

1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
 2. Transport (<https://www.gov.uk/transport>)
 3. Rail (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/rail>)
 4. Rail infrastructure (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/rail-infrastructure>)
 5. Restoring Your Railway Fund (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/re-opening-beeching-era-lines-and-stations>)
- Department for Transport (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport>)

Guidance

Restoring Your Railway Fund

Updated 2 June 2021

Contents

Policy overview

Ideas Fund

Advanced proposals

Proposals for new or restored stations

Contact us

[Print this page](#)



© Crown copyright 2021

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) (<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3>) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/re-opening-beeching-era-lines-and-stations/re-opening-beeching-era-lines-and-stations>

Policy overview

The Department for Transport (DfT) is inviting MPs, local councils and community groups across England and Wales to propose how they could use funding to reinstate axed local services and restore closed stations.

This funding is split into 3 categories to ensure we can support different projects at different phases of development. The 3 categories are:

- the Ideas Fund – development funding for early-stage ideas to explore options to restore lost rail services connections to communities
- advanced proposals – support for lines and stations already being considered for restoration and for those identified as having further potential via the Ideas Fund application and assessment process
- proposals for new stations and the restoration of old station sites

If you are unsure which category your proposal would be most suited to, advice is available on request.

Ideas Fund

Through the Ideas Fund, we are seeking proposals for projects to restore lost rail connections to communities. This could include:

- upgrading a current freight line to include passenger services and restoring stations on it – such as the line to Ebbw Vale in South Wales
- restoring track and services to an old alignment – as is being done between Bicester and Bletchley
- modifying an old route due to construction or other unavailability over the original route

DfT will fund 75% of costs, up to £50,000, of successful proposals to help fund transport and economic studies and create a business case. Future funding to develop projects would be subject to agreement of the business case.

Ideas Fund round 3

The third round of the Ideas Fund closed to new bids on 5 March 2021. Outcomes will be announced in due course.

Previous Ideas Fund bids

A list of all bids (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/restoring-your-railway-fund-bids-received>) and a list of bids that have received funding (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/restoring-your-railway-fund-successful-bids>) are available.

Sponsorship and promotion

Any application for the Ideas Fund must be sponsored by one or more Members of Parliament whose constituencies would benefit from the scheme. The group promoting the scheme could include:

- local government
- community groups
- local enterprise partnerships
- other interested parties

We will require a 'lead promoter' with whom we can work. The lead promoter will assist in:

1. specifying the train services sought
2. identifying what benefits the scheme might bring

Your application will need to make clear what the local support is for a scheme and whether there is any opposition.

Governance of the scheme should be decided between the supporters, it is not determined by the DfT.

How to apply

The steps for applying for the Ideas Fund are:

1. contact the relevant MPs with your idea
2. include a submission making your case
3. your proposal will be assessed by an expert panel
4. successful bidders work with DfT officials to agree the scope of the proposal to be investigated and to develop the project's business case for receiving more substantial development funding

The Ideas Fund expert panel for round 3 comprises:

- Chris Heaton-Harris MP – Rail Minister, DfT (Chair)
- Luke Hall MP – Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Sir Peter Hendy – Chair, Network Rail
- Jackie Sadek – Chief Operating Officer, UK Regeneration
- Isabel Dedring – former Deputy Mayor of London for Transport

Making your case

Your bid for funding should focus on making the strategic and economic case for the scheme, as well as setting out any recognised challenges. We would expect this to include:

- socio-economic benefits
- services proposed
- infrastructure and operating costs

Applications must be made on the Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund application form. To request a copy of the form, contact us at restoringyourrailway@dft.gov.uk. The form has been designed to gather the information required for the assessment of the proposal and enables applicants to make the case for the proposal, including maps of any routes affected.

Socio-economic benefits

The most important part of the application is making clear what the scheme aims to achieve or solve and the socio-economic benefits it would bring. Your proposal should set out the journey opportunities that will be created and the expected demand. It should also reference economic opportunities, such as:

- employment
- housing
- education
- healthcare
- tourism

Services proposed

Your submission should outline the services proposed to be run on the restored railway. This should include frequency and interactions with the existing railway. For example, are these extensions to existing services or new services? Would they require additional train paths on an already busy line? What is the capacity of the relevant stations?

You should also set out whether there are any freight opportunities and what they might be. We would recommend engaging with the local train operator and Network Rail to understand opportunities. If available, you should also share with us any work done previously on the proposal.

Infrastructure and operating costs

At this stage, we would not expect you to provide estimates for infrastructure and operating costs for the scheme. For this, we will use a standard cost methodology to compare to the benefits proposed by the promoters. The information we will need to inform this will be a map of the route proposed with approximate locations of any:

- stations
- level or footpath crossings
- tunnels
- bridges

Your submission must include any constraints, such as buildings that have now been constructed upon the route or complications anticipated beyond straightforward reinstatement of the line.

We would also expect to understand the land ownership of the route and whether landowners would expect compensation. For example, we would expect councils to provide necessary land that they owned for free if the scheme went ahead.

Seeking advice during the application process

We ask that all communication with the department is via a single named individual in advance of the application submission. We will provide advice and clarification on process, but will not at this stage be providing specific advice of the case being made.

Local authorities can bring significant experience, particularly on issues such as:

- land ownership
- planning consents
- local plans

- rights of way adjustment
- access to stations
- environmental management

Should you require factual information from Network Rail we will facilitate this.

Next steps for successful Ideas Fund projects

Officials will contact the lead promoter of successful schemes to agree the definition of the concept and the train service specification, agree a work plan and discuss work towards the study and building the business case. Departmental officials will work with you as the study report develops. This study will be the first step in developing more detailed proposals and potentially obtaining funding for a project's delivery.

Feedback will be provided for unsuccessful applications.

Advanced proposals

We are making funding available to accelerate the development and delivery of schemes that already have existing business cases. This will use the standard government assessment framework and DfT officials will support applicants in progressing projects.

Funding may also support newer schemes that already have supporting analysis and are seeking a larger sum of support to progress to an outline business case.

If you have a scheme that you believe fits these criteria, contact us for advice on the next steps.

Note the government assessment framework does not rely only on benefit-cost ratios (BCRs) and strong strategic cases (for example, regeneration) with low BCRs may be considered.

Proposals for new or restored stations

The competition for the third round of the New Stations Fund closed on 5 June 2020. Proposals for new stations that are in the early stages of development may be eligible for the Ideas Fund.

Further information can be found on the New Stations Fund section of the Network Rail website (<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/passengers/station-improvements/new-stations-fund/>).

Contact us

We can be contacted for help and advice at restoringyourrailway@dft.gov.uk.

[Print this page](#)

Is this page useful?

- [Yes this page is useful](#)
- [No this page is not useful](#)

Thank you for your feedback

[Report a problem with this page](#)

[Close](#)

Help us improve GOV.UK

Don't include personal or financial information like your National Insurance number or credit card details.

What were you doing?

What went wrong?

Help us improve GOV.UK

To help us improve GOV.UK, we'd like to know more about your visit today. We'll send you a link to a feedback form. It will take only 2 minutes to fill in. Don't worry we won't send you spam or share your email address with anyone.

Email address