



urban
forestry
programme

Urban Forestry Challenge Fund: information & guidance

Applications open on
24 November 2025



Future Woodlands
Scotland



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Images:
Page 2: Laura Salvage, Community Volunteer Co-ordinator. (part-funded by our Urban Forestry Programme).
Page 6: The Creative Canopy Project, led by Govanhill Baths Community Trust, is transforming everyday spaces across Glasgow’s Southside into a vibrant network of green places.
Photographer: Stewart Attwood

Introduction

Scotland's towns and cities deserve cleaner air, greener streets and healthier neighbourhoods.

Over 80% of us live in towns and cities – yet many areas still don't have enough trees. Trees cool our streets, clean our air, reduce flooding and bring nature into daily life. They make our neighbourhoods healthier and more beautiful, while supporting wildlife.

Our Urban Forestry Programme, launched with funding from bp and now supported by JERA Nex bp, is helping put trees where they're needed most and creating greener, healthier places across Scotland.

What we do

Through the Urban Forestry Programme, we:

- Provide funding for tree planting and greening projects through the Urban Forestry Challenge Fund.
- Work with partners to build skills, knowledge and capacity to create lasting change.

The Challenge Fund prioritises areas in Scotland with the fewest trees, guided by the [Tree Equity tool](#), which aims to balance urban tree distribution.

Over the next decade, we will provide funding through our Urban Forestry Challenge Fund. As part of our wider Urban Forestry Programme, we will also collaborate with partners and stakeholders to promote best practices and build capacity in the sector.

About the Urban Forestry Challenge Fund

The Urban Forestry Challenge Fund offers multiple rounds of funding to support progress towards the 3-30-300 rule*:

- 3: Everyone can see at least three trees from where they live and work
- 30: Every neighbourhood has at least 30% tree canopy cover
- 300: Everyone is within 300m of quality greenspace

We are looking for proposals with a strong urban focus that prioritise areas most in need of trees and woodlands that are well looked after.

We want to ensure that everyone can benefit from trees – by learning about trees, actively engaging in their care, or simply spending time among them.

*The 3-30-300 rule was developed by Cecil Konijnendijk of the Nature Based Solutions Institute. For more details visit the NBSI website.

Who can apply?

We welcome applications from any not-for-profit registered or constituted body. This includes community groups, state funded educational institutions, charities, community interest companies, development trusts, local authorities or partnerships made up of these organisations.

We will not accept applications from individuals. However, we encourage you to share the Urban Forestry Programme with your local community council or organisations working in urban forestry or your Local Authority.

Eligible area

All projects must have a strong focus on urban Scotland, and we are particularly interested in supporting projects where people are most in need of the benefits that trees deliver.

As part of your application, you will be asked to indicate the Tree Equity Priority (Low, Moderate, High, or Highest) for the neighbourhood(s) in Scotland where your project will take place, based on the [Tree Equity Score](#). We are interested in supporting projects that relate to areas of at least moderate priority.

What will we fund?

To contribute towards our 3-30-300 goal, we are keen to see trees being planted but more importantly we wish to see trees being planted properly. This means that consideration should be given to what trees are planted, where they are planted and how they are planted. Projects should also have clear plans for tree care to ensure they survive and thrive.

In addition to new tree planting, we will fund:

- activities which enable long-term care and maintenance of trees and woodlands
- urban forestry management research, education and skills development
- engagement and awareness-raising activities.

If you also require funding for project development, we can fund:

- technical or design consultancy
- community engagement costs
- staff time related to the project objectives.

We encourage creativity and innovation. Applicants should propose projects that address a need and contribute to our vision.

What we've already funded

In our first year, we funded a range of projects that are already bringing more trees and greener spaces to Scotland's towns and cities, including:

- **Stirling:** Planting 200 nut and fruit trees in two areas with some of the lowest tree cover in the country.
- **Edinburgh:** A community orchard and planting project with an arts-based engagement programme that will improve canopy cover and raise awareness of nurturing trees.
- **Glasgow:** A tree restoration and enhancement programme at a nature reserve in Glasgow that includes facilities for community groups and aims to enhance woodland to provide a better-quality environment for local communities.

Discover the 12 projects we've supported so far and how they're helping communities bring trees and nature back to their neighbourhoods on our website:
www.futurewoodlands.org.uk/urban-forestry

How much can you apply for?

We offer two levels of funding:

- Projects from £2,000 up to £20,000.
- Projects over £20,000 and up to £100,000.

Funds can be used over a maximum of three years. Your budget should clearly show how you plan to use the funds each year.

Please note that this is a competitive process with limited funds, and we will only accept one application per organisation in each round.

We will consider funding up to 100% of costs for small projects but encourage you to include match funding or in-kind contributions where possible. Projects seeking over £20,000 will be expected to secure match funding. Details of match funding or in-kind contributions should be set out in your project budget.

Funds should go towards project costs rather than core organisational costs, however, up to 15% of funds can be put towards overheads. For guidance on calculating full cost recovery, please refer to the National Lottery's [Applying for your Project Overheads guide](#).

How to apply

Applications for the Urban Forestry Fund will open on 24 November through an online application portal on our website.

To apply you'll need to provide basic information about your organisation, share a short project description and answers several assessment questions.

We recommend preparing your application in advance using the Word document available on our website.

This will help you avoid losing work, as the application portal does not have a “save draft” function and the online form does not support formatting, except for bullet lists

You will also be asked to upload:

- details of your organisation e.g. a copy of your organisation’s constitution
- a copy of your organisation’s most recent accounts
- project budget
- details of any partnership arrangement.



Timelines

Applications for both smaller and larger grants will open on 24 November.

- **Smaller grants (up to £20,000):** There is a single-stage application process. The deadline for applications is 5pm on 23 January and funding decisions will be made by the end of February.
- **Larger grants (over £20,000):** This follows a two-stage application process. The Stage 1 deadline is also 5pm on 23 January 2025. Successful applicants will be invited to Stage 2, with funding decisions expected in April 2025.

Urban Forestry Fund open for applications	24 November 2025
Deadline for applications	5pm, 23 January 2026
Smaller grants awarded	February 2026
Stage 2 for larger grants	February 2026 – March 2026
Larger grants awarded	April 2026

Contacting Future Woodlands Scotland

For any queries in relation to this fund please contact deshackett@futurewoodlands.org.uk

Accessibility

Our application guidance and sample application forms are available to download as Word documents.

If you'd like any information from us in a more accessible format, please get in touch by email: deshackett@futurewoodlands.org.uk

About Future Woodlands Scotland

Future Woodlands Scotland was set up in 2012 to fund innovative thinking for native woodlands.

Our mission is to protect, create and restore woodlands.

Our work is guided by five strategic priorities. Each one reflects where we can have the greatest long-term impact for Scotland's trees, landscapes and communities:

- Restoring threatened woodlands: Bringing ghost woodlands back to life
- Planting more trees in towns and cities: Greening urban areas where nature is in short supply
- Developing woodland skills: Helping people gain the skills needed to care for our woodlands
- Expanding knowledge and awareness: Funding research and sharing learning to support native woodlands
- Championing resilient forestry: Advancing regenerative approaches that work for climate, nature and people

About JERA Nex bp and Future Woodlands Scotland

Future Woodlands Scotland and JERA Nex bp are working to make Scotland's cities, towns and urban areas greener. We will do this by helping to create leafier neighbourhoods, including trees in parks, streets, amenity areas and along canals and rivers. This encourages people to spend more time outdoors interacting with their communities, which in turn promotes health and wellbeing.

The Urban Forestry Programme began in 2024, with the support of bp, which committed up to £10 million as part of its planned Scottish offshore wind project, Morven. That commitment is now being carried forward with JERA Nex bp, bp's joint venture in global offshore wind with JERA.

The 10-year Urban Forestry Programme with JERA Nex bp aims to help more people benefit from more greenspaces in towns and cities today and for years to come.



**At Future Woodlands
Scotland, our vision is
a Scotland where trees and
woodlands are thriving for
our wildlife, communities
& climate.**



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