# Farming Futures: Environmental resilience, Feasibility and Industrial research

UK registered businesses can apply for a share of up to £12.5 million across the two strands of this competition. This will be to develop innovative solutions for sustainable and resilient farming. This funding is from Farming Futures R&D Fund.

## Description

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) will invest up to £12.5 million in innovation projects.

This funding is part of Defra’s Farming Innovation Programme, which is a partnership with [UKRI’s Transforming Food Production Challenge](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/transforming-food-production-challenge/) and delivered by Innovate UK.

The aim of this competition is to fund collaborative development projects with ambitious solutions. Solutions provided will enable sustainable and resilient farming through addressing biotic and abiotic stresses in agriculture, horticulture and forestry to:

* support specific recommendations from recent Defra reviews, the [Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) act 2023](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3167) and the [Government Food Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-food-strategy)
* resolve key issues affecting the sector, where sustainable and resilient farming solutions can mitigate climate challenges and increase productivity

Your proposal must be able to demonstrate how the project will benefit farmers, growers or foresters in England.

This competition is split into 2 strands:

* Strand 1 – Farming Futures: Feasibility; evaluating emerging solutions with the UK’s world-leading research base, agri-tech businesses, SMEs and the UK agricultural sector to develop innovations in agriculture, forestry and horticulture (this strand)
* Strand 2 – Farming Futures: Industrial Research; progressing emerging solutions to new products, processes and services with the UK’s world-leading research base, agri-tech businesses, SMEs and the UK agricultural sector to develop innovations in agriculture, forestry and horticulture

This competition will address the challenges to plants, crops and farmed animals, from both their biological (biotic) and physical environments (abiotic).

It is your responsibility to ensure you submit your application to the correct strand for your project. You will not be able to transfer your application and it will not be sent for assessment if it is out of scope.

In applying to this competition, you are entering into a competitive process. This competition closes at 11am UK time on the deadline stated.

## Funding type

Grant

## Project size

Your project’s total costs must be between £200,000 and £500,000.

**Who can apply**

If you are successful, any awards given to primary agricultural producers are subject to the green box exemption, under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on Agriculture.

Please see further guidance on green box subsidies in the [WTO Guidance for support in Agriculture.](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/agric_e/agboxes_e.htm) Applicants receiving this type of support must ensure that there is minimal to no distortion of trade and comply with the requirements of [Annex 2 of the Agriculture Agreement](https://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/14-ag_02_e.htm#annII).

**Your project**

Your project must:

* have total costs between £200,000 and £500,000
* start by 1 January 2024
* end by 31 December 2025
* last between 12 to 24 months
* be able to demonstrate how the project will benefit farmers, growers or foresters in England
* carry out all of its project work in the UK
* intend to exploit the results from or in the UK

You must only include [eligible project costs](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/costs-we-fund/) in your application.

Under current restrictions, this competition will not fund any procurement, commercial, business development or supply chain activity with any Russian and Belarusian entity as lead, partner or subcontractor. This includes any goods or services originating from a Russian and Belarusian source.

**Lead organisation**

To lead a project your organisation must:

* be a UK registered business of any size
* collaborate with other UK registered organisations

More information on the different types of organisation can be found in our [Funding rules](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/funding-rules/#contents-list).

[Academic institutions](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/funding-rules/#contents-list) and research organisations cannot lead or work alone.

**Project team**

To collaborate with the lead, your organisation must be one of the following UK registered:

* business of any size
* academic institution
* charity
* not for profit
* public sector organisation
* research and technology organisation (RTO)

Each partner organisation must be invited into the Innovation Funding Service by the lead to collaborate on a project. Once accepted, partners will be asked to login or to create an account and enter their own project costs into the Innovation Funding Service.

To be an eligible collaboration, the lead and at least one other organisation must apply for funding when entering their costs into the application.

**Non-funded partners**

Your project can include partners that do not receive any of this competition’s funding, for example non-UK businesses. Their costs will count towards the total project costs.

**Subcontractors**

Subcontractors are allowed in this competition.

Subcontractors can be from anywhere in the UK and you must select them through your usual procurement process.  
  
You can use subcontractors from overseas but must make the case in your application as to why you could not use suppliers from the UK.  
  
You must provide a detailed rationale, evidence of the potential UK contractors you approached and the reasons why they were unable to work with you. We will not accept a cheaper cost as a sufficient reason to use an overseas subcontractor.  
  
All subcontractor costs must be justified and appropriate to the total project costs.

**Number of applications**

A business, can only lead on one application in each strand but can be included as a collaborator in 2 further applications in each of the 2 strands of the competition. If you are successful you will be asked to confirm you have the capacity to run multiple projects simultaneously.

If an organisation is not leading any application, it can collaborate in any number of applications.

**Use of animals in research and innovation**

Innovate UK expects and supports the provision and safeguarding of welfare standards for animals used in research and innovation, according to best practice and up to date guidance.

Applicants must ensure that all of the proposed work within projects, both that in the UK and internationally, will comply with the [UKRI guidance on the use of animals in research and innovation](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ukri.org%2Fabout-us%2Fpolicies-standards-and-data%2Fgood-research-resource-hub%2Fuse-of-animals-in-research%2F&data=05%7C01%7CChris.Lyons%40iuk.ukri.org%7C9e37f93405ed49c91b1b08db31340906%7C8bb7e08edaa44a8e927efca38db04b7e%7C0%7C0%7C638157871773964025%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=F%2BQMvS4kA4KQMrg9PqVbiXqOfeNK1HYsM7qj9brQAcg%3D&reserved=0).

Any projects selected for funding which involve animals will be asked to provide additional information on welfare and ethical considerations and compliance with any relevant legislation as part of the project start-up process. This information will be reviewed before an award is made.

**Previous applications**

You can use a [previously submitted application](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/before-you-start-an-application/#contents-list) when applying for both strands of this competition.  
  
We will not award you funding if you have:

* [failed to exploit](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/before-you-start-an-application/?&_ga=2.155271230.420987062.1682419919-1761932176.1681723579#contents-list) a previously funded project
* an overdue [independent accountant’s report](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/before-you-start-an-application/#contents-list)
* failed to comply with grant terms and conditions

**Subsidy control (and State aid where applicable)**

This competition provides funding in line with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Further information about the Subsidy requirements can be found within the [Subsidy Control Act 2022 (legislation.gov.uk)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/23/enacted).

Innovate UK is unable to award organisations that are considered to be in financial difficulty. We will conduct financial viability and eligibility tests to confirm this is not the case following the application stage.

EU State aid rules now only apply in limited circumstances. Please see our [general guidance](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/funding-rules/#contents-list) to check if these rules apply to your organisation.

**Further Information**

If you are unsure about your obligations under the [Subsidy Control Act 2022](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/23/enacted) or the State aid rules, you should take independent legal advice. We are unable to advise on individual eligibility or legal obligations.

You must always make sure that the funding awarded to you is compliant with all current Subsidy Control legislation applicable in the United Kingdom.

This aims to regulate any advantage granted by a public sector body which threatens to, or actually distorts competition in the United Kingdom or any other country or countries.

**Funding**

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has allocated up to £12.5 million, across the two strands of this competition, working in partnership with UKRI's Transforming Food Production Challenge. This competition is delivered by Innovate UK.

If your project has farmers, growers and foresters requesting grant funding, a minimum of 50% of the total grant amount requested by those organisations, must come from farmers, growers or foresters geographically based in England.

Funding will be in the form of a grant.

The total funding available for the competition can change.

The funders have the right to:

* adjust the funding allocations between the two competition strands
* apply a portfolio approach

If your organisation’s work on the project is commercial or economic, your funding request must not exceed the limits below. These limits apply even if your organisation normally acts non-economically but for the purpose of this project will be undertaking commercial or economic activity.

For feasibility studies projects, you could get funding for your eligible project costs of:

* up to 70% if you are a micro or small organisation
* up to 60% if you are a medium sized organisation
* up to 50% if you are a large organisation

For more information on company sizes, please refer to the [company accounts guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/life-of-a-company-annual-requirements/life-of-a-company-part-1-accounts#micro-entity).

If you are applying for an award funded under State aid Regulations, the definitions are set out in the [European Commission Recommendation of 6 May 2003](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition_en).

**Research participation**

The research organisations undertaking non-economic activity as part of the project can share up to 50% of the total eligible project costs. If your consortium contains more than one research organisation undertaking non-economic activity, this maximum is shared between them. Of that 50% you could get funding for your eligible project costs of up to:

* 80% of full economic costs (FEC) if you are a Je-S registered institution such as an academic
* 100% of your project costs if you are an RTO, charity, not for profit organisation, public sector organisation or research organisation

**Your proposal**

The aim of this competition is to fund collaborative development of projects with ambitious solutions. Solutions provided will enable sustainable and resilient farming through addressing biotic and abiotic stresses in agriculture, horticulture and forestry to:

* support specific recommendations from recent Defra reviews, the [Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) act 2023](https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3167) and the [Government Food Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-food-strategy/government-food-strategy)
* resolve key issues affecting the sector, where sustainable and resilientfarming solutions can mitigate climate challenges and increase productivity
* develop innovations in agriculture, forestry and horticulture to meet challenges to plants, crops and farmed animals from both their biological (biotic) and physical environment (abiotic)

The innovative technologies in your proposal could include one or more of the following biological (biotic) and physical environmental (abiotic) challenges:

* integrated pest management ​
* detection, prevention and management of diseases​
* agro-ecology ​
* gene editing and breeding​
* regenerative cropping, livestock and mixed systems​
* livestock housing, nutrition, health and management​
* innovative fertiliser practices​
* soil resilience​
* water management and innovation​

This list is not exhaustive.

Your project must seek to significantly improve:

* productivity
* sustainability and environmental impact of farming
* progression towards net zero emissions
* longer term resilience
* food security

You must be able to demonstrate how your solution and output will benefit farmers, growers or foresters in England.

Your proposal must:

* demonstrate environmental benefits and societal impact
* ensure your solutions are closely aligned with industry priorities to deliver business-orientated and transformative opportunities
* consider how it will encourage dissemination and knowledge exchange to the wider sector

**Portfolio approach**

We want to fund a variety of projects across different technologies, strands, themes, markets, locations and research categories. We call this a [portfolio approach](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/what-happens-after-you-have-submitted-your-application/#contents-list).

**Specific themes**

Your project must focus on one or more of the following agricultural and horticultural production sectors:

**Farmed animals**

* monogastric
* ruminant

**Plant**

* broadacre: cereals, root crops, grassland
* horticulture: field based and specialist growers
* fruit: top fruit, stone fruit and soft fruit
* vineyard
* protected cropping: glass and polytunnel systems
* controlled environment and vertical farming systems

**Forestry**

* agro-forestry

**Cross-sector**

* bioeconomy

**Research categories**

We will fund feasibility projects, as defined in the [guidance on categories of research](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/categories-of-research-and-development/#contents-list).

**Projects we will not fund**

We are not funding projects that :

* are equine specific
* are focused specifically on financial resilience​
* are specific to non-food or ornamental plants
* involve wild caught fisheries
* involve aquaculture for fish production or human consumption
* involve cellular expression of proteins or cultivated meat
* involve acellular production systems, fermentation systems for bacteria, yeast or fungi for human consumption
* are for the production of crops or plants for medicinal or pharmaceutical use
* do not benefit farmers, growers or foresters in England
* involve post farm gate processing and packaging

We cannot fund projects that are:

* dependent on export performance, for example giving a subsidy to a baker on the condition that it exports a certain quantity of bread to another country
* dependent on domestic inputs usage, for example giving a subsidy to a baker on the condition that it uses 50% UK flour in their product

**Before you start**

You must read the [guidance on applying for a competition on the Innovation Funding Service](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/general-guidance/your-application/#contents-list) (IFS) before you start.

Before submitting, it is the lead applicant’s responsibility to make sure:

* that all the information provided in the application is correct
* your proposal meets the eligibility and scope criteria
* all sections of the application are marked as complete
* that all partners have completed all assigned sections and accepted the terms and conditions (T&Cs)

You can re-open your application once submitted, up until the competition deadline. You must resubmit the application before the competition deadline.

**What we ask you**

The application is split into 3 sections:

1. Project details.

2. Application questions.

3. Finances.

**Accessibility and inclusion**

We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and are committed to making our application process accessible to everyone. This includes providing support, in the form of reasonable adjustments, for people who have a disability or a long-term condition and face barriers applying to us. Read more on [how we are making our application process more accessible and inclusive](https://www.ukri.org/blog/together-making-innovation-truly-accessible-and-inclusive/) for everyone.

You must contact us as early as possible in the application process. We recommend contacting us at least 15 working days before the competition closing date to ensure we can provide you with the most suitable support possible.

You can contact us by emailing [support@iuk.ukri.org](mailto:support@iuk.ukri.org) or calling 0300 321 4357. Our phone lines are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

**1. Project details**

This section provides background for your application and is not scored.

**Application team**

Decide which organisations will work with you on your project and invite people from those organisations to help complete the application.

**Application details**

Give your project’s title, start date and duration.

**Research category**

Select the type of research you will undertake.

**Project summary**

Describe your project briefly and be clear about what makes it innovative. We use this section to assign the right experts to assess your application.

Your answer can be up to 400 words long.  
  
**Public description**

Describe your project in detail and in a way that you are happy to see published. Do not include any commercially sensitive information. If we award your project funding, we will publish this description. This could happen before you start your project.

Your answer can be up to 400 words long.

**Scope**

Describe how your project fits the scope of the competition. If your project is not in scope it will not be sent for assessment. We will tell you the reason why.

Your answer can be up to 400 words long.

**2. Application questions**

The assessors will score all your answers apart from questions 1 to 3. You will receive feedback for each scored question. [Find out more about how our assessors assess.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyHgqGjxeCU)

You must answer all questions. Your answer to each question can be up to 400 words long. Do not include any website addresses (URLs) in your answers.

**Question 1. Applicant location (not scored)**

You must state the name and full registered address of your organisation and any partners or subcontractors working on your project.

We are collecting this information to understand the geographical location of all applicants.

**Question 2. Farmers, growers or foresters location (not scored)**

You must provide the location address for any farmers, growers or foresters requesting grant funding in your project. This is required for Subsidy Control and eligibility purposes.

If your project has farmers, growers or foresters requesting grant funding, a minimum of 50% of the amount requested by those organisations, must come from farmers or growers geographically based in England.

If no farmers, growers or foresters are requesting grant funding you must type ‘No grant funding requested’ as your answer to this question.

**Question 3. Equality, diversity and inclusion (not scored)**

How have you incorporated equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into your project delivery and project outcomes?

Describe or explain the details relating to any challenges or opportunities relating to EDI arising from your project, and the methods and approaches used to address them:

* during project delivery
* for governance
* for project team and advisory boards
* for stakeholder and end-user engagement
* for design thinking

Please note: Questions relating to EDI will not form part of the funding decision but will be used to inform the development of EDI activities for the competition cohort.

**Question 4. Need or challenge**

What is the business need, technological challenge, or market opportunity behind your innovation?

Explain:

* the main motivation for the project
* the farming or agricultural problem, need, technological challenge or market opportunity
* whether you have identified any similar innovation and its current limitations, including those close to market or in development
* any work you have already done to respond to this need, for example if the project focuses on developing an existing capability or building a new one
* how your project outputs would deliver significant improvements in agricultural productivity, resilience and sustainability
* what benefits English farmers or growers will gain from your project
* the wider economic, social, environmental, cultural or political challenges which are influential in creating the opportunity, such as incoming regulations, using our [Horizons tool](https://ktn-uk.co.uk/programmes/horizons) if appropriate

**Question 5. Approach and innovation**

What approach will you take and where will the focus of the innovation be?

Explain:

* how you will respond to the need, challenge or opportunity identified
* how will you improve on the similar innovation that you have identified
* whether the innovation will focus on existing technologies in new areas, the development of new technologies for existing areas or a totally disruptive approach
* the freedom you have to operate
* how this project fits with your current product, service lines or offerings
* how it will make you more competitive
* the nature of the outputs you expect from the project (for example report, demonstrator, know-how, new process, product or service design) and how these will help you to target the need, challenge or opportunity identified

You can submit one appendix to support your answer. It can include diagrams and charts. It must be a PDF, up to 2 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

**Question 6. Team and resources**

Who is in the project team and what are their roles?

Explain:

* the roles, skills and experience of all members of the project team that are relevant to the approach you will be taking
* the resources, equipment and facilities needed for the project and how you will access them
* the details of any vital external parties, including subcontractors, who you will need to work with to successfully carry out the project
* how you will work with farmers, growers and foresters throughout the project to ensure outputs remain focussed on end-users' needs
* the current relationships between project partners and how these will change as a result of the project
* any roles you will need to recruit for

You can submit one appendix with a short summary of the main people working on your project to support your answer. It must be a PDF, up to 4 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

**Question 7. Market awareness**

What does the market you are targeting look like?

Describe:

* the target markets for the project outcomes and any other potential markets (domestic, international or both)
* the size of the target markets for the project outcomes, backed up by references where available
* the structure and dynamics of the target markets, including customer segmentation, together with predicted growth rates within clear timeframes
* the target markets’ main supply or value chains and business models, and any barriers to entry that exist
* the current UK position in targeting these markets
* the size and main features of any other markets not already listed

If your project is highly innovative, where the market may be unexplored, describe or explain:

* what the market’s size might be
* how your project will try to explore the market’s potential

**Question 8. Outcomes and route to market**

How are you going to grow your business and increase long term productivity as a result of the project?

Explain:

* your current position in the markets and supply or value chains outlined, and whether you will be extending or establishing your market position
* your target customers or end users, and the value to them, for example, why they would use or buy your product
* your route to market
* how you are going to profit from the innovation, including increased revenues or cost reduction
* how the innovation will affect your productivity and growth, in both the short and the long term
* how you will protect and exploit the outputs of the project, for example through know-how, patenting, designs or changes to your business model
* your strategy for targeting the other markets you have identified during or after the project

If there is any research organisation activity in the project, describe:

* your plans to spread the project’s research outputs over a reasonable timescale
* how you expect to use the results generated from the project in further research activities

**Question 9. Wider impacts**

What impact might this project have outside the project team?

Describe and, where possible, measure the economic benefits from the project such as productivity increases and import substitution, to:

* external parties
* customers
* others in the supply chain
* broader industry
* the UK economy

Describe and, where possible, measure:

* any expected impact on government priorities
* any expected environmental impacts, either positive or negative
* any expected regional impacts of the project

Describe any expected social impacts, either positive or negative on, for example:

* quality of life
* social inclusion or exclusion
* jobs, such as safeguarding, creating, changing or displacing them
* education
* public empowerment
* health and safety
* regulations
* diversity

**Question 10. Project management**

How will you manage your project effectively?

Explain:

* the main work packages of your project, indicating the lead partner assigned to each and the total cost of each one
* your approach to project management, identifying any major tools and mechanisms you will use to get a successful and innovative project outcome
* the management reporting lines
* your project plan in enough detail to identify any links or dependencies between work packages or milestones

You must submit a project plan or Gantt chart as an appendix to support your answer. It must be a PDF, up to 2 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

**Question 11. Risks**

What are the main risks for this project?

Describe:

* the main risks and uncertainties of the project, including the technical, commercial, managerial and environmental risks
* how you will mitigate these risks
* any project inputs that are critical to completion, such as resources, expertise, and data sets
* any output likely to be subject to regulatory requirements, certification, ethical issues and so on, and how you will manage this

You must submit a risk register as an appendix to support your answer. It must be a PDF, up to 2 A4 pages long and no larger than 10MB in size. The font must be legible at 100% zoom.

**Question 12. Added value**

How will this public funding help you to accelerate or enhance your approach to developing your project towards commercialisation? What impact would this award have on the organisations involved?

Explain:

* what advantages public funding would offer your project, for example, appeal to investors, more partners, reduced risk or a faster route to market (this list is not exhaustive)
* the likely impact of the project outcomes on the organisations involved
* what other routes of investment you have already approached
* what your project would look like without public funding
* how this project would change the R&D activities of all the organisations involved

**Question 13. Costs and value for money**

How much will the project cost and how does it represent value for money for the team and the taxpayer?

In terms of your project goals, explain:

* your total project costs
* the grant you are requesting
* how each partner will finance their contributions to your project
* how this project represents value for money for you and the taxpayer
* how it compares to what you would spend your money on otherwise
* the balance of costs and grant across the project partners
* any subcontractor costs and why they are critical to your project

**3. Finances**

Each organisation in your project must complete their own project costs, organisation details and funding details in the application.

If your project has farmers, growers or foresters requesting grant funding, a minimum of 50% of the total grant amount requested by those organisations, must come from farmers, growers or foresters geographically based in England.

Academic institutions must complete and upload a [Je-S form](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/costs-we-fund/costs-guidance-for-academics/).

For full details on what costs you can claim see our [project costs guidance.](https://www.ukri.org/councils/innovate-uk/guidance-for-applicants/costs-we-fund/costs-guidance-for-non-academic-organisations/)

**Background and further information**

Text update 26/05/2023: We have updated the 'find a project partner' section to include a link to book a 1:1 meeting with Innovate UK KTN.

This funding is from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Farming Innovation Programme, and is in partnership with UKRI’s [Transforming Food Production (TFP) Challenge](https://www.ukri.org/our-work/our-main-funds/industrial-strategy-challenge-fund/clean-growth/transforming-food-production-challenge/), delivered by Innovate UK.

The Farming Innovation Programme will fund ambitious research and development projects to overcome barriers and create a more productive and sustainable sector.

Projects will benefit England’s farmers, growers, foresters and other businesses to conduct R&D to help boost productivity, enhance sustainable practices, support economic growth, improve environmental outcomes and reduce carbon emissions in England’s agricultural and horticultural sectors.

The Farming Innovation programme provides a key means to deliver against the government’s goals. The goals are set out in the [Agricultural Transition Plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024), [25 Year Environment Plan](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf), [Environmental Improvement Plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-improvement-plan), [Government’s Food Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-food-strategy) and [Net Zero targets](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1033990/net-zero-strategy-beis.pdf).

Its aims are to develop a renewed agricultural sector, producing healthy food for consumption at home and abroad, where farms can be profitable and economically sustainable without subsidy. This gives farming the opportunity to contribute significantly to environmental goals, including addressing climate change.

The Farming Innovation Programme is made up of three funds. Two of these, the Industry-led R&D Partnerships Fund, and Farming Futures R&D Fund, are being delivered in partnership with UKRI.

This competition is part of the Farming Futures R&D Fund, which aims to support:

* investigating solutions that have the potential to substantially improve the overall productivity and sustainability of farming, and move existing agricultural sectors to net zero
* prioritising solutions that will have positive outputs for farmers, growers and foresters in commercially relevant situations
* accelerating research and development of new agricultural solutions by actively engaging collaboration with the wider UK research community in the innovation process
* creating opportunities for government and the farming industry to work together to make farming greener and more productive
* helping grow the economy, create jobs and improve food security

**Defra’s partnership with UKRI**

Defra and UKRI have developed a strong partnership for agrifood and agriculture innovation. This is built upon the success of UKRI’s TFP) Challenge, the recent Farming Innovation Pathways competition, and our shared ambition for a more productive, sustainable and low carbon agrifood sector. We are taking this partnership to the next level with Defra’s Farming Innovation Programme.

Defra and UKRI are looking to fund bold ideas and encourage collaboration between businesses, researchers, farmers, growers or foresters to deliver solutions for a more productive, environmentally sustainable and resilient sector.

**Data sharing**

This competition is jointly operated by Innovate UK, and The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) (each an “agency”).

Any relevant information submitted and produced during the application process concerning your application can be shared by one agency with the other, for its individual storage, processing and use.

This means that any information given to or generated by Innovate UK in respect of your application may be passed on to Defra and vice versa. This would include, but is not restricted to:

* the information stated on the application, including the personal details of all applicants
* scoring and feedback on the application
* information received during the management and administration of the grant, such as Monitoring Officer reports and Independent Accountant Reports

Innovate UK and Defra are directly accountable to you for their holding and processing of your information, including any personal data and confidential information. Data is held in accordance with their own policies. Accordingly, Innovate UK, and Defra will be data controllers for personal data submitted during the application. Innovate UK’s Privacy Policy is accessible [here](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ukri.org%2Fpublications%2Finnovate-uk-privacy-notice-and-information-management-policy%2F&data=05%7C01%7CSachin.Patel%40iuk.ukri.org%7C2db344cc64874c4498af08da7aad0a7e%7C8bb7e08edaa44a8e927efca38db04b7e%7C0%7C0%7C637957180862665866%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=rEidvwM3vbiu4Y%2F9rtbipO504DMTA1SVqKLLEUAhz%2Bc%3D&reserved=0).

Innovate UK complies with the [requirements of GDPR](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Forganisations%2Finnovate-uk%2Fabout%2Fpersonal-information-charter%23privacy-notice&data=05%7C01%7CSachin.Patel%40iuk.ukri.org%7C2db344cc64874c4498af08da7aad0a7e%7C8bb7e08edaa44a8e927efca38db04b7e%7C0%7C0%7C637957180862665866%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=nB%2Fxlfd1A1dNrw87r%2FbgmwN%2FK1Qqlti05anLjvnpfFU%3D&reserved=0), and is committed to upholding the data protection principles, and protecting your information. The Information Commissioner’s Office also has a [useful guide](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fico.org.uk%2Ffor-organisations%2Fguide-to-data-protection%2F&data=05%7C01%7CSachin.Patel%40iuk.ukri.org%7C2db344cc64874c4498af08da7aad0a7e%7C8bb7e08edaa44a8e927efca38db04b7e%7C0%7C0%7C637957180862665866%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=4TgjiMrXhXQMDXK4okUdCGLIcI4RKrXTfn3GHg%2BAouY%3D&reserved=0) for organisations, which outlines the data protection principles.

**Find a project partner**

If you want help to find a project partner, contact [Innovate UK KTN](https://ktn-uk.org/).

Book a 1:1 meeting with a member of Innovate UK’s KTN AgriFood team to discuss your project [here](https://calendly.com/d/y6k-qx8-f3b/farming-futures-environmental-resilience-support?month=2023-06).

**Support for SMEs from Innovate UK EDGE**

If you receive an award, you will be contacted about working with an innovation and growth specialist at [Innovate UK EDGE](https://www.innovateukedge.ukri.org/?utm_source=innovateuk&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=competitionsifs). This service forms part of our funded offer to you.

These specialists focus on growing innovative businesses and ensuring that projects contribute to their growth. Working one-to-one, they can help you to identify your best strategy and harness world-class resources to grow and achieve scale.

We encourage you to engage with Innovate UK EDGE, delivered by a knowledgeable and objective specialist near you.

**Next steps**

If you are successful with this application, you will be asked to set up your project.

You must follow the unique link embedded in your email notification. This takes you to your IFS Set Up portal, the tool that Innovate UK uses to gather necessary information before we can allow your project to begin.

You will need to provide:

* the name and contact details of your project manager and project finance lead
* a redacted copy of your bank details
* a collaboration agreement
* an exploitation plan

At least one member of your project team must attend a 1 hour briefing webinar within 10 days of receiving your successful notification.

At the webinar we will provide you with detailed information relating to setting up and starting your project. We will tell you about the briefing in your notification letter.

In this competition all projects awarded funding must upload evidence for each expenditure with every claim made. These can include invoices, timesheets, receipts or spreadsheets for capital usage. This is part of Innovate UK’s obligations under the [Managing Public Money](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-public-money) government handbook in relation to assurance, financial management and control.

In order to process your claims, we need to make sure that the bank details you give to us relate to a UK high street bank that is regulated by the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA). The account must have a BACS clearing facility and be in the same company name as your application.

If you have any doubts that your bank account will not meet Innovate UK's funding criteria, you can use the [sort code checker](https://newseventsinsights.wearepay.uk/sort-code-checker). If you input the sort code and find a tick next to the ‘BACS Direct Credit payments can be sent to this sort code’, this will give you an indication that the bank account you hold is acceptable.

**Finance checks**

We will carry out checks to make sure you are an established company with access to the funds necessary to complete the project.

You must check your IFS portal regularly and respond to any requests we have sent for additional information to avoid any delays.

Failure to complete project setup may result in your grant offer being withdrawn.

**Your Grant offer letter (GOL)**

Once you have successfully completed project setup, we will issue your GOL.

The GOL will be made available on your IFS portal. You will need to sign and upload this before you start your project.

Your GOL will show the start date for your project, do not start your project before this date. Any costs incurred before your start date cannot be claimed as part of your grant.

**If your application is unsuccessful**

If you are unsuccessful with your application this time, you can view feedback from the assessors. This will be available to you on your IFS portal following notification.

Sometimes your application will have scored well, and you will receive positive comments from the assessors. You may be unsuccessful as your average score was not above the funding threshold or your project has not been selected under the portfolio approach if this is applied for this competition.

**Contact us**

If you need more information about how to apply or you want to submit your application in Welsh, email [support@iuk.ukri.org](mailto:support@iuk.ukri.org) or call 0300 321 4357.

Our phone lines are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).