

Appendix 2 Sector Support Fund (SSF) Application Template

1. Project Title	
BUY LOCAL SOUTH EAST	
2. Project Location	
Lead contact location, Produced in Kent, Rural Regeneration Centre, Blackman's Farm, Blackmans' Lane, Hadlow, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 0AX	
Primary delivery locations:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual delivery through online collaboration tools such as Zoom, Teams and Webjam • Produced in Kent, Blackman's Farm, Blackman's Lane, Hadlow, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 0AX (Floortje Hoette, CE) • Natural Partnerships CIC, Ivy Cottage, Poynings Road, Poynings, BN45 7AG • Rural Community Council of Essex, Threshelfords Business Park, Inworth Road, Feering, CO5 9SE 	
3. Lead point of contact for Project	
Name	Floortje Hoette
Organisation	Produced in Kent
Job Title	Chief Executive
Telephone	07734058309
Email	Floortje.hoette@producedinkent.co.uk
4. Lead contact in County Council/ Unitary Authority (if different from above)	
Name	Paul Jordan
Organisation	Kent County Council
Job Title	Principal Project Officer (Analysis), Growth, Environment & Transport
Telephone	03000 416328
Email	Paul.jordon@kent.gov.uk
5. Description of Project (No more than 300 words)	
<p>The Food and Drink sector is moving up on the regional government agenda: In past years, food tourism has been growing in the southeast, British food (Buy British) – in particular its wine – has become hugely popular in and outside of the UK and customers have grown more environmentally aware, shifting their attention to local and sustainable food .</p> <p>Covid19 has brought the role of the food and drink sector in our regional rural economy into sharp focus. The forced shutdown of pubs, restaurants and cafes has had a disastrous effect on the hospitality sector and its supply chain of growers, producers and distributors. Now is the moment to capitalise on a renewed focus on local buying to support all businesses in the food and drink sector to weather the Covid19 storm and rebuild a sustainable business in the recovery period.</p> <p>We therefore propose:</p>	

- A **regional website and portal** to signpost customers to local food and drink businesses showing the SELEP region (www.buylocalfoodanddrink.co.uk), which is a centralised food and drink platform for the area aimed at consumers (B2C page) and businesses (B2B-page) looking to buy local in the Southeast
- A SELEP area wide **Buy Local Food and Drink marketing campaign** focussed on local producers, retailers and followed by hospitality and tourism experiences
- Central **database for food and drink businesses** in the SELEP area¹
- A series of **business recovery support activities** for food and drink businesses based on a sector Covid impact and recovery survey g: This could include: surveys, training, 1-2-1 support, connecting suppliers with buyers, and knowledge exchange conference.

This work is supported by the need from local producers to develop business relations with local wholesale, retail and hospitality sectors to build their businesses. Additionally, a bespoke business support programme is required as expressed by the participants from the Good Food Growth Campaign (2019 – 2020)

6. Federated Board endorsement

The process of endorsement by Federated Boards is underway.

7. Project links to SELEP Economic Strategy Statement (ESS)

Please identify which objectives within the current ESS that this project will assist in delivering

ESS Priority areas	Description	Support provided by project
1. Creating ideas and enterprise	Increase the adoption of new technologies and processes	Through its virtual business recovery support package, the project will enable small rural businesses to access expertise to support development of new products/services, and build products/services started in response to the Covid19 crisis. Advice and training on new technologies and innovations in the areas of food production and delivery techniques, food processing, sales and marketing, routes to market and access to new markets will enhance economic development and support job creation. The sector Covid19 impact and recovery survey will inform in which specific areas support will be provided
1. Creating ideas and enterprise	Respond to the increasing need for workspace flexibility	The online B2C and B2B platform created by the regional map, as well as the virtual business support offering provides food and drink businesses with a more efficient, cheaper and less time-consuming way of developing business relationships, knowledge exchange and upskilling
1. Creating ideas and enterprise	Ensure that the South East is Britain's gateway for trade and investment	The project, through its B2C and B2B platform, will provide an opportunity to businesses across the three federated areas to connect

¹ East Sussex will link their existing map to the regional 'landing page'

		with each other, with larger regional, national (large retail) and international 'Buyers' as well as with customers residing within and outside of the SELEP area
4. Creating Places	Supporting quality of life and quality of place	Covid19 has shown the pivotal role the food and drink industry is playing in our local economy and communities. By beating the Buy Local drum through its SELEP-wide marketing campaign, and by supporting growers, producers, retailers and businesses in the hospitality sector boost B2C and B2B sales and build regional supply chains, the project supports the regional economy, promotes a connected, healthy and happy community, and contributes to a well-maintained countryside and a better environment
5. Working together	Working and engaging with business across the South East LEP	The regional map and supporting marketing campaign provide customers looking for local produce an insight into the great variety of food and drink businesses in the SELEP area, with the regional map providing a direct Call to Action, boosting sales and subsequent business growth. The map and business support activities offer the opportunity for local producers to engage with broader market and build on the 'local produce' offer, offering a more sustainable approach to food production which directly supports local job creation and community cohesion.
Rural Strategy Objectives	Description	Support provided by project
RE1 Provide support for rural businesses and businesses in rural areas	Entrepreneurial culture within which people are able to establish, develop and grow or relocate their business with access to a well-trained workforce in a rural location. Increase the number of business start-ups. Create sustainable employment opportunities in rural areas which in turn support's thriving communities.	The project directly supports this objective by creating a B2C and B2B platform through the creation of a regional map and database, boosting B2C and B2B sales, facilitating the creation of a more permanent regional business network and supply chain of independent food and drink businesses , which in turn will help employment and business growth across the sector. The business recovery support package provided will help businesses get back on their feet whilst forging business relations through the virtual and physical events offered.
RE3 Support the development of sustainable rural tourism	Work in partnership at a strategic level across the LEP	The food and drink offer is integral to the rural tourism sector. This project will help integrate it further by developing current and additional

	to support a co-ordinated tourism offer. Broadened tourism business base creates sustainable and enhanced employment opportunities.	markets through its Buy Local marketing campaign. The Buy Local campaign will also extend a hand to the hospitality sector which has suffered disproportionately from the social distancing guidelines, promoting its offering and helping with B2B business development and targeted recovery support
RC2 Develop the skills of the rural workforce	Support the development of local businesses to help upskill and reskill people of all ages and enhance their access to jobs.	The project, through its baseline survey, provides an opportunity to assess current skills gaps post Covid19 and offer targeted upskilling activities
RC3 Build 'community capital' in our dispersed communities, villages and towns	Develop the entrepreneurial potential and resilience of rural communities.	The Buy Local marketing campaign across the SELEP area will boost business confidence, as well as community cohesion and resilience.
Ren3 Support sustainable development and planning to provide a sustainable future	To provide a sustainable future.	Promoting local buying supports the local economy, helps to create local and regional supply chains, and links into the environmental sustainability agenda

1. Total value (£s) of SSF sought (net of VAT)

£69,510

PLEASE NOTE that the value of SSF funding sought can be scaled down to a minimum of £49,800 by cutting back on marketing and PR costs but we feel that, in order to get the traction we need with a SELEP-wide marketing campaign, the £69,510 ask is justified.

2. Total value (£s) of project (net of VAT)

BUY LOCAL PROJECT COSTS		
Activity	Description	Expenditure
Website development		£3,500
Website maintenance	12 months	£2,000
Legal fees	T&C	£3,000
Project Manager	4 days p/m @£300 a day = £1200 p/m	£14,400
Marketing and admin staff support	4.5 days p/m @£200 a day = £900 p/m x 3 = £2700	£32,400
Social media and media advertising	Paid social media, pay per click campaign	£8,000
Marketing collateral		£5,000
PR activities and influencers	Virtual campaign launch, county, regional and national press	£18,000

Sector survey	10-day consultancy (design, data collection and analysis, report) @ £500 a day	£5,000
Business support activities	Virtual networking and training events, virtual 1-2-1 business support, 1 regional Connecting Suppliers with Buyers, 1 conference	£8,000
TOTAL project costs		£99,300

3. Total value (£) of match funding (net of VAT)

£29,790

4. Funding breakdown (£s)

Source	2017/18	2018/19	2020/21	Total
SSF			£69,510	
Other sources of funding (<i>please list below, add additional rows if necessary</i>)				
<i>Produced in Kent</i>			£19,600	
<i>Natural Partnerships CIC</i>			£5,790	
<i>Rural Community Council</i>			£4,400	
Total Project Cost			£99,300	

5. Details of match funding

Insert details of match funding, including who is providing match, at what value, on what terms and what assurances are there that the match will be provided

The value of the match funding will be £29,790

Partners will provide the following:

Staff from partner organisations will absorb some of the project management, project marketing and PR support required for the projects:

Project management: Produced in Kent to cover costs of 2 days p/m @ £300 = £600 p/m x 12 = £7200.

Staff marketing support: Each partner to cover costs of 1 days p/m @200 = £200 x 12 = £2400.

PR support and commercial sponsorship: Rural Community Council and Natural Partnership to cover costs of £5390, Produced in Kent to cover costs of £5000.

In addition, the University of Kent will carry out a bespoke piece of work (sector survey) @£5000, which will be managed by Produced in Kent.

6. Expected project start and completion dates

Start project: Monday 15 June 2020

End project: 14 May 2021

7. Key Milestones

Key Milestones	Description	Indicative Date
Project initiated	Funding confirmed and contract awarded	15 June 2020

Project management group agreed	Structure formalised	19 June 2020
Project Group meetings	Virtual Last Thursday of each month	25 June 2020, and following
Regional marketing campaign developed	Content Strategy Marketing channels identified Key events	26 June 2020
Business info imported into website	Imported from HelpKentBuyLocal Added from Essex Link established from regional website to East Sussex webpage	26 June 2020
Website launched	Regional website County pages (branded)	1 July 2020
Marketing campaign launched	Press release Virtual launch event	1 July 2020
Content sector survey finalised	To be filled out by every new listing	1 July 2020
First News Bulletins to go out	Every County	8 July 2020
500 businesses listed on regional website, plus 250 on East Sussex website	250 per County	25 September 2020
Sector survey outcomes	Sector stats Impact Covid Recovery needs	25 September 2020
Business recovery support package finalised	Depending on outcomes survey, may include: Virtual networking events, sectoral support groups Virtual 1-2-1 business support Virtual training Connecting Suppliers with Buyers (2021) Conference (2021)	2 October 2020
Start of business support activities	<i>As agreed in support package</i> Virtual activities Connecting Suppliers with Buyers	19 October 2020 – 26 March 2020 January 2021 – March 2021
Conference	End of project activity	April 2021
1200 businesses listed on regional website		May 2021
End of project evaluation		14 May 2021
Strategy to monetize regional website by each county	To ensure financial sustainability project post-funding	June 2021
Project impact survey and report		November 2021
8. Benefits created by 2021 (list benefits with number/amount and cash value if applicable)		
Type of Benefit	Number of benefits created	Cash value of benefit (£)
Increased B2C sales – overall uplift of 2-5% across companies involved (acknowledging challenging economic climate)	800 companies (conservative sales estimate of £40 million annually)	Potentially 2% - 5% of £40 million = £0.8million – £2million
Increased B2B sales - overall uplift of 2-5% across companies involved	300 companies (conservative sales estimate of £30 million annually)	Potentially 2% - 5% of £30 million = £0.6million – £1.5million

(acknowledging challenging economic climate)		
New products developed	10 products developed and taken to market ²	Potential additional revenue of circa £30,000 per product = £300,000
Additional employment – target of 30 FTE posts (existing and start-ups)		£18,000 per FTE x 30 = £540,000
TOTAL		£4,340,000

9. Value for Money – Benefit/Cost Ratio

Please insert your Benefit/Cost Ratio (i.e total value of benefits divided by total costs). Please indicate how you have quantified your benefits and over what period those benefits are expected to realised

The Benefit/Cost Ratio is 44/1 and highlights the significant potential for the development of SELEP's food and drink sector.

Monitoring will take place during the period of project delivery and continue 6 months beyond that point to ensure adequate time is allowed for an accurate review to take place.

The Buy Local marketing campaign will drive customer and business traffic to the regional website, as well as the County sites it feeds into, and ultimately to the businesses listed on there. A regional map will attract a larger (UK, London and international) audience, which opens up regional, national and potentially international export opportunities, as well as the attention of the large UK retailers looking to provide a 'local' offering to their customers.

Covid19 has seen a surge in businesses taking up home delivery or Take Away services, or pivoting in other, often very innovative ways. Project training provided on developing and further building these services (with available digital technologies) and successfully adapting one's brand and business strategy in line with this operational change, will lead to at least 10 new products developed and taken to market. See also footnote.

Increase in trade across the food and drink sector in the SELEP region will lead to an increase in FTEs. The estimate above is a very conservative one.

10. Value for Money – Other Considerations

Please detail benefits that cannot be quantified or cannot be quantified without lengthy or expensive analysis. This narrative should include details on why the benefit can't be quantified. If your BCR does not meet the standard 2:1 – please use this section to set out why the investment should be considered

The project will make a significant contribution to the development and sustainability of SELEP's food and drink sector as outlined below:

Promoting the sector through a regional website and Buy Local campaign

- A visual map will be a catalyst in raising awareness about the wealth of local produce and products available to customers *and* businesses (local, regional, national), boosting B2C and B2B trade and strengthening regional supply chains
- A regional map will attract a wider customer audience to the businesses listed, broaden market horizons (UK and international) and encourage an entrepreneurial approach.

² Whilst the impact of the HelpKentBuyLocal campaign on this development remains to be assessed, Kent businesses since the start of the lockdown, have brought a surprising 16 new products to market – see press release Produced in Kent 30/04/20

- A regional map will facilitate the creation of a more joined-up business sector network and community, improving communication, information-sharing and collaboration.
- A regional marketing campaign around local buying can create a real buzz and momentum and create serious media attention, which will benefit B2C and B2B trade for the food and drink sector.
- Being part of a Buy Local campaign builds confidence and encourages businesses in recovery, bringing new drive, creativity and energy into the sector.
- PR activities delivered by the three County project partners to their respective professional networks simultaneously will encourage a wide range of stakeholders (local and regional Government, local and regional business support organisations, strategic partners, media and corporate partners) to promote the Buy Local campaign, adding to its success.

Undertaking a sector Covid19 impact and recovery survey

- A sector survey will enable the project team to devise a business recovery support package that meets the needs of, and resonates with, those businesses involved.
- A sector survey at the start of the project can serve as a benchmark exercise against which the impact survey and report outcomes can be measured.
- Data collected in the sector Covid19 impact and recovery survey can serve as evidence towards the rural strategy in development, thus strengthening the case for more investment in the sector

Providing a (virtual) business recovery support package

- A virtual offering makes it easier and cheaper (no travel costs, less time away from the business) for businesses from across the SELEP region to join, which will boost attendance numbers. Training sessions can be recorded so that those unable to attend can still engage and learn at a later stage
- The virtual character of the majority of business support offered, enables the project to engage sector professionals at minimal cost
- Knowledge sharing will enhance confidence, help forge new business partnerships and encourage investment in business development
- The Connecting Suppliers with Buyers event and end-of-project Conference facilitate a virtual or physical environment to forge and consolidate business relationships

Link to LoCASE

- Project can be linked to LOCASE initiatives, reinforcing each other’s aims and objectives. Both are pan-LEP initiatives which offer support and/or business grants to SMEs.

11. Dependencies and Risks

Please detail any scheme dependencies, risks and delivery constraints which may impact on the delivery of the project and or the benefits achieved through SSF investment in the Project

Risks	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	Overall risk
Partner disengagement	Low	Mod/High	Partners well-known to one another and have already provided significant time in pulling the application together. They fully support the sector and have demonstrated a high level of commitment to the project	Low

Poor engagement from businesses	Mod	High	Businesses in Kent and East Sussex are already engaging in existing online networks – integration of these online networks into regional website will be no problem. Captive business audience in Essex because of existing business contacts through GFGP	Low
Lack of conference venues	Low	Low	Covid19 has seen a quick adaptation to virtual meetings, training sessions and networking events – audience will be receptive to this approach during and post-Covid	Low
Skill-set lacking to ensure effective project management	Low	High	Partners involved have a long and successful track-record of managing a broad range of complex, multi-faceted projects. A project management team will be formed to ensure effective delivery.	Low

12. State Aid Implications

This project does not breach State Aid Regulations. Whilst businesses will benefit from attending the proposed events any state aid implications are well within de minimis limits.

13. Contracting Body

Kent County Council, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ will be the contracting body.

Lead contact: Paul Jordan, Principal Project Officer (Analysis) | Growth, Environment & Transport

14. Project Governance Structure

- **Project Manager:** Jill Sargent, Produced in Kent

Project manager to:

- coordinate the overall project and project group
- communicate with project funding body and account holder
- Communicate with/develop business support content with external stakeholders
- undertake project reporting and evaluation
- be the primary admin of the regional website

- **Senior Responsible Officers:**

- Kent: Jo Gurr, Produced in Kent
- East Sussex: Paula Seager/Hilary Knight, Natural Partnerships CIC
- Essex: Beverly Davies, Programme Manager for Essex Rivers LAG, Rural Community Council of Essex

Senior responsible officers to:

- Have access to business data of businesses listed in their area
 - Undertake admin of listed businesses in their area
 - Roll out Buy Local marketing campaign in their area
 - Coordinate support activities in their area
- **Project group** to consist of Produced in Kent (Kent), Natural Partnerships CIC (East Sussex) and the Rural Community Council of Essex, plus the account holder (KCC)
 - **Budget account holder:** Paul Jordan, Principal Project Officer (Analysis) | Growth, Environment & Transport, Kent County Council

15. Declaration

Declaration	I certify that the information provided in this application is complete and correct
Signature (Lead applicant)	
Print Name	Paul Jordan, Principal Project Officer (Analysis) Growth, Environment & Transport
Organisation	Kent County Council
Date	1 May 2020

A version of this document will be made available on www.southeastlep.com