

North East & Yorkshire Net Zero Hub Community Energy Fund

List of FAQ's from CEF Applicants

Category	Question	Answer
General CEF dates	When will the next round open?	Round 2 is now open! The Hub will be accepting applications until midnight on 05/05/24.
	When does the programme end and how long do we have to spend the grant?	The CEF programme will run until March 2025 – however, all projects will have 12 months to deliver, from the date they are issued their funding offer letter.
	Will more than one application per organisation be accepted?	Yes! A community group that has already received funding may apply again for a different project on a different site. These new projects would be eligible for the full Stage 1 and Stage 2 support, providing subsidy control requirements are met. A group may also put in an application for two Stage 1 projects at two different sites at the same time, providing they have the capacity to do both.
	Does Stage 1 (feasibility) funding need to have been spent/completed on a project before you can apply for Stage 2 funding for the same project?	Yes, we would need the full technical feasibility to be completed before Stage 2 funding could be applied for, to ensure project feasibility before further development.
Location	Can you request funding for feasibility studies when they have not confirmed a location?	No - For asset-based projects (type A), you should have a specific site(s) under consideration. For type B projects, you should have a location/area in mind.
Eligibility	Do we have to have a 50% community owned project if the community use our building and would benefit from the reduced room hire if energy bills would be reduced from the use of renewable energy technology?	Yes – all projects must be 50% community owned.
	What does 'community owned' mean?	For the purpose of this fund, 'community ownership' should ensure that people living locally to the project can influence decisions about the asset's management and/or distribution of benefits - for example, via an accessible membership that gives them voting rights. Ownership models should ensure that a reasonable share of 'community benefit' flows to the local community, though investment may be raised from the wider community, such as through a share offer, and benefits can also accrue to

		those other parties. The case for community ownership and community benefit will be assessed on a project-by-project basis based on evidence submitted in the application.
Organisation type	Can a Town Council lead a bid, and can they request any of the eligible funding costs?	Yes – Town and Parish Councils can lead a bid and are fully eligible organisations.
	Is a private estate eligible for the Community Energy Fund?	Potentially – if the project and final asset would be 50% community owned, and if the application was from an eligible organisation, then this may be eligible.
	Can we apply if we are a community benefit society that operates nationally?	Yes, in theory, providing the activity stated in your proposal covers the NE&Y region. You would not be able to then apply to another Hub for funding for the exact same project. If this is the case for your project, please contact the Hub to discuss before submitting your application.
Finance	Will our application be permitted without audited accounts as we're a CIC?	Yes – but you may score lower on the financial management question.
	Can we submit only one quote for the work.	Yes – but you will not gain full marks on this question, and you must provide a reason for the 1 quote would need to be justified.
	Can I commission someone I know to do the study?	Yes, if well justified through your procurement but you would need to Obtain a further 2 quotes to show value for money and must provide an explanation if you do not choose the lowest price quote.
Technology	Would the fund be applicable for installing technologies such as solar panels or heat pumps?	No - The fund is not allowed to be used for any capital purchases, but it can be used to undertake the feasibility and development for the installation of capital technologies.
	Would a hydrogen project be accepted by the Community Energy Fund?	Yes – we'd encourage you to discuss this with the Hub prior to application.
Quotes	Will standard quotes from suppliers be sufficient?	We'd encourage applicants to collate 3 quotes to ensure value for money – quotes that are specific to the proposed project would be preferred.
	Do you have any lists of providers we can seek tender from?	No – the hub cannot recommend specific contractors or consultants; however, we may be able to link you up with similar projects who could advise. A free national online Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) is being created by the Midlands NZ Hub for summer 2024. This will create a list of providers, contractors and consultants which community energy projects can access.

	What does “You should already have secured a minimum of three quotes for the work for which you are seeking funding, or explain why has not been possible” mean?	‘The work’ relates to the feasibility study or development work which you are including in your application.
Grant	What is the grant %?	Up to 100% of eligible costs.
	Can any % of the grant be paid up front?	Yes – 25% of the grant funding can be paid upfront, then claims will be released quarterly upfront based on projected spend for the next relevant quarter.
	When does the funding end & how long have we to spend the grant?	The programme ends on 31 st March 2025. However projects have 12 months to deliver from the date of their offer letter, even if this takes them past the March 2025 programme end.
Stage 1	Can we make applications for a Type A and a Type B projects?	Yes - A community group that has already received funding may apply again for a different project on a different site. These new projects would be eligible for the full Stage 1 support, providing subsidy control requirements are met (see below).
	Is it ok for projects applying for the community Energy Fund to cover both Type A & Type B simultaneously?	You are able to propose a project that combines the feasibility of both a Type A and Type B project, however, you could still only apply for up to £40,000 for Stage 1. If you were to submit two separate bids, one for a Type A project and one for a Type B project, you could apply for the full £40,000 for each project (subject to UK subsidy rules) providing they’re completely different projects. Please note, feasibility studies can only be undertaken on projects that you have not explored previously.
Stage 2	Is it possible to just apply for Stage 2 funding?	Yes – providing the eligibility is met and that a full technical feasibility (Stage 1 activity) has already taken place and has covered all the aspects included in the CEF Feasibility Report Structure
	Is there a template for the Stage 2 CEF feasibility study?	We don’t have a Stage 2 template/example. This is because Stage 2 activity can vary much more widely than Stage 1.
	Can Type B projects apply for Stage 2 funding?	No - Type B projects are only eligible for Stage 1 funding.
	Can the Hub check to make sure a feasibility study is sufficient for a Stage 2 application.	No - Unfortunately, we are unable to check individual feasibility studies as they will be checked by an external appraiser with the application. The Feasibility Report Structure is on our website for guidance.
	What if I have problems with grid connection?	We will allow a Stage 2 milestone to be ‘grid application submitted’ as opposed to ‘grid

		application obtained' to ensure that grid constraints don't impact funding opportunities. (Northern Powergrid have a free to access Open Data portal for their network which includes information on demand forecasting for both their Northeast and Yorkshire licence areas).
Miscellaneous	Can the Hub check our application before submission?	The Hub can support and advise throughout, but cannot provide a full application check before submission.
Miscellaneous	Can groups sound out the NEY NZ Hub Community Energy team about their proposal/idea before applying?	Yes – contact enquiries@NEYnetzerohub.com with your ideas and we're happy to have a chat through.