



PITCH UP! **Applications Guidance**

The Pitch Up! applications season runs from 1–30 November 2024. Go to pitchupandgrow.com from 1 November, when the 2024 application form will go online.

But there's lots you can do before then to get your application ready, and give you the best chance of success.

Below, we've listed the information you'll need to share for each stage of the application.

There's nothing to stop you starting to pull it all together now, ready to copy into the official form when it goes live on 1 November.

So, time to get busy!



2024 Application process

We are particularly interested to hear from existing enterprises looking to scale or expand elsewhere in the UK, but also happy to work with people at the idea/ proof of concept stage.

But before you start your application, please ensure your idea fits within the four core Pitch Up! principles:

LOCAL

You live in the region and near to the farm/ estate you're applying to – or are willing to relocate/ able to be on site as regularly as needed. It doesn't work to be off-land and hands-off. Even if your new business is fitting around a day job (which we completely understand), it really works to be reasonably close by and in close contact.

SUSTAINABLE

Your business is ecologically-minded, has a regenerative and low impact mindset, and wants to improve things for both nature and future generations. You also have the practical skills and business acumen to help your idea grow into a viable enterprise.

CIRCULAR

Your business will work with the existing natural resources of the estate you're applying to (eg plants/ wildflowers/ woodland), or what's already being farmed or produced there – and the businesses that are already there. Your idea will show how your business can collaborate to source or supply, re-use or repurpose waste or by-products, or introduce a beneficial new resource to the estate community/ system.

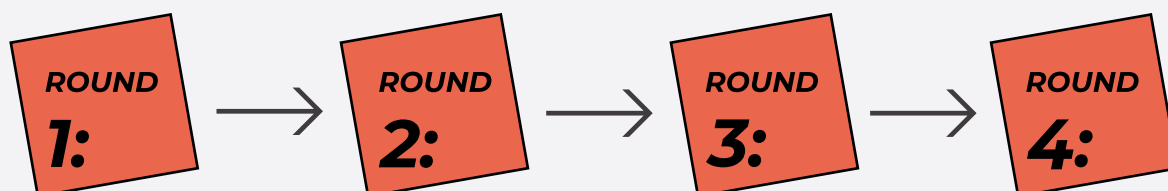
INNOVATIVE

Your business will add something fresh, exciting, different into the mix; creating new opportunities, filling gaps or solving problems for the current businesses on the estate. It will integrate with the whole estate system, rather than standing alone. And if you can see opportunities for mobile infrastructure to spread the benefits across the whole estate too, win win!



You might not know all of the answers yet – and we don't expect you to! – but it's worth having these principles in mind throughout the application process, especially when it comes to the estate visit and interview stages (see next page).

We understand you're most likely fitting your application around a day job, so we have broken up the application process into four key stages, to make it more manageable for everyone:



Application form

(see below)

*Deadline: midnight on
30 November 2024*

15-minute Zoom call

with estate team.

*Shortlisted applicants
notified from early
January 2025.*

Estate visit

with estate team.

*Dates to be agreed
with you.*

45-minute Zoom

interview with the

*national Pitch Up! team.
Dates to be agreed
with you.*

The application process should be complete by early spring 2025 – possibly before, depending on the number of applicants and what stage of development/ operations your business is at. We'll keep you updated on timings as you move through each round.

ROUND 1: Application form

This will be a simple form with the following sections:

- **Name, contact details, website and social media handles** if you have them.
- **WHICH PITCH UP! FARM ARE YOU APPLYING TO?** (tick the box for the correct Pitch Up! partner farm location)
- **WHO ARE YOU?** (200 words max): Tell us a bit about you and your core team (if you have one)... Your background? What you're doing now? What your roles would be? Any specialist skills or experience? What you're passionate about/ what gets you up in the morning?
- **WHAT'S YOUR PITCH?** (200 words max): Give a quick summary of your business/ product idea, the motivation behind it, business need or market opportunity it addresses, how it aligns with the Pitch Up! core principles (above) and why you think it will work. Or if you're responding to one of the opportunities listed at one of our farms, please tell us why you're well suited to take this on.
- **WHY THIS FARM?** (100 words max): How could your business/ product feed into/ from the circular community and farming/ production systems at your chosen farm? (For more information, see the farm links on the [Pitch Up! website](#).)

ROUND 2: 15-MINUTE ZOOM WITH ESTATE TEAM

This will be a quick video call with key members of the team on your chosen farm. The aim is to give us the chance to meet each other, and find out a bit more about you and your idea and/ or your experience (if you're responding to a listed opportunity).

The Zoom call will cover:

- Recap on the idea/ opportunity, and why it will succeed in 2025 and beyond
- Your target customer, audience and market
 - **Think:** who will buy your product or service and why? What are the structure, dynamics and predicted growth of your target market?
- The resources, equipment and facilities your product or service needs
 - **Think:** what do you already have? What will you need to buy/ have access to? Any specialist training needed? How much is all this likely to cost?
- Your competitors – who else is operating in this space and how does your product or service build on and or differentiate from competitors?
 - **Think:** what specific examples can you give, and how can you demonstrate your knowledge of this sector?

ROUND 3: FARM VISIT

This stage is really key – helping you understand the 'lie of the land' on your chosen Partner farm, and get a more tangible sense of how your business idea could come to life there.

You'll have the chance to see the land, environment and space available; meet other businesses based on your chosen farm; see the facilities, sites and hubs; and meet the farm team who would be supporting you by investing time, expertise and resources into your business.

It will also help you join the dots, picking up more understanding and site-specific details that will help you further develop your idea ready for the final interview (below).



ROUND 4: 45-MINUTE ZOOM INTERVIEW

This interview will be with both the management team at your chosen farm, and other farm managers involved in Pitch Up! It will give us all the chance to dig deeper into your business – and for you to see how we might be able to work together to grow your idea into a successful reality.

It's a good opportunity for you to see the expertise that's available through Pitch Up! – for example, you can tap into experience and specific knowledge of other businesses and circular processes across the Pitch Up! scheme, not just the individual farm you're applying to.

The interview will cover:

- A 5-minute presentation about why your idea (and team, if applicable) should win Pitch Up! support
- Questions from the Pitch Up! team, off the back of your presentation and conversation in ROUND 2
- A deeper look at your business plan, including your financial projections (you'll need to bring a 3-year cashflow projection to this interview)
- A discussion about your main risks, and how you plan to mitigate against them
- Any questions you have

If you have any questions about any of this application process, please email hello@pitchupandgrow.com and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

A final note...

Do-ers (not just dreamers) this way please...

We're looking for bright ideas from people with practical know-how and business acumen/ get-up-and-go spirit/ hard grafters and people who are really committed to making things happen.

- We need action
- And actionable businesses ready to get stuck in
- It doesn't matter if your business idea is still in the early stages of development, as long as you've really considered how it could work both practically, financially, and personally.