RISE Project 2025-2027

Expense Policy and Procedure

Below you can find instructions on how to spend money from the RISE Project balance. We are using Social Change Nest for this process. Tracking and tracing expenses via Social Change Nest makes it easy: everything is transparent, and reports are automatically generated.

Expense Policy

This is a dynamic document that will be reviewed annually (on the anniversary of the start of the project) as a minimum by the RISE Project Coordination Circle to make sure it best suits the needs of the RISE Project Collective and fulfills its objectives. The scope of this policy is to clarify legitimate expenses and the decision-making process for reimbursement relating to the delivery of the RISE Project. It also includes process information for those within the RISE Project that wish to submit an expense themselves. Its intended audience is the members of the RISE Project Community of Practice.

Finance Administrators

In place from October 2025 until September 2027, their role is to approve expenses. Feel free to reach out to them if you have questions about an expense.

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WHAT EXPENSES ARE ELIGIBLE?

Eligible expenses are those that arise from the delivery of the project by members of the RISE Project Community of Practice as defined in the Grant Agreement between the RISE Project (the recipients) and Farming the Future (the funders). These *include* hire of facilities, groceries, catering provision, travel costs and Community of Practice meeting preparation and participation time. Please make sure that your expenses offer best value and match UK Grain Lab's values of 'diversity, democracy and decentralisation' where possible. If you're not sure your expenses are valid, please check with the RISE Project's 's Finance Administrators team above BEFORE spending. Invalid expenses will not be reimbursed.

WHAT IS THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

Expenses must be submitted through Social Change Nest using the process detailed below. If you're not comfortable doing this, then one of the Finance Administrators of the RISE Project (listed above) can do it on your behalf.

After submission of an expense, RISE Project Finance Administrators review the submitted expense (confirming that the expense meets legal and fiscal requirements, e.g. having a valid receipt, a clear picture, that the amounts match, the invoice is legally valid, etc.) We aim to do this when expenses etc. are needed (so please email us if you need a quick payment). One Administrator's approval (other than the person submitting the expense, should this be one of the Finance Administrators) is required for each submitted expense.

In the event of a conflict or disagreement in the reimbursement of an expense, the matter will be referred to the RISE Project's Coordination Circle's next meeting for final decision-making.

HOW EXPENSES ARE REIMBURSED

There are three basic steps in spending the money on the RISE Project's balance:

1. **A member of the RISE Project submits an expense.**

There are two main types of expenses:

- Reimbursements of a prepaid purchase (with receipt of payment)

- Invoices for paid services provided to the Project

2. **A Finance Administrator (someone on the RISE Project team) approves it.**

3. **The expense is paid.**

Social Change Nest make payments by BACS of approved expenses 3 times each week.

STEP 1: SUBMIT THE EXPENSE

Any member of the RISE Project Community of Practice that spends money can submit an expense themselves to the RISE Project's page on Open Collective (Social Change Nest) by logging in and uploading a receipt or an invoice as proof of payment.

Option 1: Receipts/reimbursements

Receipts are for items bought for the RISE Project and for which you need to be reimbursed eg. groceries, printing etc.

Make sure that you keep the receipt. Take a clear photo of it (make sure it's clearly and easily readable) and submit it to the RISE Project's page (click on "submit expense").

A valid expense must contain the name and address of the vendor, the amount, the date, and the description of the items purchased, with any sales tax (such as VAT) clearly defined.

Option 2: Invoices

Invoices are used to pay people for a service (a vendor, a company, a freelancer). They directly charge the members of the RISE Project for this service. When you upload an invoice, you are considered an **independent contractor or freelancer.**

The invoice needs to contain following essential information:

- The invoice must be addressed to The Social Change Nest CIC (RISE Project).
- You have to include the legal name of The Social Change Nest CIC and their legal address (C/O Sedulo Office 605, Albert House 256-260 Old Street, London, England, EC1V 9DD).
- The invoice must include the legal name, address, and tax number (UTR) of the beneficiary (the vendor or freelancer who issues the invoice).
- The invoice must include a sales tax rate or, if you are not obliged/allowed to charge VAT, a reference to the law that clarifies that. Check this with your accountant if you're not sure
- Finally, just in case, make sure that you can of course legally issue invoices (you are a registered freelancer or company).

STEP 2: GET YOUR EXPENSES APPROVED

When a member of the RISE Project submits an expense (receipt or invoice), its status is `PENDING`. An email is automatically sent to all the Finance Administrators of the RISE Project to invite them to approve it (or comment on it to ask for more information).

Social Change Nest has no decision-making power on approving expenses.

STEP 3: GET PAID

Once approved, and if there is enough balance to cover it in the RISE Project, your expense will show up in the list of expenses that are `READY TO PAY`. One of the administrators of Social Change Nest goes through this list every week and reimburses the approved expenses. As long as the receipt/invoice is legal and approved by one of the Finance Administrators of the RISE Project, and it complies with the transparency and accountability rules (i.e. it is not a lump sum amount sent to an intermediary to hide how the money is spent), it will be paid.

Once the payment is done, the status of the expense will go to `PAID` and the balance of the RISE Project will be automatically updated.

Note: whenever you edit your expense, its status will go back to `PENDING` so that the finance administrators can review it again. Once paid, an expense can only be edited by the administrators.