Specification of Requirements

Blue Planet Fund Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature (OCEAN) Grants Programme - Grant Administrator

C5174

August 2023

Contents

List of Annexes

0.   Glossary

Term	Definition
Annual Application Round	The annual application rounds for Fund Applicants to submit proposals to the Grant Administrator.
Annual Review	Required review meeting for all Grant Funding Agreements to determine its delivery against proposed outcomes. This also includes updated due diligence, fraud, and risk assessments.
Applicant	An organisation that meets the eligibility criteria for Grant Funding and that has submitted an application to the Fund
Application Pack	The information sent to prospective Applicants including instructions on eligibility criteria and how to apply.
Application	Proposal submitted to the Grant Administrator as part of an Annual Application Round.
Authority	The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs acting as part of the Crown.
BPF	The https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blue-planet-fund/blue-planet-fund
Branding Manual	Branding Manual means the HMG Branding Manual Funded by UK Government first published by the Cabinet Office in November 2022, and is available at https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/guidance/marketing/branding guidelines/, including any subsequent updates from time to time.
BRM	The Business Relationship Manager. This is the individual appointed by the Supplier to…
Contract	The contract to be entered into by the Authority and the Supplier.
Delivery Partner	The successful Fund Applicant(s) who will administer the awarded grant and coordinate the delivery of the project with the Grant Administrator. The Delivery Partner will receive the grant payment and accept the terms and conditions of the project's Grant Agreement.
EOI	Expression of Interest.
Expert Committee	A group of experts and officials appointed by the Authority to assess Applications.
FCDO	The UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office.
Fund	The Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature Grants Programme (OCEAN) as part of the BPF. It is the mechanism by which Grant Funding will be competed, namely a competitive financing facility to award ODA funding for suitable BPF projects.
Fund Cycle	The annual cycle of the Fund, including pre-launch, launch and evaluation of each Annual Application Round. It also includes Delivery Partner due diligence, communication planning and day to day project management.
Fund Database	The e-platform created and maintained by the GA to which all Delivery Partners upload necessary monitoring and reporting data. It shall also contain all MI for all activity related to the Fund.
Funding Stream	One of two Funding Streams to which Applicants can apply for Grant Funding. The Small Funding Stream allows Applications up to £250k. The Large Funding Stream Applications up to £3m.
Grant Administrator	The Supplier who is appointed to deliver the Services set out in the Specification of Requirements.
Grant Funding	Funding available under the Fund.

Grant Funding Agreement	Agreement issued and signed by the Grant Administrator (on behalf of the Authority) and the Delivery Partner. It follows Grant Government Functional Standards.
Help Desk Support Function	Activities undertaken by the Grant Administrator to support Applicants through the application process, including due diligence and fraud checks. The Grant Administrator will also support Delivery Partners through this function including monitoring and evaluation approaches.
HMG	His Majesty's Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
ICF	International Climate Finance.
Independent Evaluator	Organisation appointed by the Authority to independently evaluate the outcomes of OCEAN Grant Funding Agreements and the Fund as a whole.
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
KPIs	Key performance indicators as defined in Annex L.
Learning and Network Platform	Online platform created by the Grant Administrator to encourage learning and connection amongst Applicants and Delivery Partners for the Fund.
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning.
MI	Management Information.
MPAs	Marine protected areas.
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisation.
OCEAN	Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature Grants Programme. Also known as the Fund for the purposes of the Specification of Requirements.
ODA	Official Development Assistance. See: Official Development Assistance (ODA) definitions in Annex C.
OECMs	Other effective conservation measures.
Online Application Portal	Online platform created by the Grant Administrator to facilitate grant competitions and through which they can provide a Help Desk Support Function to Applicants.
Technical Assistance	Expert advice and assistance related to the Fund, particularly with regards but not limited to grant management, MPAs, IUU and OECMs.
ToC	Theory of change.
Website	Public-facing website created by the Grant Administrator to include high level information about the Blue Planet Fund, OCEAN and case studies of successful Delivery Partner projects.

1. Introduction

<u>Section 1 Sub-section A: Introduction to the Authority</u>

1.1. The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (the "**Authority**") is the UK Government department responsible for safeguarding our natural environment, supporting our world-leading food and farming industry, and sustaining a thriving rural economy.

1.2. The Authority supports the delivery of His Majesty's Government's ("**HMG**") international poverty reduction and sustainable development priorities through a breadth of international programming. This broad remit means the Authority plays a major role in people's day-to-day life, from the food we eat, and the air we breathe, to the water we drink.

1.3. The Authority has three overarching international objectives as outlined in **Table 1** below

Table 1 The Authority's International Objectives

Objective	Description
Global Environment	Humanity's strained relationship with nature affects the climate, global health, the economy and national resilience. This objective focuses on halting biodiversity loss, scaling up the use of nature-based solutions, protecting and enhancing ocean health and resilience, conserving endangered species, sustainable land-use and wider resource use.
Global Trade	Increasing secure, high-quality trade will be fundamental to supporting our stakeholders and UK consumers, projecting the UK's global reputation for excellence, and safeguarding our national interest.
Global Health	Improving human, animal and environmental health, based on a One Health approach, will be essential if the UK is to reduce the public health and economic impact of future disease emergence at home and abroad.

1.4. Delivering against the Authority's international objectives is essential for achieving 13 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals which aim to provide a roadmap for achieving a better and more sustainable future. In 2015 the UK committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Section 1 Sub-section B: Introduction to the Blue Planet Fund Competitive Fund

1.5. The Authority is seeking to award a Contract to a Grant Administrator to administer defined workstreams for the Blue Planet Fund ("**BPF**") Ocean Community Empowerment and Nature Grants Programme (the "**Fund**").

1.6. The Fund is part of the wider Blue Planet Fund, a c£500m investment resourced from the international aid budget to help eligible countries reduce poverty, protect and sustainably manage their marine resources and address human-generated threats across four key themes: biodiversity, climate change, marine pollution, and sustainable seafood. More information is available here: Blue Planet Fund - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

1.7. The Fund will specifically deliver on the UK government's commitment to localise Official Development Assistance ("**ODA**") delivery by targeting, and encouraging consortium approaches that include, in country organisations in order to develop locally owned solutions. The Fund will aim to attract proposals from smaller organisations that work closely with the communities that are most affected by declining ocean health.

1.8. The Fund will aim to specifically target in country organisations, including civil society and Non-Government Organisations ("**NGOs**"). As global development seeks to better reach those who are systematically left behind, discriminated against and locked into poverty, working at the local level in coastal areas will be an important approach.

1.9. Feedback from BPF stakeholder outreach sessions run in Sri Lanka, Colombia and Ecuador and Mozambique? highlighted the importance and need for greater localisation of funding to local organisations, to fully utilise local community expertise and develop meaningful projects that will provide effective and impactful outcomes.

1.10. The BPF will achieve its objectives by focusing programming on seven priority outcomes, with four led by Defra and three by FCDO. The Fund will focus on activities under the four Defra-led BPF outcomes: marine protected areas ("**MPAs**") and other effective conservation measures ("**OECMs**"); illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing ("**IUU**"); (inter)national fisheries; and marine pollution. Climate outcomes will be indirectly delivered through the Defra-led outcomes, and we anticipate International Climate Finance ("**ICF**") to be up to 50%. It will also provide secondary benefits towards the other three outcomes (critical marine habitats, small-scale fisheries, and sustainable aquaculture) which are led by the Foreign Commonwealth Development Office ("**FCDO**").

1.11. The Fund will compliment and enrich other environmental funds, such as The Darwin Initiative, Darwin+, the Biodiverse Landscapes Fund and the upcoming 30x30 terrestrial fund to ensure local and/or civil society organisations are better supported to help vulnerable and marginalised communities sustainably, effectively and inclusively manage marine resources.

1.12. The Fund will operate with up to £20m over an initial period until 31st March 2025. This aligns the Contract term to the current Spending Review period. It is anticipated that further budget will be made available for continuation of the Fund from the UK's ODA budget up to 31st March 2029, this is however subject to future Spending Reviews and HMT approval.

1.12.1.   The Contract may be extended for up to a further four years (in any increment). The Authority will determine if the contract will be extended no later than 31st December 2024 for any extension.

1.13.   The Fund budget is derived from the wider £500 million BPF budget, and will therefore be monitored in line with the BPF set of established Key Performance Indicators ("**KPI**"s). The Grant Administrator will be required to monitor grant recipients ("**Delivery Partners**") against BPF KPIs which have been set out in Annex A.

1.14.   The Fund will also be required to deliver on additional critical pathways outlined in the Fund and BPF Theory of Change ("**ToC**"). The BPF programme has a strong focus on improving capacity building, knowledge sharing, and monitoring of data. However, there are also other pathways (e.g., coastal planning, legislation, strengthening voices, pilots on sustainable livelihoods, management, and enforcement) that can deliver BPF outcomes through the Fund. The Grant Administrator will be required to routinely monitor and evolve funding rounds in line with the Fund and BPF ToC set out in 0.

1.15.   **Table 2** sets out the breakdown of grant funded activity over the original contract term to be managed by the appointed Grant Administrator.

Table 2 Breakdown of Grant Funded Activity over the original contact term of the Fund.

Year by year breakdown	Financial year	Grant funded activity (large stream target) grants up to £3m	Grant funded activity (small stream target) grants up to £0.25m	Total Grant funded activity
Implementation	By 30th August 2023	-	-	-
Year 1 – grant Fund	23/24	-	-	▮▮▮▮▮
Year 2 – grant Fund	24/25	▮▮	▮▮	▮▮
Original Contract term		▮▮▮	▮▮	▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮

1.16.   The Grant Administrator will be required to support and fund projects through a Challenge Fund mechanism, to deliver impact and value for money, through the following characteristics:

Competitive process: at its core a Challenge Fund will be open to all who are willing to compete, only the best projects are funded and provide once-only funding, so impact sustainability is important.

Innovation: applicants are invited to submit potentially transformational plans that can contribute to achieving the outcome.

Leverage: a Challenge Fund mechanism will only provide co-financing for successful projects, promoting ownership and commitment, and ensures public funds go further.

Partnerships: a Challenge Fund mechanism is useful for bringing together partners in a framework of cooperation for mutual benefit.

Local solutions to local problems: a Challenge Fund mechanism encourages bidders to develop ideas that provide local solutions to local problems, stimulating ownership and greater innovation.

1.17. The Grant Administrator will be responsible for competitively awarding grants on behalf to Delivery Partners from ODA countries that are able to demonstrate the ability to empower coastal communities in delivery of local solutions to global ocean challenges. The Fund will support:

    a) Promoting understanding of **marine issues**.

    b) Improving **awareness and understanding** of the challenges faced and the options to address them.

    c) Developing **policy and approaches** tailored to local contexts and needs.

    d) Building and strengthening inclusive **partnerships**, through collaboration, skills development, resource sharing and the co-delivery of projects to deliver local solutions to global challenges.

    e) **Capacity-building** for small organisations in areas such as; applying for Aid grants; forecasting and budgeting; log-frame development; fraud & risk monitoring and assessment.

1.18. The Fund will run for up to five (5) years from 2023/24, with one application round for each Funding Stream in each financial year ("**Annual Application Round**") commencing Financial Year 2023/24 to appoint Delivery Partners with projects that deliver lasting change to the marine environment and coastal communities.

1.19. In the near term, the Fund aims to support and influence stakeholders to incorporate marine considerations in achieving poverty reduction, through evidence and best practices, and targeting the following outcomes:

    a) Communities have increased willingness and capacity to access ODA so that they are able to establish and sustainably, effectively, and inclusively implement and manage marine protected areas and other effective conservation measures.

    b) IUU fishing activities are more effectively monitored, prevented and prohibited with the communities previously dependent on these practices supported through alternative, stable, sustainable livelihoods.

c) Management of regional and national fisheries and aquaculture is strengthened to deliver sustainable fish stocks and healthy marine ecosystems, provide inclusive livelihoods, and reduce overfishing.

d) Communities have increased capacity to manage marine pollution, targeting pathways from land to sea to prevent it entering the marine environment.

1.20. Each year's Application Round will seek to award funding into future financial years, commitments can be made to Delivery Partners up to the end of the current Spending Review (31st March 2025). This doesn't prevent Delivery Partners proposing multi-year projects but any award beyond the current Spending Review allocation will be caveated with a break clause that may be enacted to end grant funded activity if future Spending Reviews do not realise the anticipated budget allocations.

1.21. Uncommitted funding from each Funding Stream may be adjusted by the Authority at any point should evidence point to better overall outcomes for the Fund.

1.22. The Grant Administrator will be responsible for relevant Workstreams (see section 3 below) of all the projects awarded to the end of the Contract. Responsibility for relevant Workstreams for any projects that are due to carry on after the end of the Contract will be handed back to the Authority and/or any newly appointed Grant Administrator. This will be set out in an agreed Exit Plan (see section 6 Exit Requirements67).

1.23. Any suitable organisation (excluding the Grant Administrator) may apply to be a Delivery Partner by submitting applications for funding to deliver projects. Usually these are organisations including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In each financial year there will be two funding grant sizes available to organisations to bid for: a smaller grant of up to £250k and a larger one of up to £3 million. An evaluating group ("**Expert Committee**") will decide which applications are successful and should receive funding based on set criteria. It will consist of independent and ex-officio experts in the marine environment and poverty reduction.

1.24. The structure of the fund will form around two Funding Streams:

Small Stream: grants up to £250k (two stage application process)

Grants that will target smaller, in country organisations and local communities that focus on capacity building.

Large Stream: grants up to £3m (one stage application process)

Grants targeting larger organisations and/or consortia that are partnered with local organisations, both of which can absorb increased funding to scale up existing activities and aim to reach higher numbers of people.

This stream will also enable the scale up of successful projects either existing or progressing projects from the small grants window.

1.25. By placing a greater focus on developing evidence, refining best practices, and supporting capability and capacity in-country, we aim for it to act as a pipeline to scale success, with projects moving up through the grants windows before seeking support from the larger environment funds or scaling impact via wider uptake.

1.26. A small team of officials in the Authority will manage the Fund for the Authority. They are employed by Defra in the International Sustainable Blue Finance Team and will consist of a Team Leader (Grade 7), Senior Policy Adviser (SEO) and a Policy Adviser (HEO).

1.27. The Fund is funded by the Authority with Official Development Assistance (ODA) definitions as set out by the OECD Development Assistance Committee, and thereby demands a capability and capacity to deliver ODA to the expected standard.

1.28. The Fund will be delivered by the Authority and Grant Administrator through close collaborative working with in-country FCDO post officials, organisations applying for grants from the Fund ("**Applicants**") and Delivery Partners. The Authority will initiate appropriate linkages between the Grant Administrator, other HMG Funds and FCDO officials to establish and build strong working relationships and networks for effective delivery of the Fund across the vast majority of ODA eligible countries, excluding those not applicable for each given funding round due to the current political environment that exists in those countries.

Section 1 Sub-Section C: Overview of Priority Countries for the Fund

1.29. The Fund will not specify priority countries and will be required to be open to the majority of ODA eligible countries across all regions, as detailed in Annex D, excluding those not applicable for each given funding round due to current political sensitivities that may exist in those countries. However, the Fund will aim to focus on BPF's portfolio delivery wherever possible to maximise the impact and value for money of the Fund. Defra and FCDO will therefore look to coordinate delivery of the Fund with the Grant Administrator in a set of priority countries within BPF priority regions. Due to diplomatic and project sensitivities, information regarding priority countries will be made available following receipt of a signed Non-Disclosure Agreement (see Schedule 5 of the Conditions of Contract).

Section 1 Sub-Section D: Grant Administrator's Ability, Background & Imposed Restrictions

1.30. The Grant Administrator shall have a strong track record in outsourced management of complex programmes, including grant administration and technical assistance.

1.31. The Grant Administrator will be required to liaise frequently with the Authority's programme team through Programme Boards in the UK and with in-country programme staff. Details of the management structure are set out in Annex E.

1.32. The Grant Administrator's personnel assigned to the delivery of this Contract shall have extensive knowledge of, and expertise in, delivering international programme management, including but not limited to:

1.32.1.   Administrative and financial management of grants;

1.32.2.   Risk management;

1.32.3.   Performance oversight and monitoring;

1.32.4.   Adaptive programming and learning; and

1.32.5.   Sustainable development and poverty alleviation, international biodiversity, and ecosystem conservation programming.

1.33. The Grant Administrator shall be available to meet in the Authority's London offices within 5 (FIVE) working days of a written request via e-mail and hold a UK bank account.

1.34. The Grant Administrator will **not** be eligible for:

1.34.1.   Grant funding provided through the Fund ("**Grant Funding**") either as a Delivery Partner or acting as a consortium member of a Delivery Partner.

1.34.1.1. The Authority defines acting as a consortium member to mean any involvement of the Grant Administrator, or their personnel, either formally or informally in the preparation of a Delivery Partners application for Grant Funding or delivery of Grant Funding once appointed; or

1.34.2.   Appointment as the Fund's lead for independent evaluation ("**Independent Evaluator**") or acting as a sub-Grant Administrator of the Independent Evaluator.

1.34.2.1. The Authority defines sub-Grant Administrator of the Independent Evaluator, to mean any involvement of the Grant Administrator, or their personnel, either formally or informally in the preparation of another organisation's bid to be appointed as the Independent Evaluator or delivery of the Independent Evaluators obligations once appointed.

1.34.3.   The restrictions imposed on the Grant Administrator by section 1.34 is to ensure a clear separation of duties and prevent a conflict of interest. The Grant Administrators failure to adhere to the restrictions imposed by section 1.34 will constitute a Material Breach of the Contract.

1.35. Whilst this Specification of Requirement and resultant Contract is initially intended to deliver Grant Administrator services for the Authority's OCEAN programme, the Authority may request that the Contractor deliver additional Grant Administrator services to support additional programmes of work to a maximum threshold of 100% of the original Contract Value and Term. Any additional programmes, or programme, of work will be aligned to the Authority's International Objectives set out within *Table 1*.

1.35.1.   Any request for additional work will be made to the Grant Administrator in writing and only awarded upon receipt of a fully costed and written proposal in line with the pricing model in the Conditions of Contract Schedule 2. The Authority would expect the Grant Administrator to achieve economies of scales by virtue of the additional work and see economies of scale reflected in the proposal for additional work.

1.35.2.   For the avoidance of doubt, the Authority is in no way making an exclusive commitment to award additional work wholly nor in part to the Grant Administrator and the Grant Administrator is not obliged to offer any additional services.

2.   Overall Objectives for this Contract

2.1. The Grant Administrator, through this Contract, is expected to adaptively facilitate, enable, and deliver the Fund, including:

2.1.1. Responsible for Core Design and Development of the Fund to enable the successful launch and appropriate implementation of the Annual Application Rounds and submission of Fund Applications ("**Applications**") as defined in Workstream 1 and 3.

2.1.2. Administration and adaptive management support of Applicants and Delivery Partners throughout each stage of the annual Fund Cycle ("**Fund Cycle**"). This will include managing a Fund helpdesk support function and tailored individual support for Applicants and Delivery Partners as defined in Workstreams 2 and 3**.**

2.1.3. Managing the Fund's Expert Committee as defined in Workstream 4.

2.1.4. Regularly communicate and report progress, risks and issues to the Authority and where appropriate FCDO in-country posts Workstream 5.

2.1.5. Adaptively managing Fund agreements with Delivery Partners ("**Grant Funding Agreements**") and monitoring the performance of projects as defined in Workstream 6 and 7**.**

2.1.6. Supporting Monitoring Evaluation and Learning ("**MEL**") activity of the Fund. The Grant Administrator will work closely with the Authority, Delivery Partners and Independent Evaluator to ensure lessons are transferred across the Fund and implemented rapidly as defined in Workstream 7.

2.1.7. Sharing knowledge and learning generated by the Fund. This will include but is not limited to coordinating learning cycles for the Fund, facilitating learning across ODA countries, and setting up a learning platform to optimise lessons learnt and share best practice across in country regional and local organisations and coastal communities Workstream 7 and 8.

2.1.8. Managing the communications and promotion activity for the Fund, including publicising the Annual Application Rounds to reach as many eligible organisations as possible as defined in Workstream 8**.**

2.1.9. Provide Supplementary Activities as outlined in section 4 of this Specification.

2.1.10.   Dispersal of Grant Funding to Delivery Partners.

2.2. The Grant Administrator will secure strengthened performance on four key levels:

2.2.1. Project Performance:

2.2.1.1.   Facilitated by the management of an independent expert committee assessment to select well designed projects/approaches and taking lessons learnt from each Fund Cycle;
2.2.1.2.   Enabled by the strong communication, reporting and early adoption of lessons learnt captured by the monitoring and evaluation of projects;

2.2.1.3. Delivered by effective, efficient, and agile fund administration and reporting with regular monitoring and mitigation of operational risks and issues.

2.2.2. Financial Performance:

2.2.2.1. Established and maintained arrangements for internal auditing in accordance with the HM Treasury's Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS);

2.2.2.2. Regular Assessment of the Fund against updates and developments in legislation (e.g. HMG & ODA);

2.2.2.3. Facilitated and informed by regular and robust financial reporting;

2.2.2.4. Enabled by accurate financial forecasting;

2.2.2.5. Delivered by strong financial controls in payments to projects and risk management;

2.2.2.6. Manage fraud risk through a fraud risk assessment, to include recording and provision of any fraudulent attempts and / or fraudulent claims avoided.

2.2.3. Fund Performance:

2.2.3.1. Facilitated by the consideration of value for money in all decisions;

2.2.3.2. Enabled by effective management of risk through guidance, training, and proactive management;

2.2.3.3. Delivered by the effective, efficient, and agile ODA fund administration and reporting;

2.2.3.4. Support and input to the independent evaluation of the Fund's impact, process & value for money.

2.2.4. Communication Performance:

2.2.4.1. Facilitated by a strong communications strategy;

2.2.4.2. Enabled robust international stakeholder partnerships and in country networks to better reach those who are systematically left behind, discriminated against and locked into poverty, working at the local level in coastal areas.

3. Workstreams

3.1. <u>Workstream 1: Core Design & Development of the Fund.</u>

The core design and development of an online platform to process applications ("**Online Application Portal**"), associated Templates, Fund Website ("**Website**") and a secure **Fund Database** are all required to set up the Fund ahead of launching the first Application Round. Timeline for the core design and development of the Fund is required to be completed by the 31 August 2023 in anticipation of the initial Application round being launched by 31 October 2023. Capability for flexible continuous improvement to the core design and development of the Fund will be a requirement throughout the Contract Term. The Grant Administrator will be required to ensure the core design and development of the Fund delivers on Authority, FCDO and Delivery Partner needs.

3.1.1.1 **Distinct Responsibilities of the Grant Administrator (Grant Administrator on Core Design & Development of Online Application Portal, associated Templates and Secure Fund Database.** *The Grant Administrator will:*

3.1.1.2 Work closely with the Authority and where appropriate FCDO in-country post officials to co-develop the core design of the Online Application Portal, associated Templates, Website and Fund Database, considering translation capabilities into Portuguese, French and Spanish to increase access and inclusivity of the Fund across the majority of ODA eligible countries, excluding those not applicable for each given funding round.

3.1.1.3 Work closely with the Authority and other similar HMG fund officials to collaborate, share expertise, design and development and lessons learned to improve cohesion, alignment, and continuous improvement across the different funds.

3.1.1.4 Work with the Authority to agree all aspects of the core design and development of the Fund are fit for purpose and meet the specific aims and objectives of the Fund. Ensure all aspects align with Authority standard requirements (see Annex F) ahead of launching the first Annual Application Round.

3.1.1.5 Ensure completion of the core design and development of an Online Application Portal, associated Templates, Website and Secure Fund Database, approved by Authority by the 30 August 2023.

3.1.1.6 Work closely with the Authority and FCDO in-country post officials to develop an agreed Communication Plan to effectively promote and launch the Online Application Portal, Fund Website, and initial Annual Application Round (**see Workstream 8**).

3.1.1.7 Develop and maintain the Online Application Portal, associated Templates, Fund Website and a Secure Fund Database as an ongoing requirement to the end of the Contract term, incorporating Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) processes, Authority and Annual Review recommendations, stakeholder and in-country feedback throughout each stage of the Fund to ensure continuous improvement, development and flexibility of the Fund (see **Workstream 7**).

3.1.1.8　Provision of a Fund **Learning and Network Platform**, to encourage and optimise networking, collaboration and sharing of knowledge and expertise between Applicants and Delivery Partners regionally, in-country and more widely across different ODA countries to share lessons learnt and best practice (**see Workstream 2, 7 and 8**). This will be an important component of the Fund to help build and strengthen inclusive partnerships and consortiums of Delivery Partners, to create projects that deliver local solutions to global challenges.

3.1.1.9　The list in *Table 3* is not exhaustive and may require additions throughout the Contract term:

Table 3 Core Design and Development of Online Application Portal, associated Templates, and a Secure Fund Database

Process ID	Process	Description
P1.	Online Application Portal & Fund Website	Design, development, maintenance and hosting of a purpose-built Online Application Portal and public facing Fund Website platform, which is modern, easy to use, has translation optionality (in main languages of origin to include Portuguese, French and Spanish). The portal will be a secure means to capture and retain applications from Delivery Partners in line with Information Security requirements in 3.5.4 below.
P2.	Application Pack	Design and development of an **Application Pack**, to include an Expression of Interest ("**EOI**"), application form, application guidance and application support documents, eligibility and selection criteria, financial documentation, templates, terms and conditions, background aims and objectives of the fund along with general guidance and helpdesk support materials (e.g. Frequently Asked Questions; video and slide pack presentations on who can apply, how to apply; support on how to create project level Log frames and KPIs; translated guidance to include Portuguese, French and Spanish, and technical support) in agreement with the Authority.
P3.	Co-Development of Application Process Templates	Work with the Authority and where appropriate FCDO in-country post officials to design and develop the templates to be used for applicants by Grant Administrator in each part of the application process. Final approval of the application questions will lie with the Authority.
P4.	Design & Development of a Secure Fund Database	The Secure Fund Database (to contain all Applications, successful Projects and all associated evidence) will be created and used by the Grant Administrator to record a robust and accurate audit trail of all activity relating to the Fund Applications, successful Projects and all associated evidence (eg. financial and project data and reporting) from each Delivery Partner.

Process ID	Process	Description
		The Secure Fund Database will be made up of databases maintained by the Grant Administrator once approved by the Authority. The Secure Fund Database will be used throughout the Contract term and should be used to store any audit trails or logs that are required to operate the fund. Many of these requirements are listed within this document. This is not exhaustive and may require additions throughout the Contract term.
P5.	Fund Learning and Network Platform	An accessible online social platform to encourage and optimise networking, collaboration and sharing of knowledge and expertise between Applicants and Delivery Partners regionally, in-country and more widely across different ODA countries to share lessons learnt and best practice
P6.	Establish & Agree Grant Administrator Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Create and agree with the Authority three challenging and measurable KPIs to track and evidence the Grant Administrator's performance with regards to successful design, development, management, and administration of the Fund. One KPI should be established for each theme below: 1. Delivering Fund outcomes 2. Accuracy and utility of management information 3. Social value delivery against timed work plan

3.1.2 **Distinct Responsibilities of the Authority on Core Design & Development of Online Application Portal, associated Templates and Secure Fund Database.** The Authority will:

3.1.2.1 Provide clear guidance on proposed content, to include background to the Blue Planet Fund (BPF) programme, aims and objectives of the Fund and proposed Applicant eligibility, selectivity, and general Annual Application Round criteria.

3.1.2.2 Provide guidance on robust, sensitive, and accessible safeguarding reporting structures that align with Authority guidelines for Safeguarding and Gender Equality within the Aid Sector. See 0 for details.

3.1.2.3 Initiate and establish appropriate linkages between the Grant Administrator and in-country FCDO officials to ensure effective support for the Grant Administrator and maximise in-country delivery of the Fund.

3.1.2.4 Work with the Grant Administrator to agree all aspects of the core design and development of the Fund are fit for purpose and meet the specific aims and objectives of the Fund and align with Authority standard requirements (see 1.Annex FAnnex F) ahead of launching the first Annual Application Round.

3.1.2.5   Provide timely Authority feedback and approval into the design and development proposed by the Grant Administrator to ensure completion of the core design and development of Online Application Portal, associated Templates and Secure Fund Database, by 30 August 2023.

3.1.2.6   Provide clear guidance on communications and Authority processes to effectively promote and launch the Online Application Portal, Fund Website, and initial Annual Application Round (**see Workstream 8**)

3.1.2.7   Work with the Grant Administrator to track and incorporate MEL processes, Authority and Annual Review recommendations, stakeholder, and in-country feedback throughout each stage of the Fund to ensure continuous improvement, development, and flexibility of the Fund.

3.1.2.8   Provide any Authority recommendations, in-country feedback received and any requests for changes to Grant Administrator and agree a timetable for any changes to be made.

3.1.2.9   Notify the Grant Administrator of any ad-hoc policy changes that require changes and/or updates to the core design and development of the Fund and agree timetable for changes to be made.

3.2. <u>Workstream 2: Supporting Projects and Applications</u>

3.2.1. The Grant Administrator will be required to receive, record, and respond to all Fund queries, and seek additional expertise where needed to ensure provision of support for individual Applicants, Delivery Partners, and any other interested party. A strong focus of the Fund is to target smaller in-country organisations that may have never been through a funding process before. The Grant Administrator will therefore be required to provide additional, flexible, and tailored support where needed to ensure successful submission of applications. The Grant Administrator will be required to actively support and seek additional expertise where needed in areas such as Applicant eligibility, provision of supporting documents, finances and budgeting, project proposal outlines and content, development of MEL, log frames and KPIs, flexible and innovative approaches to project reporting and data collection.

3.2.2. Lessons learnt from previous fund schemes strongly indicate that there is a need to provide dedicated support to potential Delivery Partners throughout the whole application process and this will therefore be a key part of the Grant Administrator's role. Such support processes shall be targeted to generate interest and optimise quality applications and outcomes throughout the Contract Term.

3.2.3. Due to the Global reach of the Fund a Help Desk Support Function will also be required to deal with queries that span different time-zones and where possible different languages (Portuguese, French and Spanish) to provide increased inclusivity and outreach across ODA eligible countries using e-mail correspondence. The Help Desk Support Function from the Grant Administrator will be required to be in place from the point the initial Annual Application Round is launched after 1st October 2023.

3.2.4. **Distinct Responsibilities of the Grant Administrator**. *The Grant Administrator will:*

3.2.4.1. Provide a secure **Help Desk Support Function** to which Applicants, Delivery Partners and any other interested party can send queries in language of origin (English, Portuguese, French or Spanish) where possible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grant Administrator shall monitor these queries during standard UK working hours (Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 18:00hrs), with the facility to operate a virtual call with the querying entity during these times if required.

A. An automated receipt of any submitted queries shall be in place stating turnaround time of within 5 working days for responses.

B. Any periods of scheduled downtime of this platform shall be communicated to the Authority, Applicants and Delivery Partners at least 48 hours in advance.

3.2.4.2. Provide suitable staff training to ensure that only qualified and experienced personnel respond to Fund queries and requirements within 5 working days.

3.2.4.3. Provide a Help Desk Support Queries Log to be stored as a database as part of the Secure Fund Database to record and retain all queries and responses for the life of the Contract term.

3.2.4.4. Respond to queries from Applicants and Delivery Partners, responding substantively and acknowledging receipt for queries that require additional expertise (this can be sub-contracted where needed), in-country FCDO Post or Authority input (content and format of responses to be agreed with Authority 4 weeks ahead of the initial Annual Application Round launch to ensure appropriate level of consistency and continuity). Queries may include, but are not limited to:

A. clarification of eligibility, selectivity criteria and / or general guidance:
B. support in the provision of financial forecasting and budgeting
C. the flexibility or otherwise of deadlines and timelines:
D. how to complete the forms and evidence requirements:
E. where to access further guidance:
F. general advice relating to the preparation of Theories of Change, log frames, financial and risk management, Safeguarding, MEL and other application requirements.

3.2.4.5. Respond to queries from Delivery Partners, with ad-hoc and routine queries. Queries may include, but are not limited to:

3.2.4.6. Knowledge and understanding of technical project issues (associated to the local marine environment and poverty reduction) and programme management issues (including MEL, risk management, safeguarding, fiduciary expertise) faced by the Delivery Partners.
3.2.4.7. Capability to assist Delivery Partners in navigating through technical and programme issues and / or providing further support and expertise with the Authority and in-country support.

3.2.4.8. To ensure quality assurance of responses received by Applicants and Delivery Partners, the Grant Administrator will be required to make a standard request for feedback on the quality of support received as part of the Help Desk Support Function.   Any feedback received from Applicants will be required to be logged and provided to the Authority for quarterly review.

3.2.4.9. Design and development of Application Guidance documents, Workshops, consultations, Q&A sessions, themed advisory sessions, knowledge sharing for Application Support will be required by the Grant Administrator, to be agreed and approved by the Authority. These support processes will be used and maintained throughout the Contract Term and adapted where needed in agreement with the Authority based upon stakeholder feedback, external evaluator recommendations or as a result, of ad-hoc policy changes.

3.2.4.10. Provision of a Fund Learning and Network Platform, to encourage and optimise networking, collaborative support and sharing of knowledge and expertise between Applicants and Delivery Partners regionally, in-country and more widely across different ODA countries to share lessons learnt and best practice (**see Workstream 1, 7 and 8**). This will be an important component of the Fund to help build and strengthen inclusive partnerships and consortiums of Delivery Partners, to create projects that deliver local solutions to global challenges.

3.2.4.11. To ensure all Design and Development of Application Guidance and Help Desk Support provided is easily accessible, inclusive, and coherent for all Applicants, Delivery Partners and any interested party.

3.2.4.12. Key required Guidance documents and Workshops to ensure an appropriate level of Applicant and Delivery Partner Support are set out in **Table 4** below. The list is not exhaustive and will require continuous improvement and review throughout the Contract term:

Table 4 Guidance and Workshops designed by the Grant Administrator

Guidance ID	Guidance	Target Audience and Aim of guidance
G1	Guidance for Applicants on each stage of the Application Process easily accessible on Fund Website	Development of easily accessible and coherent guidance on the Fund Website for Applicants on all Application processes; translated into Portuguese, French and Spanish to ensure inclusivity; to be reviewed and refreshed ahead of each Application Round, with the purpose to help guide Applicants through each stage of the Application process. To include: • Glossary • Background to the Fund, including aims and objectives • Eligibility & Selection Criteria requirements • Best Practices with visual examples to support Applicant submissions on project finance and risk management, forecasting, monitoring, and reporting; inclusion of appropriate safeguarding measures, and how to embed Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) into project design • Frequently Asked Questions and Answers • Where to find additional information, support, and advice (e.g., appropriate links to Government, NGO, Charities and regional expertise and support, and any other relevant information) • Points of contact All Grant Administrator support, and guidance staff should be fully trained and well versed in all areas of the Fund to answer questions and provide tailored support to Applicants where needed.
G2.	Workshop / Webinar – Background to Fund & Application process (Virtual)	To deliver Online Application Support and technical advice Workshops that include Q&A and themed advisory sessions on each stage of the Application process, via Microsoft Teams or a similar online platform. To be run on a rolling basis ahead of and during each Annual Application Round launch. Sessions to be recorded and made accessible on Website.
G5.	Guidance for Delivery Partners on required Project Management & Monitoring best	Development of easily accessible and coherent Guidance on the Fund Website for Delivery Partners.

Guidance ID	Guidance	Target Audience and Aim of guidance
	practice easily accessible on Fund Website	This will be required to include best project management, monitoring, and reporting practices with visual and worked examples where possible to be included on: • Finances, forecasting and budgets • Risks in programme delivery, fraud, bribery, and corruption. • Safeguarding measures • MEL, Theory of Change, Log Frames and KPIs • Approaches on collation and upload of programme results, reporting and supporting evidence • Compliance with the Branding Manual (see Annex F) All Grant Administrator support, and guidance staff should be fully trained and well versed in all areas of the Fund to answer questions and provide tailored support to Delivery Partners where needed throughout each stage of the Project.
G6.	Workshops / Webinars – Project Management & Monitoring best practice (Virtual)	To provide Online Delivery Partner Support, technical advice Workshops and themed case studies, expert speakers knowledge sharing and capacity building events with other Delivery Partners (e.g., building networks with other projects to share knowledge, expertise and provide additional support; best practices to deliver successful project outcomes and MEL processes; new and novel ways of reporting on project success; how projects can demonstrate and measure success on marine protection and climate change mitigation to produce powerful and meaningful project outcomes). To be run on a rolling basis via Microsoft Teams or a similar online platform. Sessions to be recorded and made accessible on Website.
G7	Fund Learning & Network Platform easily accessible on Website	Provision of a dedicated Fund Learning and Networking platform to link up Applicant & Delivery Partner project networks through a secure communication hub– with the aim of helping to build regional and cross-country network links between organisations, Applicants, and Delivery Partners. The hub will allow stakeholders to share queries, support, experiences, or requests for collaborations with other individuals to help forge themed consortiums and build cross country networks for the Fund.
G8.	Help Desk Support Guidance & Protocols	Standard operating procedures for managing and responding to all queries for help and support.
G9.	Help Desk Support Query & Feedback Log Record	Create and maintain a record of all queries, responses and feedback received and dealt with.

3.2.5. **Distinct Responsibilities of the Authority**, the Authority will:

3.2.5.1. Appoint an Authority Contract Manager to represent the Authority on all aspects of the Fund and provide a first point of contact to the Grant Administrator for any additional support and expertise as and when required.

3.2.5.2. The Authority Contract Manager will provide an escalation point for any necessary Authority or FCDO decisions and issues raised by Applicant and Delivery Partners queries through the Help Desk Support Function.

3.2.5.3. Ensure appropriate linkages are made between the Grant Administrator, in-country FCDO officials and external experts to ensure effective support for the Grant Administrator and development of appropriate in-country support and expertise to further support the Fund and Help Desk Support Function.

3.2.5.4. Provide clear guidance on proposed design & development of Application Guidance documents, Workshops, consultations, Q&A sessions, themed advisory sessions, and knowledge sharing events for Applicant and Delivery Partner Support.

3.2.5.5. Work with the Grant Administrator to agree and approve all aspects of Design & Development of Application Guidance documents, Workshops, consultations, Q&A sessions, themed advisory sessions, and knowledge sharing events for Applicant and Delivery Partner Support.

3.2.5.6. Work with the Grant Administrator to regularly review, agree and approve amendments to all Fund support materials where needed based upon stakeholder feedback, external evaluator recommendations or because of ad-hoc policy changes.

3.3. <u>Workstream 3: Annual Applicant Rounds: The Fund Cycle</u>

3.3.1. The Grant Administrator will be required to provide a clear timetable mapping out each stage of the Fund Cycle to be agreed with the Authority by 30 July 2023, affording a 3-month pre-launch readiness period to ensure the Fund Online Portal, Website and all associated Application processes are fit for purpose, quality checked, rigorously tested, and staff training on all elements of the Fund completed ahead of the proposed 30 October 2023 Fund launch.

3.3.2. The Grant Administrator will be required to demonstrate appropriate planning of anticipated delivery 'pinch points' (e.g., application sifting, external committee evaluation, BPF programme Board approval, grant awards, project start up and reporting) and that required level of staff resources are in place to successfully deliver throughout the whole Fund Cycle timetable.

3.3.3. The Fund Cycle will be required to employ an Annual Application Round of both a one-stage (Large stream grants up to £3m) and two-stage application process (Small stream grants up to £0.25m). The first Annual Application Round is due to be launched in October 2023 with subsequent Annual Application Rounds each year of the Contract term.

3.3.4. A broad summary of the proposed Fund Cycle process and ownership of responsibilities is set out in

3.3.5. **Figure 1**. The exact Fund Cycle processes will be required to be created, used and maintained by the Grant Administrator once agreed and approved with the Authority. The Fund Cycle processes will be used throughout the Contract term and adapted in agreement with the Authority and FCDO where needed based upon stakeholder feedback, external evaluator recommendations or because of ad-hoc policy changes.

3.3.6. As the Fund is new, the number of applications that are likely to be received is currently unknown and can't be accurately anticipated. As the Fund becomes embedded into the global funding infrastructure and as organisations understand what is needed for the applications process, the Authority expect applications to become a steady and moderate figure.

3.3.7. **Table 5** sets out the anticipated volume of applications (based on previous ODA schemes), it is not possible to confirm the volumes and provided only as a guide.

Table 5 Anticipated Year by Year breakdown of the Fund

Year by year breakdown[1]	1 stage Grant funded activity (Large stream grants up to £3m) - budget	Anticipated volume of applications	Anticipated volume of awards	2 stage Grant funded activity (Small stream target grants up to £0.25m)	Anticipated applications	Anticipated volume of applications to Round 2 (c20% of Applications received)	Anticipated volume of awards (based on budget)
Implementation 22/23	£0	N/A	N/A	£0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Year 1 – grant Fund – 23/24	£0	■	■	£0	■	■	■
Year 2 – grant Fund 24/25	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Year 3 – grant Fund 25/26[2]	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Year 4 – grant Fund 26/27[2]	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Year 5 – grant Fund 27/28[2]Error! Bookmark not defined.[3]	■	0	0	■	■	■	■
Year 6 – MEL only 28/29[2]	£0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	0

[1] Funding Stream allocations may be re-allocated from one stream to another during the life of the Fund. Allocations can be made in each Application round for future financial years, should the Funding Streams be exhausted the Authority will decide if further Funding will be allocated or Application rounds will cease early.

[2] If the Contract is extended, subject to future Spending Reviews and HMT approvals.

[3] Year 5 Large Funding Stream Allocations are anticipated to have been awarded in earlier rounds, should further years of funding be secured this may change.

Figure 1 Fund Cycle application process and ownership of responsibilities
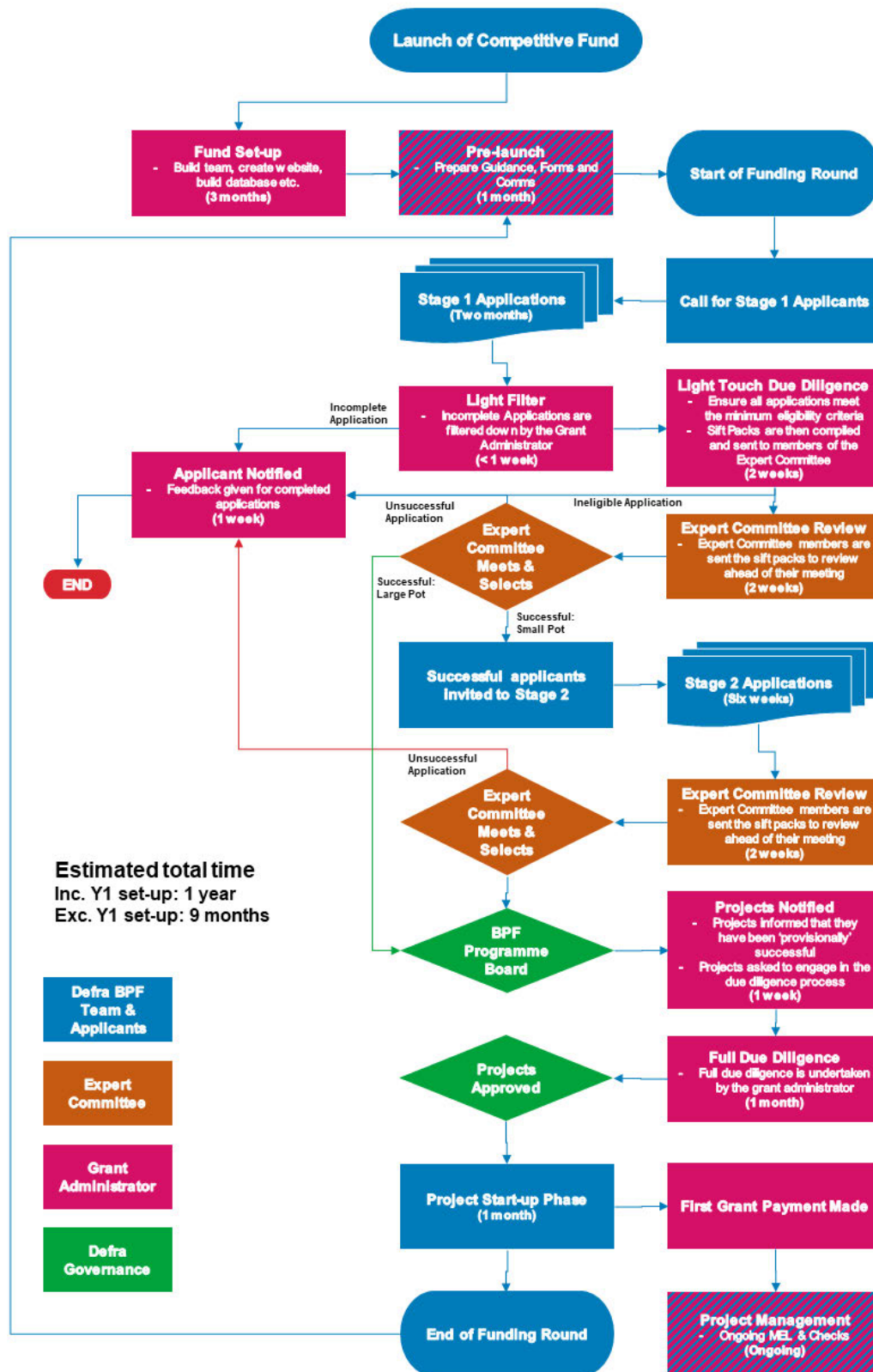
3.3.8. Design & Development of Fund Cycle Templates. The Fund Cycle Templates will be created by the Grant Administrator and approved by the Authority at Workstream 1. The Grant Administrator will be required to incorporate translation of all Fund Content wherever possible, with translation of Fund Content into Portuguese, Spanish and French as a minimum requirement. The Fund Application Content and Templates will be used throughout the Contract term unless the Authority request changes in the annual lessons learnt feedback or because of ad-hoc policy changes. The list set out in **Table 6** below is not exhaustive and may require additions throughout the Contract term:

Table 6 Fund Cycle Templates

Template ID	Template Title	Description
T1.	Application Pack	Application Content & Templates for use on the Online Application Portal and Fund Website. To include; Expression of Interest (EOI), Application Form, Application Guidance and Application Support Documents, Online Portal submission templates, eligibility criteria, financial agreements, terms and conditions, financial guidance, due diligence, background aims and objectives of the fund along with general guidance and Help Desk Support documents in agreement with the Authority. All Application Pack Content to be translated into Portuguese, Spanish and French wherever possible for inclusivity of the Fund across ODA countries.
T2.	Acknowledgement of Receipt of Expression of Interest (EOI), General Enquiries or Application Received	Standard confirmation of all EOI's, General Enquiries or Applications received within 5 working days of receipt; to include expected timeframe for response to query and / or application fund approvals.
T3.	Fund Queries Log	Log of all EOIs and General Enquiries received. Compiled to help intuitively inform, adapt and update Fund Applicant Pack, Online Application Portal and Fund Website Content throughout the Contract Term.
T4.	Response to Expression of Interest (EOI) / General Enquiries or Received.	Standard Response and Feedback Template to consistently respond to EOIs, General Enquiries. To include drafted and agreed frequently asked questions and answers to help minimise response times.
T5.	Core Application Information Log	Core Application Information Log (Project title, name and country of applicant organisation and level of funding requested) to the Authority within 5 working days of the Call for Application closing date.
T6.	Basic Sift of Applications Record	Basic Sift of Applications Record to identify and log the checking of validity, completeness, and eligibility of all applications received against the fund eligibility and selection criteria. Template to include line-by-line overview of all Applications highlighting those rejected by the Grant Administrator at the Basic Sift stage and explanation of why they were rejected.

Template ID	Template Title	Description
T7.	High Sift of Applications Record	High Sift of Applications Record. Where high volumes of applications occur, the Authority will request the Grant Administrator reduces the number of Applications from the Basic Sift to a more manageable volume using High Sift Criteria provided by Authority.
T8.	Basic Sift Outcome Confirmation Letter & Feedback Template	Standardised Basic Sift Outcome Letter to confirm Applicant Approval to Next Stage; Request for further information and / or Rejection; to include a Standardised Feedback Template to explain why the application has been successful, requires further detail or has been rejected, with information on how applicants can re-apply if unsuccessful, sign posting to Helpdesk, Applicant Guidance and Supporting Applicant Documents for any future application.
T9.	Expert Committee Sift & Evaluation Pack	Standardised format for all Expert Committee Group Members; to include Terms of Reference (ToR) describing the Expert Committee specific roles and responsibilities; Overview of Fund aims & objectives; Secured Access to successful Applications; Scoring Criteria template & Scoring Guidance; Evaluation, feedback and recommendations template.
T10.	Expert Committee Conflict Of Interest (COI) Declarations	Standardised template of Conflict Of Interest (COI) declarations for all Expert Committee Group Members to sign ahead of Sift and evaluation process.
T11.	Expert Committee Sift Evaluation & Recommendations Report	Standardised Template for Grant Administrator to record and report on final scores, feedback and expert recommendations, to include; A prioritised list of the strongest projects to be recommended to the Blue Planet Fund Programme Board for funding or progress to Stage 2 Applications, with required clarifications, caveats and actions raised during the Expert Committee Sift Meeting; A Budget Management Record of proposed application costs split across Fund Priority Outcomes.
T12.	Application Evaluation Progress & Outcome Tracker	Evaluation Progress Tracker for each Application through to Final award (or rejection) with recommendations from the Expert Committee and feedback from BPF Programme Board.
T13.	Fund Applicant Provisional Award Letter	Standardised Template for a provisional Fund Award following BPF Board approval; to include fund declaration and bank payment agreements, and request for final due diligence, safeguarding and financial checks.
T14.	Fund Applicant Rejection Letter & Feedback Template	Standardised Template for rejection of Application following Expert Committee consideration. To include Feedback Template to explain why the application requires further detail or has been rejected, with information on how applicants can re-apply if unsuccessful, sign posting to Helpdesk, Applicant Guidance and Supporting Applicant Documents for any future application.
T15.	Full Due Diligence Pre-Award Checks Record	Record of Full Delivery Partner Review (DPR) and Due Diligence checks for all successful applications as requested by the Authority (see Annex H). However, there will be occasions where full checks may not be feasible or appropriate

Template ID	Template Title	Description
		for all successful Applicants (particularly small in-country organisations) and therefore the Authority will agree and instruct the Grant Administrator to undertake a proportionate level DPR and Due Diligence checks.
T16.	Finance Classification Record	Record of Classification of Finance for all applications that have been recommended by the Expert Committee for award. This will determine whether the proposal aligns to the ESA10 definition of Research and Development (R&D) using HMT Consolidated Budgeting Guidance.
T17.	ICF Classification Record	Record of consistent and robust assessment of applications that have been recommended by the Expert Committee for award for their potential to be classified as International Climate Finance (ICF). These are projects with explicit (primary or secondary) objectives and potential to report results against at least 2 ICF KPIs or to avoid greenhouse Grant Administrators emissions and/or build the resilience of people, communities and institutions to deal with current and future climate shocks and stresses.
T17.	Gender Equality & Safeguarding Record	Record of robust, sensitive, easily accessible safeguarding and gender quality reporting structure that successful Applications are required to meet in line with Authority guidelines for Safeguarding and Gender Equality within the Aid Sector. See 0 for details.
T18.	Financial Due Diligence Risk and Mitigation Report	Risk report on all successful Delivery Partners with mitigation suggestions where applicable. Report will include recommendation for scheduling of further finance due diligence through the life of each project. This shall include recommendations for any Delivery Partners that have requested advance payments.
T19.	Successful Applications Progress Tracker	Record detailing all successful projects & their progress; to include project title, outline aims and objectives, budget allocation, project lead contact, organisation, country and local region. These details will be required to be regularly updated and uploaded promptly to the Website for publicly available fund spend transparency compliance for ODA, Grant Management Function Standards and Government Grants Information Service (GGIS).

3.3.7 **Distinct Responsibilities of the Grant Administrator for Co-ordination of Application Rounds**. This section sets out the different stages of administering the Fund Cycle's Application Rounds. The Grant Administrator shall apply suitable General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Information Security measures to ensure that all data associated with the processes below is held securely and shared in accordance with clause E2, Authority's Conditions of Contract.

The Grant Administrator will:

3.3.7.1   Follow HMG's requirements for the administration of general grants. HMG's Grant Functional Standards describe the Authority's requirements. HMG's Grant Functional Standards have been outlined in Annex F.

3.3.7.2   Propose and agree in writing the overall evaluation timeline of the Application Round with the Authority and Expert Committee Group Chair.

3.3.7.3   Notify and keep the Expert Committee Group members informed of the timeline, and managing relevant meeting invites once evaluation timelines are agreed and approved.

3.3.7.4   Draft content & templates of the Fund Application Pack for use on the Online Application Portal and Fund Website (designed and created by Grant Administrator; see **Table *3***); to include an Expression of Interest (EOI) Form to allow easy submission and compilation of basic enquiries; one Stage (large grants up to £3m) and two Stage (small grants up to £0.25m) Application Form Templates; Application Guidance and Application Support Documents; Eligibility Criteria; Financial Fund Agreement; Terms and Conditions; Summarised Background, Aims and Objectives of the Fund; Glossary; Frequently Asked Questions and Ways to get in Contact such as Helpdesk Support in agreement with the Authority (see **Table *8***).

3.3.7.5   Obtain written approval of all content and templates within the Fund Application Pack, for use on the Online Application Portal and Fund Website together with all associated written communications (announcements, press releases, social media, and website updates) from the Authority before publishing. Should any amendments to content be requested by the Authority the Grant Administrator will ensure all changes are made before publishing.

3.3.7.6   Official Fund Launch date and publication of the finalised Online Application Portal and Fund Website are to be agreed in writing with Authority. The Online Application Portal and Fund Website will be required to facilitate the Annual Application Round for all Applicants by default unless otherwise agreed with the Authority for a certain demographic or circumstance.

3.3.7.7   Publish agreed and approved additional content with Authority for all communications associated with each Application Round (announcements, press releases, social media, and Website updates, see **Workstream 9**).

3.3.7.8   Collate all queries received (**see Workstream 2**) and ensure that responses are consistently communicated to all interested parties who have submitted any general queries or an Expression of Interest (EOI) form through a standardised response template (to be created by the Grant Administrator and agreed with the Authority; see **Table 6**).

3.3.7.9   Proactively establish and utilise networks of potential in-country organisation Fund Applicants for each Application Round via emails, engagement events (such as online funding Q&A workshops), social media, and other means. Lessons learnt from similar fund schemes strongly indicate that there is a need to provide a dedicated support mechanism to potential Fund Applicants. Such support should be targeted to generate interest and optimise quality outcomes (**see Workstream 8**).

3.3.7.10   Process applications received from Fund Applicants, logging on the relevant Fund Database(s) and providing acknowledgement to the Fund Applicants within 5 working days of the Application Round closing date (see **Table 6**).

3.3.7.11   Conduct basic sift due diligence checks to ensure validity and eligibility of the applicant, and completeness of information submitted based upon Fund Eligibility and Selectivity Criteria (detailed Eligibility and Selectivity Criteria will be provided by Authority) for all applications received. Basic sift due diligence checks will be designed and created by the Grant Administrator in agreement with the Authority to ensure a robust but light touch first sift of applications.

3.3.7.12   On completion of basic sift due diligence checks, the Grant Administrator will provide all Fund Applicants with a Basic Sift Outcome Letter (a standard template to be created by Grant Administrator and agreed with the Authority; see **Table 6**). The letter shall advise applicants as to whether their application has been approved to the next stage, requires further information or has been rejected with advice on how applicants can re-apply, sign posting them to contact the Fund Helpdesk, and review Applicant Guidance and Supporting Applicant Documents for any future application.

3.3.7.13   The Grant Administrator will share the Core Application Information (Project title, name and country of applicant organisation and level of funding requested) in line with GDPR and Information Security measures to the Authority within 5 working days of the Application Round closing date.

3.3.8   **Authority Distinct responsibilities for Co-ordination of the Application Rounds**. The Authority will:

3.3.8.1   Agree and approve the evaluation timeline for the Annual Application Rounds.

3.3.8.2   Provide clear guidance on basic sifting and proportionate due diligence checks, Fund Content (to include background overview, aims and objectives of the Fund), Eligibility and Selection Criteria for all applications, to easily identify applications that do not meet the required Fund Standards.

3.3.8.3   Review, request any changes and provide final written approval of all Content & Templates of the Fund Application Pack, Online Application Portal, Fund Website, and all communications associated with each Application Round (announcements, press releases, social media, and Website updates).

3.3.8.4   Provide a list at the start of each funding rounds of ODA eligible countries that will **not** be able to apply for the upcoming funding round, due to the current political sensitivities that exist in those countries.

3.3.9   **Grant Administrator Distinct Responsibilities for managing Applications received**. The Grant Administrator will:

3.3.9.1   Receive General Enquiries, Expressions of Interest (EOIs) and Applications from Fund Applicants via the Online Application Portal and Fund Website and Help Desk Support.

3.3.9.2   If there is a particularly high number of applications (over the anticipated volumes set out in

3.3.9.3   *Table 5*), the Authority may require the Grant Administrator to manage excess applications through specific guidance or by raising sift standards. This will be an additional task payable under the 'High Application Sift'.

3.3.9.4   Each stage of the evaluation, as set out in **Table 7** below, will be carried out in sequence. This means the evaluation cannot progress to the next stage until the current stage has been completed.

3.3.9.5   Technical evaluation will take place as described below:

3.3.9.5.1   **Independent Expert Evaluation:** Expert Committee Group Members will score each Application in isolation in line with the scoring model developed by the Authority.

3.3.9.5.2   **Group Expert Evaluation:** Expert Committee Group Members will convene at a Sift Meeting set up by the Grant Administrator acting within a secretariat role to agree upon a final consensus score.

3.3.9.6   **Table 7** below sets out the responsibilities of the Authority and Grant Administrator after the Annual Application Round period has closed.

Table 7 Evaluation Responsibilities

Process	The Grant Administrator's Responsibilities	The Authority's Responsibilities
Basic Sift & due diligence checks	The Grant Administrator will ensure that only eligible Applications that meet the minimum standard set by the Authority are submitted to the Authority for evaluation by the Expert Committee.	Fund Eligibility and Selectivity Criteria will be provided to the Grant Administrator by the Authority, prior to Workstream 1.
Sift (Independent Expert Evaluation)	The Grant Administrator will provide a Sift and Evaluation Pack to all Expert Committee members via secure electronic data transfer. The Grant Administrator will manage all Independent Expert Committee Member processes; providing Secretariat function; compilation and reporting of all Independent Expert Evaluation scores, feedback, and recommendations in preparation of Group Expert Evaluation.	Expert Committee Group Members will be appointed by the Authority in the first year of the Fund. With consideration given into recruitment of Expert Committee Group Members for remainder of the Contract term.
Sift (Group Expert Evaluation)	The Grant Administrator will manage all Expert Committee Group Member processes; providing Secretariat function for set up and running of Sift meetings; compilation and report of Group Expert Evaluation scores, feedback, and recommendations. The Grant Administrator will pose any points of clarification raised by Expert Committee Members to Fund Applicants. The Grant Administrator will arrange additional Sift Meeting/s for Expert Committee Group	The Authority will attend and support the Sift Meeting/s.

Process	The Grant Administrator's Responsibilities	The Authority's Responsibilities
	Members to discuss Fund Applicants' responses to points of clarification and agree a final consensus score.	
Blue Planet Fund Programme Board Approval & Sign Off	The Grant Administrator will provide the Authority with a report of the Expert Committee evaluations, feedback, and recommendations. The Grant Administrator will notify Fund Applicants of BPF Board Outcomes and if successful progress applications to next stage or if unsuccessful provide constructive feedback (see **Table 6**) to support improvement and resubmission of applications.	The Authority will formally consider, approve, and sign off successful applications based upon Expert Committee evaluation, feedback, and recommendations.

3.3.9.7 Conduct a basic Sift and due diligence checks, flagging and/or rejecting applications that very clearly do not meet stated Fund Eligibility and Selectivity Criteria provided by the Authority.

3.3.9.8 Collate the Expert Committee Sift & Evaluation Pack which shall include:

3.3.9.8.1 Expert Committee Terms of Reference (ToR) detailing the Expert Committee specific roles and responsibilities.

3.3.9.8.2 Overview of Fund aims & objectives

3.3.9.8.3 Full submissions of the Applications to be assessed by the Expert Committee

3.3.9.8.4 Scoring Criteria Template and Scoring Guidance for the Expert Committee

3.3.9.8.5 Evaluation Feedback and Recommendations Template

3.3.9.9 Collate Agenda, and any additional notes for Chair of the Expert Committee, Expert Committee Group Members and the Authority

3.3.9.10 Request and collate Conflict of Interest (COI) Declarations from all Expert Committee members.

3.3.9.11 Request written approval from the Authority to release the Expert Committee Sift & Evaluation Pack and any additional detail to the Expert Committee Group Members, Expert Committee Chair and the Authority. Should any amendments be requested by the Authority the Grant Administrator will make the changes before requesting approval.

3.3.9.12 Once the Authority approve the release of the Expert Committee Sift & Evaluation Pack, securely send it to the Expert Committee Group Members, Expert Committee Chair, and the Authority at least 2 weeks ahead of Sift meeting.

3.3.10 **Authority Distinct Responsibilities for Applications received**. The Authority will:

3.3.10.1 Provide a dedicated contact for any queries relating to the Fund Cycle and Annual Application rounds.

3.3.10.2 Provide Fund Eligibility and Selectivity Criteria, Expert Committee Group Members Contact List and Expert Committee Scoring Criteria.

3.3.10.3 Review, request any changes and provide approval of the Expert Committee Sift & Evaluation Pack and any additional detail.

3.3.11 **The Grant Administrator Distinct Responsibilities at each Sift Meeting**: The Grant Administrator will:

3.3.11.1 Organise Sift Meetings as Secretariat, by virtual or hybrid means, in agreement with the Authority and Expert Committee Chair, notifying the participants of the date at least 3 months in advance.

3.3.11.2 Organise a pre-meeting with the Authority and Expert Committee Chair to discuss budget available and how Applications should be divided between the Expert Committee Group Members and how the Sift Meeting should operate.

3.3.11.3 Prepare papers and presentations for the Sift Meeting in consultation with the Authority and/or Expert Committee Chair.

3.3.11.4 Provide the approved Expert Committee Sift & Evaluation Pack to the Authority in advance of the Sift Meeting, and then to the Expert Committee Group Members five working days in advance of the Sift Meeting, ensure that everyone understands the purpose of the meeting and has the evidence to support informed discussion and robust decision making.

3.3.11.5 Maintain the Budget Management record throughout the Sift Meeting to enable the Authority and Expert Committee Chair to monitor the budget allocation implications as projects are being selected.

3.3.11.6 Record the Expert Committee sifted applications scoring and recommendations in an Expert Committee Evaluation Report, noting any funding conditions, caveats and feedback or changes in the scoring of proposals. Accurately record all decisions and actions to be taken (see **Table 6** & **Table 7**).

3.3.11.7 Obtain further information, as required, from Fund Applicants whose proposals are considered serious contenders for recommendation but where further detailed clarification on specific matters has been required by the Authority or the Expert Committee.

3.3.12 **Authority Distinct Responsibilities for the Sift Meeting**. The Authority will:

3.3.12.1 Provide a dedicated point of contact for any queries relating to the Specific Funding Application round.

3.3.12.2 Appoint Expert Committee Members and Chair to evaluate applications and provide strategic recommendations. Expert Committee Members will consist of independent and ex-officio experts in the marine environment and poverty reduction.

3.3.12.3 Attend the pre-meeting to agree the budget available and how Applications should be divided between the Expert Committee Members and how the specific Sift Meeting will operate.

3.3.12.4 Review, request any changes and provide final approval of the Papers and Presentations at the Blue Planet Fund Programme Board.

3.3.13 **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities role after the Sift meeting**. The Grant Administrator will:

3.3.13.1 Obtain and document any required clarifications from Fund Applicants that the Expert Committee or the Authority have requested during or after the Sift Meeting.

3.3.13.2 Prepare the Expert Committee Sift, Evaluation & Recommendations Report and Budget Management Record and send to the Authority a minimum of three working days ahead of the BPF Programme Board meeting for final approvals.

3.3.13.3 Attend BPF Programme Board when invited by the Authority, to present the Expert Committee Evaluation Report, and follow up on final application approvals, rejections, and any outstanding queries of made by the BPF programme Board.

3.3.13.4 Conduct and document Full Due Diligence Pre-Award Checks for each Application recommended by the Expert Committee and approved by the BPF Board for funding. These Pre-Award Checks will be completed within 4 weeks of the approval by the BPF Programme Board including:

3.3.13.4.1 A Full Deliver Partner Review (DPR), as requested by the Authority (see Annex H)

3.3.13.4.2 Classification of Finance

3.3.13.4.3 Assessment of the proposal to determine whether the proposal delivers on climate objectives and can be classified as International Climate Finance

3.3.13.4.4 Gender Equality Assessment

3.3.13.4.5 Safeguarding Assessment.

3.3.13.5 Where the Grant Administrator does not have the capability to deliver Full Due Diligence Pre-Award Checks in-house, the Grant Administrator shall be responsible for sourcing and sub-contracting an alternative organisation to carry out the Checks. In this case, the Grant Administrator will be responsible for the management and products of the sub-contracting organisation under this Contract.

3.3.13.6 Once applications have been formally approved (or rejected) by the BPF Programme Board, the Grant Administrator will notify all applicants of the outcome by the agreed

standard template of a Provisional Award / or Rejection Letter with feedback template, within five working days. The standard feedback template for unsuccessful Fund Applicants will include summary of constructive feedback and recommendations from Expert Committee to support the improvement and resubmission of future applications (see **Table 6**).

3.3.13.7 For Small stream proposals with 2 stages, successful Stage 1 applications will be advised by formatted standard template letter or email (template to be agreed with the Authority; see **Table 6**) from the Grant Administrator that they have been successful and need to commence Stage 2, reflecting on any feedback from the Expert Committee from their Stage 1 application, and before the closing date for their Stage 2 applications.

3.3.13.8 The Grant Administrator will advise successful Fund Applicants, using a standard template Fund Award Letter (template to be agreed by the Authority), of the outcome of their application ensuring feedback and any conditions of funding (based on summary of Expert Committee and the BPF Programme Board advice.

3.3.13.9 If necessary, successful applicants will be notified in conjunction with a press notice (**see Workstream 9**), in which case this will be produced by the Grant Administrator in consultation with and agreed by the Authority.

3.3.13.10 The standard Fund Award Letters will form the final confirmation of the award with the Fund Applicants of successful projects. These letters may be followed by further contact between the Grant Administrator and the successful Fund Applicant to finalise the individual project budgets. The Grant Administrator will monitor and record in the Offer Log; the acceptance of funding offers, caveats/conditions, and/or progress towards acceptance, triaging queries from the applicants of successful projects in line with an approach agreed with the Authority.

3.3.13.11 The Authority is the granting entity. The Grant Administrator will sign Grant Fund Agreements with Delivery Partners acting on behalf of the Authority. The Grant Administrator will draft the Grant Fund Agreements with each Delivery Partner using a standard template agreed with the Authority (see **Table 6**).

3.3.13.12 The Grant Administrator will not award any Grant Funding Agreement without the written approval of the BPF Programme Board. Likewise, the Grant Administrator will not vary a Grant Fund Agreement without express and written approval of the BPF Programme Board.

3.3.14 **The Grant Administrator will provide the Authority with**:

3.3.14.1 A spreadsheet detailing all successful projects to include: project title, outline aims and objectives, budget allocation and spend profile, project lead contact, organisation, country and local region, expenditure to date. These details shall be updated monthly at a minimum and align with requirements of the Government Grants Information System ("**GGIS**") and Authority grant functional standards (see Annex F).

3.3.14.2 A complete copy of all project outputs (such as project updates, reports, social media coverage or press releases).

3.3.14.3 Add complete project records to the relevant Database(s), with corresponding communications.

3.3.15 **Authority's Distinct Responsibilities after the Sift Meeting**. The Authority will:

3.3.15.1 The Authority will instruct the Grant Administrator to undertake and record Full Delivery Partner Review (DPR) and Due Diligence checks for all successful applications as requested by the Authority (see 0). However, there will be occasions where full checks may not be feasible or appropriate for all successful Applicants (particularly small in-country organisations) and therefore the Authority will agree and instruct the Grant Administrator to undertake a proportionate level DPR and Due Diligence checks.

3.3.15.2 The Authority will confirm the date of the BPF Programme board a minimum of four weeks beforehand.

3.3.15.3 Following the award of Funds by the Grant Administrator, the Authority will provide details of new projects to relevant Government missions overseas engaged with the wider BPF programme. This should be built into the Fund Communication Plan as a key deliverable (**see Workstream 8**)

3.4. <u>Workstream 4: The Expert Committee</u>

The Expert Committee will be appointed initially on a voluntary basis by the Authority to undertake a structured independent review and provide constructive feedback of Applications provided to them in the Expert Committee Sift and Evaluation Pack. The Expert Committee will consist of independent and ex-officio experts in the marine environment and development sector, and will use their expertise to provide scores, feedback, and recommendations against set evaluation criteria (proposed by the Authority; reviewed, amended, and agreed between Grant Administrator and Authority) ahead of a Sift Meeting. At the Sift Meeting the Expert Committee will meet to discuss all of the Applications and determine a recommendation to the BPF Programme Board to award those that significantly meet the aims of the Fund and deliver the best objective outcomes.

The Grant Administrator shall utilise suitable General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Information Security measures to ensure that all data associated with the Expert Committee are held securely and shared in accordance with clause E2, Appendix B, Authority's Conditions of Contract.

The appointment of the Expert Committee will commence in February 2023 and be concluded by the end of July 2023. The Expert Committee will be appointed voluntarily by the Authority on an annual basis for the duration of the Contract term and will consist of up to 20 independent members that will need to abide by a Grant Administrator and Authority agreed Terms of Reference (ToR). Roles and Responsibilities of the Expert Committee will align to their involvement in the External Evaluation of Applications. Should any member leave or the Authority remove them from the Expert Committee they will need to be replaced by a new Expert Committee Group Member by the Authority.

3.4.1 **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for the Expert Committee**. The Grant Administrator will:

3.4.1.1 Draft and obtain written approval from the Authority for the Expert Committee Sift & Evaluation Pack 4 weeks ahead of Sift Meeting (see Table 6).

3.4.1.2 Respond to any queries received relating to the Expert Committee from Expert Committee Group Members and / or the Authority.

3.4.1.3 Conduct an Expert Committee Fund Evaluation pre-meeting with all appointed Expert Committee Group Members, to give a background to the Fund, discuss Terms of Reference (ToR), Scoring Criteria and Scoring Guidance, and provide a Q&A session to ensure all members are confident with the process and what is required of them ahead of the Sift meeting.

3.4.1.4 Request and Collate Conflicts of Interest ("**CoIs**") of the Expert Committee Group Members ahead of Sift meeting to allow the allocation of applications to be fair and robust, acknowledging any conflicts of interest.

3.4.2 **Authority's Distinct Responsibilities for the Expert Committee**. The Authority will:

3.4.2.1 Appoint Expert Committee Group Members and Chair on a voluntary basis to evaluate applications and provide strategic recommendations. Expert Committee Group Members will consist of diverse and independent ex-officio experts in the marine environment and poverty reduction.

3.4.2.2 Authority to provide a finalised list of Expert Committee Group Members names, contact details, organisation and areas of expertise and specialism to the Grant Administrator. To be shared in line with GDPR and Information Security measures to ensure that all data associated with the processes below is held securely and shared in accordance with clause E2, Authority's Conditions of Contract.

3.4.2.3 Provide Grant Administrator with proposed Expert Committee Fund Application Scoring and Evaluation Criteria and agreed budget allocation for each application funding round.

3.4.2.4 Review and provide written approval Expert Committee Sift & Evaluation Pack 2 weeks ahead of Sift Meeting.

3.4.2.5 Attend the pre-meeting to agree the budget available and how Applications should be divided between the Expert Committee Members and how the specific Sift Meeting will operate.

3.5. Workstream 5: Day to Day Project Management

To establish the efficient running of the Fund it is necessary to define aspects that will be subject to regular engagement between the Authority and the Grant Administrator including, but not limited to:

Table 8 Regular engagement between the Grant Administrator and the Authority.

Title	Description
Design & Development of The Fund	Grant Administrator to lead the design and development of the Fund including Online Application Portal, Website, Fund Application Pack & Fund Cycle Templates (workstreams 1 - 3) in collaboration with the Authority throughout each stage.
Supporting Applicants & Project Delivery Partners Helpdesk	Grant Administrator to lead on dedicated Helpdesk support for applicants and project delivery partners throughout the whole Fund Cycle (workstream 2 – 3), to include virtual workshops, 1-2-1 advisory calls and emails, production of supportive documents liaising and regularly updating Authority on requests, issues and any risks where needed.
Fund Cycle: Application Round processes	Grant Administrator to lead upon end-to-end Fund Cycle Application Round processes, liaising Closely with Authority at each stage (workstream 3).
Expert Committee	Authority to appoint Expert Committee Group Members and propose scoring and evaluation criteria, liaising with Grant Administrator to lead as Secretariat on all engagement with members, provision of Sift & Evaluation Pack, compilation, and reporting of Sift meetings and representation of outcomes at BPF Programme Board (Workstream 4).
Fund Communications	Grant Administrator to lead on Fund Communications (announcements, press releases, social media, and Website updates, see Workstream 9) liaising with Authority at each stage to agree and approve publication.
Project Reporting and Interviews	Grant Administrator to lead upon securing realistic deadlines for project reporting and project interviews with delivery partners, liaising with the Authority at each stage.
Fund Management Information (MI) Reports	Grant Administrator to develop, update, monitor and regularly review Fund Management Information reports with the Authority to keep track of Fund progress throughout each stage of the Fund Cycle.
Secure Fund Database	Grant Administrator to lead on design, development and regular monitoring and updating of the Secure Fund Database, liaising with the Authority in regular meetings to review, highlighting delivery, budget, risks or issues.
Budget Management	Grant Administrator to track and monthly review of values against the overall budget (proposed and live projects), liaising and reporting updates to the Authority at monthly progress meetings. To include monitoring of project finances, including the total awarded, any matched funding, quarterly breakdown of budgets, spend to date and claims submitted.
Risk Management	Grant Administrator to identify and keep track of project-level risks through regular review with Authority of the Risk Registers; highlighting any potential issues that materialise, escalating significant issues to the Authority where required. Identify any trends or emerging issues that are impacting more than one project.
Continuous Improvement (supporting quality applications)	Grant Administrator to lead upon continuous improvement of the Fund in supporting quality applications, working in close engagement with the Authority to include for example; pre-application workshops, specialist

Title	Description
	expertise provision, dedicated fund and fiduciary expertise to help applicants get through all stages of the fund and acting as critical friends and sources of expertise on due diligence, compliance, safeguarding, management, monitoring, evaluation and learning, and programming: access to capacity building money, peer to peer learning to help join up on projects.
Monitoring Evaluation & Learning (MEL)	Grant Administrator and Authority to engage closely on development of the Fund, monitoring each stage closely to establish ways of improving the Fund process and identify any lessons learned. Grant Administrator and Authority to work together to compile Annual Review of the Fund and draw out actions and next steps to be taken forward. Work in close collaboration with an Independent Evaluator to provide required documentation, evidence and support where needed (**see Workstream 7**).
Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	Grant Administrator to keep track record of progress against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), liaising regularly with the Authority, highlighting any potential risks or issues with delivery.
Ministerial Parliamentary Questions or urgent Authority queries	Grant Administrator to engage closely with Authority to responded to any Ministerial Parliamentary Questions or urgent Authority queries within one working day.
Specialist Technical Assistance	Applicants, Delivery Partners, and the Authority may require *ad hoc* specialist Technical Assistance or briefing on issues arising from new or proposed developments to the fund or specific one-off tasks. This specialist advice will require extensive knowledge of the Fund, with expertise in the marine environment and the links to poverty reduction.
Exit Planning	Grant Administrator to plan exit arrangements for the Contract, including an initial high-level plan 9 months before the Contract End Date. The Grant Administrator will then produce a detailed plan no later than 6 months before the Contract End Date, to include detail on how knowledge, personnel, organisation, data, assets and intellectual property shall be transferred back to the Authority.

3.5.1 The above activities shall be supported by insightful analysis of up-to-date information presented in an accessible electronic format and captured in written updates shared in advance by the Grant Administrator, regular meetings on agreed dates will support the monitoring of delivery performance and the management of risks to inform, adjust and refine programme delivery to support agile, efficient, and effective management of the Fund.

3.5.2 **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for Day to Day Project Management**. The Grant Administrator will:

3.5.2.1 Appoint a dedicated Business Relationship Manager (BRM) resource to represent the Grant Administrator on all aspects of the Fund who will work closely with the Authority, Applicants, Delivery Partners, Expert Committee, and the independent MEL supplier.

3.5.2.1.1 The BRM resource will be available to the Authority, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays), between the hours of 9am to 5pm. Daily or weekly Microsoft Teams Meeting Calls may be required by the Authority.

3.5.2.1.2   The BRM resource is required to respond to questions and requests from the Authority within agreed timeframes:

3.5.2.2   To abide by the following Grant Administrator response times for information requests:

3.5.2.2.1   Information for Ministerial Parliamentary Questions responded to within working one working day.

3.5.2.2.2   Urgent Ministerial, Authority, National Audit Office or GIAA Requests responded to within 3 working hours, with agreed action or resolution plan within 2 working days.

3.5.2.2.3   Routine requests within 2 working days, with agreed action or resolution plan within 5 working days.

3.5.2.3   Provide Specialist Technical Advice within 2 working days, with agreed action or resolution as agreed with the Authority.

3.5.2.4   Work closely with Authority, FCDO officials and external experts to ensure development of appropriate in-country networks and expertise to support the day-to-day management of the Fund.

3.5.2.5   Arrange and attend (anticipated will require 30min) weekly Fund Catch Up Meetings (via Microsoft Teams) with the Authority Contract Manager as an informal touch point for all queries, mainly short-term until the Fund has launched and bedded in. The BRM will facilitate note taking and distribution of the notes and any actions after the meeting.

3.5.2.6   Arrange and attend (anticipated will require 1 hour) fortnightly Operational Working Group meetings (via Microsoft Teams) with the Authority Contract Manager to discuss the Risk Register and Issues Log, budgeting and forecasting and focus on any immediate short-term priorities and operational activities. The BRM will draft the agenda, facilitate note taking and distribution of the notes after the meeting. The Risk and Issues Log will be supplied by the BRM to the Authority Contract Manager one working day in advance of the meeting.

3.5.2.7   Arrange and attend (anticipated will require 3 hours) monthly Delivery Working Group meetings (via Microsoft Teams) with the Authority Contract Manager to review the MI Dashboard. The BRM will draft the agenda, facilitate note taking and distribution of the notes after the meeting. The MI Dashboard will be supplied by the BRM to the Authority Contract Manager one working day in advance of the meeting. The Authority may request a face-to-face meeting at the Authority's office at 2 Marsham Street (SW1P 4DF) in London. Travel expenses may be claimed as per section 9 (p6868) below.

3.5.2.8   Arrange and attend (anticipated will require 5 hours) Quarterly face to face meetings at the Authority's office at 2 Marsham Street (SW1P 4DF) in London with the Authority Contract Manager to review the MI Dashboard and supporting evidence. The BRM will draft the agenda, facilitate note taking and distribution of the notes after the meeting. The MI Dashboard and supporting evidence will be supplied by the BRM to the Authority

Contract Manager one working week in advance of the meeting. Travel expenses may be claimed as per section 9 (p6868) below.

3.5.2.9   Arrange and attend (anticipated will require 7 hours) an Annual Fund Review in addition to Quarterly meetings in the last financial quarter of each year. The meeting will be face to face meeting at the Authority's office at 2 Marsham Street (SW1P 4DF) in London with the Authority Contract Manager to review the MI Dashboard and supporting evidence. The BRM will draft the agenda, facilitate note taking and distribution of the notes after the meeting. The Fund Annual Review report will be shared with the Authority for early review and input, with a revised version supplied by the BRM to the Authority Contract Manager two working weeks in advance of the meeting. Travel expenses may be claimed as per section 9 (p6868) below.

3.5.2.10   The BRM will draft and provide an Annual Fund Review report by 1st March of each Financial Year during the Contract Term which will include but not be limited to:

3.5.2.10.1 Activities conducted under the Fund

3.5.2.10.2 Performance against agreed Fund Output Indicators

3.5.2.10.3 Financial Report, including Change Requests received

3.5.2.10.4 Value for Money Assessment

3.5.2.10.5 Results Framework, including an updated Log frame

3.5.2.10.6 An overview synthesis of annual fund reports

3.5.2.10.7 Performance and delivery against the Contract KPIs

3.5.3   **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for Social Value**.

3.5.3.1   The Grant Administrator will provide a written progress update against its Social Value Plan submitted at ITT stage at every Quarterly Review Meeting. This will include but is not limited to:

3.5.3.1.1 Organisation's progress against sustainability metrics: reducing greenhouse Grant Administrators emissions, waste and resource efficiency

3.5.3.1.2 Organisation's progress in supporting workplace equality, diversity and inclusion

3.5.3.1.3 Organisation's management of modern slavery, fraud and safeguarding and gender risks

for both the Grant Administrator and Delivery Partner organisations.

3.5.4   **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for Information Security**.

3.5.4.1   The Grant Administrator will ensure that any Grant Administrator system which holds any protectively marked Authority Data or other government data will comply with:

3.5.4.1.1 the principles in the Security Policy Framework: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/security-policy-framework

3.5.4.1.2 the Government Security Classification policy: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications

3.5.4.1.3 guidance issued by the Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure on Risk Management: https://www.cpni.gov.uk/content/adopt-risk-management-approach

3.5.4.1.4 Protection of Sensitive Information and Assets: https://www.cpni.gov.uk/protection-sensitive-information-and-assets

3.5.4.1.5 the National Cyber Security Centre's (NCSC) information risk management guidance: https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/risk-management-collection

3.5.4.1.6 government best practice in the design and implementation of system components, including network principles, security design principles for digital services and the secure email blueprint: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technology-code-of-practice/technology-code-of-practice

3.5.4.1.7 the security requirements of cloud services using the NCSC Cloud Security Principles and accompanying guidance: https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/implementing-cloud-security-principles

3.5.4.1.8 buyer requirements in respect of AI ethical standards

3.5.4.2 The Grant Administrator shall hold a valid Cyber Essentials certification, available upon request by the Authority.

3.5.4.3 The Contractor's System, as defined in Schedule 8 of the Authority's Conditions of Contract, as well as the Application Portal and Secure Fund Database, shall treat all information pertaining to the Fund as OFFICIAL SENSITIVE unless otherwise instructed by the Authority or produced for communication purposes (see Workstream 8). This relates to the Government Security Policy in 3.5.4.1.2.

3.5.5 The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for Performance Management

3.5.5.1 To ensure the Grant Administrator's high performance, key areas of the Grant Administrator's performance will be monitored via a set of a Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as defined in Annex L.

3.5.5.2 The Grant Administrator and the Authority will meet quarterly to review the Grant Administrator's performance. The Parties will discuss any arising issues in order to avoid issues early and work collaboratively to address any instance of performance which requires importance or is poor.

3.5.5.3 The Grant Administrator shall submit a KPI report on a quarterly basis. The KPI report shall be sent to the Contract Manager and to Authority's programme email inbox:

██████████

3.5.5.4   The Performance Management Framework is outlined within Annex L. The quality of the service provided will be regularly monitored by the Authority against the elements outlined in Annex L.

3.5.6   **The Authority's Distinct Responsibilities for Day to Day Project Management**. The Authority will:

3.5.6.1   Appoint an Authority Contract Manager to represent the Authority who will be direct point of contact Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays), between the hours of 9am to 5pm.

3.5.6.2   Work closely with Grant Administrator, FCDO officials and external experts to ensure development of appropriate in-country networks and expertise to support the day to day management of the Fund.

3.5.6.3   Authority Contract Manager will attend all meetings with Grant Administrator as outlined above (463.5.2.5 - 3.5.2.9).

3.6. <u>Workstream 6: New and Live Projects</u>

After successful completion of the Application Rounds, Fund activity by the Grant Administrator will move to an adaptive management, monitoring, and reporting support phase with the successfully appointed Delivery Partners. Key areas of focus for the Grant Administrator in Workstream 6 will be:

3.6.1   Provision of adaptive management, monitoring and reporting support for each project based on Delivery Partner needs, capacity and capability (this will be particularly important for small organisations that have never gone through funding process or led their own fund programmes).   Based on lessons learned from similar Government funds the ability to provide adaptive management (e.g., to work with Delivery Partners to adjust aims, budgets and reporting capability and timelines where needed) can significantly improve the success of project delivery and impact of project outcomes.

3.6.2   Provide appropriate support to ensure Delivery Partners in recipient of funds shall be financially stable and sufficiently competent to hold and manage the scale of ODA funds provided to them.

3.6.3   Provide appropriate support to ensure Delivery Partners in receipt of funds operate within the terms of the Fund Agreement with a specific focus on outcomes, fraud and error and continuously improving upon gender equality and safeguarding measures.

3.6.4   Provide appropriate support to Delivery Partners to either submit written Report Updates and Final Reports/ and or Virtual Project Interviews, Videos, Media Updates and engage with project progress discussions to the Grant Administrator via Secure Fund Database in line with the terms of their funding. Reporting (be it verbally by interview or written) shall reflect an accurate position of progress to date against agreed timescales and outcomes as set out in the Grant Funding Agreement (Annex F). Accurate record keeping and reporting is essential for a successful Fund outcome.

3.6.5   Provide appropriate support and provision of access to the Secure Fund Database with the capability to be a secure daily resource point for queries and communication for the Authority, and the Grant Administrator.

3.6.6   **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for the Secure Fund Database**. The Grant Administrator will:

3.6.6.1   Create and maintain the Secure Fund Database, which will contain records and Databases relating to all the Fund Workstreams.

3.6.6.2   Provide secure access to the Secure Fund Database for nominated Authority employees.

3.6.6.3   Carry out reviews at least every month of the database and its data, providing recommendations to the Authority to ensure its integrity, security, and efficiency.

3.6.6.4   Retain Secure Fund Database records for a minimum of 5 years after the Contract End Date. Both the Authority and the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) will need full

access to the Secure Fund Database and shall have the right of access to complete audits at the Grant Administrator's premises if necessary.

3.6.6.5   Fully engage with the Authority on any audit relating to the Fund.

3.6.7   **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for Reporting**. The Grant Administrator will:

3.6.7.1   Provide a monthly (2nd Friday of each Calendar Month) MI Dashboard and supporting evidence to the Authority, presented in an accessible and informative format, to enable efficient and agile management of the Fund to strengthen its performance. The Dashboard shall include but is not limited to:

Table 9 MI Dashboard minimum requirements.

Report ID	Report Title	Report Description
R1	MI Dashboard Cover Page	One page overview of agreed key reporting management information.
R2	Budget Management Record	Monitor and adaptive management of project finances, including the total awarded, any matched funding, quarterly breakdown of budgets, spend to date and claims submitted. All payments are fully accounted for including date, Delivery Partner, Project title, country, and any prepayments or accruals.
R3	Project Monitoring Record – Delivery Partner reports	Tracking the Delivery Partner reports expected, received, and overdue, chasing and securing late reports to mitigate wider impacts. Quality Assurance of the Delivery Partner Mid-Year Reviews, Annual Reviews and Final Reports.
R4	Project Monitoring – Progress & Results	Monitor and interpret performance against the agreed Fund indicators, based on formal verbal and / or written Mid-Year Reports and Annual Reviews.
R5	Project Completion	Assess the Final Reports, following completion of the project, identifying key lessons which could be applied elsewhere.
R6	Projects Risk Register	Identify, record and offer mitigation suggestions, alerting the Authority to reporting shortcomings (i.e., late or sub-standard outcomes/reports). This includes identifying potential issues that may threaten project completion such as financial risks with the Delivery Partners.
R7	Fraud & Error log	Identify, record, and offer mitigation suggestions, alerting the Authority to reporting shortcomings.
R8	Safeguarding and Gender Equality Log	Identify, record, and incentivise mitigation measures to continually improve safeguarding and gender equality processes, alerting the Authority to reporting shortcomings.
R9	Project Change Record	Audit trail of all approved changes to individual projects or the Fund.

Report ID	Report Title	Report Description
R10	Grant Administrator Performance	Grant Administrator performance against their obligations under the Contract and agreed KPIs (see Annex L)
R11	Spot Audit Report	Outcome of desk-based spot check audits
R12	Review Audit Report	Outcome of desk-based Review audits of completed projects and annually for projects with a grant value > £1m
R13	Annual Fund Review	Compilation and reporting of required documents, evidence, and outcomes in collaboration with the Authority and Independent Evaluator.

3.6.8 The Authority's Distinct Responsibilities for Reporting. The Authority will:

3.6.8.1 Regularly review and monitor MI reporting activities with BRM during scheduled meetings, to ensure progress and delivery of Fund activities are all on track.

3.6.8.2 Work with Grant Administrator and independent Evaluator to finalise and agree Annual Fund Review processes and compilation of reporting.

3.6.9 The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for managing the Financial Risks of the Fund. The Grant Administrator will:

3.6.9.1 Be responsible for all financial due diligence of Fund Applicants and Delivery Partners, including but not limited to:

3.6.9.2 Prior to Fund Agreement award to Delivery Partners, undertake and report upon full financial due diligence checks as set out in Workstream 3 and in Annex H.

3.6.9.3 Manage Delivery Partner requests to pay in advance of a specific operational or commercial need for successful delivery of a project. The Grant Administrator will be required to work closely with Delivery Partner to understand and compile evidence of advance payment needs and provide as a recommendation to the Authority for final agreement and approval.

3.6.9.4 During the life of each project to establish that the recipient of funds is financially stable and is sufficiently competent to hold and manage the scale of ODA grant provided to them as agreed with the Authority at award stage. This includes carrying out due diligence and counter fraud and risk assessment checks as required under the Grant Funding Agreement (see Annex F).

3.6.9.5 Should issues be identified during the life of each project, make mitigation recommendations to the Authority for agreement by the Authority.

3.6.9.6 Manage any payment suspension to Delivery Partners if requested and approved by the Authority.

3.6.9.7   Manage Delivery Partners understanding that they bear any (+/-) foreign exchange risk. Payments shall be made in the pre-agreed £ Sterling amount stated in the Grant Agreement and converted after transfer by the Delivery Partner.

3.6.9.8   The Grant Administrator shall determine and obtain suitable insurance to cover their responsibility for risk. This shall not exceed £5million or 150% of the total yearly charges, whichever is greater.

3.6.9.9   Ensure that all Delivery Partners fulfil auditing and assurance obligations on time and to the quality required by the Grant Funding Agreement, to confirm that the funds provided were spent on a basis consistent with project objectives and no funds were spent on ineligible expenditure.

3.6.9.10   Due to the nature of this new Fund, the Grant Administrator shall carry out desk-based spot audits on 10% of the live projects and in person site visits for 5% of live projects per annum of the Contract. Spot audits will involve a review of project spend against forecasted budget, project delivery against Fund Outcomes, review of any potential risks and where improvements can be made for the project, Delivery Partners, the Fund or Authority. The Grant Administrator will summarise and report findings and recommendations in the Spot Audit Report to the Authority on an annual basis.

3.6.9.11   Carry out desk-based Review Audits on completion of all small projects (under £0.25m) and annually for large projects (Over £1.0m). These involve a check that the reports reflect the Fund outcomes of the project, as well as an assessment of whether the report holds any apparent risks either to the Fund, or to the Authority. These might be around their apparent suitability for publication on the Fund Website, or whether they appear to have achieved their objectives or not. In cases of doubt, reference will always be made to the Authority.

3.6.9.12   Any instances of incorrect project claims, or of projects not complying with the Fund Agreement shall be flagged to the Authority within 24 hours of the Grant Administrator becoming aware that there is a problem or has reasonable grounds for believing that there might be a problem. The Grant Administrator shall not alert the Delivery Partner if fraud is suspected, and shall not remove, interfere with or attempt to amend evidence. The Authority reserves the right to independently audit the Grant Administrator if deemed necessary.

3.6.10 **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for Financial Management of the Fund. The Grant Administrator** will:

3.6.10.1   Have overall responsibility for the Fund's ODA budgets and payments to the Delivery Partners.

3.6.10.2   Comply with the Financial Conduct Authority's Handbook (noting Chapter 7 in particular) and the ICAEW Client Money Regulations at all times when handling Authority funds. More information is available at Home - FCA Handbook and Clients' Money Regulations | ICAEW respectively.

3.6.10.3 Subject to clause A3, Appendix B, Authority's Condition of Contract, the Authority authorises the Grant Administrator to act as an administrator for the limited purposes of holding, receiving and disbursing funds via an Escrow account on behalf of the Authority and will remain in full force until expiry or termination of the Contract.

3.6.10.4 Drive value for money at all levels (as defined in HMG's Green Book), making retrospective payments to Delivery Partners, developing, and managing financial forecasting and reporting on the financial aspects of projects to the Authority.

3.6.10.5 Payments to Delivery Partners shall be made in arrears. In exceptional circumstances and with the written consent of the Authority, the Grant Administrator may agree advance payment with Delivery Partners. Delivery Partners may request payment in advance on behalf of one or more of is consortium members. To qualify for payment in advance the Delivery Partners shall be not-for-profit organisations and have a clear justification to request advance payment. The Grant Administrator will provide the Authority with a breakdown of payment in advance claims on a quarterly basis. The Grant Administrator will not be required to pre-finance payments; the Authority will issue pre-financing payments to the Grant Administrator.

3.6.10.6 Making accurate and timely payments to Delivery Partners for all projects in line with agreed monitoring and payment processes. **Figure *2*** below stipulates the required timelines for the disbursement of Grant Funding.

Figure 2 Process for the Disbursement of the Competitive Fund

Step 1: 5 working days after the end of each fiscal quarter

Delivery Partners submit claims for Funding to the Grant Administrator

Step 2: 15 working days after the end of each fiscal quarter

The Grant Administrator reviews the claims received submits claims for all Delivery Partners to the Authority

Step 3: 20 working days after the end of each fiscal quarter

The Authority reviews the Assurance Statement and approves or rejects claims.

Step 4: 25-30 working days after the end of each quarter (financial year)

The Authority issues funding to the Grant Administrator's client account.

Step 5: 30-35 working days after the end of each fiscal quarter

The Grant Administrator disburses funds to Delivery Partners.

Step 6: 35-40 days working days after the end of each fiscal quarter. (by exception the Authority may agree to longer period)

Delivery Partners disburse funds to their consortium members (if applicable).

3.6.10.7   For the avoidance of doubt the payment schedule for each project will be set out in the associated Grant Funding Agreement by the Grant Administrator.

3.6.10.8   Each Delivery Partner can only submit a single claim in the quarter, for total value of work to be delivered in that quarter. The Delivery Partner is responsible for disbursing funds to downstream Partners, where needed, ensuring that all payments are made according to the Terms and Conditions of the Grant Funding Agreement. For the avoidance of doubt quarters are:

Table 10 Financial Year Quarters

Quarter	Dates
1	1 April to 30 June

Quarter	Dates
2	1 July to 30 September
3	1 October to 31 December
4	1 January to 31 March

3.6.11 Payment processing will initially be conducted on a weekly basis: the Authority reserves the right to adjust the payment processing frequency to fortnightly or monthly which may require additional adjustments to the payment process.

3.6.12 The Grant Administrator will submit to the Authority in advance (in £ Sterling value), on a quarterly basis, the validated and error free project claims. The Claim Submission will:

3.6.12.1   Provide all necessary detail required by the Authority to provide assurance that each project claim is error free and has been checked by the Grant Administrator against agreed budgets, Change Requests, suspensions, and previous claims, and is accompanied by evidence to confirm this, including the validated and error free grant claim forms (scanned and sent by email).

3.6.12.2   Be accompanied by a signed declaration from the Grant Administrator BRM.

3.6.13 The Grant Administrator will resolve any unapproved Claims and resubmit for approval.

3.6.14 The Grant Administrator is responsible for adjusting each total claim for any outstanding balance resulting from any underpayments and overpayments made to Delivery Partners. Any outstanding unpaid funds will be returned to the Authority at the end of each financial year. The Authority reserves the right to request repayment of outstanding funds unpaid to projects at any other time.

3.6.15 Disburse approved claims to Delivery Partners within five working days of receiving the funding from the Authority.

3.6.16 Provide evidence that all payments have been made to the Authority and that all money has been paid to the correct Delivery Partners by way of a copy of the bank statement from the Grant Administrator.

3.6.17 Be responsible for resolving any incorrectly executed payments to Delivery Partners. If the error results in receipt of fewer funds than the Delivery Partners were entitled, the Grant Administrator will be solely responsible to credit the Delivery Partners' account for the difference within 10 working days after identification of the error.

3.6.18 If any incorrectly executed payments results in receipt of more funds than the Delivery Partners were entitled, the Grant Administrator will recover the payment from the Delivery Partners under the Fund Agreement. If the Grant Administrator fails to recover such overpayment from the relevant Delivery Partner, then it will be responsible for reimbursing the relevant amount to the Authority.

3.6.19 Undertake risk-based spot audits quarterly in the first year of the Contract and then at least once annually in subsequent years of the Contract. The spot checks shall review that payments to projects are free of error - actually incurred in period, spent for the purposes of the project, arithmetically correct and are eligible.

3.6.20 **The Authority's Distinct Responsibilities for Financial Management of the Fund**. The Authority will:

3.6.21 Review the Claim Submission and notify the Grant Administrator of approved and unapproved claims.

3.6.22 Issue payment to the Grant Administrator in a timely manner after the breakdown of claims is received and the Authority is satisfied.

3.6.23 Consider advance payment requests and provide approval where it is established there is a well-evidenced case.

3.7. Workstream 7: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

Continuous development and improvement of the Fund, Applicant and Delivery Partner experience is fundamental to delivery. Evidence will be gathered to run robust analyses of the management and administration of funds, calls for Application Processes, Expert Committee evaluation, successful delivery of projects and project outcomes, and stakeholder feedback throughout the life of the Contract. Regular Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) will support improvements in Fund design and delivery and support innovation by Applicants and Delivery Partners.

An external evaluation must be undertaken independently from the Authority and Grant Administrator.   An Independent Evaluator will be appointed for this purpose under a separate procurement exercise.

3.7.1   The Authority will provide a Memorandum of Agreement ("**MoA**") that will govern the relationship and form an agreement of roles and responsibilities between the Authority, the Grant Administrator, and the Independent Evaluator.

3.7.2   The MoA will set out how the Grant Administrator and Independent Evaluator will work collaboratively to achieve the objectives of the MEL workstream. The Grant Administrator will be required to develop a robust framework for communication and reporting between the Independent Evaluator, Authority, and Delivery Partners.

3.7.3   The Grant Administrator will review and agree the MoA following award of this Contract and the award of the Independent Evaluator contract. Failure to enter into the MoA will constitute a material breach of the Contract.

3.7.4   **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for MEL** The Grant Administrator will:

3.7.4.1   Monitor, track and record data on the management, administration, and operational activities of the Fund against specific Grant Administrator KPIs detailed in Annex L. These will form the management information that informs the evaluation conducted by the Independent Evaluator.

3.7.4.2   Applicants will be required to develop project level MEL indicators and log frames as part of Fund Applications. Developing project MEL indicators and log frames will likely be a challenge for target Applicants from small local organisations that may never have been through MEL processes before. The Grant Administrator will be required to provide additional detailed guidance, support and advice to Applicants where needed (**see Workstream 2**).

3.7.4.3   Provision of project level adaptive support on MEL to Applicants and Delivery Partners through 1-2-1 guidance, themed workshops, Q&A advisory sessions, and knowledge sharing events, to be agreed and approved by the Authority.

3.7.4.4   Decisions on which data will be collected at the Fund and project level in addition to minimum requirements set out in this Specification will be made by the Authority and the

Independent Evaluator. Adjustments to the management and administration of the Fund will be decided by the Authority in agreement with the Grant Administrator.

3.7.4.5   All data collected by the Grant Administrator should be captured, stored and shared in a way that enables easy extraction and generation of evidence for MEL and Independent Evaluator requirements and reporting.

3.7.4.6   As part of the MoA, Fund data analysed by the Independent Evaluator will be submitted to the Grant Administrator to be uploaded onto the Secure Fund Database. The Grant Administrator and the Independent Evaluator shall work together to ensure that data from the projects can be easily presented and used to facilitate learning and continuous improvement and adaptability of the Fund.

3.7.4.7   For successful Applicants the collection of project level monitoring data will be the responsibility of the Delivery Partner. The Grant Administrator will be required to work closely with the Delivery Partner to ensure this responsibility is feasible, and that appropriate support is provided and reflected in the Grant Funding Agreements.

3.7.4.8   Within each project the Grant Administrator will be responsible for as a minimum:

3.7.4.8.1 Ensuring that all project monitoring data collected by Delivery Partners is uploaded onto the Grant Administrator's Secure Fund Database, providing necessary support and guidance where needed to Delivery Partners.

3.7.4.8.2 Ensuring that all project monitoring data is collected in line with the requirements of the International Development Assistance Act 2015.

3.7.4.8.3 Provide ongoing training and support (e.g., technical support, guidance and 1-2-1 advice where needed) to Delivery Partners on monitoring, collection and submission of data.

3.7.4.8.4 Where possible ensure all Delivery Partner data collected is standardised, complete, and reviewed for any errors prior to uploading onto the Secure Fund Database.

3.7.4.8.5 Ensure Delivery Partner data collected is aggregated and of sufficient quality to enable the Independent Evaluator's evaluation.

3.7.4.8.6 Review each project's Log frame and KPIs progress against activities, outputs and outcomes with Delivery Partners every 6 months.

3.7.4.8.7 Assessment and review of project activities, outputs, outcomes and KPIs shall be submitted as part of adaptive agreed reporting processes between the Grant Administrator and Delivery Partner in the Fund Agreement, to the Authority.

3.7.4.8.8 Compile and summarise Delivery Partner data and inputs for individual project and Fund annual review as required within the MoA for the Authority and Independent Evaluator.

3.7.4.8.9 Should a Delivery Partner be under performing against the agreed milestones set out in their Grant Funding Agreement, the Grant Administrator should, if appropriate, enact a Delivery Partner Remedial Action Plan which will need to be agreed with the Authority.

3.7.5 **Distinct Responsibilities of the Grant Administrator for Building and Applying Evidence to enable continuous improvement of projects**. The Grant Administrator will:

3.7.5.1   Apply changes to the operation of the Fund resulting from formal recommendations that have been approved by the Authority. These changes may happen at any time but are most likely to occur following formal review points (Annual Reviews, interim evaluation, etc.).

3.7.5.2   Combine, assess, and make recommendations on eligible Project Change Requests to the Authority, with consideration given to any country specific occurrences and ways in which the Fund can be adapted. These will likely cover technical elements of a project, including changes in activities, project staffing, or reallocations of project budgets in line with the Grant Funding Agreement. The Grant Administrator may be provided with the delegated authority to approve Change Requests below an agreed threshold. For audit purposes, all supporting evidence and decisions associated with Project Change Requests, including the outcome, will be required to be recorded and maintained.

3.7.5.3   Build in capacity and capability for a robust framework of communication and reporting with the Independent Evaluator.

3.7.5.4   Provide access to the Secure Fund Database for the Independent Evaluator.

3.7.5.5   The Grant Administrator will be required to explore provision of setting up a Learning and Network platform, ahead of the commencement of the first Annual Application Round, as part of the Website (**See Workstreams 1, 2 & 8**) to optimise networking between Applicants and Delivery Partners regionally, in-country and more widely across different ODA countries to share lessons learnt and best practice.

3.7.5.6   The Authority will approve uploads to the Fund Website on a quarterly basis. Activities relating to uploads of the Fund Website will be incorporated into the Communications and Promotion Plan (**see Workstream 8**) and include but are not limited to:

3.7.5.6.1 Uploading the Fund and project level reports (redacted as agreed by the Authority).
3.7.5.6.2 Uploading, on behalf of the Independent Evaluators, relevant evaluation reports. Evaluation Reports shall be redacted. The Authority shall approve the scope of redaction and final redacted version of the evaluation reports prior to publication.
3.7.5.6.3 Developing and uploading relevant reports, press releases, photos, videos, or blog posts that will facilitate learning across OCEAN and for the wider stakeholder community.
3.7.5.6.4 Ensure any relevant reports will be translated into the official languages of the relevant countries.

3.7.6 **The Authority's Distinct Responsibilities for Building and Applying Evidence**. The Authority will:

3.7.6.1   Review MEL Recommendations and provide approval to proceed with any changes or amendments to the management and administration of the Fund.

3.7.6.2   Review assessment and recommendations on Project Change Requests for Authority approval and agree delegated Authority to the Grant Administrator for approval of Change Requests below an agreed threshold.

3.7.6.3   Appoint a supplier to undertake an independent evaluation of the Fund. The Authority reserves the right to select a supplier with no relationship to the Grant Administrator.

3.7.6.4   Review independent MEL recommendations and instruct the Grant Administrator to make approved changes or amendments to the management and administration of the Fund.

3.7.6.5   Review and approve uploads to the Fund Website on a quarterly basis, dates to be agreed with the Grant Administrator.

3.8. Workstream 8: Communication

3.8.1. For the Fund to have widely successful outreach across ODA eligible countries, The Grant Administrator will need to Design, Develop and Implement a comprehensive Fund Communications and Promotion Plan, that will be continuously renewed and updated throughout the Contract Term. The Fund Communications and Promotion Plan will require a diverse range of activities to generate interest and optimise quality outcomes of the Fund, from innovative press and media activities to translation of communications into Portuguese, Spanish and French to increase inclusivity, greater awareness, collaboration, and networking of Authority, FCDO officials, CSOs, NGOs, Applicants, Delivery Partners, and any other interested party.

3.8.2. The Communications and Promotion Plan will need to interlink and feed into communications plan developed for the wider Blue Planet Fund portfolio of programmes, and all branding and promotion that is developed for OCEAN must clearly reflect that the programme is core component under the Blue Planet Fund.

3.8.3. The Grant Administrator will be responsible for the continuous Design and Development and of the Fund Communications and Promotion Plan and will need to work closely with the Authority on developing all aspects for final agreement and approval ahead of Implementation.

3.8.3 The Grant Administrator will be required to include (but not be limited to) the production and delivery of communication and promotion resources listed in Table 12. These resources will be required to be easily accessible, coherent, and inclusive to all (e.g., translated into Portuguese, Spanish and French) for the generation of outreach and awareness by the Authority, FCDO, CSOs, NGOs, Applicants, Delivery Partners, and any other interested party as part of the Fund Communication and Promotion across the majority of ODA eligible countries, excluding those not applicable for each given funding round due to current political sensitivities that may exist in those countries.

Table 11 Minimum requirements of the Grant Administrator to incorporate into the Fund Communication and Promotion Plan.

Item	Title	Description/aim	Target Audience
C1.	Development of the Core Fund Message	Create and maintain (with written approval of content by the Authority) a core brief as part of the Communication and Promotion Plan that can be used to provide consistent messaging of the Fund.	Public, Press, Authority, FCDO, CSO's, NGO's, Applicants, Delivery Partners, and any other interested party.
C2.	Mapping of Fund Stakeholder Network & Outreach	Continuous engagement and outreach with Authority, FCDO, CSOs, NGOs, Applicants, Delivery Partners, and any other interested party to establish, develop and geographically map a network of key stakeholders of the Fund. Secure list of stakeholders to be created for inclusion and	Grant Administrator, Authority and FCDO for official sensitive use only (in line with GDPR and Information Security measures)

Item	Title	Description/aim	Target Audience
		awareness in all Fund communications and promotional activities.	
C3.	Creation of a public facing Fund Website	Design, Development, hosting and maintenance of a public facing Fund website (with all content approved by the Authority) which will link to .GOV Defra BPF web page (under development). The site will include background information, articles and updates of the Fund, as well as support information for Applicants and Delivery Partners (as detailed in **Workstreams 1, 2, 3 and 7**). The Website will house the Online Application Portal (as detailed in Workstreams 1 & 3) that will handle the secured application process, project data and reporting for delivery partners. The Online Application Portal must adhere to Government Security Policy (see section 3.5.4 above) and the Authority's Communications Framework (see Annex J)	Public, Potential Applicants, new and existing delivery partners, review specialists (e.g. ICAI and IATI)
C4.	Creation of Fund Media Packs	Containing promotional material, guidance & frequently asked Q&A documents (all content approved by the Authority) to be sent out securely to the stakeholder network and outreach list (see C2).	Public, Press, Authority, FCDO, CSO's, NGO's, Applicants, Delivery Partners, and any other interested party.
C5.	Fund Learning & Network Platform easily accessible on Website	Provision of a dedicated Fund Learning and Networking platform to link up Applicant & Delivery Partner project Networks through a secure communication hub– with the aim of helping to build regional and cross-country network links between organisations, Applicants, and Delivery Partners. The hub will allow stakeholders to share queries, support, experiences, or requests for collaborations with other individuals to help forge themed consortiums and build cross country networks for the Fund.	Grant Administrator, Authority, FCDO, Applicants & Delivery Partners
C6.	Social Media Creation and Maintenance	Establishing and maintaining dedicated accounts, content and responses on key social media sites (with written approval of content by the Authority), to include; Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. These should feature regular engaging posts and updated, during normal periods, ramping up to more regular posts at key points in the Funds timeline, such as the build up to Application Rounds being open.	Public facing
C7.	Creation of Image Library	Library of agreed images (with copyright) access for use by Authority and Delivery Partner for Fund	N/A

Item	Title	Description/aim	Target Audience
		related communications. Minimum 250 high quality images per annum.	
C8.	Creation of Promotional Material for use at large events	Regular promotional opportunities will also include Intergovernmental meetings (e.g. COP28 and CBD) and annual global events (e.g. Earth Day). Video content, presentations & event stand material. The Grant Administrator will be expected to develop these materials for written approval by the Authority and support with the promotion of the fund at these events. This may involve attending in person in some cases.	Public facing
C9.	Newsletter	Bi-monthly E-newsletter for updates on progress of the Fund (with written approval of content by the Authority)	Stakeholder Network & outreach list (see C2)
C10.	In country Messaging to Government	A core brief as part of the Communication and Promotion Plan that can be used to provide consistent messages in several languages on the Fund (with a minimum translation of core content on the Fund into Portuguese, Spanish & French)	Other Country Governments & British Diplomatic representatives

3.8.4 **The Grant Administrator's Distinct Responsibilities for Communication and Promotion of the Fund.** *The Grant Administrator will:*

3.8.4.1 Design, develop and lead upon a comprehensive Fund Communications and Promotion Plan (to include minimum requirements outlined in **Table 11**), in co-ordination with and agreed by the Authority, prior to any communications and / or content are publicly released.

3.8.4.2 Regularly update Authority on communications and alert Authority to any issues or concerns within 24hrs.

3.8.4.3 Ensure that Delivery Partners:

3.8.4.3.1 comply with requirements of the Branding Manual in Annex F in relation to their funded activities; and

3.8.4.3.2 cease use of the Funded by UK Government logo on demand if directed to do so by the Authority.

3.8.5 **The Authority's Distinct Responsibilities for Communication and Promotion of the Fund.** *The Authority will*:

3.8.5.1 Provide clear guidance on the content, Authority processes and written approvals required for all public facing communications and promotion of the Fund.

3.8.5.2 The Authority Contract Manager will provide Grant Administrator with direct point of contact for all Authority public communications led sign off and written approvals.

4 Additional or Supplementary Grant Administrator Activities

4.1 **Supplementary Activities** are additional activities that the Grant Administrator shall provide in connection with the management and administration of the Fund.

4.2 The Authority envisages that there will be a requirement on the Grant Administrator to establish Additional or Supplementary Activities due to the creation and development of this new Fund. As the Fund is designed and developed, emerging or newly identified needs and priorities, including in response to adaptive programming will need to be considered. As such, the scope of Additional and Supplementary Activities cannot be accurately predicted at Contract inception.

4.3 Additional and Supplementary Activities are likely to span a wide range of interventions and durations, including but limited to:

4.3.1 Delivering an intervention as a result of work under Workstreams 1-8; and/or

4.3.2 Providing Technical Assistance under the areas of expertise defined in the Bidder Pack and Pricing Workbook.

4.4 Should the Grant Administrator need to procure Services to deliver Additional or Supplementary Activities, the Grant Administrator will be responsible for ensuring any organisation is managed as a sub-contractor.

4.5 A set process for instructing the Grant Administrator to provide Additional or Supplementary Activities is set out in **Table 12** below.

Table 12 Process of Instructing the Grant Administrator to Provide Supplementary Activities

Step	The Grant Administrator's Responsibility	The Authority's Responsibility
Step 1: Request for Proposal	N/A	A written request from the Authority's Contract Manager is made to the Grant Administrator for Supplementary Activities.
Step 2: Submission of Supplementary Activities Proposal	The Grant Administrator will make a written proposal to the Authority describing the scope and cost of the Supplementary Activities.	N/A
Step 3: Review of Proposal	Respond to any clarification questions from the Authority.	The Authority will review the Grant Administrator's proposal & may elect to raise clarification questions to the Grant Administrator.
Step 4: Acceptance or Rejection of the Supplementary Activities Proposal	N/A	The Authority's Contract Manager will write to the Grant Administrator to either accept or reject the Grant Administrators proposal.

4.5.1 For the avoidance of doubt, the Grant Administrator is responsible for bearing their own costs in providing a Supplementary Activities Proposal to the Authority.

4.5.2　In the event the Authority rejects the Grant Administrator's Supplementary Activities Proposal the Authority will not reimburse the Grant Administrator for their cost in submitting a Supplementary Activities Proposal and may, at the Authority's sole discretion, source another provider to deliver the required Supplementary Activities.

4.5.3　In the event the Authority does elect to source another provider to deliver Supplementary Activities, the Grant Administrator will provide any material necessary to any provider the Authority elects to appoint for the delivery of Supplementary Activities.

5　Continuous Improvement of Grant Administrator Contracted Services

5.1　During the term of the Contract, the Grant Administrator shall look to develop, maintain, and improve efficiency, quality and, where possible, provide a reduction in charges to enhance the overall delivery of the awarded Contract.

5.2　The Grant Administrator shall have an ongoing obligation throughout the Term of Contract to identify new and potential improvements to Contracted Services of the Fund which shall include, but are not limited to:

5.2.1　New and evolving relevant technologies which could improve the Application of the Fund (e.g. advancement of Online Application Portal, Website, Databases, MI reporting, and Repository tools and templates).

5.2.2　New or potential improvements which enhances the responsiveness, procedures, and outreach of the Help Desk Support Function (e.g., increased networking with in-country posts and local organisations, Grant Administrator staff development and training).

5.2.3　New or potential improvements which enhance global communication, promotion and improve awareness and understanding of the Fund at the international, in-country, regional and local community level.

5.2.4　Help build and strengthen inclusive partnerships and consortiums of Delivery Partners, to create projects that deliver local solutions to global challenges.

5.2.5　Support capacity-building for small organisations in areas such as; applying for Aid grants; forecasting and budgeting; log-frame.

5.3　The Authority shall share with the Grant Administrator 5% of any annual savings resulting from implemented changes proposed by the Grant Administrator as outlined above. This will be administered by formally varying the contract to reflect the reduction in costs, minus the agreed percentage saving to be retained by the Grant Administrator. For example, if a proposed change is implemented and results in an annual cost reduction of £50,000, the Contract will be varied to reduce the fixed cost element of the contract by £47,500. For cost reductions occurring in-year, the annual cost will be reduced on a prorate basis.

5.3.1　The Authority may re-invest any savings recouped back into the scheme via Supplementary Activities (see section 4 above).

6 Exit Requirements

6.19 (NINE) months before the end of this Contract, the Grant Administrator will provide a High-level Exit Plan that outlines the guiding principles through which this Contract's exit procedures will operate, including but not limited to:

6.1.1 Removal of property and equipment

6.1.2 Asset transfer

6.1.3 Data and knowledge transfer

6.1.4 Personnel arrangements (including updated TUPE information)

6.1.5 Organisational transfer

6.1.6 Operational transition

6.1.7 Business Continuity

6.1.8 Exit governance and risk management

6.26 (SIX) months before the end of this Contract or upon Termination of the Contract, the Grant Administrator will:

6.2.1 Review and sign-off of the final narrative, providing inputs as requested to the Authority's Project Completion Report and provide a Final Exit Plan to the Authority which shall include plans to:

6.2.1.1 Deliver to the Authority prior to the Contract End Date all finished work which relate to the Contract;

6.2.1.2 Provide a summary of the status and next steps in relation to any on-going projects or other material and unfinished activities being conducted or monitored;

6.2.1.3 Return all confidential information and any other data to the Authority before the Contract End Date in a format requested by the Authority.

6.2.1.4 Provide a summary document detailing all Fund reports and communication materials, including links to relevant online platforms and contact information.

6.2.1.5 Provide a lesson-learnt briefing focused on the challenges faced and opportunities generated in managing such a large complex programme.

6.2.1.6 Provide an overview of how the Grant Administrator has ensured the Fund has been committed to sustainability and doing no harm. This should compliment and align with the Authority's Strategy for International Development outlined within Annex M.

6.2.1.7   Consider if any Grants Agreements require extension. The Authority only envisages extension of Grant Agreements which have been delayed due to unexpected and unavoidable circumstances.

6.2.1.8   Publish any monitoring data as directed by the Authority.

6.3 Once approved in writing by the Authority, the Grant Administrator will operationalise its Final Exit Plan.

6.4 The Grant Administrator shall allow for a minimum period of 90 (NINETY) days, or longer if required, after the contract end date (or termination date) for the exit process to be properly implemented.

7   Losses from Fraud, Error and Corruption

7.1 The Grant Administrator will be responsible to bear the cost of any Fraud, Error or Corruption Loss in cases where the Grant Administrator has failed to adhere to any process and policies set out in this Contract, including HMG policies and procedures.

7.2 In cases where the Grant Administrator has fully complied with all HMG policies, the Authority will meet the cost of any unrecoverable loss arising from the loss event.

7.3 The above two clauses include managing financial, operational, delivery, safeguarding and reputational risks on behalf of the Authority.

8   Intellectual Property Rights

8.1 Any Intellectual Property generated as part of this Contract shall belong to the Authority.

9   Expenses, Travel and Subsistence

9.1 Expenses incurred by the Grant Administrator, or their appointed agents, consortium partners or sub-contractors, shall be budgeted for within the Grant Administrator's fixed rate fee.

9.2 All Travel and Subsistence should be in line with the Authority's Travel and Subsistence Policy (see Annex I), should strike an appropriate balance between the costs and the benefits, taking into account cost, convenience, carbon emissions and care of staff.

9.3 If possible, travel should be avoided, using a more sustainable and cost-effective means of achieving the business objective such as telephone or web conferencing.

9.4 Claims should always be supported by valid receipts for audit purposes and shall not exceed any of the stated rates below. Should the stated rated be exceeded, the Authority reserve the right to reimburse only up to the stated rate.

Annex A.   Blue Planet Fund Programme Key Performance Indicators

Blue Planet Fund Indicative Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

	Blue Plant Fund Indicative Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
1	Volume of finance mobilised for purposes which match BPF objectives.
2.1	Number of people, as a result of BPF finance, with improved outcomes: i) income
2.2	Number of people, as a result of BPF finance, with improved outcomes: ii) ability to cope with the effects of climate change
2.3	Number of people, as a result of BPF finance, with improved outcomes: iii) climate resilience
2.4	Number of people, as a result of BPF finance, with improved outcomes: iv) food security and nutrition
2.5	Number of people, as a result of BPF finance, with improved outcomes: v) waste management.
3	Number of projects or planning and/or governance processes with increased inclusion of local people and knowledge in decision making to improve the marine environment
4	Number of marine-related evidence, knowledge dissemination and education activities or products developed as a result of BPF finance.
6	Degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognizes and protects access rights for marine users.
7	Net change in greenhouse gas emissions– tonnes of GHG emissions reduced or avoided as a result of BPF finance.
8	Area of marine ecosystems protected, enhanced or under sustainable management practices as a result of BPF projects.
9	Changes in marine natural capital asset extent and condition as a result of BPF funding.
10	Amount of waste averted from entering the marine environment and losses avoided in marine-related value chains as a result of BPF intervention.

Annex B.   Blue Planet Fund Theory of Change

OCEAN Theory of Change

Long-term impact	Placing the ocean on a path to recovery that enables local communities and nature to thrive	Defined by the competitive fund team
Medium-term impact	Local and/or civil society organisations are better supported to help local communities sustainably, effectively and inclusively manage marine resources	

Strategic Outcomes

❶ Communities have increased willingness, capacity and access to ODA so that they are able to establish and sustainably, effectively and inclusively implement and manage marine protected areas and other effective conservation measures

❷ IUU fishing activities are more effectively monitored, prevented and prohibited with the communities previously dependent on these practices supported through alternative, stable, sustainable livelihoods

❸ Management of regional and national fisheries and aquaculture is strengthened to deliver sustainable fish stocks and healthy marine ecosystems, provide inclusive livelihoods, and reduce overfishing.

❹ Communities have increased capacity to manage marine pollution, targeting pathways from land to sea to prevent it entering the marine environment

Set by Defra; led by and adapted from the BPF outcomes

Medium Term Outcomes

- Effective civil society organisations
- Marine ecosystem services better valued, protected and used
- Household incomes more sustainable and improved
- More sustainable and inclusive ocean economies
- Improved food security and nutrition amongst the poorest
- Improved waste management systems and infrastructure

Outputs

- MPAs established and better managed and enforced
- Improved policies, plans, regulations and management
- Improved knowledge, and awareness of marine environment
- Increased access to alternative / sustainable livelihoods
- Targeted communities have increased capacity to manage fishing practices and stocks
- Infrastructure improved, circular economy developed
- Quality of data and monitoring improved
- Increased finance mobilised towards sustainable ocean economy
- Community voices strengthened
- Empowerment of women and other marginalised groups

These will be to be determined by applications where we will expect them to lay out, and show evidence for the causal chains between the activities and the strategic outcomes that we set

Activities

Ⓐ Coastal planning
Ⓑ Monitoring and data collection
Ⓒ Enforcement improvements
Ⓓ Legal support
Ⓔ Subsidy reform
Ⓕ Development of innovative finance mechanisms
Ⓖ Research and Innovation
Ⓗ PES and other livelihood pilots
Ⓘ Knowledge sharing and education

Based on success pathways

Inputs

Combination of Defra RDEL and CDEL provided through small scale grants (<£250k) that target applications solely from or directly led by low capacity, locally based organisations.

Combination of Defra RDEL and CDEL provided through larger scale grants (<£3m) to support more established, higher capacity organisations that collaborate with locally based partner(s).

Expert support provided from Defra's policy teams, including from ALBs to build capacity in delivery partners and recipient governments in support of delivery across all projects

Annex C.   ODA Definition

C5174_Annex_C_OD
A_Definition_O.pdf

Also included as a separate document for reference.

Annex D.   ODA Guidance and Eligible Countries


C5174_Annex_D_O
DA_Eligibility_O.pdf

Also included as a separate document for reference.

Annex E.   BPF Management Structure and Governance

Roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities

Overall responsibility lies with the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO).

On a day-to-day basis, the programme will be led by Defra's designated BPF project team for the competitive fund, with many operational tasks being contracted to a professional Grant Administrator (detail below).
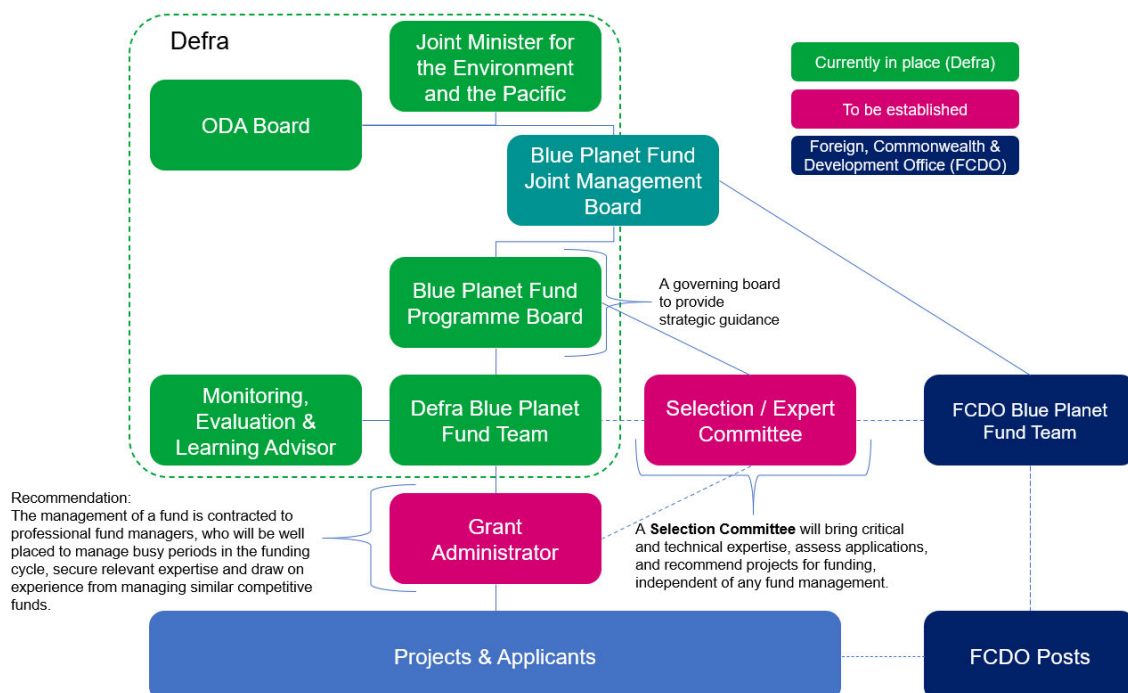
Roles of key stakeholder groups

HMG

Defra BPF team: The team will lead the day-to-day delivery of the fund. They will oversee procurement exercises, manage the contracts with the Grant Administrator and independent

evaluator, deliver oversight of the programme, and oversee programme-level financial and risk management, including safeguarding. The Defra BPF team have weekly meetings, in addition to more specific additional meetings and catch-ups. They will report into the Defra BPF programme board (every six weeks) and the Joint Management Board (JMB).

BPF regional advisors: Five regional advisors will be recruited under the BPF. The regional advisors will be based globally, spanning a diverse range of geographies, including Fiji (Pacific), Vietnam (South-East Asia), Ghana (West Africa), Ecuador (Latin America), and Mozambique (East Africa). Regional advisors will develop extensive networks in their regions, advise on organisations suitable for the fund, support in the due diligence process, and support grantees in project and programme delivery (where appropriate).

BPF Programme Board: The Defra project lead will be required to report at least once every two months to the BPF Programme Board, which has oversight at working level of all BPF investments. The programme lead will update the BPF Joint (Defra-FCDO) Management Board and other internal boards (e.g., Marine & Fisheries programme board) if/when required.

Joint Management Board (JMB): the JMB provides strategic oversight of the BPF and is comprised of both Defra and FCDO members. The JMB ensures the BPF delivers on its aims and aligns with wider HMG objectives. At the business case stage, all BPF investments by Defra and FCDO will be reviewed by the JMB against the BPF ToC and Investment Criteria. The JMB does not have decision making powers.

ODA Board: The role of an ODA board is to provide accountability and assurance for Defra's ODA budget and to provide strategic direction for Defra's ODA spend. The ODA board meets quarterly and consists of senior civil servants from FCDO and Defra.

Investment Committee: Investment Committee is a sub-committee of Defra's Executive Committee. With responsibility for approving Tier 1 and 2 project business cases it focuses on affordability, capacity, deliverability, strategic alignment and interdependencies.

FCDO BPF team: Defra and FCDO work closely together at working level. FCDO are regularly updated, and the teams provides essential feedback on Defra's programming.

FCDO Heads of Mission (HoM): HoM will be engaged and kept informed of the fund's activities within their countries. Defra will also seek regular advice on strategic, political and security issues for the duration of the fund.

External to HMG

Grant Administrator: The Grant Administrator will be responsible for the administrative remit of the competitive fund, including management of the application process, conducting due diligence on potential delivery partners, supporting the selection/expert committee, on-going day-to-day liaison with, and management of, delivery partners, establishing a communication plan for the fund and supporting project-level monitoring and evaluation, including annual reporting. The Grant Administrator will report directly to the Defra BPF team. The Grant Administrator will **not** be involved in the selection of projects, beyond high level filtering and due diligence checks. Assessment of bids will be undertaken independently by the selection/expert committee (below).

Delivery partners: Projects will be delivered by a wide range of organisations, including universities, research institutions, CSOs and NGOs. Delivery partners will be responsible for the design and delivery of projects as set out in the specific grant agreements for their projects, including but not limited, to fiduciary, legal, reporting safeguarding aspects and project stakeholder management. They will be managed by the Grant Administrator.

Independent learning and evaluation contractor: The independent learning and evaluation contractor will be brought in at regular intervals over the course of the project. This will ensure separation between those delivering projects and the fund, and those evaluating the performance and compliance of the fund. They will be responsible for performing analysis, assessing project reporting, including project final reports, and making recommendations for improving MEL across the portfolio. They will work closely both with the Grant Administrator to gather data on projects, as well as with the BPF and ODA teams' MEL experts.

Expert (selection) Committee: The independent selection / expert committee will be responsible for reviewing applications and making robust recommendations to Defra on which projects to fund. The committee will assess applications against a framework to determine which prospective projects are likely to have the largest impact on the BPF objectives. The committee will also use its expert knowledge to determine whether delivery partners are capable of delivering a project that they have proposed, and this will be part of the assessment framework. We are committed to forming a committee that is diverse and that represents different sectors and groups, and we will revisit the approach and members regularly to ensure this.

The expert committee will report to the BPF team and the BPF Programme Board will have oversight over the committee. The committee will be supported administratively by the Grant Administrator.

Annex F.   HMG Grant Functional Standards and Authority standard requirements

HMG Grant Functional Standards.

HMG Grant
Functional Standard

Authority standard Grant Funding Agreement and drafting guidance.

Authority Grant
Funding Agreement

Authority Branding Manual

C5174_Annex_F3_Br
anding_Manual_O.p

Also included as separate documents for reference.

Annex G. Safeguarding within the Aid Sector.

PDF C5174_Annex_F_Saf eguarding_O

Also included as a separate document for reference.

Annex H. Due Diligence Assessments – Delivery Partner Reviews

PDF C5174_Annex_H1_D ueDil_O.pdf

PDF C5174_Annex_H2_D ueDilChecklist_O.pd

Also included as separate documents for reference.

Annex I. Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)

PDF C5174_Annex_I_MO A_OCEANGA_O.pdf

Also included as a separate document for reference.

Annex J. Defra Communications Framework

PDF C5174_Annex_J_Co mmsFramework_O.p

Also included as a separate document for reference.

Annex K. Defra Expenses Policy

PDF C5174_Annex_K_Exp enses_O.pdf

Also included as a separate document for reference.

Annex L. Performance Management Framework (PMF)

1. Overview of the Performance Management Framework

1.1. As part of the Authority's continuous drive to improve the performance of all Grant Administrators, this Performance Management Framework (PMF) will be used to monitor,

measure, and control all aspects of the Grant Administrator's performance of contract responsibilities.

1.2. The PMF purpose is to set out the obligations on the Grant Administrator, to outline how the Grant Administrator's performance will be evaluated and to detail the sanctions for performance failure.

2. Management of the PMF

2.1. Key Performance Indicators ("**KPIs**") shall be monitored on a regular basis and shall form part of the Quarterly Review Meeting. Performance of KPIs will be reported by the Grant Administrator and Authority quarterly and annually. Where KPIs are highlighted as 'Self-Assessed' the Grant Administrator shall produce the report and those highlighted as 'Assessed by the Authority' shall be reported on by the Authority.

2.2. The first quarter shall not be formally assessed. It shall be used to develop the quarterly report template and agree the format and content to be included in the report.

2.3. Any performance issues highlighted in these reports will be addressed by the Grant Administrator, who shall be required to provide an improvement plan ("**Remediation Plan**") to address all issues highlighted within a week of the Authority request.

2.4. As part of the Fund's Quarterly Review Meetings the Authority will review with the Grant Administrator the Grant Administrator's Performance Management reports and implementation of any Remediation Plan.

2.5. Performance failure by the Grant Administrator may result in administrative costs to the Authority[4].

2.6. The KPIs are essential in order to align Grant Administrator's performance with the requirements of the Authority and to do so in a fair and practical way. KPIs have to be realistic and achievable: they also have to be met otherwise indicating that the service is failing to deliver.

2.7. The use of a strong set of KPIs accompanied by a proactive approach to correcting failures and addressing their cause improves the relationship and enables a partnership rather than a confrontational style of working. Its focus is on managing and improving service. It is NOT about taking cost out of the service to the Authority.

2.7.1. The Authority reserves the right, on serving notice in writing on the Grant Administrator to treat any failure to meet a KPI as breach of contract in respect of such failure, in which case the Authority shall have the remedies available in accordance with the Contract in respect of such breach. A notice under this provision may be served at any time.

---

[4] Lost income to the Authority in this case is in reference to a monetised cost of the Authority's staff time taken to rectify any failures in Service delivery from the Grant Administrator.

.

2.7.2. The Authority reserves the right to amend the existing KPIs detailed or add any new KPIs. Any changes to the KPIs shall be confirmed by way of a CCN.

.

3.   **Key Performance Indicators**

6.2 If any of the deliverables are deemed not to meet the Acceptable Standard, then it will be considered 'failed'.

.

3.1.   OCEAN Grant Administrator Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Workstream 1: Core Design & Development of the Fund (KPI value 20%)

KPI 1: Fund process and tools are delivered in full and on time, enabling the successful launch of the first funding round

a. All process and tools outlined in workstream 1, and as detailed throughout the Specification of Requirements, are finalised and delivered on time and ahead of Fund launch.

Acceptable Standard: All requirements outlined in Workstream 1 and detailed throughout the Specification of Requirements are created within the initial set-up period and completed and in place by the end of the formally agreed set-up period. This allows the first funding round to launch on time, fully utilising all resources and process outlined across each workstream. The establishment of these processes and resources causes no delay to the start of the Fund.

Reporting: Regular discussions with the Authority throughout the set-up period will be used to ensure that the Grant Administrator timelines remain on track. The Grant Administrator will inform if there is a delay with the development of any process or resource that may either cause the launch date to be postponed or for a temporary solution to be put in place.

b. All forms of data relating to the Fund, including personal details relating to Delivery Partners and Applicants, are stored in a safe and secure way, and are fully backed up.

Acceptable Standard: All data collected throughout the duration of the programme is stored in a safe and secure way that is fully in in line with GDPR and Information Security measures to ensure that all data associated with the processes below is held securely and shared in accordance with clause E2, Authority's Conditions of Contract. The data is available to be provided to the Authority within 24 hours of a request being submitted to the Grant Administrator. All data is fully backed up, including through a secure off-site back-up.

Reporting: The Authority will conduct ad-hoc audit checks through requests for information and evidence of security compliance.

Workstream 2: Supporting Projects and Applications (KPI value 10%)

KPI 2: High Delivery Partner performance and strong applications are enabled by adaptive and tailored support provided by the Grant Administrator

   a. Requests from Applicants and Delivery Partners are efficiently acknowledged and actioned.

Acceptable Standard: Questions and requests are all actioned and responded to within five working days. Responses are dealt with to an acceptable quality as deemed by the Authority.

Reporting: The Grant Administrator will be required to keep a log of all queries and requests for support from Applicants and Delivery Partners. This will be reviewed by the Authority. Applicants and Delivery Partners will be asked to provide feedback on the quality of support they are receiving, which will be logged and reviewed by the Authority.

   b. The guidance for Applicants that is produced is clear and of a high quality, encouraging high quality applications from smaller organisations.

Acceptable Standard: There is growth in the number of high-quality fund applications being submitted for the smaller pot size. High quality applications are defined as applications that make it through the first Expert Committee sift for evaluation and fund approval.

Reporting: The number of high-quality small pot size applications grows. This will be measured by the Grant Administrator.

   c. The feedback provided to unsuccessful Applicants is clear and of a high quality, leading to previously unsuccessful applicants reapplying with stronger applications.

Acceptable Standard: Unsuccessful Applicants are encouraged to reapply as a result of a transparent of assessment process and the provision of detailed, constructive feedback. After the first year, there is growth in the number of previously unsuccessful organisations submitting successful applications.

Reporting: The number of successful applications from previously unsuccessful organisations grows. This will be measured by the Grant Administrator.

Workstream 3: Annual Applicant Rounds: The Fund Cycle (KPI value 20%)

KPI 3: Grant Administrator will be responsible for developing their own management and administration performance Key Performance Indicator

The KPI must be challenging, measurable and specifically relate the requirements in the specification listed as part of Workstream 3 (Annual Applicant Rounds: The Fund Cycle).

The KPI must include a definition of the Acceptable Standard as well as the way in which the Grant Administrator will report to the Authority on this.

The KPI must be agreed with the Authority before the end of the agreed Workstream 1 set-up period.

Workstream 4: The Expert Committee (KPI value 10%)

KPI 4: The Expert Committee is efficiently supported to ensure quality application evaluation and approvals

a. The sift & evaluation pack, guidance, and instructions for the Expert Committee are provided on time and are of high quality.

Acceptable Standard: The Expert Committee are provided with clear sift & evaluation documents, guidance, and instruction, requiring no substantive support to access, evaluate and return scored applications on time.

Reporting: The sift and evaluation pack.

b. The secretariat function for the Expert Committee is delivered to a high standard, including briefings, and facilitating sift meetings to allow the Expert Committee to have informed discussions and report robust recommendations to the BPF Programme Board.

Acceptable Standard: Secretariat function of the Expert Committee informs and accurately reports upon discussions and recommendations put forward on successful applications to the BPF Programme Board.

Reporting: The report of the Expert Committee evaluations, feedback, and recommendations. Expert Committee members will also be asked annually to provide a satisfaction rating based on the secretariat service provided.

Workstream 5: Day to Day Project Management (KPI value 10%)

KPI 5: Management of projects, and their finances, are delivered to a high standard

a. Funds are disbursed to Delivery Partners within the agreed timeframe.

Acceptable Standard: At least 90% of all disbursements to Delivery Partners are completed on time, with the money being issues from the escrow account to the account of the Delivery Partner within five working days of that quarter's payment date.

Reporting: The Grant Administrator will be required to keep a log of all payments made, including dates.

b. Financial forecasts accurately match the monthly expenditure needs.

Acceptable Standard: The financial forecasts are accurate and reliable, delivered on time to the Authority, with variation from initial forecast less than 10%.

Reporting: The Grant Administrator will be required to submit monthly financial forecasts to the Authority.

c. Fraud, corruption, and safeguarding issues are identified and reported.

Acceptable Standard: All fraud, corruption and safeguarding cases are formally reported to the Authority within two working days of notification to Grant Administrator by the Delivery Partner or whistle-blower. Nil response returns should be provided to the Authority where appropriate.

Reporting: The Authority will conduct ad-hoc audit checks.

Workstream 6: New and Live Projects (KPI value 10%)

KPI 6: The Fund is managed in an agile and adaptive way, responding to risks and opportunities to strengthen performance

    a. The Grant Administrator shall look to develop, maintain, and improve efficiency, quality and, where possible, provide a reduction in charges to enhance the overall delivery of the awarded Contract.

Acceptable Standard: The Grant Administrator will make regular evidence-based recommendations to the Authority on ways that the fund could be adapted to improve its performance.

Reporting: The Grant Administrator will be required to make regular improvement recommendations to the Authority.

    b. Management Information (MI) tools including, registers, trackers and automated reports, will be created and used to support adaptive management of the fund.

Acceptable Standard: MI tools are fully utilised and are updated regularly. The Grant Administrator will use these to look across projects and analyse reports and data from them, and will report this information as well as recommendations for improvements, to the Authority.

Reporting: The Grant Administrator will be required to make regular improvement recommendations to the Authority.

Workstream 7: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (KPI value 10%)

KPI 7: The performance of projects and the Fund is strengthened by adapting and responding to recommendations arising from feedback, projects and annual reviews

    a. Project reporting and annual reviews are completed and actively used to strengthen performance.

Acceptable Standard: Projects are well supported in completing and understanding the outcomes of their reporting requirements and annual reviews. The Grant Administrator actively engages and adaptively supports Delivery Partners to ensure at least 80% of the recommendations made in annual reviews are completed in the agreed timeframe.

Reporting: The project annual review tracker.

    b. Programme annual reviews are completed on time and are actively used to strengthen the performance of the Fund as a whole.

Acceptable Standard: Implementation of annual review recommendations is delivered efficiently, meeting all agreed milestones.

Reporting: The programme annual review tracker.

Workstream 8: Communications and Promotion of the Fund (KPI value 10%)

KPI 8: International awareness and understanding of the fund is strengthened, and the opportunity to apply reaches new prospective Applicants

   a. An effective communication and promotion plan is developed that raises profile of the fund and leads to an increase in high applications from a wider range of potential Delivery Partners.

Acceptable Standard: There is growth in the number of high-quality fund applications being submitted for the smaller pot size from new organisations that haven't submitted previous applications to the Fund. High quality applications are defined as applications that make it through to the Expert Committee sift for evaluation and fund approval.

   b. The Communication and Promotion Plan for next (rolling) twelve months is shared with Authority on time and is of a high quality.

Reporting: The Grant Administrator will be required to submit the latest Communication and Promotion Plan to the Authority on a monthly basis. The number of high-quality applications from new organisations will be measured by the Grant Administrator.

   c. Engagement with the programme online grows and promotional activity through online platforms reaches a global audience.

Acceptable Standard: Strong upward trend (as defined by the Authority) in website statistics and engagement with the fund on social media platforms (unique and returning visitors, time spent, downloads, country of origin, subscriptions), representing broad readership (geographic and sectoral).

Reporting: A communications dashboard will record promotional statistics.

Annex M.   HMG Strategy for International Development

C5174_Annex_M_H
MGStrategy_O.pdf

Also included as a separate document for reference.