

All Projects in England

# GUIDANCE NOTES FOR CLAIMANTS

## European Fisheries Fund projects

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The European Fisheries Fund may give financial support to meet a number of economic, environmental and social goals. These notes set out the procedures you should follow in order to claim EU grant aid from the European Fisheries Fund and, if appropriate, MFA grant for fisheries projects. They also provide guidance on completing the claim form. They are based on Council Regulation (EC) 1198/2006, Commission Regulation (EC) 498/2007 and the Grants for Fishing and Aquaculture Industries Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007/3284) and Council Regulation (EC) 744/20.



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## General points

1. You should note that the Offer letter will have set out the maximum grant available. Any changes have to be agreed in advance. Sometimes claimants receive a reduced level of payment made in final settlement. This is because ineligible items<sup>1</sup> have to be disallowed and items that cost less than expected when the project was approved are accepted at the reduced value. Any of these factors will therefore result in grant paid being less than the maximum grant available.
2. In these notes:
  - “You” means the claimant for grant. You can employ a consultant to help you complete your Claim Form but you will still have to sign the form. You will be responsible for ensuring that all of the terms and conditions for grant are fulfilled. In particular, this means that you will be expected to keep ownership of the work which is being grant aided.

“We” means the Marine and Fisheries Agency (MFA).

**Marine and Fisheries Agency**  
**Business Relations Team**  
**Area 4C, Ergon House**  
**Horseferry Road**  
**London**  
**SW1P 2AL**

Telephone: 0207 270 8042/8384

Email: [eff.projects@mfa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:eff.projects@mfa.gsi.gov.uk)

Marine and Fisheries Agency website: <http://www.mfa.gov.uk/grants/grants.htm>

## Claims

3. You should normally submit a single full and final claim by the date specified in your Offer Letter. With our agreement you may be allowed to submit one or more interim claims but the final claim must still be submitted by the date specified in the Offer Letter.

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<sup>1</sup> You will find a list of eligible and ineligible items in the relevant eligibility guidance notes for the type of European Fisheries Fund grant for which you have applied.

4. We will aim to pay grant within eight weeks once we have all the necessary information to consider your claim. We accept no liability in respect of loss attributable to any delay in the payment of claims or to any suspension, reduction or cancellation of grant.

## The Claim Form

5. Grant will be paid electronically direct into your bank account by BACS. Please complete and return the enclosed form AP 201 to:

**Marine and Fisheries Agency  
Business Relations Team  
Area 4C, Ergon House  
Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 2AL**

(Please note on form to tick the box in Section 1 which says, 'other' and when asked for details state 'grant recipient')

6. You, or someone acting on your behalf, are required to complete the Claim for Grant form and provide supporting information. Notes on selected questions are as follows:
  - **Section 1 – (a):** the name of claimant should be the person who originally applied for grant and to whom the grant should be paid. If different, a covering note of explanation should be attached;
  - **Section 1 - (b):** you can find the project number on the Offer Letter; the title of the project should be a brief description of the project, as set out in the application form; the date the project is approved is the date of the Offer Letter; the start and completion dates you should enter should relate to the project and not the claim. For Interim claims, you should enter the expected date of completion of the project;
  - **Section 2 (a):** You should set out the total grant aid available as set out in the Offer Letter and details of any grant already received, the amount you are claiming now and any remaining to be claimed;
  - **Section 2 (b):** this indicates how expenditure on the project is to be funded. You should include details of payments still to be made. All figures must normally exclude VAT unless you are not registered (see paragraph (h) below). The funding package for the project should be that now envisaged. This may be different from that set out in your application. Any differences should be explained in section 15 of the claim form;

- **Section 2 (C)1:** this table is intended to provide full details of payments made in connection with a claim. If you have your own personal computer facilities you may wish to draw up your own table. You should only include eligible expenditure. We will check and verify every entry on the table using the supporting documentation which you must also provide (see paragraphs 7 to 12). All expenditure should be recorded and claimed net of VAT.
7. The “work carried out” column must show the breakdown of work as set out in the Offer Letter. You should list each invoice claimed for in date order and arrange them in the order and categories shown in the Offer Letter. The amounts shown in the table should be exactly as quoted on the relevant invoice and should neither be rounded up nor down. Where other currencies are involved, you must enclose bank documents showing the date of the completed transaction and the exchange rate used.
8. Payments in kind include the provision of land or real estate, equipment or materials, research or professional activity, or any work for which no charge is made:
- **Section 3 (a):** this table is intended to show the differences between the completed project as approved. The comparisons should be restricted to each category set out on the Offer Letter rather than individual payments. You should give brief reasons for any differences greater than 10%. Remember: before implementing any variation in your project you must secure approval from MFA;
  - **Section 4 (a):** this table is intended to show what the project has achieved compared to the targets set out in the Offer Letter. You should give brief reasons where targets have not been achieved; where appropriate you must have obtained an inspection report from the local Environmental Health Officer confirming that the installation meets health and hygiene requirements and enclose a copy of the report;
  - **Section 5 (a):** you, or a person authorised to sign on your behalf e.g. the Company Secretary, Managing Director, Partner or Owner, must sign the form. If your agent completes the form both you and your agent must sign the form.

## Supporting Documentation

9. All claims **must** be accompanied by a progress report. If the progress report of your project is not satisfactory we may not be able to pay your claim.
10. You must submit the originals of all invoices and other sales dockets in support of each item listed in Section 2(c) 1 of the claim form. In order to verify payment for each item, we require either that the invoices bear the supplier’s official receipt or similar documents that will satisfy the scheme auditors. The following will also be considered: photocopies of original documents; and electronic versions of original documents. We will retain all original

documents. If you cannot, for a legitimate reason, provide originals, you **must** provide copies which are

certified by the supplier as true copies of the originals. We also ask you to number the invoices in the order they are listed in table. For payments in kind you will be required to demonstrate that services or goods are costed at market rates and that documentation has a probative value similar to receipts that will satisfy the scheme's auditors.

Valid invoices must contain the following information:

- VAT registration number
- Company registration number
- Business name
- Business address
- Where the business is registered

11. Some expenditure incurred in non- capital projects may not involve invoices. In such cases you must provide appropriate documentation to confirm that the expenditure was incurred and defrayed, e.g. rail tickets for attendance at trade fairs.
12. For claims in respect of structural work, a statement from an independent architect or surveyor on letter headed paper is required confirming that the work has been carried out in accordance with the terms of the original application? Where the work has not been carried out in accordance with such terms, give reasons for the differences and refer to dates on which modifications were authorised by MFA.
13. For claims in respect of structural work on vessels you must provide evidence of tonnage re-measurement under the provisions of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2930/86 as amended where applicable to the size of the vessel.

## **Inspections**

14. You must allow inspection of the project by officials authorised by MFA together with any person accompanying them (which may, from time to time, include an official of the European Commission), provide them with access to relevant documents and give them such assistance as they may reasonably request in the exercise of their duties under the scheme. All records held by you or MFA may have to be made available for inspection by the European Commission and the National Audit Office.

## **Progress Reports**

15. It is important that we monitor the progress of all approved projects and you will therefore be asked to provide updates on progress with your project every six months.

16. So that we can evaluate the effectiveness of your project and the scheme as a whole once the project has been completed, you will also be required to submit a progress report on your business and performance of the project on an annual basis for 3 years from the date of payment of the final payment of grant.

## **Modifications**

17. If the approved project needs to be modified, you should get our agreement before the modification takes place. If you do not, you may lose your entitlement to award of grant. Modifications in this context include changes in the suppliers name or status of the beneficiary, change of location, take-over of the company as well as changes in the design and purpose of the project. We will withhold any payments due until we approve the modification. We will also withhold payments if we have any reason to believe that you modified your project before we gave permission to do so.

## **Retention of records**

18. We will retain original copies of all documents, invoices and other evidence of payment for reference by authorities such as European Commission or the European Court of Auditors. You must also keep documentary evidence of expenditure for six years from the date of final payment of grant. Documentary evidence includes: order forms and delivery notes for plant and equipment; bills of quantity; tenders; estimates and quotations; architects' (etc,) certificates; statements and invoices; relevant books of account; drawings; plans and technical specifications.

## **Cancellation of project**

19. If for any reason you decide not to proceed with the project, you should renounce the award as soon as possible. You should send a written notification to us the following address:

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Business Relations Team  
Area 4C, Ergon House  
Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 2AL**

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