



## **The Agricultural Shows Innovation Fund**

### **Background information**

Agricultural Societies and Shows have a long and prestigious history and are at the centre of rural communities in Wales. Each one has an important role in promoting sustainable farming and food production to the wider public and in supporting community cohesion, our culture, and the wellness agenda.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, most, if not all, agricultural shows across Wales were cancelled in 2020 and a large number will be cancelled in 2021.

It is important that agricultural show Societies can return to a position of some normality following the pandemic which includes the reintroduction of agricultural shows across Wales. In 2020, The Welsh Government commissioned a short resilience review of agricultural shows, with a particular focus on the following:

- What are the issues facing agricultural societies and shows?
- What support might be necessary to help agricultural societies at this time?
- How can Societies help each other and the agricultural community?
- What would help to reinstate the shows next season?

One of the recommendations from the report included the establishment of an 'innovation fund' whereby shows of all sizes can apply for financial support to deliver new and innovative solutions to current challenges.

**The Royal Welsh Agricultural Society (RWAS) is administering the Agricultural Shows Innovation Fund (the Innovation Fund) on behalf of the Welsh Government.**

<b>Funding Pot</b>	-	£25,000
<b>Application opening</b>	-	18 June 2021.
<b>Closing Date</b>	-	16 July 2021 at 5pm.
<b>How to apply</b>		The application form is available at <a href="http://www.rwas.wales">www.rwas.wales</a> . Completed applications should be sent to Mared Jones (Head of Operations) by email <a href="mailto:mared@rwas.co.uk">mared@rwas.co.uk</a> . Applications will be accepted in Welsh and English.
<b>Eligibility</b>		The Innovation Fund is open to the organisers of all shows or events promoting agriculture in Wales. Joint applications are welcomed.
<b>Objective</b>		The objective of the Innovation Fund is to encourage innovative solutions to help meet the current challenges and to aid collaboration between agricultural show Societies.

The Innovation Fund will support new projects only - no retrospective activities will be considered.

## Categories

There are 3 funding categories:-

- Category 1** - Innovation through the pandemic
- Category 2** - Innovation within the “new normal”
- Category 3** - Innovation that encourages collaboration.

**Whilst not limited to, applications are expected to consider at least one of the following criteria:**

- Delivering efficiency
- Working in partnership
- Health & Safety compliance
- The use of technology
- Reducing carbon
- Communication
- Waste management
- Engaging with the next generation
- Promoting the Welsh language and Culture
- Knowledge transfer and education
- Improving the customer journey
- Biosecurity compliance

**Items the Innovation Fund could pay for are provided below. Please note this is not an exhaustive list:**

- **Equipment**  
e.g. – EID reader, Cashless Payment System, Podcast equipment, CANVA Marketing app.
- **One-off events**  
e.g. – Food festival, Dog show, Horse show, Horticulture/Garden Festival etc
- **Training costs/ Staff Development**  
e.g. – Provide social media or marketing training.
- **Costs associated with delivering your event bilingually.**  
e.g. – Costs of producing a bilingual schedule, signage, certificates/rosettes.
- **Online communication platform**  
e.g. - Organising a virtual show, website, online entries platform, podcasts.
- **Covid compliance**  
e.g. – Making your event Covid secure, hand wash facilities, signage, risk assessments etc.
- **Education**  
e.g. - Information leaflets, educational day, podcasts, events on social media.
- **Community Engagement**  
e.g. – Coffee mornings, social media platforms, introducing new competitions, collaborating with other shows.

## **Ineligible Costs**

The following items are examples of expenditure which are not eligible for grant aid.

- Purchase of land
- Purchase of buildings
- Maintenance costs for existing buildings.
- Purchase of vehicles
- Payments to land managers for undertaking activities on their land.
- Financial costs, overheads, and insurance charges
- Costs of arranging loans, VAT and other taxes by the beneficiary, administrative and staff costs.
- Existing costs.

## **Selection Process**

Following the closure of the application window, all applications will be considered by a panel.

The Panel will include representation from Welsh Government, the Association of Shows and Agriculture Organisations (ASAO) and an independent member.

All applications will be scored on their merits in satisfying the criteria outlined above and how they demonstrate best value of money.

The aim is to support as many shows as possible and while we may not be able to support the total cost of a project, we may be able to offer a contribution.

Please also note that the panel may invite certain applicants for an interview, if necessary.

Successful applicants will be informed within 28 days of the closure of the application window.

If successful, acceptance of the grant awarded must be made within fourteen working days of the date on the approval letter.

## **Payment of Grant**

The RWAS will administer the funding.

## **Claims Process**

Payment will be made by electronic transfer to a specified bank account. Successful applicants will be required to send a written report to the RWAS by the end of the project summarising expenditure, delivery of the project and the outcomes achieved. This will be requested separately.

## **UK GDPR**

The RWAS is committed to protecting your personal data and processing it in accordance with all legal requirements. Additional information is available on request from the RWAS. We will not share your data with third parties. Details of successful will also be circulated with members of the Press and published on the RWAS website. The RWAS will retain your data in accordance with the retention schedule to simplify future applications. You have various rights in the data we hold including rectification and objecting to processing.

## **Conditions**

- You must provide confirmation that no other public funding (whether from EU or UK sources) has been sought for the project.
- Any publicity associated with a successful application/project must reference the Welsh Government funding.