

SSE RENEWABLES COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUNDS

SSE Renewables' Community Benefit Funds provide grants to local community groups and not-for-profit organisations located within 20km of our wind farms in Ireland. The funding supports projects that will create positive social and environmental impacts ensuring the communities adjacent to the wind farm receive tangible benefits from the development, creating a sustainable legacy. The funds support projects that encompass energy efficiency and social sustainability projects, to empower, and support communities in the transition to a net zero future.

What is the Meentycat & Culliagh Community Benefit Fund and who does it benefit?

The Meentycat & Culliagh Wind Farms are located in the Cark mountains north of Ballybofey in County Donegal and has a total generation capacity of 88.5MW. It comprises the 72.4MW, 38 turbine phase 1 wind farm which was commissioned in 2004, as well as its 9.2MW, four turbine Cark and 6.9MW, three turbine Meenbog extensions which were both commissioned in 2009.

The Meentycat & Culliagh Wind Farms can power over 59,000 homes[^] and help abate over 58,500 metric tonnes of harmful carbon dioxide* per annum. The Meentycat & Culliagh Community Funds launched in 2005. So far over €1.2m has been presented to groups around the wind farm.

Who should I contact for more information?

If further information is required, please contact Anne Reynolds, the Community Investment Manager at CommunityFundIreland@sse.com.

What are the application timescales?

The fund will open for applications on **30th September 2024** and close at **5pm on 25th October 2024**.

Who can apply for funding?

Applications are welcome from local community groups and not for profit organisations located within 20 km of the wind farms. The Area of Benefit for this local fund prioritises groups within 5 km, followed by groups within 10 km and then out to 20 km from the centre of the wind farms.

All applicants must have:

- **A constitution** - Your group / organisation should be properly constituted. The constitution should be signed and dated and should outline the group's / 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.The Wheel have developed a governance resource for small community and voluntary organisations. A constitution template is provided on [page 22](#). <https://www.wheel.ie/>
- **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 expenditure must be made through this account and grant payments will be paid into this account.

Fund Aims

The fund is to be used to provide support for projects in the communities in who host our wind farms. 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 instal microgrids, and / or energy storage
- transition to equipment that uses a renewable energy source
- improve energy efficiency in buildings, transportation, and / or processes
- use 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.

Scoring Criteria

Applications will be scored on a number of criteria including but not limited to:-

- Proximity to the wind farm
- Primary & Secondary UN sustainable goals
- Number of beneficiaries
- Additional funding has been secured
- New group applying
- Value for money
- Collaboration & community involvement
- Capacity & Financial Sustainability.

What can be funded?

The fund will consider applications for both capital and revenue funding.

Capital funding - For expenditure on new assets or the development of existing assets. These are expected to have “wider community benefit” and to have an expected lifespan of at least 5 years.

Revenue funding – For expenditure on running costs related for example to the delivery of training, events, or excursions.

Please ensure that you have the Project Financial plan complete, for example, details of any fundraising you have done or match funding received before applying as once a grant is awarded the project must be fully complete before a group can apply for further funding.

Multi-year funding

To support large scale transformational projects, SSE Renewables will consider multi-annual funding.

Under the multi-annual funding stream, a grant agreement is issued to the group for the overall sum, which is then paid in set instalments on an annual basis over the duration of the agreement. A progress report will be required annually to show evidence of the project delivering impact year on year before drawdown.

What cannot be funded?

The SSE Renewables Meentycat & Cullliagh Community Benefit Fund will not support the following activities or costs:

- Applications that only benefit an individual
- Activities which do not directly benefit the local community or align with any of the fund criteria
- Projects benefiting primarily those residents outside the Area of Benefit
- The advancement of religion or party politics
- The direct replacement of statutory funding

- 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
- Existing loans, debts, or retrospective funding (i.e. paying for costs incurred before a decision on an application to the Fund for support can be made).

Introducing our Community Investment Portal

With the introduction of our new online Community Investment Portal, applying for and managing your grants has never been easier. By using our online portal, we aim to improve the experience of those applying to our community benefit funds. The Portal makes grant applications easy whilst also allowing applicants to view key information on their applications and any grant awards - all in one place.

We've produced a series of short videos, providing an overview of the Portal, how to set up your user account, how to make applications and how to manage your applications and grants. To watch these videos click [here](#).

Below is a step-by-step guide to help with your application to the Meentycat & Culliagh Community Benefit Funds.

How to apply online

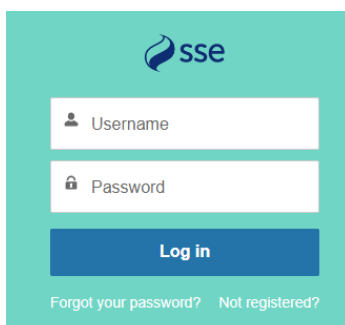
Applications to the Meentycat & Culliagh Community Benefit Fund are made through an online application form on the SSE Community Investment Portal. To access this, please follow the link below:

[Meentycat and Culliagh | SSE Renewables](#)

Step 1 - Confirm your eligibility to apply to the Fund.

- It is essential that only authorised personnel from the group applying to use the SSE's Community Investment Portal
- An organisation must only be registered on the Portal once.
- If any additional users are required, the registered user must contact Anne Reynolds by email CommunityFundIreland@sse.com with the name and email address of any additional users to be registered.

Step 2. Create a user account



- You must create a user account (using the link above) to access and submit a grant application. You will only need to register as a user once and will thereafter be able to log in any time you wish to continue writing a draft application or view your grant details.
- Click the "Not Registered?" link
- Enter your First Name, Last Name, and Email address
- You will receive an email containing your **Username** and a link to **create a password. Keep this email safe as a reminder of your username.**
- Your username will be your email address with ".sse" at the end.
- Enter a unique password that meets the criteria and keep it safe.
- If you forget your password you can click the 'Forgot your password?' link
- You can watch the video instructions [here](#).

Step 3. Register your Group on the SSE Community Investment Portal

Note: you will only need to register this information the first time you apply for a grant on behalf of your group; it will remain on the Portal for any future applications.

***** To start the registration process you must have your Constitution document available to upload *****

Your constitution is downloadable on Company Registrations Website -

<https://core.cro.ie/search> or Charities Regulator Website

<https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/en/information-for-the-public/search-the-register-of-charities>

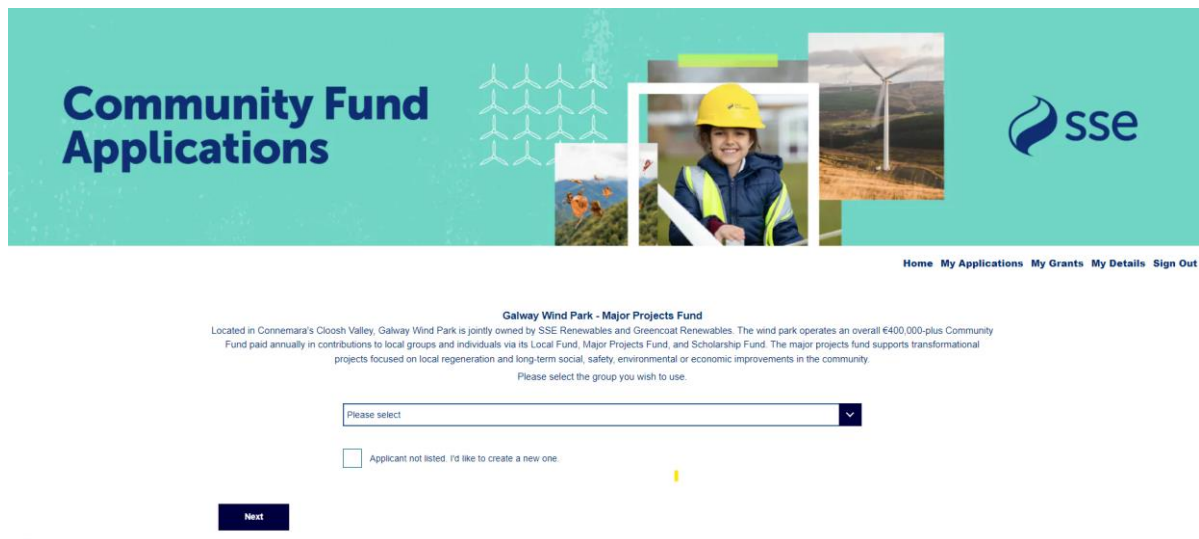
Questions you will be asked during the application process

- Name of Group:
 - This should be the name that appears on your group's governing document and bank account
- Type of group:
 - You will be able to select from a list: Unincorporated voluntary or community organisation; SCIO; 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. This is searchable on Company Registrations Website - <https://core.cro.ie/search> or Charities Regulator Website <https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/en/information-for-the-public/search-the-register-of-charities>
- 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. This is searchable on Company Registrations Website - <https://core.cro.ie/search> or Charities Regulator Website <https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/en/information-for-the-public/search-the-register-of-charities>
- What are your aims and objectives?
- Please describe your main activities including any previous community projects you have carried out.
 - Provide a summary of the main activities or services your group delivers and/or has delivered to-date.
- Please outline what communities your projects or activities support.
 - State which communities or beneficiary groups your group supports. For example, all residents in the community your group is set up to benefit, or young people, or people who are not in education, employment or training.
- Correspondence address:
- Registered address:
 - This is the address at which your group or organisation is formally registered, which may differ from the correspondence address. This is searchable on Company Registrations Website - <https://core.cro.ie/search> or Charities Regulator Website <https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/en/information-for-the-public/search-the-register-of-charities>

Step 4. Complete the application form

Questions to ask yourself:

- Has anyone else within your organisation completed Step 3 already. If they have, please request the registered user for your group email the SSE Community Investment Manager (with your details and requesting for you to be added as a Portal user for that organisation).
- Your draft application will save at key points, so you can log out of the Portal and resume drafting it when you log back in, should you not wish to complete and submit it in one session. To do so, [log in here](#) and click 'launch' next to the relevant application.
- If you would like to apply on behalf of a new group tick the box "Applicant not listed. I'd like to create a new one."
- Or, if you have submitted an application on behalf of your group already, simply select the group you wish to use from the Drop-down menu.



Application Form Screen 1 - About the Project:

- Please provide a short summary that describes the project or activity you wish to apply for funding. (maximum 25 words)
- Please provide a Postcode / Eircode which represents the geographical area your project will benefit.
- Please describe the project you are looking for funding for. (Maximum 3000 characters)
 1. What do you want to do?
 2. How will you do this? (activities you will deliver, equipment needed, how it will be used)
 3. How will the community be involved in the development and delivery of the project?
 4. Who will lead the project?
 5. How will you monitor and evaluate the project?
 6. What are the proposed start and end dates of the project?
- How will you maintain/ sustain your project after the period of funding is finished? Please also include detail if this project helps make your organisation more self-sustaining. (Maximum 3000 characters)
- How have you identified a need for this project within the local area? (Maximum 2000 characters)

Where possible please link this to local data e.g. local community plan, local residents survey, labour market statistics and neighbourhood statistics.

- How many people will benefit from the project? – (Numbers only no text)
- How have you calculated this figure? (Maximum 1200 characters)
- Will any jobs be supported by this project?

If yes, please state how many. (Numbers only no text)

- Will any community assets be built, improved by this project (e.g. community hall, walking path)?

If yes, please list how many. (Numbers only no text)

- Will this project help improve energy efficiency or climate action?
 - If so, please state the energy generation or carbon reduction capacity of the project, where known. Resources to calculate available at <http://www.sbcc.sustainabilitytool.com>

Application Form Screen 2 - UN Sustainable Development Goals

SSE Renewables community programme supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Please review the goals below and identify the main goal your project will support or have an emphasis towards. If you wish to tell us about any secondary goals the project will support, you can also include these.

- Select your primary goal. (*Must be one of the 4 priority UN SDGs outlined above*)
- Select your secondary goals.

Full list of Goals available to choose from:

- **Goal 3 – GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- **Goal 4 – QUALITY EDUCATION**
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- **Goal 7 – AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY**
Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- **Goal 8 – DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**
Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- **Goal 11 – SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- **Goal 13 – CLIMATE ACTION**
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- **Goal 15 – LIFE ON LAND**
Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Application Form Screen 3 - Project Aims and Success

- Please explain how your project achieves the criteria outlined in the fund guidance document.

Application Form Screen 4 - Project Bank Details

- International Bank Account Number (IBAN)
- Bank Account Holders Name

- Upload copy of bank statement from within last 3 months.
- Upload a copy of your latest financial accounts.
- Additional Authorised Bank Signatory
 - Ensure these details are correct as they will be sent a copy of the Grant offer letter to co-sign should you be successful in your grant application.
 - First name
 - Last name
 - Email
 - Position in the group.

Application Form Screen 5 - Group Finances

- What are the main sources of income for the group?
- What was the group's annual income as stated in your uploaded financial accounts? (New groups: state projected income for first year).
- What was the group's annual surplus or deficit as stated in your uploaded financial accounts?
- How much does the group currently hold in unrestricted reserves?
- Please tell us about your organisation's available reserves position, and where relevant, tell us why your reserves cannot be used towards this project.

Application Form Screen 6 - Project Budget

Please provide an accurate list of all costs involved in the work, services, or items required for the project. This should include all project costs (whether you already have funding in place for those or not). You will have the opportunity to insert the information into a list/ table in the form or to upload your own budget file and enter a figure. **Do not do both**, please select either **List Cost Breakdowns** or **Upload File**.

Note: if you enter costs using the list cost breakdown option then decide to upload a budget file instead, please ensure you delete any entries in the "List Cost Breakdown" before continuing.

Application Form Screen 7 - Project Budget cont....

- Please tell us how you have costed your project.
- **Upload any quotes you have obtained for the project.**
 - For any item of value over €10,000 you must seek 3 quotes
 - Upload 1 or 3 quotes per Cost Listed
 - Name each quote with the same name as entered for Cost Details with Q1, Q2, Q3 as appropriate.

Application Form Screen 8 - Project Budget cont....

Please tell us the amount you are applying to SSE for.

Note: Please only enter the minimum amount you need from SSE Renewables to deliver this project.

Application Form Screen 9 - Project Funders

Provide details of all other funding is secured or being sought towards the total project costs. For each funding source:

- Select correct Funding Type

- Enter Funding Amount
- Select correct Funding Status.
- Save and Continue.

Application Form Screen 10 – Checklist

You will need to be able to answer each of the following to submit your application:

- I can confirm we have appropriate procedures in place to carry out our project safely.
- I can confirm the organisation has at least three unrelated people serving on the management committee/board.
- I can confirm this project doesn't require retrospective funding.
- If requested, I could provide the details of an independent referee.
- I can confirm that any level of salary paid is at, or greater than, the Living Wage.
- **Does the project require any of the following consents?**
 - Planning permission
 - Building warrant
 - Listed buildings consent
 - If yes to any of these - Further consent information
 - Please state whether these consents been applied for. If so, have they been granted? If not, when do you anticipate them being applied for or granted?

Application Form Screen 11 - Additional Uploaded Documents

You will have the opportunity to upload the following documents as part of your application:

- A copy of the organisation's Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Policy (if applicable)
- Letters of support (if applicable)
- Additional information (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
 - Land ownership / lease agreements
 - Please note due to GDPR we ask you not to include any photos which include people.

Submit Button - This is the last opportunity to review / edit your application. Once you have submitted your application you will no longer be able to edit the contents.

What happens Next?

- Once the submit button has been clicked, we will send you an email confirming your application has been received.
- If you require a copy of your application following submission, you can request one by logging into the Portal and navigating to the 'My Applications' section then clicking on 'Copy of Application' next to the relevant application. You'll then receive an e-mail within 24 hours, containing instructions on how to download a copy. Note, due to the limitations of Adobe software, this will not contain any information on your submitted project budget or other funding.
- If you need any further information regarding how to complete the application form please contact Anne Reymolds, by email CommunityFundIreland@sse.com

Troubleshooting Guide

- We recommend using Google Chrome as your browser. Not essential
- If asked about a number, only enter figures. **No letters or punctuation**. For example:
 - Beneficiaries
 - Financial details
 - Grant details
- Preferred document type for upload is PDF other than for any project budget file that you upload, which should ideally be in Microsoft Excel. Please **ensure documents are not password protected**.
- If you haven't received an e-mail from us, it is possible the e-mail has been moved into your 'spam' or 'junk' folder by your e-mail provider. Add the SSE e-mail address it was sent from to your 'Safe Senders' list – this will prevent emails from that address being moved into your spam or junk folder in the future. This can be done by
 - a) adding the address in your safe senders list or
 - b) marking the e-mail as not junk and checking the box '*for this and all future messages from the relevant SSE e-mail address*'.
- If you have any IT problems while trying to access the SSE Community Investment Portal, please contact communityfundsupport@sse.com
- If you have any issues completing your application form, please contact Anne Reynolds, by email CommunityFundIreland@sse.com