigation, contributing to net zero by 2050.

This may include supporting innovative and technological advances and the development of new products and processes.

The closing date for submissions is 6 October 2021. A review panel will be convened in late October to assess and score projects against the funding round criteria.

Recreational Sea Fishing

This round will fund projects that support or enhance the sector. This includes improvements to infrastructure, programmes that contribute to environmental and fish stock sustainability (such as innovations in new gear or technology, provision of professional advice, fisheries management plans or pilot studies) and educational or promotional campaigns.

This time-limited competitive funding round is available to businesses and organisations based in England engaged with recreational sea fishing, public bodies and local authorities that focus on fishing and aquaculture activities, universities, research institutes and NGOs. Individual anglers are not eligible.

The closing date for submissions is 6 October 2021. A review panel will be convened in late October to assess and score projects against the funding round criteria.

For more information on these funding rounds, eligibility criteria and details on how to apply, go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fisheries-and-seafood-scheme#FaSS>

The Fisheries and Seafood Scheme remains open for eligible projects outside of these funding rounds. The fund focuses on projects that help businesses adapt to life outside the EU's Common Fisheries Policy and recover from the impacts of Covid-19.

It is also funding a wide range of projects from providing professional advice to local businesses and encouraging local sales, to making fishing gear more selective of size and species and working conditions safer. In line with the Government's commitment to tackle climate change across all sectors of the UK economy, the scheme will work with the seafood sector to reduce emissions and provide environmental improvements.

The scheme match funds projects that aim to:

- Create new opportunities for businesses – such as exploring new local markets and support to sell a wider range of products
- Support business to adapt to new markets and respond to new trading conditions
- Support sustainability – with the potential to boost the traceability of the fish landed and promote environmentally-friendly processing methods
- Protect the environment – with equipment that reduces the impact of fishing on the marine environment *Improve safety on fishing vessels and on shore – by supporting high standards of health, safety, hygiene, and working conditions across the seafood sector

FaSS is in addition to the £23 million committed earlier this year to support seafood exporters, fishing and aquaculture businesses affected by Covid-19 and new trading conditions.

You can find out more, and submit your online application, on our website: <http://www.gov.uk/guidance/fisheries-and-seafood-scheme>.