

Forestry Commission launches new Tree Production Innovation Fund

Press release

New fund to ensure the quantity, quality and diversity of domestic planting stock available for tree planting in England.



A new £1 million fund to increase and diversify our domestic tree production has been announced by the Forestry Commission today (21 July), in partnership with Defra.

With £1 million available this year, the [Tree Production Innovation Fund](#) will encourage the development and adoption of new technologies and ways of working that will ensure the quantity, quality and diversity of planting stock available for tree planting in England.

In May 2021, the government launched the [England Trees Action Plan](#) which aims to treble tree planting rates in England by the end of this Parliament, reflecting England's contribution to meeting the UK's overall target of planting 30,000 hectares per year by the end of this Parliament.

The fund will support nurseries to increase and diversify the domestic supply of young trees to facilitate an increase in tree production while maintaining high levels of biosecurity, helping to reach planting targets.

Applicants will be invited to apply for up to £200,000 in grant funding to support projects designed to address one or more of the following challenges identified through stakeholder engagement as barriers to tree production.

These include:

- Making better use of available seed and vegetative planting material to maximise the quantity, quality and diversity of trees produced
- Developing growing systems to enhance their efficiency and resilience to change, whilst delivering improved quality and diversity of product
- Using innovative environmentally sustainable weed control solutions to reduce reliance on herbicides

Forestry Commission Chair Sir William Worsley said:

I fully believe forestry needs to embrace new technology, and in turn we need to develop technology that can support the future of forestry. We need new and innovative ideas to drive this change and I'm pleased this £1 million funding will support nurseries to increase and diversify domestic tree supply.

By enhancing the quantity, quality and diversity of planting stock available now, it will help our trees to be healthy and resilient to the impacts of changing climate and increasing threats from pests and diseases into the future.

Lead applicants to the fund will need to be based in the UK and the Forestry Commission welcome applications from consortia and new entrants to the sector.

The fund will open for applications on 21 July 2021, with the application window closing at 11.55pm on 8 September 2021 and successful projects running for a six month period between October 2021 and March 2022.

For more information on the [tree planting and establishment grants available see here](#).

Published 21 July 2021