



Evaluation criteria for bids for AHDB residual funds for ornamentals

Version	1.0
Date	11 May 2026
Latest version of criteria	www.hta.org.uk/ahdbscheme

About this document

This document sets out how the HTA and BOA will determine which funding bids to put forward for monies made available by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) under its scheme to release reserves it held as of 1 April 2026. Further details of this scheme are available on the HTA's web site (www.hta.org.uk/ahdbscheme).

The aim of HTA and BOA working to these criteria is to ensure that bids put forward for approval are treated fairly, have a strong chance of being approved by the AHDB, and represent good value for UK ornamentals growers as a whole. By publishing the criteria, we also aim to help potential bidders put forward bids that are as strong and likely to succeed as possible.

This document sets out:

Section 1 - Acceptance criteria (bids failing to meet any of these will not be put forward)

Section 2 - Evaluation criteria (bids will need to achieve minimum scores in different areas in order to be put forward, and may be prioritised by HTA and BOA based on their scores).



1. Acceptance criteria

All bids **must** meet each of the following criteria in order to be considered:

- a. Bids must provide a collective benefit to UK production rather than a benefit to one grower, organisation or a 'closed group' of bidders
- b. Bids must be for one or more of the purposes allowed under the grant scheme which are:
 - i. Research
 - ii. Innovation
 - iii. Development
 - iv. Dissemination (including knowledge transfer)
 - v. Grower or stakeholder events
 - vi. Communications
 - vii. Market development (domestic or export)
- c. Bids must be for the benefit of growers in the GB ornamentals sector
- d. Bids must contain all the contents required by AHDB under the scheme, namely details of:
 - i. the project/bid's objective
 - ii. how and to what extent the project/bid will benefit the Recipient's represented sub-sector in Great Britain
 - iii. a plan of activities and timetable for delivery
 - iv. a budget breakdown identifying the nature and amount of each substantive cost
 - v. the Recipient's named project lead and contact details
 - vi. any known risks and proposed mitigations proportionate to the project
 - vii. any proposed use of contractors or collaborators and a summary of the proposed procurement route
 - viii. any proposed outputs and knowledge-transfer or dissemination approach



2. Evaluation Criteria

Bids which meet **all of the acceptance criteria** will be evaluated according to the following four evaluation criteria:

- A. Feasibility of delivery** - The feasibility of delivering the bid to the proposed time, cost, and quality specified in the bid
- B. Extent of benefit** - The proportion of growers in ornamentals (or any sub-sector of ornamentals a bid relates to) will have access to the benefits delivered by the bid
- C. Cost benefit** - The scale of benefit likely to be delivered relative to the cost and risks in the bid
- D. Organisational credentials** - the credential(s) of the organisation(s) involved in delivering the bids (e.g. past record of delivery, capacity, financial resilience, etc)

Each of the four criteria will be scored 0 to 3, to generate a total score out of 12 for a bid. Each criterion will be scored as follows.

A. Feasibility of delivery

- 0. Proposal contains no or very limited information on how the activity will be delivered; delivery plans may be speculative or ill-defined, with unclear plans or costs for delivery
- 1. The bid outcomes and aims are clearly stated and a basic delivery plan with broad estimates of spend and timings is provided. For larger more complex proposals risks and mitigations are not identified or feasibly addressed. The bid is likely only to include headline information on how and by whom the bid will be delivered
- 2. The bid contains clear aims and a detailed plan (proportionate the scale of funds being requested) for delivering them, providing information on costs, timings, dependencies, and the team/resource in place to deliver the bid. The bid identifies key risks and provides headline thoughts on mitigating these. The bid's aims will either clearly be achievable, or if the project aims carry a higher risk of failure then detailed mitigations and contingencies are provided
- 3. The bid meets all the criteria for a score of 2, and additionally is likely to include particularly strong capabilities from the bid team, for instance including subject matter experts, specialists in professional disciplines



relating to the bid, or partner organisations with prior experience of delivering similar work

B. Extent of benefit

0. The bid will deliver outputs or benefits that are likely to be used by/accessible/relevant to fewer than five grower organisations/businesses.
1. The bid will deliver outputs or benefits that are likely to be used by/accessible/relevant to up to fifteen grower organisations, or five in any sub-sector of ornamentals (such as bulbs or cut-flowers producers)
2. The bid will deliver outputs that are likely to be used by/accessible/relevant to over fifteen growers, or five growers in any sub-sector of ornamentals **OR** is likely to benefit multiple sub-sectors of ornamentals
3. The bid meets all the criteria for a score of 2, and additionally is likely to deliver benefits within the production supply chain, for instance supporting developments and changes among growers' suppliers or customers that are likely to amplify the benefits of the project to UK production

C. Cost : benefit

0. Vague/top-line costings are likely to be all that is provided, with no supporting evidence of costs provided/offered. No, or very superficial effort is made to relate the costs of the bid with the returns that are likely to be delivered¹. There will be limited or speculative evidence of grower support for the aims of the bid.
1. Itemised costings are provided, but with limited evidence of any systematic approach to assuring value for money. There may be a broad qualitative comparison of the costs of the project with returns for growers in terms of reduced costs/risks or increased revenues/profitability or other benefits. There will be little if any evidence of having assessed the scale of the benefit to be delivered by the project relative to its costs. There will be some evidence of grower support/appetite for the aim of the project.

¹ NB – benefit need not be expressed purely in financial terms, but could also cover reputational, environmental, skills/labour, health and safety, plant health, social, or other benefits to growers.



2. Bids have a clear assessment of the scale/value of the benefits to be provided, drawing on evidence or well-grounded assumptions/estimates. There will be a clear picture of 'what success looks like' for growers on delivery of the project in terms of benefit realisation. Costings will be clear, robust and detailed (proportionate to the scale of the bid), and an approach to assuring value for money (proportionate to the scale of the bid) will be evident. There will be clear and proportionate measures in the bid to assess the scale of impact/success delivered. There will be strong evidence of support/appetite from a range of growers for the aim of the project.
3. Bids will meet the criteria for a score of 2, and additionally are likely to provide information on how the benefits of the project will be maximised after and outside of delivery of the project, for instance in linking in with other programmes in the industry, providing legacy resources, etc.

D. Organisational credentials

0. The organisation/individual submitting the bid is likely to have no, or limited experience or demonstrable capability of delivering similar projects/bids. There is likely to be very limited financial or operational resilience or depth to be able to deliver the bid/project
1. The bid is likely to be from an organisation/individual with some experience of delivering at least one or two projects similar in type and scale to those proposed in the bid. The organisation is likely to have a trading/operating history of more than three years. The organisation (or those in the project team for the bid) will have a good understanding of horticultural crop production, and at least some experience of working in/for the ornamentals sector
2. The bid is likely to be from an organisation/individual with an established track record of delivering work similar in type and scale to that proposed. The organisation is likely to have been established for several years, and able to demonstrate financial resilience and operational depth, for instance being able to show how the project will be delivered should key project team members become unavailable
3. Bids will meet the criteria for a score of 2, and will additionally be able to demonstrate that they or other organisations involved in the bid have high levels of credibility or favourability within the sector, and/or among stakeholders in the industry which could play a role in ensuring that the benefits of the bid are realised as widely as possible in the industry.



Minimum score requirements for submission

In order for bids to be put forward to AHDB for review and approval, HTA and BOA would normally expect bids to meet the following scoring thresholds. Achieving bid scores in excess of these minimum scores **does not** guarantee that funding will be released.

	Bids for <£5k	Bids for £5k to £25k	Bids for over £25k
Scores allowed of '0' on any criteria	No bid scoring 0 on any criteria will be submitted		
Scores allowed of '1' on any criteria	2	1	0
Total minimum score needed	6	7	8

. . . end of document . . .