

LEI workshop FAQs.

November 2018.

Q: Does National Grid prioritised list of National Parks (NPs) and AONBs exclude any others from applying to LEI grants?

A: No, the prioritised list is in relation to the VIP grants which is a National Grid project. LEI grants are available to all NPs and AONB.

Q: What is the likelihood of Ofgem approving any LEI applications once it reaches them

A: To date, Ofgem have not rejected any applications.

Q: How long can the approved LEI programs run for?

A: 3 years plus 3 years maintenance.

Q: Is there a GIS map available with the layout of NG transmission lines?

A: A map is available on the [NG VIP website](#)

Q: When do application submissions finally need to be in i.e. final cut-off date of the program?

A: March 2021 is the final deadline for applications.

Q: Can we use existing staff time for the matched funding element of the project?

A: Only if it's either a brand-new role or a new job description for a piece of work added to an existing team members current role.

Q: Are there standard rates applied for the cost of volunteer time?

A: Not really – these should be realistic rates for the role the volunteer performs, supported by the relevant evidence, e.g. local hourly rates for the kind of work they would be undertaking.

Q: Can the lines be anywhere within the NP/AONB? Or can they be outside the NP/AONB?

A: As long as there is strong evidence that the transmission lines have an adverse visual impact directly on the NP/AONB they can be outside of the boundary, within reason. Evidence of the visual impact is key to the application and can be found in the [Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Technical Report](#).

Q: Can we access the expert's advice via media such as Skype or similar?

A: Absolutely, the Landscape advisors can advise as required and provide additional data that may support and help the application.

General Note: Applications should focus primarily on the character of the landscape and the visual impact; ecological benefits are a secondary, 'nice to have', outcome.

Q: Are we limited to 3 applications per project?

A: You can have 3 live projects at any one time or up to a maximum of £600k granted. This means that there is the possibility of more projects live at any one time if cost of the project is smaller.

Q: Do we get extra credit for asking for less money based on a higher matched funding element?

A: No, we want projects to be the best they can be and maximise the grants available.

Q: Where can we get the technical reports to help us understand the lines in our area?

A: All the NP/AONB have been sent the technical reports for their area. Or you can ask the Landscape Advisors.

Q: What are the landowners' responsibilities to maintain beyond the project?

A: There are no requirements from the LEI grant program, however, the landowners are normally invested to an extent that this is likely to continue voluntarily as the outcome normally benefits the landowner. This could also be included in the agreements between the NP/AONB and the landowner to be responsible for maintenance for a set period of time beyond the LEI project.

Q: How are the Landscape Advisors remunerated?

A: Funding comes from the initial VIP £500 million which is paid for by the bill payer.

Q: What are the barriers to obtaining a grant?

A: Really this is down to the NP/AONB resources and initial AONB investment – the money is available and we are keen to disperse this to ambitious projects.

Q: What if the money is not spent by 2021

A: The money will be gone.

Q: What is the general rule on funding interpretation boards as part of the project.

A: This is not advocated unless there is a well evidenced case and it's a small part of the project. In some cases, temporary signage to explain why some of the landscape being removed may be accepted. This could also be part of the matched funding of the project.

Q: Does the funding go into the NP/AONB bank account despite the partner work and input?

A: Yes, the AONB is the responsible and accountable party so all payments will be to them. Contracts with partner organisations should be drawn up by the AONB and they will distribute costs as agreed.

Q: What is the feedback on applications that include carparks?

A: As an example, if the view from the carpark was impacted by transmission lines it might be that part of the project plan was to move the carpark. However, general maintenance of the carpark would not be considered.

Q: Is the 25% matched funding element part of the £200k max grant or on top of it?

A: It is on top of the max £200k grant.