**AHDB Landscape Recovery Project**

**1. Introduction**

The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) is a levy funded, independent organisation which plays a pivotal role in improving farm business efficiency and competitiveness. Under the new English agricultural policy, direct payments will be phased out from 2021 until 2027 with no direct payments from 2028 onwards. As part of the overarching Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMs) Landscape Recovery (LR) represents a new approach to supporting long-term, significant habitat restoration and land use change of the sort that will be essential to achieve the governments’ environmental ambitions. This scheme is for landowners and managers who want to take a more radical and large-scale approach to producing environmental and climate goods on their land.

AHDB would like to support farmers and growers in getting ready for the impending policy change and help them not only survive but thrive. This document is an invitation to quote to work on behalf of, AHDB on a project to examine what action farmers and growers are taking with regard to new agricultural policies. Specifically, we would like to assess the LR pilot scheme in England and the removal of Direct Payments over the agricultural transition period. How are farmers preparing for the changes and challenges ahead? Are they engaging with LR? Are they participating in the pilot? Are they planning to expand, diversify or to leave the industry or have they made any plans to mitigate the loss of direct payments?

Submissions for the provision of these projects should be based on the information contained within this document and sent to AHDB in the format outlined in section 4.

**2. Research Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this project is to inform farmers and growers of how farm businesses are adapting to the changes in policy. Related to this are the following objectives:

* What are the key factors LR participants have taken into consideration in their planning that others can learn from?
* How do farmers expect LR will impact on their farm business finances – what are the expected costs and benefits?
* Is there a difference in attitude between the more progressive farmers/growers and others?
* What are the farmers attitudes towards collaborating on environmental issues?
* How do farmers feel LR could be improved?
* What are the barriers to participating in LR?
* How is the collaborative partnership managed?

There is a high level of interest amongst farmers and growers in knowing how the new ELMs policies will/could work and how it could impact their finances. This project is about providing farmers and growers an understanding of how the LR policy proposals could impact their business and help explore ideas of how to prepare for the change. AHDB is also keen to learn about the views of farmers and growers that are not taking part in the LR, as well as where they receive information regarding policy change and in which format.

The number of participants in this study should be skewed towards those that are taking part in the LR. AHDB requires in-depth qualitative information from these participants, and this may be obtained via case studies. The following sectors need to be represented:

* Beef
* Sheep
* Pork
* Dairy
* Cereals and Oilseeds

The first round of applications for Landscape Recovery pilot projects closed on Tuesday 24 May 2022 and responses are expected by Friday 8 July 2022.

The first round will focus on 2 themes:

1. Recovering and restoring England’s threatened native species. Projects under this theme could recover priority habitats, improve habitat quality, and increase species abundance.
2. Restoring England’s streams and rivers: improving water quality, biodiversity and adapting to climate change – these projects could restore rivers to a more natural state, reduce nutrient pollution, benefit aquatic species, and improve resilience to climate change (for example by reducing flood risk).

The first round of Landscape Recovery is open to any individuals or groups who want to come together to deliver large-scale, long-term projects of 500-5,000 hectares.  In this first pilot round, Defra will take forward up to 15 projects with a roughly even split across the 2 themes.

In total, AHDB expects at least three in-depth qualitative reports/examples covering the criteria outlined above and at least one in-depth qualitative report of a large-scale group of farmers, such as within a National Park or similar who have chosen not to participate in LR.

Please note that this study due to its size is not intended to be representative of the agricultural sector in England. The intention of the project is to capture initial views and plans regarding LR and is not expected to provide a comprehensive analysis of the scheme.

AHDB invites applicants to provide details/methodologies regarding the identification and recruitment of farmer participants on which the qualitative reports will be based. However, AHDB will assist with locating participants if required.

The information required to be collected and reported on includes:

* Background (type of farm business, current performance, profitability etc.)
* The attitude/mind-set of farmers/growers towards the impending change in policy
* For those that are taking part in the LR:

- Their plans for LR (including costs involved for implementing these changes)

- Expected payments received for the LR (payment rates are not yet in the public domain)

- How is the partnership managed?

* For those that are not taking part in the LR:

- What is their rationale for not taking part in the LR pilot?

- Are they planning future involvement in the LR or in other such schemes?

- Their plans for mitigating loss of direct payments (if any), including any costs and revenue associated with any changes made

**3. Service requirement**

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| **Project objectives** | * To identify and recruit farmer, grower and landowner participants as described above by end-September 2022 * To provide a written report of the background and current situation of the participants, their attitude, plans and estimated costings for taking part in the LR, and any returns/revenue they expect to receive for taking part. This report should include the background and current situation of participants that are not taking part in the LR (including their attitude, any plans, if any, to mitigate the loss of direct payments and the costs/revenue involved) by end-December 2022 |
| **Requirements** | The proposal must clearly demonstrate that the research objectives listed above will be met.  The methodologies used to achieve the research objectives must clearly be identified **in the** **proposal** with **clear demonstration** of how the approach achieves the objectives.  The full and comprehensive cost breakdown must be provided. Please include a cost per case study/qualitative report.  Any other costs (such as out of pocket expenses) that will be incurred by the projects must be included in the proposal and detailed in the breakdown.  The proposal must also include the following details:   * Name and full contact details of the project manager that would be leading the project. * CV of the project managers assigned to each of the project. * Key targets and dates of achievement (timetable). * A breakdown of costs for all stages of the project excluding VAT * A breakdown of the number of days and day rates for each stage of the project including both fieldwork and non-fieldwork stages of the project. * Details and experience of any 3rd party agencies that will be used to deliver the research project. Cleary indicating the stage in which they would be involved   Please note - A costing table with a final lump cost must be provided for the research project so they can be judged independently.  Agencies must clearly mark their recommended route to achieve the aims and objectives and final lump cost in delivering this. Variations in sample options with linked costs can be provided but it is the cost of agencies recommended route that proposals will be evaluated in section 4.  **Timing Requirements:**  See section 5 and above |
| **Additional Information** | * Any research tools e.g. recruitment screeners, discussion guides/questionnaires used by the successful quoteer must be approved by AHDB prior to any fieldwork taking place. * Farmer/grower participants must be approved by AHDB once initial identification and selection is carried out by the successful quoteer. * Applicants are invited to present their views on best methodologies in order to achieve the objectives of the research. |
| **Budget** | * A budget in the region of £20,000-£25,000 ex VAT is available for this project |
| **Deliverables** | Short written case studies on farmer participants. Summary/conclusions which compares and contrasts the actions undertaken by participants per sector. AHDB does not require a detailed technical report. |

**4. Structure of submissions and evaluation methodology**

Evaluation of the quote will be undertaken in accordance with the following criteria and weightings:

**60% of the evaluation weighting will be based on the quality of the proposal.** This will entail:

* Demonstrate a clear understanding of the brief and research objectives in the proposal. (10%)
* Outline a clear approach and highlight any proposed techniques to be used in the methodology and/or analysis used (including the identification and recruitment of farmer/grower participants) – clearly showing how they are relevant and link to achieving the research objectives. Demonstrating how a process for quality control will be followed (30%)
* Provision of detailed project plan including a timeline with identification of any risks/key dates. Where possible identifying ability to delivery project ahead of minimum time (5%)
* Relevant experience of allocated project manager (15%)

***Please note: a minimum score of 40 out of 60 is required in this section to be appointed by AHDB on this project.***

**40% of the evaluation weighting will be based on the cost of the proposal.**

**Proposals should be submitted and received by 19th August 2022.** As a guide, proposals should not exceed 6 sides of A4. Copies of CVs can be treated outside of this estimate. Please send your proposals to the following addresses:

**Sarah.baker@ahdb.org.uk**

[**David.swales@ahdb.org.uk**](mailto:David.swales@ahdb.org.uk)[**Jess.corsair@ahdb.org.uk**](mailto:Jess.corsair@ahdb.org.uk)

**Title for email submission: AHDB Landscape Recovery Project**

Submissions will remain held until after the closing date and time has passed.

AHDB will review quotes following the closing date, and may consult with interested parties as part of the selection process. AHDB reserve the right to seek alteration of individual quotes to meet the exact requirements and to decline all quotes should the requirements not be met.

**5 Timetable**

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | Request for quote circulated | 27th June | | Deadline for receipt of responses | 19th August | | Communication of intended award and contract commencement | 26th August | | Initial briefing meeting with AHDB | w/c 5th September | | Full results presented by | 16th December | |

Please note that these timescales are approximate and may change.