

# **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS**

## **Angling Improvement Fund 2024/25**

### **FISH PROTECTION & PREDATION MANAGEMENT**

#### **Introduction**

The Angling Trust, with the support of the Environment Agency (EA), is seeking new applications for the 2024/25 Angling Improvement Fund (AIF).

The AIF is funded by income generated through the sale of the EA's coarse and non-migratory trout fishing licences and aims to provide a direct benefit to anglers. It was established in 2015 and since then has reinvested over £2.7m of fishing licence money into projects that directly benefit fisheries in England.

In the 2023/2024 round, 33 different projects were funded.

#### **When does the Fund open and close?**

The application portal **opens on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and closes at 1700 on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

Applicants will be notified if they have been successful or not by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024. This gives successful applicants sufficient time for their project to be completed during the better weather in summer and autumn.

#### **Who is eligible?**

- Angling clubs
- Commercial angling venues
- Syndicate fisheries
- Community organisations
- Local authorities who provide angling facilities

It is not a requirement to be an Angling Trust member club or affiliated organisation to apply.

Any project **must** be based in England and involve a form of angling covered by a valid EA non-migratory trout and coarse fishing licence.

There **must** already be angling taking place at the site.

Joint applications between 2 or more organisations will be welcomed. We will prioritise awards to clubs and fisheries where there is the greatest benefit to rod licence holders. Therefore, free fishing waters, or clubs with open membership will be preferred to venues with restricted access arrangements (syndicates for example). The number of anglers, or day tickets sales will also be considered and if the club or fishery owner is actively involved in participation events or activities to grow the sport of angling.

#### **What is the maximum award applicants can apply for?**

The maximum award will be restricted to **£6,000** per project. (please refer to page 3 for treatment of VAT)

Applicants should attempt to match the award with a similar amount of funding from their own sources. This may include cash, volunteer time, donations, or a combination of all three.

## **Notification of results and payments**

**All communication will be with the main contact person as detailed on the form**, by email or by phone. Successful applications will be required to sign and return an Award Acceptance Form.

**Payment is made on completion of the project once receipts and photos have been received.** This may necessitate a site visit. Payments will be made directly to the organisations bank account, not to individuals.

## **When must successful projects be completed by?**

Successful applicants will be expected to complete any funded project works by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024. This includes sending copies of receipts/invoices and photographic evidence of the completed project to [AIFAdmin@anglingtrust.net](mailto:AIFAdmin@anglingtrust.net).

## **What species are eligible?**

Funding is available to support non-lethal and legal techniques to manage unsustainable predation at sites by:

- Mammals such as otters and mink
- Birds such as cormorant, goosander, and other fish eaters

We **do not fund** projects involving the removal of:

- Signal crayfish
- Seals
- Catfish
- Zander
- Any other non-native species or predatory fish

Any other non-native species or predatory fish

Projects benefiting migratory salmon or sea angling projects are not eligible.

If you are uncertain whether your predator is eligible, please contact one of our Fishery Management Advisors before making an application.

## **Suitable projects for funding**

Please note: **The fund will not pay for work already completed or materials/services already purchased.**

- Well planned projects that demonstrate a good understanding of the current impacts of predatory species at the site
- Evidence is shown of the real need for action
- Independent expert advice has been sought, preferably from an Angling Trust Fishery Management Advisor (FMA)
- The project should be sustainable over several years thereby safeguarding fish stocks and angling opportunities

We need evidence that the applicants have at their disposal the expertise to deliver their project within the timescales permitted.

## **What works are eligible?**

- Installation, repair and material costs of otter proof fencing
- Provision of fish refuges including marginal planting (Stillwaters only)
- Removal or modification of bird loafing and roosting sites
- Non-lethal equipment such as auditory and visual deterrents
- Fees to bona-fide professional contractors to implement the project
- Other measures aimed at reduction of predation

- Consideration must be given to maintaining or enhancing access for less able-bodied anglers as part of the works

### **What is not eligible for AIF funding?**

- Routine maintenance of the fishery
- Advertising, marketing or promotion costs
- Purchasing new or replacement fish stock

**If you are uncertain that your project will qualify, please contact [aifadmin@anglingtrust.net](mailto:aifadmin@anglingtrust.net) before applying.**

### **Advice on the prevention of otter predation**

More information about otter predation can be found by following the links below:

<https://anglingtrust.net/fma/otters/>

<https://anglingtrust.net/regional-forums/virtual-fisheries-forums/#maintaining-your-otter-fence>

The Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*) is native to the UK and protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). It is an offence to disturb or kill otters without a license from Natural England.

### **Advice on cormorant and goosander predation**

More information about fish eating birds can be found by following the links below:

<https://anglingtrust.net/fma/cormorants-goosanders/>

<https://anglingtrust.net/regional-forums/virtual-fisheries-forums/#cormorant-management>

The Angling Trust employs two **Fishery Management Advisors** who can offer free advice to applicants.

Richard Bamforth (North and Midlands)  
[Richard.bamforth@anglingtrust.net](mailto:Richard.bamforth@anglingtrust.net)

Jake Davoile (South and East)  
[Jake.davoile@anglingtrust.net](mailto:Jake.davoile@anglingtrust.net)

### **Assessment criteria**

Provision of funding will be based entirely on the information given on the application form.

It is therefore essential that:

- Evidence of predation is provided. For example, photographic evidence from the affected venue, catch reports or reduction in attendance as a result
- Confirmation and evidence that you have sought expert advice
- A clear project delivery plan
- An effective design that meets the objectives of the project by the specified completion date
- A concise accurate budget plan that shows the applicant's contribution which should preferably be a minimum of 50%

- Applications from Commercial Fisheries are expected to provide a cash contribution and a minimum overall 50% match.
- Clear evidence of the benefits the project will provide
- Clear evidence that the improvements made will be sustainable into the future

### **Treatment of VAT**

Many angling clubs will not be VAT-registered and therefore unable to recover VAT on purchases. These clubs will receive the amount in full including VAT up to a maximum of £6,000.

Where the organisation is VAT-registered, and so able to recover VAT, the award will only cover the net amount, which again must not exceed £6,000.

### **Match funding and voluntary time**

Preference will be given to projects that offer a significant match-funding commitment. This can come in the form of labour, materials, or expertise, not just in monetary payments.

When assessing the costs of labour, the following rates apply to estimate the value of voluntary time.

<b>General, unskilled labour</b>	<b>Skilled, trained labour</b>	<b>Specialist services</b>	<b>Professional services</b>
Per hour £10.42 Per day £77.10	Per hour £29.44 Per day £217.85	Per hour £49.07 Per day £363.10	Per hour £78.94 Per day £584.10
Supervised scrub clearance, ditch-digging, planting, basic administrative support	Operations for which certificated training is a requirement, such as operating dangerous equipment, driving off-road vehicles, using chemicals	Supervising, training labour teams, surveys, counts, trapping, ringing, diving, printing, designing, photography	Consultants, lawyers, planners, engineers, accountants, auditors

### **How to apply**

You must only apply via the online grant application system. Please follow the link below.

<https://grants.anglingtrust.net/>

### **Your application form should be submitted by 1700 on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

Following assessment of all the projects submitted if you are shortlisted to receive a funding offer, we may ask to see copies of:

- The organisation's most recent audited accounts, recent bank statements, or equivalent
- Evidence of prices or copies of quotations
- Confirmation of partnership funding, or offers/promises of funding
- A copy of the lease agreement for the site where the project will take place (if applicable)
- Confirmation that Public Liability Insurance cover is in place

In the event of any queries or questions please contact the AIF Admin Team on; [AIFadmin@anglingtrust.net](mailto:AIFadmin@anglingtrust.net) or ring 0115 822 4561 or 07495 433626.

## **Terms and Conditions**

Successful applicants will be required to read sign and accept our Terms and Conditions (T&C's) governing the delivery of the project.

## **Health and Safety**

Before commencing your project, you should consider your responsibilities under the **Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015) and the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. Remember, just appointing a contractor to do the work does not mean that you do not have responsibilities.**

**You must carry out a Risk Assessment before starting any work as without doing so may invalidate any insurance cover you have.** This should be completed by a person with the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience, and training.

We strongly recommend that you view our forum held in January 2022.  
<https://anglingtrust.net/regional-forums/virtual-fisheries-forums/#guide-to-health-and-safety-requirements-for-projects-and-working-parties>

A free leaflet can be downloaded from the HSE website at:  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg411.pdf>

The following are examples of permissions or consents (but not restricted to) that you may need to obtain, and organisations you may need to consult, depending on the nature of the project:

Approvals and consents (could) include:

- Utility/Services Search
- Land Registry Search (if required)
- Flood Risk Environmental Permit, refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits>

External consultation (could) include:

- Landowner consultation if entry or access over land is required
- Local Authority (planning and potentially archaeology). The Local Authority Planner should always be consulted on construction projects. This will have cost and timescale implications and may require supporting information such as ecological surveys and a formal flood risk assessment
- Natural England - if the project is in a designated conservation area, works are likely to need formal assent
- Historic England
- Forestry Commission
- Other local interest groups

A useful summary is available relating to Countryside Stewardship works but many of the issues could apply to AIF funded projects:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-get-paid-for-environmental-land-management#wildlife-offers>