



**Forest Holidays**

# 2023-24 Rural Start Up Fund

Application Pack



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## Dear applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Forest Holidays and The Royal Countryside Fund Rural Start-Up Fund.

We are committed to caring for the environment and nature. To achieve this, we need the support of passionate people who share our vision and are committed to sustainable farming and agriculture. This is why we have created the Rural Start-Up Fund, an opportunity for new rural businesses to receive financial support as they develop in the sector.

In addition, as part of the Rural Start-Up Fund, there is the opportunity to receive bespoke mentoring support from several members of the Forest Holidays team.

This pack will explain everything you need to know about the Rural Start-Up Fund, and how to apply.

Best of luck!





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# Application process

Part 1: Fill in the application form.

Part 2: Record a short video of yourself and upload (see overleaf).

Part 3: Applications will be judged by a panel from Forest Holidays and The Royal Countryside Fund and a shortlist will be made.

Part 4: Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview.

Part 5: Following interviews, one winner, or multiple winners, will be chosen.





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# Eligibility

To apply, you must be:

- Aged 18 and over
- A UK citizen holding a UK passport
- Resident in the UK
- Embarking on a new business/enterprise start-up venture
- Able to demonstrate how your business will, in some way, support rural communities, the countryside, or rural sustainability

You cannot apply if:

- Your business/enterprise is considered unethical, harmful or detrimental to the environment or nature
- You do not meet the eligibility above.





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## Video advice

In addition to your application form, please film a short video of yourself. The idea behind the video is for us to learn more about you and your start-up.

Please consider the following questions:

- Describe your business/enterprise start-up
- What makes your business/enterprise rural?
- What does the environment and nature mean to you?
- What would receiving the funding mean to you, your business and your community?

The video can be taken on a phone/tablet - the quality of the video will not be taken into consideration. Please make sure it is between 60 and 90 seconds in length.

Please upload onto YouTube or similar site and make it publicly available. If you choose to save it somewhere with private settings, please provide us with the logins.







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# What we expect from you

If successful, you will be expected to:

- Submit a 6-month report halfway through the award outlining how the funding has been spent
- Submit an end of report award outlining progress through the year
- Keep us up to date throughout the year with emails/general correspondences
- Actively participate in marketing the award – through interviews, media content and social media contributions
- Attend an overnight open day event with other programme participants







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## What you can expect from us

There are numerous benefits to the award:

- Access to individualised mentorship sessions covering a variety of topics delivered by the Forest Holidays team
- Access to the networks of The Royal Countryside Fund
- Involvement in alumni activity including networking and knowledge-sharing with similar businesses
- Support and open communication
- Invites to events and open days





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## What past participants have to say

"A little bit of faith from someone else goes a long way— it's given me the confidence to go out and talk to people as a serious small business with a clear mission and a little bit of cash to kick-start and test things."

-Gemma Wren, 2021/22 Winner



"The RCF and Forest Holidays provided us with essential business mentoring and support, which culminated in an away day at Delamere Forest. With this funding, we're now able to take our business, SUP Lass Paddle Adventures, to new heights and increase our visibility in the market."

-Caroline Dawson, 2022/23 Winner





# 2023/24 Key dates and deadlines

Applications Open: Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> December

Applications Close: Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> February at 12pm (Midday)

Interviews (online): Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> and Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> February

Launch Day: early March\*

\*date TBC



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Thank you



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