



NEWS RELEASE

Use: Immediate

Date: 03/10/24

Scottish Crofting Federation delighted that KTIF funding will support crofters.

The Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) is pleased to announce that it has received funding from the Scottish Government's Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund (KTIF) programme for the 2024-2025 period. This funding will enable us to deliver peer-to-peer knowledge exchange activities aimed at supporting crofters as they navigate changes in the agricultural support systems and find ways to adapt their practices to meet the climate and biodiversity emergencies, while retaining, or indeed improving, their financial sustainability.

The recently published "Value of Crofting" report has highlighted how important crofting is for the rural economy and communities, and as well as its vital role in Scotland's food production, while addressing the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. However, many crofters have told us that they are very anxious about the upcoming changes set out in the Agricultural Reform Route Map and it is leading some to consider giving up crofting. We want to ensure this does not happen.

Our KTIF funded project will capitalise on the wealth of knowledge and good practice that already exists within the crofting community to offer knowledge exchange activities that will help crofters meet new challenges. A key component of the project is that learning will be delivered by their peers who will understand the unique limits and opportunities presented by each geographical area and by crofting in general. Every crofter has different strengths and areas of expertise, and it is expected that all participants will have knowledge to share, leading to skills development across the whole community.

Topics to be covered will include: the impact of local landscape and topography; what good biodiversity looks like; impacts of climate change; accessing local markets; carbon audits; benefits of different animal breeds; soil fertility; growing animal fodder; managing pests; trees for climate mitigation; how to meet new funding conditions; circular economy in crofting; business planning & diversification.

As the only crofter-led and crofting-focused organisation in Scotland, SCF is uniquely positioned to develop and deliver this programme, having a trusted relationship with the crofting community. We plan to work in partnership with community development trusts in various locations throughout the crofting counties to deliver in-person training sessions, which will be supplemented with webinars. The first webinar is planned for late October, with the first in-person event in mid-November.

Donna Smith, SCF Chief Executive commented that "SCF is keen to talk to crofters who would like to be involved in training delivery, as well as those who wish to take part in the programme. Locations that we have provisionally identified for this year are Applecross, Nether Lochaber, Skye, Mull, Western Isles, Shetland and Helmsdale. Please get in touch!"

Subject to funding, it is hoped that the programme will continue for another two years to enable us to offer the programme in more locations.

END

Notes to editors

Please contact SCF office for high resolution photo.