

## **NECF OPEN CALL - APPLICATION GUIDANCE**

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### **NECF Overview:**

NECF provides an exciting opportunity to improve school grounds, enrich learning, support pupil wellbeing, and contribute to environmental goals with little or no financial burden on the school. NECF's Trees for Climate programme can fund trees, planting, maintenance, and even the delivery of planting events.

We enable schools to transform underused outdoor spaces into thriving green environments that support learning, wellbeing, biodiversity and climate action. With funding available for planting, maintenance and delivery, schools can create a lasting environmental legacy for current and future generations while providing pupils with meaningful hands-on experiences of nature.

For this application, schools will be subject to the **NECF Social Priority Scoring Matrix**. Our tree planting selection process prioritises areas with low existing canopy cover and low tree equity scores, alongside high levels of social need. By combining canopy data with the Index of Multiple Deprivation, we plan to target planting where it will deliver the greatest environmental and community benefit.

### **Important notes**

- 1) Tree Planting will be facilitated by external contractors carefully chosen by the NECF. All contractors will be subject to Enhanced DBS checks prior to working on site. Any subcontractors working on site must have either DBS clearance or be escorted at all times.
- 2) Schools will be expected to provide staff for planting events at a ratio of 1 staff member to 20 school children.
- 3) Schools are ranked against the NECF Social Priority Scoring Matrix and the 2 highest ranked schools per local authority area will be selected each season. If you are not selected for this year, you may be eligible in future years.
- 4) Funding is **not confirmed** until a signed agreement is in place.

For more information on NECF please see: [NECF website](#) and [NECF Trees For Climate Grant](#)

## How to Apply

Applications can be submitted:

- **Online** via the NECF application portal: click here for the [application form](#)

### 1. Section 1 - Application details

Use Section 1 in the Online Application Form to provide the basic information about the school applying and the main contact person responsible for the project. This should be someone who will lead or coordinate the project and act as the point of contact throughout.

Please include:

- The full name of your school.
- Local Authority
- The lead contact's name and position
- Lead Contact email
- Lead Contact phone number.
- School's address
- School Postcode.

This section helps us understand who is applying, who will be responsible for the project, and how to reach you. Make sure the contact details are accurate and that the person listed is available to respond to any follow-up questions.

### 2. Section 2 – Grant Eligibility

Section 2 in the Online Application Form helps determine whether your organisation and proposed site meet the basic requirements for funding. The Trees For Climate grant can cover up to 100% of costs for eligible projects, as well as provide ongoing funding to support the maintenance of the trees. This ensures that any planting continues to deliver long term value. More info [here](#).

Is your school located within the NECF boundary?

Proposed projects must be located within Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Gateshead, Sunderland or Durham (Please use following link [here](#), click the magnifying glass on the top right of the screen and enter your postcode to check).

Who is the landowner?

Each applicant must:

- Tick what type of school is applying
  - Council schools – NECF have secured permission from your Local Authority
  - Non-council Schools – you will need to hold or secure **written permission** from the landowner to develop and manage the site.

### 3. Section 3 - School boundary and pupil involvement

#### Boundary Map

Please upload a boundary map of your school. Supported files are jpeg and pdf. This can be a simple screenshot from Google Maps, or similar.

#### Pupil Involvement

We do like to have pupil involvement delivering our projects but is not essential. Please state if you wish for pupil involvement and if so, how many pupils and which age groups.

### 4. Section 4 - Project Overview

Use this section to give a clear summary of your project and its purpose. This is your chance to explain:

#### Summary of project aims and expected outcomes

What tree planting would you like? Examples – hedging, orchards, larger standard trees, small woodland etc

What you aim to achieve and what outcomes you expect (e.g. increased nature-based connections, education, pupil engagement, improved biodiversity).

#### Do you have any groups or partners you would like to involve in the project?

Examples could include, but not limited to: nature organisations, community groups, parent organisations, local organisations, volunteers etc.

### 5. Section 5 - Declaration

This section confirms your understanding and agreement with the terms of the application process. It ensures transparency, accountability, and consent for data handling and collaboration.

Please read each statement carefully and tick **Yes** to confirm:

1. Accuracy of Information

You confirm that all the information provided in the application is true, accurate, and complete to the best of your knowledge.

2. Grant Understanding

Please tick to confirm you have read the grant conditions. [Click here](#).

3. Monitoring and Reporting

You agree to participate in monitoring and evaluation activities, which help assess the impact of the project and contribute to national learning.

4. Information Sharing

You consent to share the information provided in your application with representatives of the project partners (e.g. NECF, Contractors) for review and collaboration purposes.

5. Data Consent

You agree to provide personal details required for processing your application. These details will be securely stored and used only while NECF are working with you.

6. Important Notes

Confirmation you have read the Important Notes regarding Contractors and Staff to Pupil ratio for planting events

7. Right to Withdraw or Update

You understand that you can withdraw or update your personal details at any time by contacting NECF at [info@necf.org.uk](mailto:info@necf.org.uk).

## 6. Submit

Once you have completed all sections of the application form and before clicking **Submit**, please ensure:

- All **mandatory fields** are filled in.
- You have reviewed your answers for accuracy and completeness.
- You have ticked **Yes** to all relevant **Declaration** statements.

**Congratulations! You've successfully submitted your application form to NECF.**

If you have any questions or need to make changes after submission, please contact the North East Community Forest at [info@necf.org.uk](mailto:info@necf.org.uk).

## Contact Information

If you have any questions about the application process, site planning, or programme requirements, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the NECF team. We're here to support you throughout your application and project journey.

## How to Reach Us

- **Email:** [info@necf.org.uk](mailto:info@necf.org.uk)

- **Postal Address:**

North East Community Forest  
Newcastle City Council  
Planning Service, 9th Floor  
Civic Centre  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 8QH

- **Website:** [North East Community Forest | Northeast Community Forest](#)