

New Entrants Pilots – Information Document

The objective of the New Entrants Pilots is to trial learning and development ‘incubator’ support to a target group of new and recent entrants, to test the best means of building their entrepreneurial capability and creating opportunities for them to compete effectively for access to land and finance. By helping us understand more about ‘what works’ in terms of support to build entrepreneurial capacity in new entrants, the pilots will generate evidence for Defra to decide how government could best design new entrant support in the future.

Objectives and outcomes

The key objective for this grant funding is:

To pilot learning and development support to a target group of new and recent entrants, to test the best means of building their entrepreneurial capability and creating opportunities for them to compete effectively for access to land and finance.

The required outcomes of the pilots are:

1. New entrants are supported to join the industry, with barriers reduced;
2. Improvements in new entrants’ competencies including innovation, entrepreneurship, strategic, operational & contextual (including environmental) knowledge (see Annex for competencies);
3. Improvements in new entrants’ business skills and education;
4. Increased opportunity to test business model/ideas in a de-risked environment;
5. Improved opportunities for new entrants to access finance and land (e.g. presenting their business case to key stakeholders);
6. New entrants build on their knowledge, skills, confidence & experience to progress their business; and
7. Improvements in sustainable business plans.

Structure

We will award grants to delivery partners to provide new entrant business support and interaction with land and finance providers and their expert advisers. We will pilot multiple incubator and accelerator learning and development programmes, allowing for a **range of different models and partnerships in different sectoral and geographical contexts**.

Target audience

We are piloting support at the start up and progressing stages, therefore the pilots will be aimed at two groups of people with relevant industry experience necessary at these stages:

1. **Starting up:** Individuals with farming, conservation, land management experience or expertise, but not their own business.
2. **Progressing:** Individuals with 4-10 years’ experience running or being a partner in a land-based business (this could be a Community Interest Company (CIC), Co-operative, Community Supported Agriculture partnership etc., as well as individual business).

Recruitment to the pilots is likely to be by suppliers on a competitive basis, rather than based on needs i.e., those who have the most potential to become successful entrepreneurs. Grant applicants will be responsible for identifying appropriate participants for each group.

Timeline

The Authority intends to grant fund initiatives to be delivered by one or more grant recipients between **August 2022 to 30th April 2023**. Each pilot will have an optimum-sized learning group, with a maximum programme length of 6 months. However, a 'recruitment period' and a 'delivery period' will not be prescribed and the learning can be delivered flexibly. The support should be delivered in a way that allows participants to earn livelihoods e.g., evening online sessions and weekends.

Annex: New Entrant Competencies

Area	Core outcome
Key contextual knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of agricultural challenges and opportunities post-EU exit • Knowledge and understanding of delivering environmental outcomes and wider societal benefits • Knowledge and understanding of land-based businesses' contribution to net zero ambitions
Strategic understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurship skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Management strategy ◦ Business diversification and value adding ◦ Understanding strategic benefits of collaboration and legal options for formalising them
Operational abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Marketing and sales ◦ Business model development ◦ Financial planning (cashflow, gross margins, capital budget, profit and loss and sensitivity analysis) ◦ Relationship management ◦ Digital literacy ◦ Ability to evaluate own working • Grants and funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Experience of identifying and completing funding or grant applications • Environmental abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Monitoring and assessing environmental outcomes • Knowledge of key technical skills relevant to their specific business opportunity • Knowledge and understanding of different legal frameworks to provide access to land e.g. land partnerships such as share farming
Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication / interview skills • Innovative thinking • Resilience • Ability to deliver a business 'elevator pitch' in less than 200 words