



Northern Powergrid

Net Zero Community Energy Fund 2024

Overview

Net Zero Community Energy Fund overview:

- Grants of up to £10,000 for building capacity of local community energy organisations
- Applications accepted between 22 April and 15 July 2024
- Apply [here](#).

This document contains more information on:

- The context and purpose of the fund
- Eligibility criteria
- Potential projects
- Potential uses of funding
- Application assessment
- Next steps after application
- Support not in scope

Supporting community energy

Our vision is for a thriving, connected and strong community energy sector in our region, where decarbonisation, resilience, energy democracy, energy security and innovation go hand in hand.

We want to work with the communities we serve to tackle the climate emergency together. With many community energy organisations being volunteer-led, we know that developing low-carbon, local energy projects is not easy. The knowledge that new groups need is available, but getting hold of it – or funding it – can be difficult.

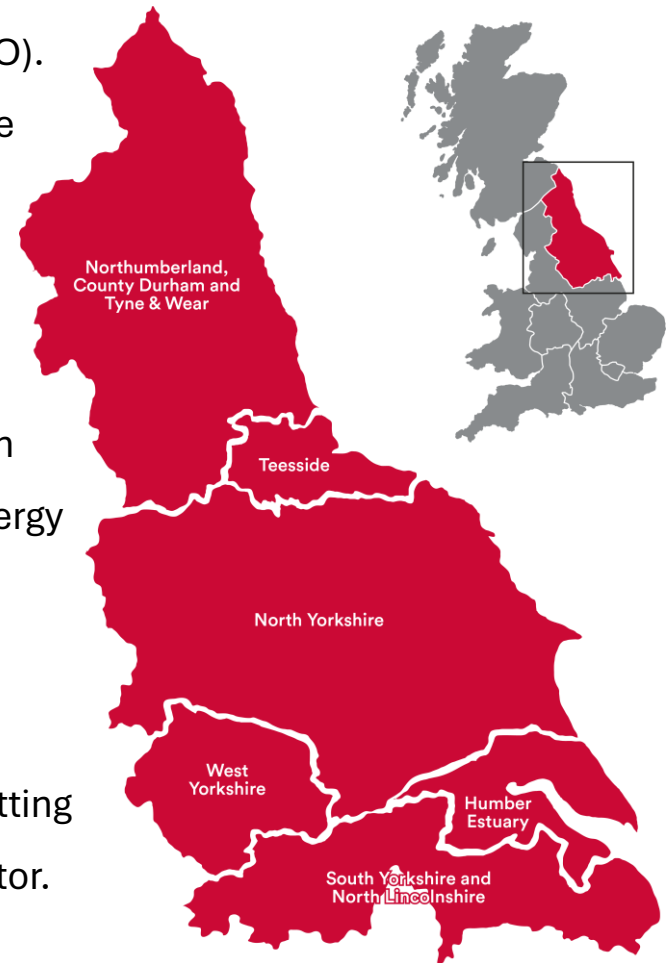
We know we have a role to support community energy, both as an anchor institution and also as a key player in the energy sector locally and nationally, with the relevant expertise and networks.

After the success of last year's fund, we are continuing the Net Zero Community Energy Fund for 2024. Alongside our [Community Energy Engagement Strategy](#) and the [Northern Powergrid Foundation](#), this aims to support communities across the North East, Yorkshire and Humber, and Northern Lincolnshire on their net zero journeys.

Northern Powergrid's role

Northern Powergrid is a Distribution Network Operator (DNO). We manage the electricity network that powers everyday life for more than 8 million people across 3.9 million homes and businesses in the North East, Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire.

We have a key role to play in facilitating the energy transition and recognise that supporting the growth of community energy helps to ensure this transition is as fair as possible, with no one left behind. In 2014, we were the first DNO to launch a Community Energy Seed Fund. In 2020, we published a [Community Energy Engagement Strategy](#) for 2020-2023, setting out 26 commitments to support the community energy sector.



Net Zero Community Energy Fund

Northern Powergrid is working with Regen to administer £50,000 in funding to support new and existing community energy organisations and climate action groups across the North East, Yorkshire and Humber, and Northern Lincolnshire. Grants of up to £10,000 are available.

The **aim of this fund** is to help new and existing groups to:

1. Build capacity
2. Access expertise
3. Explore project feasibility in the early ‘at risk’ stages of development.
4. Support emerging community energy organisations with start-up costs.

We are open to your ideas for support that will help your community achieve net zero, or identify actions to achieve net zero, and we want to support you to develop these ideas further.

Eligibility criteria

We will accept applications from community-based organisations and charities which meet the following criteria:

- You are a volunteer-led group, a registered charity, community benefit society, community interest company or a not-for-profit organisation with charitable aims.
- You have a formal constitution and a bank account with at least two signatories.
- You have an organisation income of less than £100,000 in the most recent financial year.
- You are run by local people with clear local benefits to the project and demonstrable community links.
- You are based in and have the majority of your beneficiaries within Northern Powergrid's geographical area of the North East of England, Yorkshire and Humber and Northern Lincolnshire.

Note: You can apply to the community fund for 100% of project costs, with no match funding required.

Potential projects

This fund's purpose is to help community energy groups in starting up and building capacity, as well as exploring the feasibility of new energy projects.

We would encourage applications from groups focusing on, but not limited to, the following:

- Looking to establish a community energy organisation
- Installing low carbon technologies
- Feasibility of renewable energy projects
- Delivering energy efficiency
- Projects on decarbonisation of heat
- Education and public engagement on energy.

Potential uses of funding

The funding can be used to support start-up costs, training or project specific activities, including:

- Technical expertise and mentoring
- Formal training
- Feasibility studies
- Researching a new business model
- Setting up a legal entity*
- Supporting relevant staff time
- Producing engagement materials to support a project
- Facilitated discussions/workshops with experts or the community
- Proof of concept trials/ pilot projects
- Support finding funding, bid writing, governance advice or training

***Successful applicants will need a bank account and formal constitution to accept funding.**

Application assessment

Applications will be reviewed to ensure the eligibility criteria are met. Eligible applicants will be judged by Regen, Northern Powergrid and a panel of independent community energy experts against the criteria below. All applicants will be informed of the outcome.

Criteria	Applications should demonstrate that:
Need and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a clear and proven need from within the community for the project.• The project delivers a significant positive contribution towards carbon reduction.• The project objectives align with the community need and the aims of this fund.
Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have experience and capacity to manage both funding and the project successfully.• You have clearly identified timescales, key milestones, necessary support, value for money and team responsibilities.• You have an understanding and awareness of the energy and community energy sectors.
Long-term sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a clear plan for monitoring the project outputs, and how these will inform further work within the community.• If the project continues past this funding period, you have provided clear evidence on an operation plan and prove you have sufficient resources to continue to manage and maintain any assets developed through the fund.

Next steps after application

- Following the approval of an application, a grant offer letter (including terms and conditions of grant acceptance) will be sent to the successful applicant.
- The applicant will be required to sign and return the acceptance and terms and conditions of the grant forms within one month of the grant offer being made and prior to the start of the project. If the project is started before the acceptance of grant and terms and conditions forms are returned, the grant offer may be withdrawn.
- Following confirmation that all documentation has been received, 100% of the grant funds will be released to your organisation's bank account within two weeks and applicants must start their project within three months.
- Progress reports will be required to be submitted every three months and a final project report submitted within six weeks of project completion. Detailed guidance for these reports will be provided.
- Failure to comply with the submission of any reports or failure to meet the terms of contract may result in the applicant needing to pay back the grant award in full.

Support not in scope

While we want to be flexible, we will not normally consider the following:

- Projects or business models that have been proven to be unviable by other community energy groups.
- Applications from individuals.
- General running costs, including long-term employment (this fund is not for general staffing costs).
- Projects that have already taken place or applications for retroactive funding.
- Any costs associated with the development, completion or submission of an application to this fund.
- Applications from commercial organisations.
- Applications for political or religious causes.
- This list is not exhaustive – please get in touch if you have any questions about your organisation's eligibility.

Contact us or apply now



APPLY HERE

<https://form.typeform.com/to/otj9yYJa>



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