

SFT Appeals Policy – December 2021

Scottish Forestry Trust aims to provide an efficient and effective grant service at all times. We aim to ensure that prospective applicants are given early feedback on their proposals and likelihood of an award being made through the use of our Concept Note submissions, which will help reduce the scope for unsuccessful applications being made. Having said this the Trust has a limited amount of funds available and not all applications will be successful.

If however an applicant has been informed that their application for support was unsuccessful and they believe that it has not been assessed correctly according to the eligibility criteria then it is possible to submit an appeal.

Making an Appeal

If you would wish to make an appeal about a decision that SFT has made in regard to your application you should do this in writing, no more than three months after our decision has been communicated to you. This can be sent by post to Director, Scottish Forestry Trust, 59 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2JG, or by email to director@scottishforestrytrust.org.uk. The information you should provide should include the following:

- Name of applicant
- Name of project to which your appeal relates.
- Date of the appeal.
- Information regarding the nature of your appeal: Is the appeal regarding the outcome of an application for support? Is the appeal in regards to the process followed? Is the appeal related to SFT's priorities for providing support?
- Details of whether you have discussed your appeal with anyone from SFT and the nature of that discussion.
- Any other information that you feel is relevant to your appeal.
- The resolution that you seek.
- A signature of the person making the appeal.

How the Appeal will be Reviewed

Decisions that are taken by the Board of Trustees are taken on the basis of recommendations from its Projects and Research Committee (PRC). The PRC generally nominates a lead reviewer from its number.

The Appeal will initially be reviewed by the Director in liaison with the Chair of the Scottish Forestry Trust. If appropriate a member of the PRC (not the original lead reviewer) will be asked to examine the appeal and the original application again and present a view. The outcome of the review will then be submitted to the full Board of Trustees.

Possible Outcomes

If an appeal, once reviewed, is denied then SFT will look to provide (i) an explanation as to why your request has been denied; (ii) re-assurance that the process has been followed; (iii) feedback to ensure that any future applications made would meet our funding criteria.

Should your appeal be upheld and it is felt that your project would have been supported then consideration will be given to backdating your award to the point of your original application to a maximum of three months, is appropriate (is this reasonable). SFT would not be liable for the prevention of any project proceeding on the basis of the original application not being successful, as any decision would have been made in good faith in line with our processes.

Timescales

You will receive an acknowledgement that your Appeal has been received. If you do not receive an acknowledgement then you should resubmit it providing details of the date it was first submitted.

Normally, Appeals will be dealt with and you should receive the outcome within 45 days. If there is to be a further delay in the review for whatever reason you will be informed in writing with a new date proposed.