

Think Big, Act Wild – new Rewilding Challenge Fund awards £100k to large-scale rewilding projects

Friday 2 December, 2022

A major new annual fund to tackle the nature and climate crises is being launched by charity Rewilding Britain, with £100,000 to be awarded to one large-scale rewilding project every year.

The Rewilding Challenge Fund encourages applicants across Britain to 'Think Big, Act Wild', and has been set up to nurture innovative and pioneering initiatives which show maximum potential for upscaling rewilding on land and at sea.

The significant new award is being made available because of increasing demand for large-scale rewilding projects. There is growing recognition that rewilding is a key solution for tackling the nature and climate emergencies, with extensive benefits for people including nature-based economic opportunities.

Sara King, Rewilding Manager at Rewilding Britain, said: "We are absolutely delighted to launch the Rewilding Challenge Fund under the heading 'Think Big, Act Wild'. We're looking to scale-up rewilding – a vital step if Britain is to achieve the goal of major nature restoration across 30% of the country's land and seas by 2030.

"We're really keen to hear from community groups who can join together to bid for ambitious, large-scale rewilding projects, as well as from the managers and users of large areas of land and sea."

Rewilding is the large-scale restoration of nature to the point where it can take care of itself again. It involves reinstating natural processes and, where appropriate, native missing species.

Rewilding Britain is calling for major nature recovery across 30% of Britain's land and seas by 2030 – including core rewilding areas of native forest, peatland, grasslands, wetlands, rivers and coastal areas across 5% of the country, with no loss of productive farmland.

The charity is launching its Rewilding Challenge Fund ahead of the crucial UN biodiversity summit COP15 in December, to demonstrate rewilding's growing support and its huge potential for helping Britain reverse nature loss and meet its climate targets.

The increasing popularity of rewilding has been highlighted by the success of Rewilding Britain's growing Rewilding Network, which brings together a wide range of community groups, farmers, landowners, land managers and local groups across Britain to share ideas, experiences and expertise.

The Rewilding Network now includes almost 900 members, covering more than 113,000 hectares of land and more than 300 square kilometres of seas. These projects are demonstrating the extensive economic and social benefits of rewilding to local communities, as well as to biodiversity.

Rewilding Britain is inviting those interested in applying for the Rewilding Challenge Fund to submit a short expression of interest before 17 January 2023. Applicants must be members of Rewilding Britain's Rewilding Network, or be eligible to join.

Successful applicants will be invited to submit a full application, and the winning project will be announced by the end of March 2023. All details, including how to apply, can be found at rewildingbritain.org.uk/the-rewilding-network/rewilding-challenge-fund.

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