**Cotswolds Conservation Board**

**National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI)**

**Call for Projects in the vicinity of pylon line ZF2 (Upper Coberley to Alderton)**

This national £24 million grant scheme offers awards of up to £200,000 for projects to enhance landscapes containing or impacted by National Grid’s existing electricity transmission infrastructure.

Only the Cotswolds Conservation Board can apply to the National Grid for this funding in the Cotswolds and we are inviting partners to put forward projects.

The deadline for submitting expressions of interest to the Board is the 1st February 2019 for projects commencing in December 2019.

The Board has selected pylon line ZF2 for our first call for projects as it is judged to have the highest impact of any line within the Cotswolds AONB.

**Proposing a Project**

The accompanying document “Supporting Information” details information to help you develop ideas for projects, it contains:

* The sort of projects they are interested in funding.
* The selection criteria.
* A map showing the approximate area impacted on by the power line along with the landscape character types from the AONB Landscape Character Assessment.
* Actions for the landscape types impacted. These have been selected from the Cotswolds Landscape Strategy and Guidelines to help trigger project ideas.
* Statement on project area and visual impact assessment.
* Web links to: The LEI web page, Cotswolds AONB Management Plan, Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment and the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines.

This is a discretionary grant with a two stage application process starting with a simple expression of interest (attached). If the expression of interest is successful, the ensuing full application will need to be detailed and complete. We have been informed that unlike many grant schemes the element of competition is relatively low so the prospect of strong eligible projects being funded is good.

Please note that the Board is not able to contribute to the minimum 25% match funding, though as well as cash, you can count in-kind and volunteer effort as match.

The Board will look to combine similar projects together under a single expression of interest to National Grid.

If you have a project idea please complete the expression of interest form and e-mail it to Simon Smith, Project Development Officer any time before the 1st February 2019.

We would encourage you to discuss an initial project idea with Simon.

E-mail Simon.smith@cotswoldsaonb.org.ukl

Direct dial 01451 862031

**Next Steps**

The Board will review the expressions of interest received against the selection criteria and the AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines to decide which projects to take to National Grid. You will be notified of the Board’s decision in respect to your expression of interest by the 15th February 2019.

**Indicative Timetable**

Board issues call for projects 3rd December 2018

Deadline Expressions of Interest (EOI) to the Board 1st February 2019

Board submits EOIs to National Grid and

notifies partners of its decisions 15th February 2019

Full applications invited 18th March 2019

Deadline for full applications 10th May 2019

Panel meeting Early July 2019

Ofgem approval completed & funds distributed December 2019

**Attachments**

1. LEI ZF2 Supporting Information
2. LEI Expression of Interest Form for Partners