



The European Agricultural Fund for  
Rural Development: Europe  
investing in rural areas.



## **The Rural Development Programme for England**

### **The Northwest Application Form**

# **GUIDANCE NOTES**

**for Projects in the Northwest of England  
seeking a direct grant between £100,000 and £250,000  
of RDPE Investment**

These Guidance Notes have been designed to help you make the best possible case for RDPE support and to ensure we reach a decision on your application as quickly as possible.

**Thank you for your time taken to read these notes.**

**Any Questions or Help Needed?**

**Please contact:**

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## The Rural Development Programme for England

### GUIDANCE NOTES for Applicants using the Northwest Application Form seeking an RDPE investment of between £100,000 and £250,000.

The Question Asked and what we would like to see in your answer...	
<b>1:</b>	<p><b>What is the name of the applicant business/organisation?</b></p> <p>Tell us the full name by which your business/organisation is registered. Please do not use colloquial names or acronyms.</p>
<b>2:</b>	<p><b>What is the registered address of the business/organisation?</b></p> <p>Provide the full address of the business/organisation including the post code. Please note that this is the address we will use to contact you through.</p>
<b>3:</b>	<p><b>Who will be the main contact?</b></p> <p>Identify the person to whom all our communications regarding the project should be addressed. Ideally the named contact should be someone who has ongoing knowledge of the project.</p>
<b>4:</b>	<p><b>What is their job title/status?</b></p> <p>Tell us the job title within an organisation – or “owner” or “partner in the business”. This is so it is clear what the nature of the main contact is to the project.</p>
<b>5:</b>	<p><b>Please provide a telephone contact number.</b></p> <p>This should be the number the main project contact is most likely to be reached on. It could be a mobile or landline number. You can provide more than one contact number for the same person.</p>
<b>6:</b>	<p><b>Email address</b></p> <p>This should be the email address for the main project contact. Again you may provide more than one email address if necessary. If you do not have an email please let us know that. Please do not provide an email address if you do not use it regularly.</p>
<b>7:</b>	<p><b>Will the above person be managing the project?</b></p> <p>In some cases, the main contact person is not the person who will be managing the project as you may be employing someone to work on the project directly.</p>

8:	<p><b>If no please provide the contact details for the person who will be managing the project.</b></p> <p>Their name, address, telephone number and email contact details for the person who will be managing the project. If this is not known at this stage the details can be provided at a later date.</p>
9:	<p><b>How would you describe your business/ organisation?</b></p> <p>Identify the status of your business/organisation Examples include: Registered charity, Company limited by guarantee, company limited by shares, Trust, Local Authority. This list is not exhaustive. We can advise if you are unsure. We would also want to see any registration number associated with your status. You should also provide your farm holding number and SBI number if applicable</p>
10:	<p><b>Is your business/organisation VAT registered? If yes, what is your VAT number?</b></p> <p>Simply yes or no and if yes, the relevant VAT Number.</p> <p>Please note that VAT is not an eligible project cost if you are able to recover any VAT element from H.M. Revenue and Customs.</p>
11:	<p><b>Are you starting out a new business?</b></p> <p>Simply Yes or No. Please tick 'Yes' if your application is to assist in the setting up of a new business. We ask this question as we have to report the EU the number of new businesses RDPE have supported.</p>
12:	<p><b>Total number of full time (30+hour) equivalent employees?</b></p> <p>How many people your organisation employs working 30+ hours or equivalent per week. This information is required particularly if you are applying for a business grant.</p>
13:	<p><b>If your last accounts, is the turnover is less than €2million per annum.</b></p> <p>You need only answer this question with a yes or no – and it is only relevant if you are a revenue generating organisation/business, the EU does not support micro-businesses with a turnover of more than this amount. If you are close to the limit, please let us know.</p>
14:	<p><b>Estimated project start date</b></p> <p>The date you wish to start your project.</p> <p>Please note that this date cannot be before the date on which your application will be reviewed by our project panel. Equally, you cannot spend any money you wish to recover partly through grant aid before you have received an offer letter.</p>

15:	<p><b>Estimated project end date</b></p> <p>The date you expect the project to finish ensuring that you allow enough time for all expenditure to clear the bank account.</p>
16:	<p><b>Please provide a description of the project and what it will do.</b></p> <p>Details of the project for which you are applying for grant aid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is it that the project will enable you to do that you can't do at the moment?</li> <li>○ What are the aims and objectives of the project?</li> <li>○ What type of activity will take place?</li> </ul> <p>On completion of the form, please return to this question to ensure the items you have costed into the application for grant aid at table 35 are directly linked to the project description.</p>
17:	<p><b>Who will benefit from this project?</b></p> <p>This could be the organisation itself from increased turnover, it could be a community group, or it could be individuals on training courses which have been provided through RDPE funding.</p> <p>In addition, because of Defra reporting statistics, you should detail the age ranges of potential beneficiaries and their gender. Defra wish the programme to report this information for equality purposes. If your project is successful in being awarded a grant, you will need to gather and keep evidence relating to age and gender.</p>
18:	<p><b>Where will the project deliver these benefits?</b></p> <p>There are certain parts of the North West Region where RDPE grant is not available and we require as specific information as possible to be able to identify the areas that this project will benefit.</p> <p>The address of the project if it is site specific, a list of postcodes or perhaps a map showing the area your project will cover depending on the nature of the project. Please indicate if the project will take place in a less favoured area, this is important to know the possible grant rate available.</p>
19a:	<p><b>To apply for RDPE funding, you need have been in contact with Business Link North West.</b></p>
	<p>All <u>business</u> applicants should make contact with BLNW, an action plan/diagnostic is prepared as a result of that contact. The contact number for Business Link is 0845 0066 888. To enable us to contact your relevant advisor please include their name.</p>

19b:	<p><b>As your application seeks over £5,000 of RDPE funding, it must be supported by an independent business plan or, your own business plan which has been independently assessed.</b></p>
	<p>As your application is for a grant of over £5,000 an independently prepared or verified business plan is required to support the application.</p> <p>This business plan should be prepared by an independent consultant and the cost of this can be subsidised by a minimum of 40% by the Northwest Regional Development Agency. If you have prepared your own business plan, it will still need verifying by an independent business advisor and this too can be subsidised by a minimum of 40%. Grant forms to help with the cost of the business plan preparation/verification are available from BLNW, from Local Action Group development officers or RDPE 01768 861321 or <a href="mailto:RDPE@NWDA.co.uk">RDPE@NWDA.co.uk</a> .</p> <p>The business plan and action plan will provide evidence to show that your proposal makes sense, that there has been adequate market research to evidence why grant aid is needed, and that proper consideration has been given to the potential risks.</p> <p>We can provide help on exactly what is required, but the basic requirements are:</p>

If you are	You will need	
	BLNW Action Plan	Independent Business Plan
New business start-up	√	√
Existing business applying for a grant of less than £5,000	√	n/a
Existing business applying for a grant of £5,000 or more	√	√

Please ensure your action plan is submitted with the application and your business plan, if applicable

**For Questions 20 to 26...**

If you feel that question 20 - 26 are adequately covered in your business plan, there is no need to provide us with detailed answers on this form however we do require you to clearly reference by page number and paragraph where our questions are addressed in your plan.

You may provide additional information if you wish to do so.

If you are answering Questions 20 to 26 because your project is less than £5,000 in value the following guidance will be of assistance.

<b>20:</b>	<b>What is the need for this project and why does the project require public sector support? Please detail what evidence you have to support this.</b>
	Please justify the need for proposing the project, and why public sector support is needed to help make it happen. Is there clear research to show there is a need for the activity? Is there a market opportunity? Has there been any community consultation? Are jobs at risk without the project? This section is one of the most critical parts when the panel consider your application. There is limited funding and not everything can be supported so the more evidence of need and justification that can be provided might help in the decision making process. Please also think about the other benefits this project will bring about such as linking with other projects, businesses and initiatives.
<b>21.</b>	<b>How does your project address regional and sub-regional priorities e.g. the North West Regional Implementation Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy</b>
	Given the level of funding being applied for, it is important to ensure that your project aligns with other key sub-regional and regional priorities. In relation to regional priorities key documents would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regional Rural Delivery Framework</li><li>• Regional Economic Strategy</li><li>• Sustainable Food and Farming Strategy</li><li>• Regional Forestry Framework</li></ul> In relation to sub regional priorities, please contact your Development Officer or NWDA for advice on the most relevant sub regional strategies to consult. Some of the sub regional strategies can be found on the NWDA website: <a href="http://www.nwda.co.uk">www.nwda.co.uk</a>

22:	<p><b>How will the project be managed?</b></p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is responsible for your project on a daily basis?</li> <li>• Who will be submitting your grant claims and progress reports?</li> <li>• How will you maintain records throughout the project's lifetime and after it has finished?</li> <li>• What project management experience does the project manager have?</li> </ul> <p>This should detail who will be responsible for running the project on a day to day basis, who will be submitting claims and progress reports, what project management experience there is in the organisation, how the finances will be managed, how information pertaining to the project will be recorded and kept. This section should also detail how any items will be purchased – there are clear purchasing guidelines to ensure public funds are invested fairly. If you are working in partnership with other organisation/s please detail how the partnership working will be managed e.g. through steering group meetings, partnership agreement?</p>
23:	<p><b>As you will receive your grant in arrears, how you will manage cash flow?</b></p> <p>You need to spend the money, and have it clear your bank account before you can claim your grant back. No grant payment, in full or in part, can be made up front. Therefore please consider how you will manage cash flow within your business/organisation considering you may not receive your grant until at least 50 working days after you submit your claim.</p>
24:	<p><b>How will you keep the project going once funding is no longer available?</b></p> <p>RDPE wishes to support projects that are sustainable over the long term. Therefore it is important to know what will happen after the RDPE funding has run out. It may be that the need for the project no longer exists and it has run its natural course, however if a job is to be created can that job be sustained after public sector support has ceased? Ultimately, your project should be self financing.</p>
25:	<p><b>If your project includes capital building works, what is the forecast value of the site/building?</b></p> <p>For projects that affect the value/saleable value of a property as a result of the grant aid investment, it is a requirement to know the value of the property pre the works being carried out and an estimate of its value on completion. These valuations should be prepared by an independent assessor/surveyor.</p>
26:	<p><b>Are there any similar businesses/organisations undertaking similar activity in the area – how does this project differ?</b></p> <p>It is important to know who else is providing a similar service or activity in your area and what particular niche or new idea your project has that means it is not duplicating near by activity. If you are a business please remember that your competitors are not necessarily doing exactly the same as you but may be seeking to attract a similar customer base.</p>

27:	<p><b>What alternative funding options have you considered for this project?</b></p> <p>Please list any other sources of funding you identified and why these were not appropriate.</p> <p>If the application were to be refused RDPE funding – what would happen to the project? There are a number of options to consider. For example a reduction in scale of the project or perhaps that the project would in fact, go ahead without RDPE funding anyway.</p>
28:	<p><b>What alternative options have you considered in delivering this project? Please give a minimum of three options, including the ‘do nothing’ option.</b></p>
	<p>What other ways of running the project may achieve similar things? Perhaps similar results could be achieved at less cost? Or perhaps something slightly different can be achieved with a little more investment over a longer period of time? Could the project be delivered by another organisation? Could it happen in a different location? How have you arrived at this project being the most appropriate way to achieve the objectives? You should consider and give examples of a minimum of 3 alternative options:</p> <p>a) Why is your chosen option the preferred one – state why the application is the most appropriate way to deliver your project</p> <p>b) Are there any alternative options – what else have you considered and why was it rejected?</p> <p>c) What would happen if you did nothing – please test your assumption that you <b>must</b> do this project – in 3 years, what your business/organisation will look like if you hadn’t run this project. This question will also help you to answer question 19 on how the project adds value.</p> <p>Each option you detail should be costed and key outputs for each option identified. This will help to show how you have arrived at the preferred option.</p> <p>You can detail more options if you wish and explain why they were rejected.</p>
29:	<p><b>What could go wrong with the project? Please identify the main risks to the project and how you intend to minimise/manage these risks? Please include a copy of your risk register.</b></p> <p>Risks could include cost over-run, inclement weather, failure to recruit the necessary staff on time, failure to secure match funding or to gain custom for your product or business. There may be a third-party whose role in this project is crucial to success. Please set out your answer to cover the following points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the risk you have identified?</li> <li>• How likely is it to happen (high, medium, low)?</li> <li>• What would impact on delivery be (high, medium, low)?</li> <li>• Is the risk something you can manage or for others to manage?</li> <li>• What can you do to remove or reduce the risk?</li> </ul>

30:	<b>How will you make sure your project has minimises negative environmental impact and is able to maximise potential environmental improvements?</b>
	Positive benefits to the environment can come from such simple concepts as reduced product miles (the shorter distance between producer and consumer the less energy is wasted in getting it there). There are a number of other factors that may well apply in your project, please summarise these. Any significant damage to the environment that results from your project may make it ineligible if not planned out of the process or adequately ameliorated.
31.	<b>If your project involves construction, and has a total project cost of over £500,000 does it comply with the BREEAM standard of very good or above?</b>
	<p>BREEAM is a tool to measure the sustainability of buildings in the UK. The standard covers a number of main building types including: Offices, Retail and Industrial. There are two main stages to the assessment – a design stage and a post construction stage. As a minimum, the programme would be looking for BREEAM minimum standard of “very good”</p> <p>If your project does involve construction work, you should consult your architect will be able to advise you further.</p>
32:	<b>How will you minimise any negative social impacts and maximise any positive social benefits?</b>
	One of the aspirations of the programme is to increase a sense of community. RDPE is keen to see communities and businesses work together and not to exclude certain sectors.
33:	<b>If you are seeking funding for property work, what is the property’s status?</b>
	<p>If you are applying to undertake building works it is important to know if you are the owner of the property/land.</p> <p>If not, it may be necessary to have permission granted in writing from the relevant person who does own the site. If you own the premises/land please state you are the “owner”. Otherwise please state if you are a tenant, shared ownership, or other as appropriate. If you do not own the property/land you may be required to provide more details on your rights and length of agreement.</p>
34:	<b>Is your project dependent on any forms of legal consent?</b>
	Examples include planning permission, building regulation, listed building, landlord’s permission and environmental health. Please state on the form if permissions are needed and timescales for obtaining these. Occasionally you will be asked to prove that no such permissions are necessary.

35	<p><b>Does your business or organisation have an equal opportunities policy?</b></p> <p>No funding will be provided to projects which do not operate to the best principle of social inclusion. If your business does not have an equality/diversity policy, please indicate your business's approach to this issue.</p>														
36	<p><b>Does your business have a health and safety policy?</b></p> <p>No funding will be provided to project which do not operate sound health and safety standards. If you do not have a written health and safety policy, please indicate your organisation's way of dealing with Health and Safety issues.</p>														
37	<p><b>Please provide a breakdown of what your project will cost.</b></p> <p>Please use the table to detail all expenditure for which you wish to claim RDPE grant aid. Please ensure all items tie back to the original project description you gave under question 15. We will be able to advise you on eligible expenditure and which RDPE Measures you are applying to.</p> <p>The table will expand so if you need more lines please insert them as required. Please check that the columns add up. If the columns and totals do not add up, this could hold up the processing of your application.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="240 1021 1482 1290"> <thead> <tr> <th>Estimated cost</th> <th>Evidence required</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Below £250</td> <td>No quote required</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£250 - £500</td> <td>Single oral/website quote</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£501 - £2,500</td> <td>3 oral/website quotes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£2,501 - £15,000</td> <td>3 written quotes to against a clear, written specification</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£15,001 - £50,000</td> <td>3 formal competitive tenders</td> </tr> <tr> <td>£50,000+</td> <td>4-6 formal competitive tenders</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>You also need to ensure the costs of any publicity can be met as you will be required to publicise and acknowledge the support the RDPE programme has given. We can provide further information on the nature of this publicity and acknowledgement.</p>	Estimated cost	Evidence required	Below £250	No quote required	£250 - £500	Single oral/website quote	£501 - £2,500	3 oral/website quotes	£2,501 - £15,000	3 written quotes to against a clear, written specification	£15,001 - £50,000	3 formal competitive tenders	£50,000+	4-6 formal competitive tenders
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38	<p><b>Please provide a breakdown of the funding sources that you anticipate paying for this project.</b></p> <p>The totals project costs (under question 33) and total income (this question) should be the same figure. Income and expenditure must balance. When calculating level of RDPE grant required, please refer to your development officer who will know the rules regarding the percentage of grant allowable. The grant that you request must be the amount you need to enable the project to go ahead.</p>														
39	<p><b>State Aid: Please list the grant aid or other support received in the past 3 years and the sources.</b></p> <p>State Aid is a complex subject that we can help advise on. We require you to identify all forms of support that your organisation/business has received over the last 3 years from a UK or EU Public Body.</p>														

<b>40</b>	<b>What are the outputs and results that your project will achieve?</b>
	<p>There are a list of outputs the RDPE programme is working towards. Your named contact on the front of this application form can help you complete this section but to help them please think about what your project will do as a result of the grant aid. The outputs must be directly attributable to the implementation of the project and not those that would have occurred over the normal course of events.</p> <p>It is important that you are realistic about what you believe your project can achieve. Regular monitoring will be undertaken of the project and evidence will be required to substantiate any outputs claimed. Please also remember you may also be required to provide age range and gender information on outputs achieved.</p>
<b>41</b>	<b>What are the target achievement dates for this project?</b>
	Please state some key dates that will occur throughout the lifetime of the project. All targets should have a date by which you expect to have the work complete. We usually expect 3-4 key targets per year depending on the nature of the project.

WE ADVISE YOU TO RUN THROUGH THIS CHECKLIST  
BEFORE SENDING YOUR APPLICATION

<b>Submission checklist – PLEASE CHECK...</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
That all questions have been answered fully as possible.	✓	✓	✓
You have provided confirmation of the match funding expected.	✓	✓	✓
Planning permission enclosed or evidence that planning permission is not required (if applicable).	✓	✓	✓
Copy of Building Lease, Freeholders lease or any other permissions (as applicable)	✓	✓	✓
Evidence of correct procurement (quotes/tenders) – see guidance note 33.	✓	✓	✓
Evidence of match funding.	✓	✓	✓
Have you included an enclosed copy of last 3 years audited accounts for the business, unless a newer business.	✓	✓	✓
Your business plan: including any letters of support if appropriate.	✓	✓	✓
You have included your business link action plan/diagnostic.	✓	✓	✓
The form signed by appropriate member of business/ organisation/ group	✓	✓	✓