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**Expression of Interest 2024/25**

**Rural England Prosperity Fund**

Background to REPF

Announced in September 2022, the Rural England Prosperity Fund (SPF) provides £110 million of new funding nationally through to March 2025, targeted at rural areas. The primary aims of the REPF are to improve rural productivity, connectivity and access to key services. This will be achieved by:

* supporting new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams.
* supporting new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy.

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is overseeing the Fund, all part of the Government’s broader Levelling Up agenda.

REPF core funding has two investment priorities:

* Communities and Place
* Supporting Local Business

Cotswold District Council has an allocation of £764,292 over the two years (£191,073 in 2023-24 and £573,219 in 2024-25). For more information on the REPF, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-england-prosperity-fund-prospectus>

Please note, the REPF is purely capital funding, so cannot be used to meet day to day running costs. This form is to be used to submit proposals for the intervention relating to the local cultural heritage offer (Intervention 2.4). The Council has allocated £150,000 for Intervention 2.4 in 2024/25. For more information on the definition of this intervention, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-england-prosperity-fund-prospectus/rural-england-prosperity-fund-interventions-objectives-outputs-and-outcomes-summary>

Any organisation with a legal status can apply for REPF funding, but we cannot support projects that have received funding from other DEFRA schemes. For more information see section 6.1 of the prospectus (link above).

This form is not to be used to apply for Rural Business Grants or for grants for villages halls and community buildings. For more information on how to apply for these grants and on CDC’s approach to the Rural England Prosperity Fund, please visit [www.cotswold.gov.uk/repf](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/repf).

Please send this form to Paul James, Economic Development Lead, Cotswold District Council by email to [paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:paul.james@cotswold.gov.uk) by **5pm** on **Friday 17th May 2024**. This information will be used to assess the project, in consultation with the Council’s REPF Assessment Panel, and determine whether it will form part of the Council’s spend in 2024-25.

By completing this EOI you are confirming that you certify to the best of your knowledge the information submitted on this form is true and correct and you have the appropriate level of authority to submit this EOI on behalf of your organisation.

**Project Contact Information**

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| Project Name (be specific not general, to avoid confusion with other similar projects or locations) |
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| Applicant Organisation |
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| Legal Status of Organisation (i.e. Charity, Limited Company etc) |
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| Applicant Address |
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| Primary Contact (name and role in the organisation) |
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| Contact Telephone Number and Email Address |
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**Project Status**

In this section you will be required to give details of the current status of your project and milestones.

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| Will the project be ready to complete before March 2025? (Please tick the relevant box) | | | |
| Yes |  | No |  |

**Project Objectives**:

This section looks at the key objectives set out by the Government and how your project relates to both those and the key priorities of Cotswold District Council.

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| Investment theme: tick the primary theme that best fits your project | |
| Community and Place |  |
| Supporting Local Business |  |

Please highlight which of the Cotswold District Council priorities your project is best related to:

Link to Cotswold District Council Corporate Plan here: <https://meetings.cotswold.gov.uk/documents/s4905/Annex%20B%20Corporate%20Strategy%202021%20Update%20160222.pdf>

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| Cotswold District Council priority: tick the primary theme that best fits your project | |
| Enabling a vibrant economy |  |
| Responding to the climate crisis |  |
| Supporting health and wellbeing |  |
| Delivering high standards of service |  |

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| Strategic Fit (max 1000 characters)  (Please expand on the local context for your project). Having identified Cotswold District Council’s priority/priorities in the above question, please expand on this and explain how your project aligns with other Council supported partnerships and organisations. |
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| Partnership working and collaboration.  Does your project intend to work with other places e.g. other local authority areas in Gloucestershire or with organisations based in neighbouring areas? |
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**Project summary**: In this section you will be required to give more details on your project outcomes and community benefits.

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| Describe your project idea clearly and succinctly, including what the investment would buy and why it would meet the aims of the Shared Prosperity Fund. Include the potential timeframe and any significant drivers or constraints related to the scheduling of the investment. Include details of the organisation(s) that would be involved in its delivery and why public funds are needed. (Max 1250 characters) |
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| Summary of benefits/outcomes that will be delivered.  Expanding on your summary, provide information on the tangible benefits, measurable outputs and outcomes that would be delivered. These could address challenges or capitalise on opportunities, including those associated with solutions to improve local pride in place, increase life chances, to help spread and create opportunity. List the expected outputs and outcomes and indicate the timescales. Please refer to the REPF list of outputs and outcomes – see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-england-prosperity-fund-prospectus/rural-england-prosperity-fund-interventions-objectives-outputs-and-outcomes-summary>.  Please also include any outputs and outcomes your project will deliver which are not included in the Government’s list. (Max 1250 characters). |
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| Evidence of need or demand (Max 1000 characters)  Give details of the evidence you can reference that supports your case that there is a need or demand for this project. |
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| How will the project support Cotswold District Council Net Zero goals? Does the project contribute to wider environmental considerations such as resilience to natural hazards and the 25-year Environment Plan?  See Cotswold District Council’s Climate Emergency Strategy  <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/8d8eab9716634de/cdc-climate-emergency-strategy-adopted-2020_09_23.pdf> |
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| Summary of the REPF Investment(s) requested and other sources of funding: (Estimated total cost of the project, and (if available) list the main elements of the budget. Provide details of any potential or secured source(s) of funding and the likely shortfall.) | |
| Total Project Cost (please break down into main elements if possible) | £ |
| Ask of REPF (Capital) | £ |
| Other sources of funding either agreed or in process (please specify amounts and sources) | £ |
| Current estimated funding shortfall | £ |
| Is this project in receipt of any other DEFRA funding? | YES/NO |

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| Please provide a brief explanation of the project’s status, including whether any necessary approvals and consents, e.g. planning permission, landowner consent, have been obtained. (Max 700 characters) |
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| Please provide a brief explanation of the project milestones (Max 700 characters) |
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| What are the key challenges and risks associated with the successful delivery of this project? |
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| Equalities and diversity: Does your project have any positive or negative impact on any of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation? <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics> |
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REPF EOI form Marh 2024