

Aviation Carbon Transition 2026

Guidance & Overview

Version: 17th March 2026

Application Window: 23rd April 2026 – 29th May 2026

Contact: sustainability@bristolairport.com

Purpose & Scope

In 2023, Bristol Airport launched its Sustainability [Strategy](#) (2023–2028), outlining bold targets to cut emissions, drive zero-emission flight innovation, protect the local environment, and boost regional economic growth.

Developed with stakeholders, the strategy sets ambitious goals backed by strong governance to ensure transparency and accountability. It spans airport operations, zero emissions flight, our local environment and supporting local communities, aiming to create lasting positive change for aviation and the region.

One important element of our Sustainability Strategy is the Aviation Carbon Transition (ACT) Programme.

Now in its fourth year, the ACT Programme is driving transformative change by supporting projects that kick-start decarbonisation in the South West, focusing on Scope 3 emissions linked to Bristol Airport (e.g., aircraft emissions, passenger surface access, employee commuting, ground transport, waste management, and construction).

Scope 1 and 2: While the ACT Programme primarily targets Scope 3, projects that also deliver Scope 1 or Scope 2 benefits (e.g., on-site fuels, electricity use) are welcome as co-benefits. Assessment will prioritise Scope 3 reductions demonstrably attributable to Bristol Airport’s value chain.

2025 projects included developing a nature investment strategy to secure high-integrity UK carbon offsets, carrying out a hydrogen feasibility study to design and assess how a mobile liquid hydrogen refuelling system could be safely integrated at the airport, and exploring nuclear-derived sustainable aviation fuel and hydrogen production within the South West to enable future low-carbon fuels for aircraft and ground transport. Together, these projects highlight ACT’s focus on practical and scalable solutions that strengthen environmental performance and prepare the airport for emerging technologies. More information on these projects can be found on our website [HERE](#).

The 2026 Programme

Fund Size, Awards & Co-funding

- Total annual fund: £150,000
- Typical award size: up to £32,000 per project
- Match funding (cash and/or *in-kind*) and collaboration are strongly encouraged. Priority is given to bids with a defined cost breakdown and confirmed co-funders/partners.
- Joint proposals are welcome; a leading organisation / organiser must be appointed.

Eligibility

- Applicant type: UK-based organisations (business or universities of any size). Individuals will be considered if proposals meet the criteria.
- Location: Companies must be based in the UK or have a UK-registered office.
- Desirable: South West regional projects / entities.
- Exclusions: No retrospective funding (projects already delivered/paid for are ineligible).

Timeline of Application and Selection Process

Competition opens	23 th April 2026
Application submission	29 th May 2026
Interviews	w/c 8th June 2026
Project Start	June 2026
Project End	30th November 2026

Priority Areas

We are interested in projects that address the following:

Transport - surface access

Measures to reduce emissions from all airport-related ground transport, supporting a shift to low carbon travel modes and enabling widespread adoption of zero emission vehicles as part of Bristol Airport's transition programme.

Airline partnerships – decarbonisation opportunities.

Cut emissions from aircraft on stand, ground vehicles, and engine checks. Track simple usage and idle time, share monthly progress with airlines, and use clear rules and incentives to drive reductions.

Infrastructure & Operations - Airside/landside infrastructure enabling lower/zero-emission flight.

Airport and airline-facing innovations that reduce operational emissions, e.g., airside electrification, ground support equipment, process optimisation, and energy efficiency improvements.

Innovative Technologies

Early-stage or novel solutions with clear potential to significantly reduce aviation emissions, with Bristol Airport as a testbed where appropriate.

Electricity & Energy Systems

Charging, storage, batteries, and distribution for airside/landside applications and associated enabling technologies. Alternative renewable energy technologies.

Verified local carbon reductions & nature-positive outcomes

Projects that generate verified, local carbon reductions/removals applicable to Bristol Airport where appropriate, while stacking co-benefits (ecology, health, well-being). Includes development of a framework for verification and procurement of credible national, regional, and local voluntary offsets outside international compliance markets.

Alternative Fuels

Research, development, and enabling infrastructure for low-carbon fuels (e.g., SAF/biofuels, hydrogen, e-fuels), including storage, handling, refuelling, and distribution at Bristol Airport.

Proposals beyond the stated priority areas may be considered by Bristol Airport's ACT Panel if they deliver measurable Scope 3 emissions reduction.

Assessment Criteria

Primary criterion: Quantified reduction of Scope 3 emissions attributable to Bristol Airport's value chain.

- Feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and value for money.
- Alignment with Bristol Airport's sustainability goals and contribution to the wider South West region.
- Scalability/replicability within aviation or across the region.
- Credible carbon methodology, monitoring, and verification approach.
- Delivery capability, timeline, and risk management.
- Partnership strength and match funding (cash/in-kind).
- Co-benefits (Scope 1 and 2, ecology, health, community), where relevant.

Governance & Decision Process

1. Applications must be submitted within the published window; late submissions will not be considered.
2. Please provide as much information in your application as possible.
3. Write clearly and in simple language – try to avoid acronyms or technical jargon.
4. Panel assessment will be made against eligibility and criteria – clarification may be required throughout the duration of the application process.
5. Notification within two weeks of portal closure of invitation for interview (subject to any deferrals for additional information).
6. Panel decisions are final. You cannot appeal or submit another application for the same round. The panel may defer additional information where necessary.

Funding Conditions & Reporting

- Allocation deadline: All projects must be completed by 30th November 2026.
- Monthly virtual progress meetings with the Bristol Airport ACT Team are required.
- Each project must submit a monthly progress report.
- Publicity: Successful projects may be publicised by the Airport.
- Reporting: Post-completion project summary & presentation required; detailing impact, outcomes, and learning.
- Use of funds: In line with the approved budget; retrospective costs are not eligible.

What the application must contain

- Objective, scope, and Bristol Airport relevance of the project.
- Innovation and impact of the project.
- Workplan: Milestones (Gantt chart), risks, deliverables, and progress meetings.
- Detailed budget and funding sources (identify any match funding).

- Partnership arrangements (letters/MoUs where applicable).

Contact the Fund Administrator for further questions - sustainability@bristolairport.com

Examples of previous projects funded by the ACT programme can be found at –
<https://www.bristolairport.co.uk/corporate/environment/aviation-carbon-transition-programme/>