

Rewild London Fund 2023

Grants guide

Banded demoiselle at Woodberry Wetlands

Key information

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Foreword

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As well as being a place of respite and enjoyment, London's green spaces have a crucial role to play in tackling the climate and ecological emergencies. Our iconic parks, shaded woodlands, nature reserves, wetlands,

community gardens and more help keep London cool, reduce the risk of flooding, and are vitally important for our health and wellbeing. They also provide homes for wildlife, bringing nature closer to our communities for Londoners to enjoy.

It is testimony to how nature rich our city is that we have over 1,600 sites protected because of their importance for wildlife. Known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), they cover nearly 20 per cent of the city's surface area. We know how important nature is for both physical and mental health, which is why I have committed to ensuring that all Londoners live no more than a ten-minute walk from green space.

Since I became Mayor, a record 476,000 trees have been planted and I have made over £30m available for green space, rewilding and tree planting projects. This includes support for over 40 Rewild London projects that are helping to rewild our city, reintroducing lost species and making more habitats for nature to thrive.

However, despite ongoing efforts, I know that our natural environment is deteriorating worldwide, and we all need to do more. This next round of my Rewild London Fund is a step towards this and will help reconnect people to their city's nature.

But more than this, I want Londoners to share their views and get involved in making London wilder. For this round of the Rewild London Fund competition, I will be inviting Londoners to have their say on bringing London's lost creatures back. I especially want young Londoners to join in with their ideas for what they want to see back in our city.

Rewilding allows nature to take the lead and is an exciting way to create healthier ecosystems. I am proud that London is leading the way once again. We have already brought back beavers in Ealing, bees in Bexley and bats in Barnes. London is a healthier, more exciting place the more we share it with our wild neighbours. I am looking forward to seeing the next generation of ideas.

Together, we will make progress cleaning up our city, re-establishing lost species and reconnecting people and nature as we build a greener, fairer city for all Londoners. I am excited to see the applications to this current round of my Rewild London Fund and for London to become a wilder, nature rich place.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

1. Introduction and aims of the fund

London's wildlife is rich and varied. Over 15,000 different species share London and the capital boasts a wide range of natural habitats.

These range from nationally important wetlands like Frays Farm Meadows and Rainham Marshes, to the downlands that helped inspire Charles Darwin's scientific discoveries, ancient woodlands, heathlands, and world-famous nature reserves including Richmond Park.

Biodiversity is deteriorating worldwide, and this decline is projected to worsen. Despite a long legacy of action in the city, much of London's wildlife has not escaped this decline.

Most of London's most valuable sites for nature are recognised as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). There are more than 1,600 SINCs across the city, covering nearly 20 per cent of its surface area.

These sites are the core of London's wildlife network and need to be at the heart of any actions to rewild the city and recover nature.

To conserve this core network and to ensure it is resilient to pressures like climate change, it needs to be well managed, expanded and better connected through habitat creation, enhancement and restoration. It also needs to be known and enjoyed by Londoners, so its value is understood.

The Mayor wants London to be rich in nature, home to a range of species. He established the [London Rewilding Taskforce](#) to look at opportunities for rewilding in London which reported in March 2023.

The Mayor has also announced the next round of the Rewild London Fund, which will be a competition to inspire Londoners as to how their city can be made wilder, greener and closer to nature. This is designed to support SINC owners and managers in responding to the climate and ecological emergencies by creating and restoring priority habitats across London's SINC network.

£710,000 of funding is available, and we will offer grants of between £10,000-£50,000 for smaller projects and up to £150,000 for two larger projects. Projects will start in January 2024 and be completed by March 2025.

Supporting a range of different sized projects in this way reflects the view of the Mayor's Rewilding Taskforce. The Taskforce has identified the need for rewilding projects to happen at a range of spatial scales to help restore and connect wildlife areas across London.

The Rewild London Fund aims to:

- create new habitats to expand, diversify and connect SINCs in line with London Environment Strategy targets and the recommendations of the London Rewilding Taskforce
- enhance London's SINCs to restore nature and support biodiversity
- support innovative habitat or species focussed projects that inspire action, and trial and implement new approaches that could be adopted more widely to help rewild the city
- strengthen local ecological networks to make them more resilient
- secure better future management of sites
- build skills to better plan for and manage SINCs
- support activities that enable underrepresented communities to better access and actively participate in managing important wildlife sites and promote rewilding projects to engage the public in rewilding and the environment.

This guide sets out the objectives of the fund, the grants available and the application process in more detail.

The Rewild London Fund supports the [Green New Deal Mission](#), jointly developed by the Mayor and London Councils, which aims to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies, and improve air quality, by doubling the size of London's green economy by 2030 to accelerate job creation for all.

The Rewild London Fund is one of several Mayoral funds to enhance green and blue spaces. Find out more about our other green infrastructure [funding programmes](#).

1.1 About London's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Priority Habitats

London's most valuable and special places for wildlife are identified by the Mayor and London boroughs as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) through the local plan making process. **Section 1.1.1** provides more information about SINCs and how they are protected

Most SINCs are managed by boroughs or other public bodies and offer opportunities for Londoners to enjoy nature close-up. However, it is estimated that 40-60 per cent of SINC sites are not covered by any regular management to conserve or enhance their special biodiversity and fewer than half of London's boroughs have access to in-house ecological advice. Priority habitats for conservation are listed in the [London Environment Strategy](#) (see **section 1.1.2** of this guide).

1.1.1 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

Over 1600 SINCs have been identified across the capital. They cover nearly 20 per cent of London, forming the core of our ecological network. Some of these sites are also statutorily designated as Local Nature Reserves or as internationally or nationally important sites for the habitats or species found within them.

SINCs receive a high level of protection from development in the Mayor's new [London Plan](#). Most are managed by boroughs or other public bodies.

A comprehensive network of SINCs stretches across London, covering a breadth of important wildlife habitats, to public parks, cemeteries and railside land. Nearly all areas of priority habitats and many sites with important populations of priority or legally protected species are selected as SINCs.

There are three tiers of SINCs:

- Sites of Metropolitan Importance include the best sites in London and are of regional significance for nature. Over 150 metropolitan sites have been identified, with a total area of nearly 16,000 hectares (10 per cent of London's land area). They include nationally important wildlife sites like Ruislip Woods, Ingrebourne Marshes and Farthing Downs, and locally important places like Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Woods and Hounslow Heath where Londoners can discover wild places that belie their urban setting.
- Sites of Borough Importance include woodlands, rivers, grasslands and some of the more mature parks which have ancient trees and meadows. There are almost 800 borough sites identified to date, with a total area of about 12,000 hectares (almost 8 per cent of London's land area).
- Sites of Local Importance give people access to nature close to home. They are publicly accessible parks and green spaces with local intrinsic nature conservation value. About 460 local sites have been identified, with a total area of 1,700 hectares (just over 1 per cent of London's land area).

You can find out more about how SINCs are selected [on our website](#) and in the [Spaces Wild report](#).

1.1.2 Priority habitats

In London, priority habitats are:

- acid grassland
- chalk grassland
- coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
- fen, marsh and swamp
- heathland
- lowland meadows
- open mosaic habitats on previously developed land
- ancient woodland
- wet woodland
- orchards
- reedbeds
- rivers and streams.

The creation of new priority habitat will be of highest ecological value where it expands or connects existing habitat areas. The [London Habitat Opportunity Maps](#) identify ecologically suitable areas to create new priority habitats.

The [London Environment Strategy](#) sets targets for the creation of priority habitats. [Reference:1](#) These targets relate to habitats with the greatest opportunities to create new areas across much of London, and for which progress can be accurately monitored to 2050.

Table 1.1 Priority habitat targets

Habitat	By 2025 By 2050	
Species-rich woodland	20ha	200ha
Flower-rich grassland	50ha	250ha
Rivers and streams	10km	40km
Reedbeds	5ha	30ha

There are also targets at a borough level for locally relevant priority habitats, set through local nature recovery plans and biodiversity action plans (BAPs).

1.1.3 SINC status

You will be required to provide the SINC name(s) and grade(s) (i.e. local, borough or Metropolitan) as part of your application (where applicable). This information is available on the [Planning Data Map](#) and in borough local plans.

You can also download the Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC (GiGL) SINC's Open Data dataset from the [London Datastore](#). This is a GIS polygon dataset that shows the boundaries, site names and grade of all SINC's in London.

The full version of this dataset with all its attributes (including site references, access information and planning dates) and citations (containing full site descriptions and habitat lists) are available under a GiGL data use

licence to GiGL Service Level Agreement partners. Detailed SINC data, including citations, are also available as part of GiGL's information services for community volunteers – please see [GiGL's website](#) for more information.

A requirement of Rewild London Funding is to provide any habitat data or species records generated through the project direct to Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) to their specified standards. Any time or costs associated with doing this, either for the project team or for GiGL, must be factored into your project plan and budget where necessary. Please contact GiGL early on in your project planning to discuss data standards, access and provision, and the costs of their involvement so you can factor them in to your bid.

Note that not all projects need to take place in SINC's. See section 2 below for examples of types of projects.

Case Studies: Rewild London Fund 2021

Case study: The Chase LNR River, Wetland and Meadow Restoration and Creation, Barking and Dagenham

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD), alongside Thames Chase Community Forest Trust and Thames21, transformed the Chase Local Nature Reserve, improving meadows, woodlands, and wetlands, as well as promoting SINC's awareness in the local area and within the Council.

The efforts, led by the LBBD Park Ranger team and trained Thames Chase Conservation Volunteers, concentrated on the River Rom Restoration, introducing wetland habitats, and rejuvenating The Slack Bird Sanctuary. They addressed scrub build-up, invasive species, and improved nesting areas, significantly enhancing biodiversity and habitats. The project used drones for surveying and monitoring. The Chase now offers the community a serene environment and opportunities to connect to nature.

Photo: River Rom Wetland Restoration, 2022

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lh7Tl-EDfsM>

River Rom Wetland Restoration

Case study: North Camberwell Wildlife Corridor, Southwark

The North Camberwell Wildlife Corridor project was a unique community-led scheme with ambitious aims to create a corridor for wildlife along the streets between two SINC's, linking Burgess Park to Benhill Road Nature Garden. The project has already had a positive impact by increasing flowering plants for pollinators, fruiting trees/shrubs for wildlife and people, and habitats for house sparrows. Areas which had been mown grass have been transformed and new planting introduced.

Photo: Friends of Burgess Park



Figure -

Friends of Burgess Park: North Camberwell Wildlife Corridor

Case study: Link the SINC's, Sutton

The 'Link the SINC's' project by the London Borough of Sutton aimed to enhance the connection between Sutton's major council SINC in the southeast and the chalk grassland SINC's in the west, specifically for invertebrate species.

This project established priority chalk grassland habitat pathways in the North Downs' green spaces, connecting areas already inhabited by small blue butterflies. It also created new habitats to improve connectivity for other vital butterfly species like the chalkhill blue and dark-green fritillary.

Photo: London Borough of Sutton



Figure -

Community planting activity in Sutton

Case study: Greenway Pollinator Trail, Newham

The Greenway Pollinator Trail transformed a 6 km grassland strip in Newham into a meadow. Banner signs educated visitors about the trail, with detailed 'pit-stop' boards on species benefiting from the initiative.

The project showed that grasslands can be positively transformed but need ongoing efforts. An ecologist guided the seeding and training for maintenance staff, and community and school events took place in collaboration with Butterfly Conservation and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.

Photo: London Borough of Newham



Figure -

Greenway Pollinator Trail

2. What the Rewild London Fund will support

In this new round of funding, the Rewild London Fund will support a range of projects that help to create new priority habitats and enhance London's SINC's.

These projects should take place within SINC's or create/ restore priority habitats directly adjacent to SINC's to buffer, expand and connect sites. We will also support projects that include some priority habitat creation not directly adjacent to a SINC where this will improve connectivity between sites for target species (for example through corridors or stepping stones), as well as projects that tackle off-site impacts on SINC's such as poor water quality where applicants can show there will be a direct benefit from the projects. Innovative approaches will be considered, including rewilding approaches where these can be proved to support the improvement of SINC's.

Priorities of the fund

The Fund aims to support land managers, and organisations working with them, to deliver the London Environment Strategy priority habitat targets (**see section 1.1.2.** of this guide). The fund also aims to help SINC managers to tackle barriers to good site management and support projects that showcase innovative or strategic approaches to improving the resilience of the SINC network.

We will prioritise projects that deliver outcomes in line with the Green New Deal and the Rewild London Fund aims (see Section 1). These are projects that:

- focus on outcomes that address the ecological emergency and ensure sites are better managed, bigger and better connected
- help improve sites in the longer term, particularly to sustain and expand important populations of priority species
- demonstrate innovation with new approaches to overcoming long-standing barriers to site management
- share good practice across London and improve access to nature for underrepresented communities.

Projects could include:

- expanding and buffering SINC's through new habitat creation on adjacent land, such as the creation of new chalk grassland banks
- works to enable more effective and efficient site management, such as infrastructure and equipment to bring amenity grassland into meadow management
- trials and monitoring of innovative management techniques that can be rolled out to other sites, such as no-fence collars for conservation grazing projects
- improving habitats between SINC's to ensure they are better connected and more resilient, such as creating habitat stepping stones to help secure landscape connectivity for priority species
- enhancing more than one SINC to improve a local nature network, such as installation of reedbeds along a waterway/ waterbody to create a local network
- creating or improving habitats in order for sites to meet thresholds for SINC designation during a future SINC review
- ecological surveys or monitoring of the outcomes of management to inform future site management and local nature recovery plan development, such as hydrological studies to design wetland creation schemes
- creating the conditions for potential species (re)introductions that meet wider conservation objectives (e.g. invertebrate diversity and abundance)
- focused staff training activities to make sure that those responsible for the day-to-day planning and management of SINC's have the right skills to do so (note that this will **not** be provided by LWT in their advisory role).

The fund also aims to support activities that enable underrepresented communities to actively participate in managing wildlife sites.

2.1 Supporting more action for nature

The Mayor recognises that not all grant managers have access to the expertise needed to plan and deliver the types of essential projects this fund will support. To help more applicants to access and meet the aims of the fund we have partnered with [London Wildlife Trust](#) (LWT) to provide expert support to those organisations who

need it to help them take more action for nature.

Grant funded projects will be offered advice and support from LWT during project delivery. This support is funded as part of the programme and will be allocated to projects based on need and the availability of relevant experts. Requests for LWT support will be triaged by Groundwork London who will be providing grant management support for this Fund (see section 4.1).

It is expected that projects will typically be allocated 0.5-1.5 days of specialist support from LWT over the course of the project depending on need. LWT's involvement will help ensure the projects are exemplary by providing a 'critical friend' role, offering advice and sharing knowledge. Expertise on offer will include:

- habitat management, restoration and creation advice
- how to integrate projects into existing management plans
- advice on the suite of habitat and species surveys required: what surveys might be needed and who to contact (not survey delivery).

Please note that the funded support from LWT will **not** include any elements of project delivery. Their time cannot be used for: carrying out or writing methodologies for site surveys; writing management plans; supervising contractors or writing tender documents for contractors/consultants; providing volunteers or marketing and communications support for your project. If your project requires more detailed and/or ongoing ecological expertise and support, please include this in your grant budget.

2.2 Projects quality

Applicants should consider the following when deciding if their project meets the aims of the fund:

Project size and ecological relevance

Applicants should be able to demonstrate that their proposed project is of appropriate scale for its ecological and landscape context. Applicants should use this information to decide which funding programme to apply for (smaller projects of £10,000 - £50,000 or larger projects of £100,000 - £150,000). Projects must deliver ecologically appropriate outcomes in terms of the types of habitats being restored and created and the size of these habitats. This is particularly relevant to projects seeking to improve connectivity between or buffer or expand SINC's.

Applicants should also explain how their proposed project responds to the priorities in local Biodiversity Action Plans and/or fits within local strategies for nature's recovery or other relevant plans or strategies.

Long-term outcomes

We will not fund routine or one-off habitat management activities unless the application demonstrates there is a plan in place to secure appropriate management long-term. For example, we would not fund a project to clear scrub from a degraded grassland site that does not demonstrate how the site will be managed in the future to prevent it scrubbing over again, but would fund a project to clear scrub and install fencing or other infrastructure to support ongoing management.

Sharing best practice and public engagement

We will expect grant recipients to share their knowledge and best practice to help accelerate the changes required across London to create healthy, sustainable places and to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies.

Applicants should identify how they will share best practice within their own organisation and with other organisations across London. All successful projects will be required to work with the GLA to develop a case study of the project to share good practice and learning that can be adopted elsewhere, with a target audience for these case studies being fellow land managers and other active in the sector in London.

Applicants will also be expected to work with the GLA on communicating about their projects, for example through producing videos and social media content.

Applicants should demonstrate how they will engage the public and/or schools with their project, for example by organising open day(s), citizen science or other volunteer components, guided walks, talks or education sessions. Applicants should also consider how their project can support activities that enable underrepresented communities to better access nature.

Permissions and risks

Projects will need to be delivered by March 2025. If your project requires permits, such as those from statutory agencies, or other permissions these should either be secured at time of application or be on track to be secured by the time a grant agreement is signed (i.e. by January 2024). We expect any risks to project delivery to be identified and mitigated. Please contact us in advance of submitting your application if you need help understanding what permissions will be required to undertake your proposed project. You can contact us with any questions via rewildlondon@london.gov.uk or to arrange a phone call.

Equality

As a public-sector organisation, the GLA must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct which is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. It must advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who don't have that characteristic. As recipients of public funding, successful applicants will also need to meet this Duty.

See section 5 for more detail on the application questions you will need to answer and how to complete the application form.

Case Studies: Rewild London Fund 2022

Case study: bringing beavers back to Ealing

Citizen Zoo, in collaboration with Ealing Council, Friends of Horsenden Hill, the Ealing Wildlife Group and the London Beaver Working Group are reintroducing beavers to London's Paradise Fields after a 400-year absence.

These beavers will rejuvenate the ecosystem by constructing dams, creating ponds, and managing tree growth, fostering a diverse wetland environment beneficial for both nature and the community. Alongside this, volunteers are being trained in camera trapping, surveying, and community engagement to ensure the beavers' well-being.

Photo: Citizen Zoo



Figure -

Citizen Zoo community training on beavers

Case study: Old Lea River Restoration Project, Hackney

Hackney Council, alongside Wildlife Gardeners of Haggerston and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, are restoring Old Lea River by enhancing the river habitat, tackling invasive species, and introducing native plants.

Unique in Southeast England, this project employs the Urban Riverfly monitoring method with trained volunteers detecting pollution through species surveys. Shrubs and trees have been planted, and materials from coppicing have contributed to the creation of three berms (partial river barriers), to create a variety of habitats.

Case study: Greening the Wapping Canal, Tower Hamlets

Along the Wapping Ornamental Canal near Spirit Quay, floating rafts with native wetland plants are being installed. These rafts not only provide nesting and resting spots for swans and water birds but also create habitats for small fish and water insects.

This project aims to enhance the habitat and connectivity in the Shadwell/Wapping water bodies, introducing 112 m² of marsh swamp and fen priority habitat and enhancing 1km of canal. Assisted by E1 Waterbird Welfare and Shadwell Waterbirds Volunteer group, the raft installations are set to finish by mid-December 2023.



Figure -

Habitats at the Wapping Canal

3. Grants available

A total of £710,000 is available in this funding round, and we expect to be able to support about 15-20 projects.

The majority of grants will be between £10,000 and £50,000, with two flagship projects being supported through larger grants of £100,000 to £150,000.

Organisations can apply for a maximum of two grants for two stand-alone projects such as two unrelated projects at two separate SINC sites. Where a project includes works across multiple sites, a single application should be made. This applies to both smaller and larger grants.

Funded projects should start from January 2024 and should be completed by March 2025. Grants cannot be used to retrospectively fund work already completed or under way. Projects must take place within Greater London.

3.1 Eligible organisations

Applications are open to:

- local authorities
- civil society organisations which manage land or are working in partnership with the landowner. These could include:
 - registered charities including charitable incorporated organisations
 - formally constituted community groups
 - social and not-for-profit businesses including community interest companies and social enterprises
 - community benefit societies.

Applications must be from a formally constituted organisation that has an organisational bank account and is able to enter into legal contracts. You cannot apply as a private individual.

We welcome applications that involve different organisations; however, the lead applicant must be the primary manager of the land. If they do not own the site, they must provide evidence of landowner permission and approval for the proposed project with their application.

3.2 Grant funding terms

Successful applicants who receive funding offers must sign a grant agreement before the project can start.

Payments will be made according to the following schedule:

- 50 per cent upfront, on return of signed funding agreement
- 50 per cent on completion, subject to submission of a satisfactory final monitoring report and proof of expenditure.

We understand some organisations may have cashflow difficulties. We are happy to discuss alternative payment schedules for successful projects, including a mid-project grant payment.

3.2.1 Match funding

Projects must have a minimum of **20 per cent match funding**. For example, if you are applying for a grant of £10,000, you should have at least £2,000 in match funding. This match funding can be either cash (for example, from another grant or from your own funds), or in-kind (for example, donated materials, or staff or volunteer time).

The value of volunteer time for “unskilled” volunteering – that is, a task that can be carried out with basic or no training – should be calculated using the [London Living Wage](#) (currently £11.95) per hour. For example, 100 hours of volunteering would be worth $100 \times £11.95 = £1,195$. The value of volunteer time that relies on specialist skills (for example, a landscape gardener giving a day’s work for free) should be calculated using the typical day or hourly rate for that task/ profession.

3.3 Eligible costs

The Rewild London Fund can support a range of costs as long as these are contributing to the delivery of the project, and to the core aims of improving London’s SINC’s and making the city’s ecological network more resilient.

Costs that can be supported by the Rewild London Fund, with no restrictions

This includes both capital and revenue costs, such as:

- purchase of trees and plants for habitat creation
- purchase of other materials to improve SINC’s and create new habitat
- fencing, paths and other site infrastructure that is directly related to SINC habitat improvements and management
- machine and equipment purchase or hire to create or restore habitat
- staff and/or contractor costs for project delivery, including labour, design, project management, volunteer management
- specialist fees, for example, an ecologist or arboriculturalist; surveys or monitoring; GiGL fees; volunteer expenses
- payment of administrative costs directly related to delivery of the work, e.g. consents for works on river
- event costs, such as training workshops for staff,volunteers or contractors
- PPE or other equipment necessary for safe project delivery.

Costs that can be supported by the Rewild London Fund, with restrictions

- a maximum of 10 per cent of the total grant can be used for maintenance costs associated with establishment of new habitats that will be incurred beyond the end of the project period (that is, after March 2025).

Costs that cannot be supported

The Rewild London Fund cannot be used towards the following costs:

- land purchase
 - capital items that are not primarily about improving SINC's – for example, improving a building or other grey infrastructure
 - “business as usual” activities – for example, routine maintenance
 - works that are legally required of the landowner/ manager, for example protection, management and/ or restoration of SSSI features (for which the SSSI is designated), delivery of agri-environmental scheme targets or woodland management grants subject to existing contract agreements, or maintenance of a Public Right of Way
 - projects where the specific elements being applied for have already started or are a direct continuation of existing work. We will fund projects that expand previous or existing projects that have worked well (i.e. are new programmes) and stand-alone habitat creation or restoration projects within a larger programme of site improvement works
 - core staff costs or other core costs that are not project specific.
-

4. How to apply

Please read this guidance carefully, including the application guidance and assessment criteria below. Applications must be made and submitted through the online application form. You will be asked a series of eligibility questions before accessing the form. Once you have started your application, you can save your progress and return to it before submitting.

[Access the online application form](#)

You can find a copy of the application form questions in [Appendix A](#). As well as the form, you will need to provide at least three photographs of your project site(s), maps showing the location of the site(s) and the extent of proposed works and any relevant sketch designs, plans or maps. You can also upload additional files, such as letters of support or summaries of site management plans or ecological surveys where relevant.

The deadline for applications is 12 noon on Monday 27 November 2023.

4.1 Support in preparing your application

The application and delivery timeline are outlined below. Applications will be managed by Groundwork London, who will be happy to answer any questions you have about the application process, or about your project. Groundwork London is part of a federation of charities mobilising practical community action including on the environment.

Please email rewildlondon@london.gov.uk with any questions or to arrange a phone call.

We will be holding two optional applicant information webinars on the following dates. We suggest that first-time applicants join the first webinar to allow enough time for additional questions and/or further support. The same content will be covered at each session:

- Thursday 12 October 2023, 3:00pm - 5:00pm – [Register via Zoom](#).
- Thursday 2 November 2023, 5:30pm-7:30pm – [Register via Zoom](#)

This will be an opportunity to hear more about the aims of the fund, the application process and assessment criteria. It will give you a chance to ask questions and receive advice on completing your application.

Section 5 of this guide provides more detail on completing the application form and the assessment criteria.

Table 4.1 Application and delivery timeline

Date	Milestone
25 September 2023	Applications for Rewild London Fund 3 open
September -	Read this document in full to understand the fund requirements and how to apply. Contact rewildlondon@london.gov.uk with any questions about the application process or your project.
November 2023	Join the optional information webinars for additional support on: Thursday 12 October, 3pm-5pm; Thursday 2 November 2023, 5:30pm-7.30pm
By 12 noon on 27 November 2023	Submit your application online .
Late November - December 2023	Assessment process takes place. You may be asked for more information about your project, or to clarify any queries.
January 2024	You will be informed of the outcome of your application. If successful, you'll be asked to complete and sign a funding agreement.
January 2024	Projects start. Grantees receive first payment instalment.
September 2024	Submission of mid-project monitoring report.
March 2025	Submission of final project monitoring report and proof of expenditure. Grantees received final payment instalment.

4.2 Support for project delivery

If your grant application is successful and you are awarded funding, Groundwork London will be your first point of contact during your project delivery period.

You will be assigned a grants officer who will be able to help you with queries, discuss any changes to your project, and help with the required grant reporting and payments. If you require more specialist advice and support from LWT you will be able to request this via Groundwork London (see section 2.1) and they will also work with LWT on project monitoring.

Groundwork London will host a programme induction session once funding has been awarded, to help successful applicants understand the requirements of the programme and answer any initial questions. This will also be an opportunity to meet other grantees and share ideas.

5. Application guidance

This section outlines the application requirements and assessment criteria and provides advice on completing the application form. **Please read this in detail before starting your application.**

5.1 Completing the application form

The [application form](#) for the Rewild London Fund is split into six sections, which will be used to assess your project's suitability for the fund. A copy of the application form can be found in [Appendix A](#). Before accessing the form online, you will be asked a series of gateway questions. These questions are designed to check whether your project proposal is eligible for the fund. They are not scored, but all projects must meet the basic eligibility criteria.

The application form sections are:

- Section 1: About your organisation – these questions are designed to check whether your organisation is eligible for the fund, and to enable due diligence checks to be carried out. They are not scored, but all organisations must meet the eligibility criteria
- Section 2: About your project – these questions provide an overview of your project, the activities that will take place and the outputs you aim to deliver. They are not scored, but will be used for initial screening to check that your project meets the core aims of the fund
- Section 3: Meeting the aims of the fund – these questions form 60 per cent of the assessment of your project (15 per cent for each question). They allow you to go into more detail about what your project will achieve and enable us to assess how well your project meets the aims of the fund. Further details of the assessment criteria are outlined below
- Section 4: Delivering your project – these questions form 20 per cent of the assessment of your project. They allow you to demonstrate how your project will be delivered successfully, on time and within budget, and safely.
- Section 5: Project budget – this question forms 20 per cent of the assessment of your project. It allows you to demonstrate that you have thought about the costs of your project, and that it delivers good value for money.
- Section 6: Equalities Monitoring - this information is used to monitor the different backgrounds of grant applicants and recipients. It is not part of the assessment and is optional.

5.2 Assessment criteria

Your application will be assessed against the criteria outlined below.

Application form section 3: Meeting the aims of the fund

These questions form 60 per cent of the assessment of your project (15 per cent for each question). They allow you to go into more detail about what your project will achieve and enable us to assess how well your project meets the aims and priorities of the fund.

1. How will your project increase the resilience of the SINC network, respond to the ecological emergency and contribute to the London Environment Strategy habitat targets?

Your answer to this question should focus on *why* your project is needed and why the location of your project is a priority.

You should describe how your project fits within the wider ecological network and responds to priorities in local strategies and plans to respond to the climate and ecological emergencies. This could include priorities for sites, habitats and species identified in the London Environment Strategy, the London Rewilding Taskforce report, Biodiversity Action Plan, Local Nature Recovery Plan, Green Infrastructure or Open Spaces Strategy and/or Local Plan.

You should explain the significance of your project in terms of location and size within the local ecological network and provide a map showing the location of your project site/s and any key ecological connections that are relevant to the project.

2. What will your project do to enhance a Site(s) of Importance for Nature Conservation, improve habitats at sites which then aim to qualify for SINC status, and/or improve ecological connectivity between SINC(s)?

Your answer to this question should focus on what your project will do to address the need or opportunities that you described in response to question 1. This is where you must tell us about the key outcomes or outputs from your project (section 3.5 of the application form enables you to list the outcomes and outputs that your project will deliver).

You should provide details about your proposed activities (set out in your Project Plan – see Application Form Section 4 below) and the anticipated environmental benefits.

Where relevant, you should include information about how any new habitats created will be accommodated and work within the existing site use to demonstrate that they can be maintained in the long term.

You should include full details of how you will improve the condition and resilience of the site or SINC network and/or enable site management and further improvements to take place in the future. Please note this requirement also applies to species-focused proposals. These projects will need to demonstrate how they will result in the uplift in the quality and/or extent of the SINC(s), including the priority habitats for which the SINC is designated. If significant changes to the existing habitats within the SINC are proposed as part of the project, the rationale for doing so needs to be set out in order to demonstrate that there will be a net uplift in SINC quality/quantity.

You should also provide details of any ecological surveys or management plans that will be undertaken or produced through the project and explain how these will be used.

You should also provide details of consents or permissions that might be required (for example tree works in a Conservation Area), and to what level these have progressed at the time of application.

You should provide a map denoting the areas of your planned activity and provide details of the area of habitat that will be restored and/or created in Ha.

3. How will you ensure that your project leaves a positive legacy and supports the site(s) to be better managed in the long term?

Any project must have a clear plan for maintenance, to ensure that the benefits of activities to improve the space are fully realised. In order to support this, up to 10 per cent of any grant can be spent on maintenance required to help with the establishment of newly created priority habitats beyond the end of the project.

Your answer to this question should detail how any maintenance budget will be spent, who will be responsible for maintaining the new or improved space, and how any volunteering or community involvement to help manage the site will be sustained if relevant.

If the project includes surveys or monitoring, then you should describe how these will inform future management.

Your answer should also describe any staff training that will be delivered to increase skills and help to ensure the appropriate long-term management of the project site(s).

4. How will your project capture best practice and share approaches and learning? How will your project engage the public and support activities that enable underrepresented communities to better access and actively participate in managing important wildlife sites?

Your answer to this question should demonstrate an awareness of how your proposed activities fit in the context of London's SINC network, and the potential wider benefits of your project.

You should provide details of any monitoring that you will undertake and how the results from this or other learning from the project will be used to inform management of other SINC's and/or shared with relevant networks.

All successful projects will be required to work with the GLA to develop a case study of the project to share good practice and learning that can be adopted elsewhere by fellow land managers and others active in nature conservation in London. Applicants will also be expected to work with the GLA on communicating about their projects, for example through producing videos and social media content. Time should be factored into your project plan to do this.

Finally, demonstrate how you will engage the public and/or schools with your project, for example by organising open day(s), citizen science or other volunteer components, guided walks, talks or education sessions. Projects should consider how they can support activities which enable underrepresented communities to better access nature. Your answer should demonstrate an awareness of local communities to your site(s).

5. What outputs and outcomes will your project deliver?

This section will be used to understand what your project will deliver. For example, number of SINC's improved or connected, area of SINC improved and area of priority habitat restored / enhanced.

Application form section 4: Delivering your project

These questions form 20 per cent of the assessment of your project. They allow you to demonstrate how your project will be delivered successfully, on time and within budget, and safely.

1. Project permissions

This will establish the extent to which your project has the required permissions and consents to begin delivery.

2. Project plan

In this section you should set out the key milestones for your project, the timeline for achieving them, and the actions you will need to take. Your project must be completed by March 2025, and the timeline should reflect this. Your answer should demonstrate that you have a well-thought-out project plan, with realistic and achievable timelines.

3. Risk register

In this section you should outline some of the key risks to your project, and how you will mitigate these risks. You should score each risk according to its likelihood of happening (probability), and how big an impact it would have. The total score (probability x impact) should be assigned a red, amber or green rating. Any red risks may need further mitigation to ensure that they don't prevent your project from being successfully completed.

This should include health and safety risks and mitigations.

Application form section 5: Project budget

This question forms 20 per cent of the assessment of your project. It allows you to demonstrate that you have thought about the costs of your project, and that it delivers good value for money.

Your budget should be as detailed as possible and should follow the guidelines on eligible costs outlined in section 3.3 above. It's useful to get at least three quotes for major items and check the costs for smaller items with reputable suppliers.

Approximately 10-22 projects will share funding, divided into two funding programmes:

1. Approximately 10-20 smaller grants of between £10,000 and £50,000.
2. Two larger grants of between £100,000 and £150,000 for flagship projects. Examples of projects could include 'daylighting' of a lost stream or extensive reedbed creation.

The amount requested from the Rewild London Fund by each applicant should be a genuine reflection of the funding need of the project, rather than aiming for the upper limit of the funding programme applied for without justification. This will allow the panel to award funding to a greater number of projects.

To be eligible to apply for the larger grant amount, you must have a transformational, flagship project idea. If you believe you have a suitable project and want to discuss it further, please get in touch at

rewildlondon@london.gov.uk. If you are successful, the reporting and monitoring requirements may be more than stated in this guide, and may include a site visit.

5.3 Assessment process

Once you have submitted your application, it will be assessed according to the following process:

1. Sifting: initial review of all applications for eligibility, including: organisation, delivery timelines, grant amount, project remit. Ineligible applications will be rejected at this stage.
2. Shortlisting: all applications are scored by a minimum of three assessors from the Greater London Authority (GLA), London Wildlife Trust (LWT) and Groundwork London, according to the criteria outlined above. Applications that score less than an agreed threshold will be rejected at this stage.
3. Grants panel: shortlisted applications are reviewed by the grants panel for a final funding decision. The panel will include officers from the GLA, and LWT, as well as independent nature conservation experts. The panel will review applications collectively to ensure a breadth of project types and locations, in line with the priorities of the fund.
4. Site visits (if required): LWT officers will carry out site visits, if required, to confirm the suitability of proposed activities before grant funding is offered.

We expect final funding decisions on all applications to be made by January 2024. During the assessment process, we may contact you to clarify points in your application, ask for more information or arrange a site visit.

As we anticipate a high volume of applications, unfortunately we may not be able to fund every good application. The grants panel will prioritise those applications that most closely fit the assessment criteria and will also consider the location and type of projects to support a balanced programme across London.

Any offer(s) of funding will be made subject to you accepting a grant agreement which must be signed before your project can start.

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References

- [Reference:1](#) For more detail please see pages 181-183 of the London Environment Strategy (2018) www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf