

DECC Local Energy Assessment Fund

A new £10 million fund announced by DECC today presents an exciting new opportunity for community energy projects.

What is the funding for?

In summary, the fund will provide support for communities to:

1. Commission assessments of the energy efficiency of homes and buildings in their community
2. Run demonstration projects of the type of measures that will shortly be available through the Green Deal (e.g. solid wall insulation)
3. Carry out feasibility studies for community renewable energy projects
4. Run public awareness-raising and engagement events and meetings to ensure that the whole community (a) understands the reasons for your group engaging in this work (b) has access to the findings of any studies and (c) is given the opportunity to get involved

In order to apply for funds to carry out feasibility studies for renewable energy projects, communities will need to show that they have, or will (during the period of the funding) carry out work under points (1) and (4). Communities do not have to do all of this work themselves – average grants under this fund are expected to be around £50,000 up to a maximum of £130,000, and this can be used to pay specialist organisations for support.

Why is the government providing this funding?

The reason for the fund is to give communities a head start on the possibilities that are opening up through: the Green Deal¹ (improving homes), the payments that will be available through the Renewable Heat Incentive (heat generating renewable energy technologies), and encouraging take up of technologies that benefit from the Feed in Tariff (electricity generating renewable energy technologies).

The funding will be available for any legally incorporated not-for-profit groups – including voluntary groups, Parish Councils, CICs, Co-ops and Communities of Interest. In some cases a legally incorporated non-profit group such as a local charity will be able to represent an un-constituted community group by acting as a lead organisation. In exceptional cases public sector bodies may be accepted as lead bodies where they can justify that they are fulfilling a crucial role in support of a community group.

What are the deadlines?

The funding will be issued in two phases. In phase 1, bids will need to be submitted to DECC by 12 Noon 22nd December 2011 and successful groups will be announced in the week beginning 9th Jan

¹ Including trialling ways for local businesses and social enterprises to deliver building and home improvement work to improve the energy efficiency of homes

2012. In phase 2, bids need to be submitted by 12 Noon 20th Jan 2012, and successful groups will be announced by 31st Jan, 2012. Work will need to be completed by 31st March 2012.

More information about the fund

There is a press release on the DECC website

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/news/pn11_107/pn11_107.aspx and more information about the fund here: <http://www.greencommunitiescc.org.uk/DECCAbout.aspx>.

What can CSE do to help your group?

CSE is especially keen to help groups make the most of this funding, especially since the deadlines for getting in a bid and delivering work are so tight. We can help you put together a bid and also provide services / expertise for delivering a project. If you are keen to put in a bid but not sure where to start, some of the things we could help with are:

- We are able to support you with writing a bid
- We have expertise in carrying out energy audits both at household level and community-wide, which we can share
- We have developed a straightforward and robust energy auditing model that would fit the funding criteria and that could be rolled out in any community
- We can provide support with renewable energy feasibility studies for all technologies
- We have experience in identifying appropriate energy efficiency improvements and installing them; we have directories of local installers that can be used for work
- We are experts in designing and running community consultations for energy projects
- We can support you in managing your project to the tight timetable required
- We've got systems you can use for your project evaluation and reporting.

How to contact us for support with your bid

For more information on CSE support for your bid, call 0117 934 1400 and ask to speak to a member of the Local & Community Empowerment Team. Alternatively, email communities@cse.org.uk

This webpage will be kept up to date with fund details, and highlights some tools and resources that could be useful to groups wishing to apply for funding: <http://www.cse.org.uk/projects/view/1175>

More information about CSE

Our website, www.cse.org.uk, also provides information about our current and previous projects, including:

- Preparation for the Green Deal rollout in autumn 2012²
- Installing solid wall insulation in homes in Bath³
- Our technical consultancy services⁴

² <http://www.cse.org.uk/pages/information/local-authorities/the-green-deal>

³ <http://www.cse.org.uk/projects/view/1142>

⁴ http://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/file/CSE_technical_capability_statement_may2011.pdf