

## 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?

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

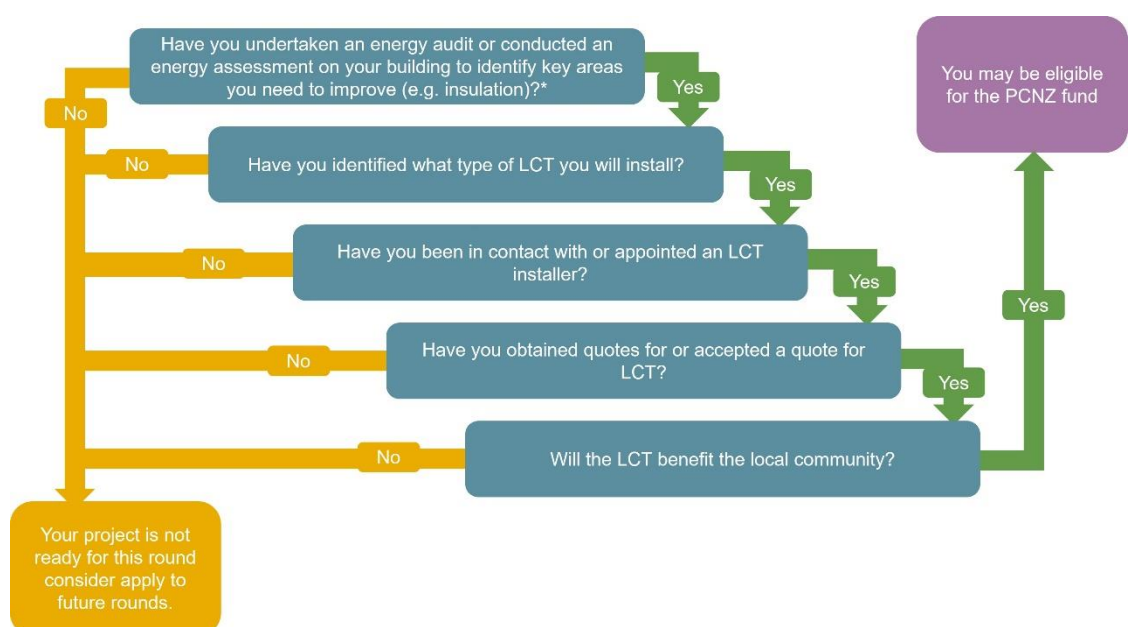
**Colin McMillan**  
**Community Investment Manager**  
**01738 344360**  
[colin.mcmillan@sse.com](mailto:colin.mcmillan@sse.com)

Where does this money come from?

SSEN has established this fund to support communities in our power distribution network area to improve local resilience 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.
- Projects that meet the Technical Specification Guidance (see project guidance and Technical Specification section on page 3 for further information)



**\*Projects seeking insulation and other energy efficiency measures are still eligible to apply**

How much can I apply for?

The fund will be managed as one fund between the north of Scotland and central southern England. 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?	<p><b>Round opens</b> Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025</p> <p><b>Deadline for applications</b> Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025</p> <p><b>Awards made</b> Late September 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications received after the deadline will not be eligible.</li> <li>• Applicants can only apply for one grant per round to PCNZ.</li> </ul>
How are decisions made?	<p>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.</p>
What can grants be used for?	<p>To support Low Carbon Technology (LCT) projects which enable communities in their Net Zero plans. Examples of LCT's which can be considered within the scope of the fund include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solar Panels – Where a community is looking to install solar panels on a community owned building.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Battery storage – Battery for communal use, including during a power cut or emergency situation, or alongside another low carbon installation (such as solar panels).</li> <li>Renewable energy generation – Including a community wind turbine or a micro hydro project.</li> <li>Smart Heating Controls – Installation of smart heating controls for community buildings.</li> <li>Energy Efficiency Measures – Priority will be given to primary measures such as Heat Pump project, solar battery storage etc or project that include both primary and secondary measure. General energy efficiency measures to be used to help reduce consumption in communal buildings or aggregated domestic properties.</li> <li>Electric Vehicle Charging – Electric Vehicle charging points at community buildings or at a communal space which will be available for public use.</li> </ol>
What are the criteria and priorities for the fund?	<p>The fund will support projects that purchase and install LCT in community owned/operated buildings where the public will benefit or where organisations such as social housing providers enable the provision of LCT in aggregated domestic properties.</p> <p><b>Please note</b> –when accessing application, priority will be given to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Projects which support communities who are particularly remote or isolated.</li> <li>Projects in areas considered deprived or with high fuel poverty rates.</li> <li>Projects which see communities working together.</li> <li>Projects that can evidence that they meet the Technical Specification to install their chosen LCT.</li> <li>Projects that support communities make progress towards net zero ambitions.</li> <li>Projects that have recently obtain an energy audit, which supports the proposed measure</li> </ol> <p>SSEN is aware there are often lengthy lead times associated with project preparation, as well as getting approval to connect for some LCT. We advise applicants to consider projects that have already been approved to apply in the current round. Those uncertain of their timescales should contact or <a href="mailto:carol.masheter@sse.com">carol.masheter@sse.com</a> or <a href="mailto:colin.mcmillan@sse.com">colin.mcmillan@sse.com</a> to discuss further before making an application.</p>

The panel will review the application based on its relevance to the priority themes identified above.

- **Purchasing equipment:** Consider if any planning permission is required to install Low Carbon Technology and ensure this is acquired prior to applying.
- **Maintenance:** If purchasing equipment, consider how it will be maintained and any associated costs covered in the future.
- **Quotations:** Please provide at least 1 quotation for all items over £250. For larger capital items of more than £2,500 in value we expect you to have sought at least two quotes, for such items of more than £10,000 in value we expect you to have sought at least three quotations. If this is not possible or appropriate, please tell us why.
- **Staffing costs:** Ensure any staffing cost is provided at or above the living wage.
- **Project budget:** Please make it clear in your application what elements you are requesting the funding for and if you have secured match funding if required.
- **Energy audit:** Provide evidence of a recent energy audit or equivalent that provide evidence for your preferred technology..
- **Technical Specifications:** If applying for a power source, the guidance below outlines the information and actions you should have taken before applying for PCNZ Low Carbon Technology funding. It is important to remember that if your application is successful, you will not be fast tracked for any works you may need SEN to complete to install or connect the LCT, including load checks, and you will still need to pay any connections costs.

### Checklist

Before applying for the fund, you should have completed the below actions

- ✓ Know what LCT you are looking to install
- ✓ Have an Energy Performance Certificate or know the energy efficiency of the building where you want to install the LCT\*. This will ensure the building is as energy efficient as possible to get maximum benefit from the LCT.
- ✓ Have been in contact with or appointed a LCT installer
- ✓ Obtained a quote for the LCT
- ✓ Have checked the LCT is compatible with the building and supply type
- ✓ Have checked requirements and obtained planning permission as required
  - For Projects in England - <https://www.gov.uk/planning-permission-england-wales>
  - For Projects in Scotland - <https://www.mygov.scot/planning-permission>
- ✓ Have a maintenance plan in place for the upkeep of the LCT

\*Excluding Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Your installer should have the following information.

#### 1. Type of supply

- Single Phase –This is commonly used in homes and small buildings / businesses and one incoming service cable is used to supply the building.
- 3 Phase – Electricity is delivered using three alternating currents (AC) voltage. This is commonly used in large buildings or for heavy machinery and three incoming cables are used to supply the building.
- CT Metered –This is commonly used in industrial settings and large buildings.
- Looped Supply –Whilst not common, it is more likely to be used in urban areas and is where two or more buildings share a connecting cable. This can restrict the connection of the LCT.

## 2. Input / Output of the LCT

- Input – This is the amount of electricity coming from the network to power the LCT and can be found in information for your chosen LCT.
  - Maximum input is the maximum amount of electricity the LCT will use.
  - Continuous input is the amount of electricity the LCT will need to remain operational.
- Output – This is the amount of electricity the LCT could return to the network. and can be found in information for your chosen LCT. This does not apply to all LCTs, only those which are able to supply electricity back to the grid, such as Solar PVs or Vehicle to Grid EV chargers.
  - Maximum output is the maximum amount of electricity the LCT could return to the grid.
  - Continuous output is the amount of electricity the LCT could return to the grid.

## 3. Voltage / Fuse / Load

## 4. LCT details ready to be registered once installed.

If you are unsure of the load, we can complete a free load check for the property. Please note: charges may apply if an increase in load is required.

Please note - If you are planning to install an energy device in a home or small business, you are required to register your energy device with your Distribution Network Operator (DNO), the company that is responsible for bringing electricity to the property where you are installing the device.

<https://www.energynetworks.org/industry/connecting-to-the-networks/connect-direct>

### Other useful links

**Energy Networks Association** - Website for ENA providing guidance and advice on LCTs

<https://connect-direct.energynetworks.org/>

**Connect Direct** - National Database for installers to apply for LCT connections

<https://www.energynetworks.org/industry/connecting-to-the-networks/connecting-electric-vehicles-and-heat-pumps>

**SSEN Connections** - SSEN webpage providing advice on LCTs and Connections

<https://www.ssen.co.uk/our-services/new-supplies/>

When must grants be spent by?

All awardees must be able to meet grant conditions and draw down funds before 31 March 2026. Grants should then be spent within 12 months of being paid.

What happens when the project is finished?

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.

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

- Projects which do not benefit people living within the SSEN distribution areas
- Actions that are in conflict to the interests of SSEN.
- Individuals or private businesses.
- 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.

How do I apply?

Applications to the Powering Communities to Net Zero– Low Carbon Technology Fund are made through an online application form. To access this, please follow the link:

<https://www.ssen.co.uk/about-ssn/our-communities/powering-communities-to-net-zero-fund/>

## About the online application process

The following guidance may help you in completing the application form:

- You must already have or create a user account (using the link above) in order to access and submit a grant application.
- You will be able to save your draft application at key points before logging out of the application portal, and resume drafting it when you log back in.
- We will send you an email confirming your application has been received after you have submitted it. This will contain a link to download a copy of your application and save this for your records.
- You can read Frequently Asked Questions about our online application and grant management system [here](#)
- If you have any problems in accessing or completing the application form, please contact the relevant Community Investment Manager (details above).
- You can view videos on navigating the online grant system [here](#).

## Guidance on completing the application form

We have provided guidance below on the information we are looking for under the questions asked on the application form, as well as any supporting information that we require.

### Documents to upload

We will ask you to upload the following documents during the application process, please ensure you have them to hand:

- A copy of the group's constitution or equivalent governance documents.
- A copy of one of the group's bank statements from the last three months.
- A copy of the group's most recent approved annual accounts.
- A copy of your project budget (or you can use the budget template provided in the application form).
- Copies of quotes for works or goods included in the project budget.
- Copies of any relevant community emergency action plans, resilience plans, or net zero plans.
- Documentation confirming the building owner agrees to the project work being undertaken (if applicable).
- A copy of the organisation's Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Policy (if applicable).
- Letters of support for your project (if applicable).
- Any other documents which you think are required in support of your application (e.g. Architects drawings, relevant permissions such as planning, building warrant, and/or listed building consent).

Please note due to data protection requirements we ask that you **do not include any photos that feature people** in any of the uploaded documents.

### Group Details

**Note: you will need to register this information the first time you apply for a grant on behalf of your group and it will remain on the portal for any future applications.**

- Name of Group:
  - This should be the name that appears on your group's governing document and bank account statement.
- Type of group:
  - You will be able to select from a list: Unincorporated voluntary or community organisation; SCIO; registered charity (other); Company limited by guarantee; Community Interest Company; Community Benefit Society; Community Council; Parish Council; Other
  - If your group has one, you will be asked to provide its registered charity and/or company number so please have this to hand.
- Phone number:
  - Please enter a phone number on which we can contact the above-named person.
- Website
- Number of people:
  - on your group's board or management committee – in total, not just office bearers

- employed by the group
  - who volunteer for the group.
- Date established:
  - Please provide the date that your group's governing document was adopted, or if it is a registered company or charity, the date it was registered with the regulator.
- What are your group's aims and objectives?
- Your groups' main activities including any previous community projects:
  - Provide a summary of the main activities or services your group delivers and/or has delivered to-date.
- Communities your projects or activities support:
  - State which communities or beneficiary groups your group supports. For example all residents in the community your group is set up to benefit.
- Constitution
- Correspondence address
- Registered address:
  - This is the address at which your group or organisation is formally registered, which may differ from the correspondence address.

## About the Project

- A short summary of the project or activity that you are applying for funding towards:
  - Please give a summary (no more than 25-words) of the project or activity you are requesting a grant towards – what it will deliver and for who.
- The geographic area the project will be delivered in:
  - Please provide a postcode / Eircode that best represents the project's delivery location.
- A description of the project you are looking for funding for (suggested word limit - 400 words)
  - We suggest you cover:
    - Where the project will take place.
    - When you intend to deliver the project.
    - What you want to do – what technology will be installed and what change you hope it will make.
    - How you will do this – e.g. the activities you will deliver, how you will reach those you are seeking to benefit, any equipment needed, and how it will be used.
    - How the community has been and/or will be involved in developing and delivering the project
    - Who will lead the project – their role(s), skills and experience.
    - How you will monitor and evaluate the success of the project
    - The proposed start and end dates for the project.
    - If you are purchasing equipment, provide detailed specifications, on where it will be installed and who will maintain them. If planning is required has this been obtained.
    - Relevant training / experience / qualifications you have to carry out the project
- How will you maintain / sustain your project after the period of our grant funding is finished? (Suggested word limit is 400 words).
  - If the project will continue beyond the period for which you are seeking grant funding, please let us know how you intend to continue it, including how you will secure any funding, volunteers, or other resources needed to do so.
  - Please also include relevant details if the project will help to make your organisation more self-sustaining.
- How have you identified a need for this project within the local area? (Suggested word limit is 400 words)
  - Your project should address a current need and gap in local provision.
  - If your project is building based please provide a copy of a recent energy audits by uploading the report in the upload section at the end of the application form.
  - Please link to local data including emergency action plans, resilience plans, net zero action plans, local community plans, resident surveys.
  - Please provide data on the demographic of the local area in terms of need (Index of Multiple Deprivation, extent of fuel poverty, level of remoteness/isolation, etc).
  - Please describe if you have consulted with any stakeholders and how your project compliments their work and plans (eg. Emergency Services, Local Authority, or the local community).
- How many people will benefit from the project?
  - Only include those who will benefit directly from the project. This may include any volunteers involved in delivering it. Please ensure the number you give is realistic.



- How have you calculated the above figure?
  - Please tell us how you arrived at this figure.
  - Include the population of the Parish/Community Council area along with other details that are relevant.
- Will any jobs be supported by the project?
  - If yes, we will ask how many.
- Will any community assets (e.g. community hall, local river, etc.) be built and/or improved as part of the project?
  - If yes, we will ask how many.
  - If yes, we will also ask whether the group submitting this application own this asset or have agreement from the owner to undertake works associated with this project. You will need to evidence that the owner is in agreement by uploading relevant documents in the uploads section at the end of the application form.
- Will this project help improve energy efficiency or climate change?
  - If yes, please provide details of the energy generation or carbon reduction potential of the project, where you know this.

## Project Aims and Success

- Explain how your project achieves the Fund aims and priorities outlined on page 1 and 2 of this guidance document (suggestion word limit – 400 words)
  - Demonstrate how the project meets the fund priorities:
    - Projects which support communities who are particularly remote or isolated and have experienced emergency events due to poor weather in the past.
    - Projects in areas affected by recent significant weather events, including storms and flooding, which resulted in extended power loss.
    - Projects which demonstrate innovative approaches to improving the resilience of vulnerable community members.
    - Projects which support areas which can be difficult for emergency services to respond to events in.
    - Projects from communities which have been identified as having low resilience.
    - Projects where communities work together towards local resilience planning.
    - Projects that support communities make progress towards net zero ambitions.

## Project Bank Details

- We will require your group's bank sort code and account number:
  - Please ensure the details you provide here are correct as this information will be used to make grant payments if you are successful in securing a grant.
- Bank account holder's name:
  - This is the name that your group's bank account is held in, as it appears on bank statements - it should be the name of your group.
- Upload a copy of a recent (within the past three months) bank statement
- Upload a copy of your group's latest accounts (as approved by your board or management committee)
- Additional authorised bank signatory:
  - Provide the name, e-mail address and position of a second person who is authorised to use your group's bank account. Please ensure you enter these details correctly as this person will be e-mailed any grant offer letter for their countersignature.

## Group Finances

- What are the main sources of income for the group?
  - Please provide brief details of how the group normally raises most of its income e.g. from local fundraising, grants, charges for services, etc
- Total income and surplus/deficit from the uploaded financial accounts:
  - The figures you provide should match those in the group's approved annual accounts that you uploaded earlier as part of your application
- Current unrestricted reserves and why they cannot be used for this project:
  - Unrestricted reserves are monies which are not restricted (usually by a donor or lender) for any particular use. If your group's unrestricted reserves cannot be used towards the project you are seeking a grant from SSN for, we will ask you to explain why.

## Project Budget

- Select an option to add your project cost details:
  - You will have the opportunity to insert the information into a list/ table in the form or to upload your own budget template. Please **do not do both**.
  - If you enter costs in the list / table option then decide to upload a budget file instead, please ensure you delete any entries in the list / table before continuing.
  - Please provide an accurate list of all costs involved in the work, services, or items required for the project. This should include any project costs that you are not requesting a grant towards.
  - If you enter costs in the list / table option, these will automatically be totalled.
  - If you have chosen to upload a budget file, enter the total project cost (as stated in the file) into the box provided.
- Explain how you have costed the project.
  - Please provide at least one quotation for items over £250 in value. For larger capital items (e.g. building work, vehicles, equipment) of more than £2,500 we expect you to have sought at least two quotations, and for such items of more than £10,000 we expect you to have sought at least three quotations. Please upload any quotations you have received towards such costs or upload a document detailing why it has not been possible to obtain relevant quotations.
  - If you are seeking a grant to cover salary costs, please tell us what hourly rate will be paid. SEN is a Living Wage Friendly Funder; therefore, we require any roles paid for through our funding to meet or exceed the Living Wage.
- Tell us how much you are applying to the Powering Communities to Net Zero Fund for.  
Only non-recoverable VAT costs should be included in any grant amount you are requesting from SEN.

## Project Funders

- If your total project cost requires other funding (including where your organisation is contributing its own funds), you will be asked to list all of the other funding sources, including the amounts being applied for and whether this funding is confirmed.

## Checklist

We will ask you to tick yes, no, or not applicable to the following checklist:

- That the group has the appropriate procedures in place to carry out your project safely
- That the group has at least three unrelated people serving on its management committee / board.
- That the project doesn't require retrospective funding
- That, if requested, you can provide the details of an independent referee.
- That any salaries are paid at, or greater than, the Living Wage
- Whether the project requires your group to secure permissions, such as planning permission, a building warrant and/or listed buildings consent, prior to starting work. If it does, tell us whether these have been applied for / granted. If they haven't been applied for or granted yet, tell us when you expect this to happen.

## Uploads

Please remember to upload:

- A copy of a recent Energy Audit that supports your projects proposed Low Carbon Technology measures (for community building projects – if applicable).
- Any relevant net zero plans, community action plans, emergency or resilience plans.
- Recent quotes for the items you wish to purchase.
- Documentation confirming the building owner agrees to the project work being undertaken (if applicable).
- A copy of the organisation's Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Policy (if applicable)
- Planning consent or building warrant (if required)
- Letters of support for your project (if applicable)
- Any other documents which you think are required in support of your application (e.g. Architects drawings, relevant permissions such as planning, building warrant, and/or listed building consent).