

## Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, your project must benefit communities that lie wholly within the Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) area. If you are unsure who your distribution network operator is, please check here:

<https://www.ssen.co.uk/about-ssen/who-is-my-distributor/>

## Key information

Who can I contact if I have any questions or need guidance?

**Colin McMillan (central southern England)**  
**Community Investment Manager**  
**01738 344360**  
[colin.mcmillan@sse.com](mailto:colin.mcmillan@sse.com)

**Carol Masheter (north of Scotland)**  
**Community Investment Manager**  
**01738 351576**  
[carol.masheter@sse.com](mailto:carol.masheter@sse.com)

Where does this money come from?

SSEN has established this fund to support communities in our power distribution network area to improve local resilience. This is shareholder funded and is designed to support communities in their transition towards net zero carbon emissions.

Who can apply?

- Community groups based within the SSEN distribution area.
- You don't need to be a registered charity to apply, but your organisation must have a constitution (governing document or set of rules) and be set up on a not-for-profit basis. If you are unsure if your group is eligible, please contact us for advice.

How do I apply?

If your project meets the fund criteria, please complete an application form, which can be requested from SSEN or downloaded from:  
[SSEN Powering Communities to Net Zero Application Form](#)  
Completed forms should be submitted by e-mail to [colin.mcmillan@sse.com](mailto:colin.mcmillan@sse.com).

How much is the fund worth?  
How much can I apply for?

The fund will be managed as one fund between the north of Scotland and central southern England with a total fund value of £475,000 in 2024. In most cases, you can apply for funding from £1,000 up to a maximum of £20,000. In exceptional circumstances, multi-community area funding to a maximum of £40,000 can be considered. The panel will consider value for money and may award less than requested.

What is the timetable?

<b>Round opens</b>	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
<b>Deadline for applications</b>	Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2024
<b>Awards made</b>	Late October 2024

- Applications received after the deadline will not be eligible.
- Applicants can only receive one grant award per round.

How are decisions made?

The SSEN Powering Communities to Net Zero Fund Panel will review applications and determine which projects should receive funding. The panel comprises representatives of the community, organisations with expertise in low carbon technology, community resilience planning, and supported by members of the SSEN management team.

What can grants be used for?

The fund will provide support for projects which enable communities in their Net Zero plans.

## What are the criteria for the fund?

The fund will support projects that achieve one of the following criteria:

1. Low Carbon Technology (LCT) purchasing and installation – where community groups want to purchase and install LCT for public use, including for public or community use buildings.
2. Low Carbon Technology purchase and installation – where organisations such as social housing providers enable the provision of LCT in aggregated domestic properties.

Examples of Low Carbon Technology which should be considered within the scope of the fund are listed below, this is not an exhaustive list:

- a) Solar Panels – Where a community is looking to install solar panels on a community building.
- b) Electric Vehicle Charging – Electric Vehicle charging points at community buildings or at a communal space which will be available for general use.
- c) Heat Systems – Replacement or upgrade of heating system to a low carbon heating system. Including thermal storage, biomass, and ground or air source heat pumps. This could also include combined heat and power.
- d) Battery storage – Battery for communal use, including during a power cut or emergency situation, or alongside another low carbon installation (such as solar panels).
- e) Renewable energy sources  
Note: SSEN is aware there are often lengthy lead times associated with community project preparation, as well as getting approval to connect some LCT. We advise applicants to consider projects that have already been approved to apply in the current round, as timescales for awarding and spending funds may be more likely to align. Those uncertain of their timescales should contact [colin.mcmillan@sse.com](mailto:colin.mcmillan@sse.com) to discuss further.
- f) Smart Heating Controls – Installation of smart heating controls for community buildings.
- g) Energy Efficiency Measures – General energy efficiency measures to be used to help reduce consumption in communal buildings or aggregated domestic properties. This can also include insulation.

**Please note** – this fund will prioritise:

- Projects which support communities who are particularly remote or isolated.
- Projects in areas considered deprived or with high fuel poverty rates.
- Projects which see communities working together.

## Project Guidance

- Consider if any planning permission is required to install Low Carbon Technology and ensure this is acquired prior to applying.
  - If purchasing equipment, consider how it will be maintained.
  - We require at least two competitive quotes for work between £1,000 and £10,000 and at least three quotes for work above £10,000. If this is not possible or appropriate, please tell us why.
  - Ensure any staffing cost is provided at or above the living wage.
  - If applying for LCT, groups are required to complete a Technical Specification Form (TSF) in addition to the main application form. It is also important to think about storage and who will be responsible for maintaining the technology. Note: the TSF is not required if applying for smart heating controls or other energy efficiency measures which do not require connections.
  - Please ensure you attach your constitution, latest annual accounts, bank statement, copy of AGM (if applicable), and any other relevant documents.
- All awardees must be able to draw down funds before 31 March 2025. Grants should then be spent within 12 months of being paid.

## When must grants be spent by?

What happens when the project is finished?

Are there any activities or items SSEN are unable to support?

- At the end of the activity period, you must submit a final evaluation report in which we will ask you to fully report on the project and its outcomes.
- Projects which do not benefit people living within the SSEN distribution areas
- Actions that are in conflict to the interests of SSEN.
- Individuals.
- The advancement of religion or politics.
- The repayment of loans or payment of debts.
- Costs already incurred or activities which will take place before we have made a decision on an application (retrospective funding).
- Payments for activities which are the responsibility of statutory authorities.