

The **Somerset Rural Renaissance Partnership** (SRRP) includes over 20 organisations with an interest in helping to revitalise the economy in rural areas.

SRRP has been allocated investment funds from the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) to spend on projects. For 2008/09 we have just under £150,000 for allocation. There is also an additional amount for the Workspace or redundant buildings Programme.

There are 2 **deadlines** for the receipt of project bids this year:

- > Sept 1st 2008
- > Nov 1st 2008 (if any funds remain).

Key Economic Priorities

The Rural Renaissance Scheme has endorsed the economic priorities identified by the Somerset Strategic Partnership:

- A more productive and competitive Somerset economy
- More sustainable and resource efficient economic growth in Somerset
- A stronger and more diverse economy across Somerset's market towns and rural communities
- A more highly skilled, rewarded and qualified Somerset workforce, relevant to the future needs of the County's economy.

All applications for funds must indicate which priority they will assist with.

Are you eligible to apply?

Normally Investments are only available to organisations and agencies that develop projects that will benefit a group of people or businesses i.e. not for individuals or the benefit of one business.

Which areas of Somerset?

All of the rural areas are eligible. This excludes projects aimed at Bridgwater, Taunton and Yeovil.

What will your project deliver for the RR investment?

The RR Partnership is tasked with achieving a range of outputs for the investments:

- Creating/Safeguarding jobs & supporting people to get a job
- Creating new or supporting existing businesses
- Assisting in skills development

Is there evidence of a need for the project?

You will need to demonstrate that you have researched the needs to justify the investment

Have you some match funding?

The Scheme as a whole needs to have at least 50% of match funding

Is your project sustainable beyond RR funding?

The process for applying for an investment

1. Read the guidance details and obtain an application form available on the RR website
2. Discuss your project idea with a member of staff (01823 358060)
3. Submit an application (Deadlines Sept 1st & Nov 1st)
4. Appraisal of the application
5. Decision on your project
6. Contract issued for investment

From enquiry to contract may take up to 3months

What can the RR investment be spent on?

Any funds awarded will be against the cost of specific items either capital or revenue that have been requested for a new activity or project. 'Capital' includes the cost of specific equipment or improvements to a building, whilst 'revenue' might mean the costs of staff, office costs or direct implementation of the specific project.

All RR investments will be paid out in quarterly instalments against a standard claim form, which must be submitted with evidence of all project spending. **Note:** The deadline for all spending is March 31st 2009.

What outputs need to be demonstrated?

We are particularly interested in supporting projects that can evidence the following outputs:

> **Jobs:** Creation of a new job, or the safeguarding of an existing job. Support to individuals to obtain a job. Has our investment directly helped to bring that about?

> **Businesses:** Support of existing businesses, or the establishment of a new business

> **Skills:** Support for individuals to gain basic skills, or to gain NVQ Level 2

We will help you to understand how these outputs must be evidenced prior to your submitting the quarterly claim form.

RR Workspace Programme

This is for the conversion of redundant buildings and there is separate guidance on this. See the website.

Contact details: To request copies of the Partnership's latest Delivery Plan, and other Guidance please go to the website or contact the RR Scheme Manager, Paul Chadwick on pchadwick@somerset.gov.uk or Caroline Rigby carigby@somerset.gov.uk

For more information on Rural Renaissance please go to

<http://www.somerset-rural-renaissance.co.uk/>

This Guide is valid in 2008/09

