

Equestrian projects funded through Sport England's Movement Fund:

Environmental sustainability and increasing participation

Equestrian-based project examples which align with Movement Fund's priorities.

Please note these examples are not provided by Sport England and we cannot guarantee these projects will result in funding being granted.

Example 1: LED arena lighting upgrade

Project

Replace outdated arena lighting with energy-efficient LED systems to improve visibility and extend safe riding hours.

Need / rationale

Limited lighting reduces usable arena time, particularly in winter, restricting opportunities for people who work, care for others, or rely on public transport. This contributes to lower participation and reduced retention of new and returning riders.

Environmental sustainability

- Significant reduction in energy consumption and carbon emissions
- Longer product lifespan reduces waste and replacement frequency
- Lower ongoing maintenance and operational costs

Increasing participation and physical activity

- Extends facility opening hours, enabling consistent evening and winter activity
- Increases opportunities for working adults, young people outside school hours and volunteers and coaches with limited daytime availability
- Supports sustained, year-round participation rather than seasonal drop-off
- Enables centres to deliver additional weekly sessions at times when there is a demand and otherwise unused capacity

Example 2: Solar panels for equestrian centres

Project

Install solar panels on stables, arenas, or clubhouses to generate renewable on-site energy.

Need / rationale

Rising energy costs can increase participation fees, creating affordability barriers - particularly for lower-income households and those new to the sport.

Environmental sustainability

- Renewable on-site energy generation reduces reliance on fossil fuels
- Long-term reduction in carbon emissions and operational energy demand
- Visible demonstration of commitment to environmental responsibility

Increasing participation and physical activity

- Reduces operating costs, enabling reinvestment of savings into affordable sessions, outreach activities, and participation growth for inactive and low-income groups

Example 3: Arena and yard drainage improvements

Project

Improve drainage systems in outdoor arenas and high-traffic yard areas to reduce flooding and waterlogging.

Need / rationale*

Poor ground conditions lead to cancelled lessons, safety concerns, and inconsistent delivery, particularly during wetter months. This reduces progression, retention, and overall participation.

Environmental sustainability

- Improved natural water management reduces runoff and surface erosion
- Strengthens climate resilience in response to more extreme weather patterns
- Reduces reliance on chemical surface treatments and reactive repairs

Increasing participation and physical activity

- Reduces cancellation of sessions enabling reliable year-round delivery of activity
- Supports:
 - improved participant retention
 - progression from beginner to regular participation
 - increased capacity for new participants
- Improves confidence for new riders by ensuring predictable session delivery

Example 4: Biodiversity, accessible green spaces and community activity routes

Project

Develop tree planting, hedgerows, biodiversity zones and accessible walking routes across equestrian centres, creating green spaces that support both riding activities and wider community use through structured physical activity opportunities.

Need / rationale*

Many people aren't ready or able to engage directly in riding. Creating accessible green

spaces provides alternative entry points into physical activity, while enhancing the attractiveness of equestrian venues. Demonstrate community consultation and provide evidence that local residents or groups will use the spaces for walking and other organised activities.

Environmental sustainability

- Increased biodiversity and habitat creation through tree planting, hedgerows and wildlife-friendly areas
- Improved natural shading, drainage and climate resilience, reducing heat stress, flood risk and reliance on artificial shelter or cooling
- Supports low-impact use of natural spaces and long-term environmental stewardship of equestrian land
- Encourages greater environmental awareness and connection with nature

Increasing participation and physical activity

- Creates a “first step” into physical activity in a welcoming environment for inactive groups
- Attracts people who may not initially engage through traditional equestrian activities, creating pathways into riding, volunteering or other programmes
- Encourages increased site usage and repeat visits by both equestrian and non-equestrian audiences
- Supports wellbeing-focused engagement and social connection through outdoor activity
- Enables structured offering of physical activity opportunities, such as guided walks, enabling the centre to monitor participation and usage
- Strengthens partnerships with schools, community groups and health referral services, helping reach underrepresented audiences through regular activity opportunities

***Need / rationale**

It's important that you spend some time evidencing the need, which will be specific for your situation. See our [evidence of need document](#).

The key to any application to the Movement Fund is to clearly demonstrate an increase in physical activity levels. This is crucial for all environmental sustainability projects.

Project example 4 would need to clearly show some structured physical activity where the centre can measure the usage and report back to Sport England. The application will not be strong enough with just casual usage. This could include guided walks on foot or on horseback. Consider including a brief delivery plan to show the activities you will be promoting and running schedules.