

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN), the Distribution Network Operator for central southern England and the north of Scotland, is now welcoming applications to its new Powering Communities to Net Zero fund.

The new Powering Communities to Net Zero (PCNZ) fund is a successor to the previous Resilient Communities Fund, which has awarded over £5m to around 700 projects in the past nine years. The new fund will run annually from now, concluding in Spring 2028. More than £3m in grants will be awarded during this time. This fund will support communities during prolonged power interruptions caused by storms, aid their ability to cope in periods of severe weather, and will now also support the adoption of new low-carbon technologies by non-profit organisations.

The new fund explained:

The fund is split into two categories; community-led physical and environmental resilience, and Low Carbon Technology (LCTs).

The new community-led physical and environmental resilience grants.

- Half of the £3m funding will be available over the next four years to enable communities to apply for grants that will bolster physical and environmental resilience measures. Further details of the criteria are found in the fund guidance and in the application form. Grants of up to £15,000 will be awarded to successful applicants in this category.

The new low-carbon technology grants.

- The other half of the funding being made available over the next four years will also be available for non-profit organisations to apply for grants to go towards the purchase of new Low-Carbon Technology. For example, a successful grant application could result in a social housing scheme or community centre being awarded funding to contribute to the cost of EV chargers, solar panels, battery storage or backup, low carbon heating systems, smart heating controls, or other general energy efficiency measures. Grants of up to £20,000 will be awarded to successful applicants in this category.
- Note: SSEN is aware there are often lengthy lead times associated with community project preparations, as well as getting approval to connect some low carbon technologies. In light of this, SSEN is advising applicants to consider projects that have already been approved to apply in the current round, as the timescales for awarding and spending funds may be more likely to align. Those who are uncertain of their timescales can contact colin.mcmillan@sse.com to discuss this in more detail.

The deadline for applications to both categories is **5pm on Saturday 31st August 2024**, and applicants are asked to consider the criteria in the fund guidelines. The application documents can be downloaded on our website www.ssen.co.uk/pcnz. This gives full details of what can be supported by the fund as well as guidance on which projects will be prioritised.

The PCNZ Fund Panel, will review applications and determine which projects should receive funding, with the successful applications announced in late October.

More information can be found on our news article on the [SSEN web-site](#).