

## Urban Community Energy Fund – Eligibility Checker

This form asks simple questions about your group and the project you have in mind.

All this form does is let you know if your group is, in principle, eligible to apply to the Fund for a grant or loan or not.

If your project appears to be eligible, you may submit an application, but before you do, please contact us so we can talk you through it. We want to help you submit the strongest application possible.

If your project is not eligible for UCEF funding this may be because your project is located in a rural area (according to Office of National Statistics criteria) and you need to apply to the Rural Community Energy Fund. Or it may be that, based on the answers you have given, your application will not be successful unless you adapt it.

We can help you work through the areas where your project idea is currently unsuitable. When the fund goes live in the coming weeks, please contact us for more support. The eligibility checker can be used again to see if your adapted plans are eligible.

If you can't answer all of the questions below, please contact us for advice.

### **Q1. Is your community group incorporated?**

This means that you are registered with Companies House as a company, or with the Charity Commission as a charitable incorporated organisation, or with the Financial Conduct Authority as a Registered Society. You may also apply if you are a Parish or Town Council, as you would be a 'body corporate' under the Local Government Act 1972.

Local Authorities and Housing Associations, even if incorporated, cannot apply on their own but are welcome to apply in partnership with the local community. This is best done by establishing a separate incorporated body with representation from both the council/housing association and the wider community on the board.

Incorporation is a relatively quick and low-cost process - see our **Guide to Incorporation** for more detail.

### **Q2. Does your community group have its own bank account requiring at least two signatures from unrelated people to make a withdrawal?**

This measure will help to protect the community group from potential fraud. We cannot pay grants and loans into bank accounts that do not meet these criteria.

### **Q3. Will the project that you are seeking funding for deliver the local community and will it benefit that community directly?**

You will be asked more about this in your application form. Proposals that have no community involvement and which do not deliver a significant and measurable community benefit will not be funded.

**Q4. Has your community group received more than £150,000 in grants or subsidies from public bodies during the last three years?**

If 'yes', then State Aid laws mean we will be unable to fund your proposal at this time. See our **Guide to State Aid**.

**Q5. What type of renewable technology are you proposing?**

- Wind turbines
- Hydropower
- Solar photo voltaic
- Solar thermal
- Ground, water and air source heat pumps
- Anaerobic digestion, biomass, bio liquids, biogas and bio-CHP
- Low carbon/renewable heat networks
- Gas combined heat and power (CHP) units
- Don't know yet

All of the eligible technologies under UCEF are listed here. If your chosen technology does not appear, it isn't eligible under this fund. It's fine if you don't know yet which renewable energy technology your group or organisation wishes to explore. UCEF grant funding may be used for local consultations that will establish which technology your community supports, but by the loan stage we will expect you to be focused on one particular technology.

**Q6. If the speculative work that you undertake with your UCEF grant demonstrates that further project development work is a good idea (or if you are already at the stage where you know this) is your community group willing to consider a UCEF contingent loan to take the project further?**

The purpose of the UCEF is to bring community energy projects of a significant size to the point at which they are 'investment ready' – that is, a lender is happy to provide project finance to cover the costs of construction.

***We can therefore only award grants to community groups who are at an early stage of development and wish to determine the key feasibility issues before proceeding to more detailed work.***

Of course, if the work you do with your UCEF grant funding demonstrates that your project ideas are not feasible, you would not be required to proceed to the loan stage.

On the other hand, if your UCEF grant funded work shows that you have some chance of proceeding (or if you have already determined the key issues through other funding that you have already raised), then your group would be eligible and encouraged to apply for a contingent loan through UCEF to get your project to the stage where it is ready to construct. The loan is only repayable when your project is successful. If there are good reasons why your project cannot proceed, even after your UCEF loan, then it will not be repayable.