

Powering our communities fund CRITERIA 2021/22

The aim of the Powering our Communities fund is to provide seed funding to support the development of community and local energy in our region, the North West of England (see below for full details of eligible areas).

The Powering our Communities Fund has been developed in response to stakeholder feedback which told us that there is a capacity gap in the community and local energy sector which is preventing it from reaching its full potential. The aim of this fund is to support community and local energy groups to grow and address the barriers the sector is facing and enable it to take action to meet net zero.

For this year's fund we are looking for projects that meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Investigating or piloting new business models or new ways of working;
2. Scaling up delivery of a community or local energy project or group;
3. Addressing a specific barrier that is holding back the development of community or local energy

This year we are particularly looking for projects that bring something new to the sector or our region. It could be an idea that has been developed outside our region, or one that hasn't been tried before anywhere before, or a project being established in an area new to community and local energy.

We also welcome projects in partnership with organisations such as local authorities and businesses as long as it is clear what control and benefit the local community has as a result of the project.

Our fund is open to all of our community and we particularly welcome applications from ethnic minority groups.

For details of previous fund winners please see the case studies on our [website](#).

Who can apply?

Applications will be accepted from a wide range of any type of organisation including community benefit societies, industrial provident societies, charities, schools or local authorities, as long as they can demonstrate the community involvement or local benefit of their project.

What can be funded?

The funding can be used to support a wide range of activities including producing materials to promote initiatives, supporting staff time or technical expertise, buying equipment or researching a new approach / business model.

Projects will run from April 2022 to March 2023 unless agreed otherwise.

How much funding is available?

We will award successful projects with between £1,000 and £15,000 and the project will need a bank account to accept the funding. There is up to £75,000 available in total to support projects.

Deadline for applications

The deadline for submissions is midnight Friday 3rd December 2021. Application forms and supporting information should be submitted to communityandlocalenergy@enwl.co.uk.

Successful projects will be made aware of the outcome in early 2022.

Application Process

To apply please download the application form from our website www.enwl.co.uk/communityandlocalenergy

The application form asks for information about the applicant and their organisations, how the project meets the criteria and details about your project.

Applications will be judged by an assessment panel against the following criteria:

- How well does it deliver against the fund's priorities?
- How well does the project demonstrate engagement and benefit for the local community?
- Does the project bring something new to community and local energy in the North West?
- Does the project target a group that might be considered hard to reach or excluded from the energy systems transition to net zero?
- Is the project replicable and useful for others in the region to learn from?

In addition to the above you need to be able to demonstrate that you have a separate bank account under the name of your group with at least two unrelated signatories or that you have a charitable partner organisation willing to bank any grant awarded to your group.

Successful applicants will be required to agree to our Grant Funding Agreement and agree to submit a monitoring and evaluation form at the end of the project, as well as participate in associated publicity.

The successful projects will be expected to work with Electricity North West to promote the project through a case study, promotional materials and participation in events.

Electricity North West sees this as an opportunity to build ongoing relationships with organisations and explore further opportunities to provide support.

We will not fund:

- Projects that have already taken place or applications for retrospective funding
- Activities that would normally be funded from statutory sources
- Projects that are primarily for the advancement of religion or politics
- General appeals and contributions to large scale projects
- Applications from individuals or to support an individual
- Organisations raising funds to donate to other causes or charities
- General capital costs (they must be clearly linked to the delivery of the specific activity applied for)

- Existing activities

If you have any questions about the process or the criteria please contact us at communityandlocalenergy@enwl.co.uk.

What do we mean by community and local energy?

Community energy means community-led projects or initiatives to reduce, manage, generate or purchase energy. Community energy projects focus on engagement and benefits to their local area and communities.

Local energy encompasses community energy projects and also includes activities by a wider set of local partners such as local authorities, housing associations, intermediary or advisory organisations and local businesses. Local energy projects may have a commercial aspect to their delivery but are also likely to benefit their local area and community.

Who is Electricity North West?

Electricity North West is the distribution network operator for the North West region of England which means we maintain and operate the overhead lines, underground cables and associated infrastructure that transport electricity to your homes and businesses. As part of this we have a role to play in helping to improve the lives of our customers and communities. This includes helping to take action on climate change and the transition to a net zero carbon future, improving the living conditions of our customers in the North West, and enabling everyone to better take advantage of changes taking place in the electricity industry.

The majority of the project activity needs to be in Electricity North West's licence area which includes the following local authority areas:

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|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Allerdale | Craven* | Pendle | Staffordshire Moorlands* |
| Barrow-in-Furness | Derbyshire Dales* | Preston | Stockport |
| Blackburn with Darwen | Eden | Ribble Valley | Tameside |
| Blackpool | Fylde | Richmondshire* | Trafford* |
| Bolton | High Peak | Rochdale | Warrington* |
| Burnley | Hyndburn | Rosendale | West Lancashire |
| Bury | Lancaster | Salford | Wigan |
| Carlisle | Manchester | Sefton* | Wyre |
| Cheshire East* | North Yorkshire* | South Lakeland | |
| Chorley | Northumberland* | South Ribble | |
| Copeland | Oldham | St. Helens* | |

* Only part of this area is within our boundary. Please check before applying.