

BORDER UNION AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY
BICENTENARY BURSARY FUND
Terms and Conditions

As at July 2024

1. The Fund was set up from donations, pledges and contributions received in **response to an appeal for a Bursary Fund** by the Border Union Agricultural Society ('the Society') in 2012/2013, to mark the Society's Bicentenary year in 2013.
2. The Fund is classed as a **restricted fund** within the Society's records and books of account. It will remain open to receive further donations and legacies until such time as the Society shall decide to close it. The funds will remain restricted until exhausted. The Society's Board of Trustees will be responsible for the management of the funds and will give guidance on the amount that can be awarded in any year. The amount will largely be informed by the interest earned on the funds invested but may also include an element of capital. The assessment of applications and subsequent award of any bursary will be done through an Awards Panel (*see Clause 15 below*).
3. The Fund reflects one of the Society's main objectives: that of **encouraging improvement** in the fields of agriculture, forestry, horticulture, their allied industries, country sports, food (catering, processing, diversification), conservation, rural crafts, equestrianism, rural leisure, fish farming, environment, renewable sources of energy, and all aspects of the rural economy of the Borders and North Northumberland. It has been created in order to provide financial support in the form of bursaries to **people with drive and ambition** who have identified an opportunity to advance their careers (or start a new career) in one or more of these areas. It is particularly important that applicants (especially those who are asking for support for post-graduate study) put forward **clear and strong** arguments that will persuade the Awards Panel that the bursary support given will ultimately contribute to the benefit of the rural economy of this area.
4. Bursaries from the Fund will be awarded in respect of **learning opportunities** such as courses, study or participation in relevant conferences where the focus is on:
 - (i) Vocational and artisanal training, and training in rural skills
 - (ii) Entrepreneurship, innovation and improved efficiencies
 - (iii) Promotion of agricultural produce
 - (iv) Managerial skills (especially in relation to farm enterprise management)
 - (v) Attendance at national or international conferences where applicants can show how the focus of their attendance will relate to their own career or business.
 - (vi) Rural leadership, higher level management training and career development, (e.g. Nuffield (*see Clause 12*), Scottish Enterprise, etc.)Bursaries are for educational purposes only; applications for grants for start-up equipment and/or materials, or for sponsorship in sport, are not eligible
5. Bursaries will normally be awarded to applicants who are active in work, whether they are in **paid employment** or **self-employment**. Students who are asking for support for post-graduate study may apply but must pay particular attention to (and must satisfy) the conditions of Clause 3, especially the last sentence of that clause. Only in very exceptional circumstances will applications be considered from students currently in full-time or part-time education or undertaking a first degree

6. Applicants should **live or have lived in the area** covered by the Society. In practice this means the Borders and North Northumberland.

7. To ensure that awareness of the Bursary Fund reaches as wide an audience as possible, the Society will **promote** the Fund regularly through whatever means it feels appropriate, examples being:

- (i) all media in the Society's area, including newspapers and local radio
- (ii) the farming press and magazines relating to the rural economy
- (iii) the Society's catalogues and schedules, and at the Border Union Show
- (iv) the Society's website and Social Media channels
- (v) other agricultural societies and the Young Farmers Clubs in the area
- (vi) advisory agencies and professional advisers

8. Level of bursary.

- (i) The **number** of bursaries awarded, and the **value** of these bursaries, may vary according to the financial resources available and according to the demand placed on these. The Society does not commit or guarantee to award bursaries every year.
- (ii) Applicants will be required to declare the level of **personal financial commitment** which they are able to contribute to the chosen study/focus
- (iii) The **value of individual** bursaries will be determined by the Awards Panel after the application has been fully assessed but will not normally exceed 50% of the total cost of the agreed study, course or learning opportunity. However, the panel reserves the right to exceed this if it considers that special circumstances apply.
- (iv) The Awards Panel reserves **the right to withhold** a proportion of the bursary awarded until the recipient has fully completed his/her proposed study and/or to withdraw support from any candidate who fails to complete his/her agreed programme of study.
- (v) The terms and mode of disbursement of the bursary awarded will be discussed with each successful candidate.

9. Applying for bursary awards

- (i) Applications are to be made on application **forms issued by the Society** and may be submitted in writing or electronically.
- (ii) Applications may be submitted **at any time** but will only be assessed in **January, April, July and October**. Applications must therefore be received by 5.00pm on **31st December, 31st March, 30th June and 30th September** respectively.
- (iii) An up-to-date **CV** and two written **references** are required, one covering the applicant's education or employment or professional career, the other covering personal character.
- (iv) Applicants will be required to attend an **interview**.

10. **Assessing** the application and determining an award

- (i) The Awards Panel will **meet** quarterly, in January, April, July and October
- (ii) Applications should therefore be lodged by the end of December, March, June and September respectively
- (iii) Notwithstanding these quarterly meetings, it may be possible to arrange a fast-track assessment
- (iv) An application found to be **incomplete** or considered 'light' may be referred back to the applicant

(v) The Awards Panel may take account of evidence of the applicant's **commitment to the locality** when considering an application.

11. The Awards Panel reserves the right to **discuss and refine** with successful applicants the objectives of the proposed study/focus; it also reserves the right to monitor the progress of successful applicants.

12. The Awards Panel will consider supporting scholars who are selected by other Trusts such as the **Nuffield Farming** Scholarships Trust so long as they meet the Panel's criteria for residence and study. Where the Scholarship Trust advises that a candidate (or candidates) meeting its criteria has (have) come forward, the Awards Panel can be represented at the interviews in accordance with the Trust's guidelines; the Awards Panel recognises that the ultimate decision to award a Nuffield scholarship rests with the Scholarship Trust.

13. Requirements of successful applicants

Recipients of bursary support will normally be expected to **remain in their current employment** or be **employed in the Borders (including self-employment)**, or be employed **by a Borders-based company**, for a period of time after the completion of the study for which the Bursary was awarded.

14. Successful candidates will be asked to discuss with the Awards Panel appropriate ways in which they can **provide feedback** and demonstrate the benefits gained from their chosen course or study. This may include making a report of the study/focus activities to which their bursary award has contributed and/or to make presentations to the Society, other societies in the area and/or other appropriate groups. Reports will be posted on the **Society's website** and displayed at the Border Union Show.

15. Organisation and **structure of the Awards Panel**

(i) The Awards Panel will comprise a maximum of ten members, of which a quorum of 50% is required at each meeting

(ii) The Panel will include the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Society (*ex officio*) and at least one other Trustee or Director. The Panel will elect its own Chair. The Society's Executive Director/Secretary and appointed Chartered Accountant attend the meetings as observers.

(iii) Members will be expected to serve for a maximum term of 3 years

(iv) Membership of the Awards Panel should aim to reflect a broad spectrum of professional experience and backgrounds (business, education, professional development, etc.) Individuals can be co-opted.

(v) The decision of the Awards Panel is final.

16. **Duties of the Awards Panel**

(i) The Panel must keep proper **records of meetings and of decisions** taken but must also have due regard to **confidentiality** at all times.

(ii) The Panel must observe the **Society's duties and obligations** under company and charitable law and must not compromise these.

(iii) The Awards Panel will **discuss and review** the Terms and Conditions and the mechanism of the Bursary Fund at least once every three years, submitting its review (and any recommended amendment) to the Society through the Board of Trustees.

17. Notwithstanding the above, the Society reserves the right **to review or amend** all aspects of the Fund and the operation of the Awards Panel at any time so long as the restricted nature of the Fund is recognised and respected.