

# GENERATION GREEN COMMUNITY FUND GUIDANCE

## What is the Generation Green Community Fund and who does it benefit?

The SSE Airtricity Generation Green Community Fund is an exciting initiative established by SSE Airtricity to support communities across the entire island of Ireland in their journey towards sustainability. With a total fund of €5 million, this fund is designed to empower local communities to take an active role in the Green Transition—a collective shift toward greener, more sustainable living.

By providing financial assistance, the Generation Green Community Fund helps to kick-start and support community-driven projects that focus on environmental education, sustainability, and climate action. The fund is particularly aimed at fostering local leadership and promoting social equity, ensuring that all communities, regardless of their size or location, can contribute to Ireland's sustainable future.

The Generation Green Community Fund is open to a wide range of groups – whether projects are part of a grassroots organisation working on environmental awareness, a school looking to integrate sustainability into the curriculum, or a social enterprise creating green solutions, this fund is here to support their vision. SSE Airtricity's goal is to equip individuals and communities with the knowledge, skills, and tools to tackle climate change and build a more sustainable, resilient future.

This guidance document will provide an overview of the details of the Generation Green Community Fund, including how to apply and what types of projects are eligible.

### Who should I contact for more information?

For more information on the fund and your application, please contact [GenerationGreenCommunityFund@sse.com](mailto:GenerationGreenCommunityFund@sse.com)

### What are the application timescales?

The fund will close for applications on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025.



## What does the fund support?

The fund will be structured around two key strands that each have set focus areas. Applicants will apply to one strand per project and align their applications to at least one focus area. The focus area descriptions are given as a guide to the type of programmes that will be funded – projects could support more than one focus area.

### Strand 1 - Education for a Sustainable Future

**Objective:** Empower young people and the broader community with the knowledge and skills needed to contribute to the Green Transition, fostering the next generation of climate leaders.

**Focus Areas:**

1. **STEM and Climate Education:** Programmes working with primary and secondary schools that promote STEM education with a focus on climate and energy-related subjects
2. **Green Curriculum and Schools Funding:** Schools, education centres or organisations that develop and implement sustainability focused curricula and initiatives.
3. **Youth Engagement and Innovation:** Programmes that develop youth-led sustainability initiatives and competitions that encourage innovation in climate solutions.
4. **Community Education and Engagement:** Programmes that may consist of community workshops, awareness campaigns or educational programmes that promote sustainable living, renewable energy and climate action at grassroots level.
5. **Green Skills and Employability Programmes:** Programmes that provide training and certification in Green Skills (e.g. renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency, sustainable construction etc.).

### Strand 2 - Community-Led Sustainability Projects

**Objective:** Empower local communities to lead and implement sustainability projects that contribute to net zero goals, ensuring long term impact and local ownership.

**Focus Areas:**

1. **Climate Resilience Planning:** Initiatives that assist communities in developing climate action plans that address local vulnerabilities to climate change.
2. **Sustainable Infrastructure Development:** Green infrastructure projects like eco-friendly community hubs or retrofitting of existing buildings with renewable energy and energy-saving technologies (e.g. solar panels, rainwater harvesting systems, LED lighting etc.).
3. **Community Environmental Programmes:** Community programmes that will develop environmental projects like community gardens, biodiversity projects, conservation projects and nature trails etc.
4. **Circular Economy and Waste Reduction Initiatives:** Projects focused on waste reduction, recycling and initiatives promoting the circular economy (e.g. community repair cafes, upcycling centres or local composting programmes).
5. **Eco friendly travel initiatives** – Initiatives that promote eco-friendly travel in communities like Bicycle infrastructure, public transit upgrades and electrification, local travel infrastructure.

## What size Grants are available?

Applicants can apply for funding between €10,000 and €250,000 by submitting a detailed project proposal through our online application portal. Each proposal should outline the project's alignment with one of the fund's key strands, demonstrate anticipated social and environmental impacts, and provide a clear budget breakdown. Applications will be reviewed on a competitive basis, with priority given to projects that exhibit long-term sustainability, community engagement, and measurable impact toward net-zero goals.

## Who can apply for funding?

Applications are welcome from local community groups, not for profit organisations, social enterprises and local authorities working throughout the island of Ireland (both Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland).

The fund is open to applications from **not-for-profit groups/organisations** such as:

- Non-profit organisations
- Community Groups and organisations
- Social enterprises
- Local development groups
- Community cooperatives
- Schools
- Universities and third level institutions
- Educational trusts and training centres

Joint applications from multiple eligible organisations collaborating on a project are eligible to apply for funding.

All applicants must have:

- **A constitution** - Groups / organisations should be properly constituted with a constitution that is signed and dated and outlines the group / organisation's purpose, as well as its governance and committee structure.

The constitution should include confirmation that:

- The organisation has social or charitable purpose
- Is not for profit in nature; and that
- No directors or trustees are remunerated.
- **Financial Statements** that are produced according to requirements set out by the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) or Companies Registration Office (the CRO).
- **Organisational Bank / Credit Union account** – A bank / credit union statement showing the name and address of the group applying for the grant, IBAN, BIC and bank branch details dated within the last 3 months must be submitted at the application stage.

All project expenditures must be made through this account and grant payments will be paid into this account.

## What cannot be funded?

The SSE Airtricity Generation Green Community Fund will not support the following activities or costs:

- The advancement of religion or party politics
- Activities that are the statutory responsibility of statutory authorities
- Projects benefiting primarily those residents outside the Fund Area of Benefit
- Activities contrary to the interests of SSER or its subsidiaries
- Activities likely to bring SSER or its subsidiaries into disrepute
- Anti-renewable energy/wind farm activities
- Retrospective funding (i.e. paying for costs incurred before a decision on an application to the Fund for support can be made)
- Recoverable costs (i.e. VAT costs that can be recovered).

## Alignment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

For a project to be deemed eligible the aims, objectives and outcomes must align with at least one of the following four UN Sustainable Development Goals.



**UN SDG 4. Quality Education** - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Eligible projects should seek to;

- promote inclusive learning practices and / or facilities
- support access to lifelong learning
- educate and / or advocate
- provide access to educational equipment
- engage and / or benefit the community of all ages



**UN SDG 7. Affordable & Clean Energy** - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Eligible projects should seek to;

- generate renewable electricity, and / or microgrids, and / or energy storage
- transition to equipment that use a renewable energy source
- improve energy efficiency in buildings, transportation, and / or processes
- smart energy management systems and / or equipment
- deliver long-term environmental and economic benefits



**UN SDG 11. Sustainable Cities & Communities** - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Eligible projects should seek to;

- promote and / or enable safe and inclusive communities
- collaborate with others
- incorporate principles and practices of the circular economy
- protect and enhance cultural and / or natural heritage
- improve or enhance infrastructure for recreation and / or health
- involve local regeneration and / or community planning
- deliver long-term social and financial benefits



**UN SDG 13. Climate Action** - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Eligible projects should seek to;

- reduce carbon emissions
- transition to efficient electrification of technology – e.g. light, heat and / or transport
- improve energy efficiency
- incorporate green building practices
- achieve steps towards Net Zero
- minimise waste
- improve or enhance landscape while contributing meaningfully to the local biodiversity
- deliver long-term environmental improvements

## How to apply

Applications to the SSE Airtricity Generation Green Community Fund are made through an online application form.

You will be asked to confirm your eligibility to apply to the Fund and will then need to create a user account for your group for our Community Investment Portal, if you have not already done so, or login if you already have an account.

## 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 to access and submit a grant application.
- Your draft application will save at key points, so you can log out of the portal and resume drafting it when you log back, should you not wish to complete and submit it in one session. Log back in and click the 'My Applications' button on the home screen, then 'launch' next to your draft application. Please do not use this same login page to create your user account - this must be done through the application link.
- 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).

## 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
- 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 capital works or goods included in the project budget
- 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.
  - For example, any architects' drawings, a business plan, and/or copies of any relevant permissions, such as planning permission, building warrant and/or listed building consent.
  - Project evaluations or impact reports which highlight the impact of your project.
  - Please note due to GDPR we ask you not to include any photos which include people.



## 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: Registered charity (other); Company limited by guarantee; Community Interest Company; Community Benefit Society; Community 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.
- Constitution:
  - Upload the latest version of your group's governing document adopted by the members.
- 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:
  - Key points to cover:
    - what you want to do
    - How you will do this – e.g. the activities you will deliver, where/ when/ how often you will deliver them, 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.
- Suggested word limit - 400 words
- How will you maintain / sustain your project after the period of our grant funding is finished?
  - 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?
  - Your project should address a current need and gap in local provision.
  - Where possible please provide relevant local data that demonstrates this e.g. from a local community plan, survey of your intended beneficiaries, labour market statistics, and/or neighbourhood statistics.
  - Suggested word limit is 300 words.
- 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.
- Will any jobs be supported by the project?
  - If yes, we will ask how many.
- Will any community assets (e.g. community hall, footpath) be built and/or improved as part of the project?
  - If yes, we will ask how many.
- 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.

## UN Sustainable Development Goals

SSE Airtricity community programmes support the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We will ask you to identify the primary UN Sustainable Development Goal that your project contributes to and will allow you to also identify secondary goals. You can find out more about the UN SDG's at: [Sustainable Development Goals | United Nations Development Programme \(undp.org\)](https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals)

The Goals we will ask you to select from are:

- Goal 4 - education and training e.g. your project will support people to enter work, will help schools to deliver new activity or would help community members learn new skills.
- Goal 7 - energy efficiency - your project helps communities to have affordable and modern energy e.g. insulation measures, new heating systems.
- Goal 11 - Sustainable communities - your project will help enhance the local community e.g. improving a community hall, building new community sports Centre, running a community event
- Goal 13 - climate action - your project will help to combat climate change e.g. community renewables.

## Project Aims and Success

- What are the intended outcomes of the project and how do you anticipate measuring success?
  - Outcomes are the economic, social and/or environmental benefits/changes that you seek to make from your programme

- Where possible make sure your outcomes are clear, achievable, specific and realistic.
  - Make sure your outcomes link logically to the needs gap you have identified.
  - Please limit the number of outcomes to a manageable number (we suggest no more than 5 outcomes)
  - Suggested word limit 300 words
- Explain how your project achieves the Fund aims and priorities outlined on page 2 of this guidance document.
  - Provide an overview of how your project advances at least one of the Focus Areas for Strand of funding that you have applied for.
  - Suggested word limit - 300 words
- Will your project contribute to the local economy?
  - If it will, explain how the project helps enhance the local economy e.g., creation of jobs, encouraging new businesses to area.
- Please tell us whether the project is new.
  - If it is not, tell us how it has been funded to date.

## Project Bank Details

- If your project is in the UK, 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.
- If your project is in the Republic of Ireland, we will require your IBAN 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 SSE Airtricity 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.
  - For larger capital items (e.g. building work, vehicles, equipment) of more than €3,000/£2,500 in value we expect you to have sought at least two quotations, for such items of more than €12,000/£10,000 in value we expect you to have sought at least three quotations. Please upload any quotations you have received towards such costs.
  - If you are seeking a grant to cover salary costs, please tell us what hourly rate will be paid. SSE Airtricity 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 [Generation Green] Community Fund for.
  - Only non-recoverable VAT costs should be included in any grant amount you are requesting from SSE Airtricity.

## 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 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.