

Before you apply to LEAF please read this guidance document.

Guidance for applying to the Local Energy Assessment Fund (LEAF)

LEAF aims to help communities to accelerate their activity on energy and climate change. This guidance is intended to help you understand what kind of projects might qualify for funding under the Local Energy Assessment Fund (LEAF) and how to go about applying.

Local Energy Assessment Fund (LEAF) “Seeding community energy action”

The Local Energy Assessment Fund is a new £10million fund to support community action on energy efficiency and renewable energy. It aims to help communities to equip themselves to work with the private and public sector to deliver meaningful projects through mechanisms such as the Green Deal, Feed in Tariffs and the Renewable Heat Incentive.

This fund is a short-term intervention to be completed by 31st March 2012. It is expected that average grant values will be around £50,000. The maximum grant available under LEAF will be £130,000. Applicants should be aware that they will be responsible for checking whether their grant application will be effected by European State Aid rules.

The funding will be issued in two phases as follows:

Phase 1: Applications to be submitted online by **12 noon on 22nd Dec 2011** – successful applicants to be notified by 10th Jan 2012.

Phase 2: Applications to be submitted online by **12 noon on 20th Jan 2012** – successful applicants to be notified by 31st Jan 2012.

These phases will be run simultaneously with applicants selecting which of the two deadlines they submit under, depending on how long they will need to apply and how long they will need to implement their project.

All work funded under LEAF must be completed by 31st March 2012. Communities applying will need to show that they can complete the proposed project within this period.

What kind of activities will the Local Energy Assessment Fund support?

This fund will support communities in working to understand and reduce the amount of energy that is used in homes and other buildings and where local action can help deliver savings of energy, carbon dioxide emissions and money. This work can include energy surveys of buildings, practical energy saving measures and demonstration projects, workshops to help local people take action to save energy and reports on what more needs to be done in the area. If much of this work has been done already, then there is the potential to use the fund to further develop work on renewable energy systems.

Projects supported by the scheme will need to:

- Have clear community involvement/lead
- Be led by an organisation demonstrating community benefit (see “Who can apply” section)
- Lead to greater understanding of the opportunities for energy efficiency and renewable energy within and across the host community
- Show how they will lead to an increase in installations of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures
- Show how they will benefit their community in the long term
- Be cost effective
- Be prepared to share information with other communities

The Fund will support activities such as:

Energy efficiency

- Community energy efficiency surveys reviewing the potential for energy saving in homes within your community. These studies should consider how measures could be delivered cost effectively under the Green Deal in a way that allows the community to realise some of the benefit.
- Installation of energy saving technologies such as solid wall insulation in local demonstration homes (these should be open to the public on a regular basis) and using community buildings as exemplars of energy saving technologies and measures.
- Running engagement events ahead of the above studies, to generate interest and help local people to understand the potential of energy saving measures and behaviours. A maximum cost for these activities of £5000 applies, although additional public engagement can be carried out following completion of the studies, as long as it can be delivered before the programme end date on the 31st March 2012.

Renewable energy

- Area-wide renewable energy studies to highlight which renewable energy technologies would be most appropriate and beneficial for the area.
- Outline feasibility studies into specific renewable energy projects that could be financed through Feed in Tariffs, Renewable Heat Incentive or the new renewable energy revolving fund.
- Engagement events, linked to the above studies that consult and inform local people on how renewable energy can be developed for the benefit of communities. A maximum cost for these activities of £5000 applies, although additional public engagement can be carried out following completion of the studies, as long as it can be delivered before the programme end date on the 31st March 2012.
- Developing community capacity, for example establishing community energy enterprises able to take forward projects through the Rural Renewable Energy Fund

Project development support

- Communities will be able to include up to £1,000 in the project budget to pay for support or advice from third parties in helping to develop funding applications to LEAF. **This will only be paid if your proposal is successful.**

Project delivery support -

Communities can include funding for support from project partners, consultants or contractors to enable them to deliver their project more effectively. Project support could include things like:

- Specialist technical advice or support on energy efficiency or renewable energy (can include training and support on how to save energy, on new heating systems and using technologies)
- Guidance on working with and contracting energy efficiency installers
- Setting up community enterprises, business planning, governance and structure, financing including preparing for share offers, debt financing etc, legal advice
- Marketing, promotion, profile raising
- Effective community engagement and building community support and active involvement
- Working with volunteers
- Running community events
- Building local supply chains

Information should be incorporated into the project application outlining who will be providing the support, their experience and expertise suitable for the task, what they will be doing and what it will cost to involve them. Project support can be sourced through the community networks involved in LEAF (see links page for links to community network logos and websites) and through existing local contacts. Responsibility for choosing an appropriate support provider rests with the applicant.

What kind of project will the Local Energy Assessment Fund *not* support?

The following list of project types are not eligible for funding under this programme:

- Projects that do not specifically promote energy efficiency in buildings or renewable energy (this includes projects promoting local food, waste reduction and transport initiatives)
- Projects that cannot demonstrate community engagement
- Projects that cannot demonstrate community benefit
- Projects led by “for-profit” companies that cannot demonstrate community benefit
- Projects seeking capital funding for measures that could be funded by CERT, CESP or other energy efficiency programmes
- Projects seeking capital funding for any technologies that would qualify for either Feed in Tariffs or Renewable Heat Incentive.

Who can apply?

Funding applications to LEAF should be led by community benefit organisations or community groups. In exceptional cases public sector bodies may be accepted as lead bodies, where they can justify that they are fulfilling a crucial role in support of a community group (e.g. acting as “banker” for an unconstituted community group). All lead organisations must have a community benefit structure.

The list of bodies eligible to lead LEAF bids includes:

- Parish Councils
- Community Interest Companies
- Community Co-operatives and Community Benefit Societies (Industrial and Provident Societies)
- Voluntary Associations
- Development Trusts
- Faith Groups
- Registered Social Landlords
- Communities of Interest such as sports clubs
- Charities
- Local authorities (where they can justify that they are fulfilling a crucial role in support of a community group (e.g. acting as “banker” for an unconstituted community group))

Funding will **NOT** be available to an organisation solely based on its structure. In addition to proving that they have an appropriate community benefit structure, a successful bidder will also have to show their plans for engaging the local community in decision-making and ensuring that the results of their LEAF-funded activities lead to long-term community benefits.

How does the application process work?

You can submit applications for LEAF online using the application form on our website. You can start your application, save it and complete it later if you need to gather more information. You are able to upload supporting information such as letters of support, annual accounts your signed "Declaration" form and other supporting documents.

Successful projects will be selected by an independent panel of community energy professionals and DECC. Selection criteria will be published on our website before the first round of applications closes.

Confidentiality

The information you submit as part of your application will be stored in our database for the duration of the project and will only be used in relation to selecting projects and project/grant administration. It will not be shared with organisations outside of the selection panel and those acting on behalf of the Local Energy Assessment Fund.

Reporting

We will need to see evidence that you have delivered your project before making your final grant payment.

This evidence will include copies of any studies and reports funded by LEAF, reports on events funded by LEAF and a covering report explaining progress toward your outcomes as a result of completing your project. These must be submitted by 31st March 2012 by uploading into your profile on the online application site.

Awarding of grants and invoicing

Once a grant has been awarded, communities will be informed of the total value of that grant.

Communities will be able to draw down:

- **All of the community engagement fund (up to £5,000) and**
- **25% of the costs of the first study they intend to do**

The remainder of that sum (75%) and 25% of the next scheme – demonstration and / or further assessment will be payable on completion of the first initiative.

Completing your application to LEAF

Professional support in developing your project bid

If your organisation would benefit from professional support in developing your project bid, these costs can be covered by your grant up to a maximum of £1000. You will need to identify these costs within your application in the budget section. These costs **can only be awarded if you are selected to receive a grant**, so you should be aware that any work provided up front on consultancy or professional project development support is 'at risk'. If you are not successful in securing a grant you will not receive any funding for the work on developing your bid.

If you are paying for this kind of support you should include it in the 'Revenue Costs' section of your application, as **it cannot be claimed back if it is not included in your application**.

How does the online application system work?

Before you can begin filling in the online application form you must register on the website. This activates your application pages, which can be filled in and saved as you go along. This enables you to complete your application in a number of stages if you wish. The form will prompt you to enter all the information you need to submit. You can upload supporting documents and store them ready to submit with your application.

You may find it easier to write and edit the text for your proposal in a word processor first and then cut and paste it into the application form. If you do this then please keep any formatting simple with titles on separate lines and single line spaces between sections. This is because you will lose formatting such as bullet-points, bold text and italics when you paste your text into the form.

We also recommend that you save a copy of everything you submit on your application form in a separate file or as a hard copy for your own records.

Section 1: your organisation & community

1.1

In this section you should list the name of your community group.

1.2 and 1.3

In section 1.2 you should list the name of your **lead organisation**. This is the organisation that will receive the grant (if awarded) for your project and will be responsible for reporting to LEAF. This can be the same as the community group listed in 1.1, but in some cases may be different (for example if a local charity is representing an unconstituted community group).

We need to know how your lead organisation is constituted and what activities or functions it carries out in your community. Lead organisations should be run on a for community benefit basis so you need to tell us how you redistribute your profits. Please also submit copies of your organisation's governing documents with your application (for example Memorandum & Articles for a social enterprise). For examples of groups that would be eligible to apply to LEAF see the "Who can apply" section. You must also submit your organisation's annual accounts for the previous financial year in the 'Supporting documents' section of the application to demonstrate the financial stability of your organisation.

Only legally constituted organisations run for community benefit are eligible to receive a grant so if your group is not legally constituted you will need to form a partnership with an appropriate organisation who can receive the grant on your behalf. If this is your situation you will need to explain how your lead body and community group will work together and demonstrate how the community group is involved in the decision-making process.

1.4

Please tell us about the area in which the project will take place; its location, size and characteristics. You should focus only on information which is relevant to your project and helps us to understand the context for your work and the reasoning behind your project. Examples of relevant information might include:

- Geographical information – where is your community? Is it urban or rural?
- Technical information - about the type of housing/buildings or renewable energy resources in your area.
- Socio-economic information – about the types of people who live in your area and the businesses that are based there

1.5

We will also ask about the people and organisations your group works with and how you will use the grant money to help them. Use this section to demonstrate how your project will work effectively with local people and organisations to achieve its aims. If you are targeting particular groups you should explain who they are and why you are targeting them in this section.

Section 2: project details

This is the section where you will tell us about what you intend to do if you are successful in securing funding from LEAF.

2.1

This section asks for a description of your project. You should use this section to give a clear summary of your project, what you plan to do, why, and how you plan to do it.

2.2

This section asks what **outcomes** (or changes – see “Glossary” for more detail on what we mean by outcomes) your project will generate (**what** will change, **how** it will change and **who** will change). This should cover what your project aims to achieve in the longer term.

To keep your project manageable we suggest focusing on a maximum of 4 project outcomes (it is perfectly acceptable to have less than 4). For each outcome you should include the following information in the appropriate boxes on the form:

Outcomes

List the key outcomes here (e.g. Increased uptake of domestic energy efficiency measures to reduce our carbon footprint) putting one in each box.

Need/Baseline

Explain why you have set this as an outcome (need), what your current situation is and why this is an issue locally (baseline). Do not worry if calculating your emissions is part of your funded work; we simply need to know what you know already and why you think the project is necessary.

Benefits

Explain here what benefits will result from achieving the listed outcome. Be sure to tell us how it will benefit your community specifically as well as more global benefits such as reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Monitoring & evaluation indicators

You need to show how you will monitor progress towards achieving your outcomes and how you will evaluate the impact of your project. You can use the “links” page on this website to help you find ways to monitor things like carbon emissions reduction or carbon savings from installed measures.

2.3

You must tell us about your project **deliverables**. These are the things your grant will pay for, should your application be successful, in order to achieve your outcomes. Examples of deliverables might be a

community energy efficiency survey or a programme of workshops and “meet the installer” sessions on energy efficiency measures.

Note that all of your deliverables should be focused on improving the energy efficiency of buildings in your area or developing renewable energy projects. See the section entitled “What kind of activities will the Local Energy Assessment Fund support?” for examples of the kind of activities you might include as deliverables in your project.

You also need to tell us about what your organisation and any partners or sub-contractors will do towards each deliverable, including any studies, technical support or engagement activities that will be carried out, and when these things will happen.

2.4

In this section please tell us about how your project links with other community projects, networks, groups or activities already underway in your area. Use this section to show us how your project has taken account of any other work going on in your area and include any examples of how you plan to increase the impact of and benefits from your project by working with these projects.

2.5

We would like LEAF to have the greatest possible positive impact for the money available so we would like to fund projects that will share the lessons they have learned and experience they have gained with others. Use this section to tell us how you will inform others about your project and pass on what you have learned. This might include networking with other communities at local or national level, events, media work or online information.

2.6

LEAF aims to help communities to bring about real reductions in carbon dioxide emissions and energy bills through energy efficiency, renewable energy and behaviour change. We recognise that most of these savings will not be achieved before 31st March 2012 when the programme ends. This section is an opportunity to explain how your project will achieve real savings whether these are in the short or the long term. You should include information on what you plan to do after your project is complete to ensure that real savings result from your project. For example if you are applying for a feasibility study or area assessment, what plans do you have to implement the findings of those studies (should they be positive)? If you are able to estimate the savings you think your project can achieve then include that in this section.

Section 3: community engagement

3.1

This section asks how you have involved community members outside of your organisation in making decisions and running your project so far and how you will continue to involve them over the timescale of the fund (until March 31st 2012). This might include behavioural surveys as part of energy efficiency studies, engagement events, planning meetings or training.

3.2

Question 3.2 asks you about how the community will be involved in your on-going work (after 31st March 2012) that results from your LEAF-funded activity. For example you may have community involvement in implementing an energy efficiency or renewable energy project for which you have received feasibility funding. This will help us to understand the level of community engagement in decision-making for your longer term work and to what extent the community will benefit in the long term from LEAF funding. If you are applying for LEAF funding for a capital project (such as a demonstration project for solid wall insulation) you will need to explain in this section how you plan to facilitate public access to visit the demonstration property and how you will encourage more people to visit it.

Section 4: skills and experience of your project team

4.1

This section asks about your experience and track record in delivering projects. This will include any background work you have done to date on the project for which you are seeking funding (but can also include other projects). For example any preliminary engagement work carried out with your community, surveys or research that you have carried out. Also include information about any projects you have carried out before now which have contributed to you seeking this funding (e.g. your group might have run a successful local food project or switch-off campaign which stimulated interest in wider carbon saving activity across the community).

4.2

You also need to tell us about the skills and experience of the specific people who will be running the project. Include only relevant skills and experience. This experience does not have to be related to energy projects (e.g. could be management of non-energy projects) but should help to illustrate that you have the capacity, skills and experience to deliver your project successfully. For your community group this might refer to other successful projects you have carried out as well as any relevant skills and experience of group members.

Please also include information on the relevant skills and experience of your key partners and subcontractors. Only include information that is relevant to the work they will be carrying out on the project for which you are applying to LEAF.

Section 5: budget

5.1, 5.2 and 5.3

These sections ask for details of the costs of your project and how you will spend the grant money. There are separate tables for revenue costs (5.1 - support, studies, preparatory work, etc.) and capital costs (5.2 - installation of measures). Please ensure that costs are recorded in the right place within the tables. You will also need to add up your costs and insert the total amount of grant you are requesting in the "Total Cost" table.

Include written quotes for work to be carried out wherever possible and for all items of £1000 and over. Finally, check that your total is not over £130,000 (the maximum grant available) and that you understand any implications under European De Minimis state aid rules (see Declaration form). Compliance with state aid rules always remains the responsibility of the applicant. Particular care will be needed if your community or lead organisation has received state funding before for similar activity.

All capital work must include written quotes with a covering letter explaining how you decided to use the selected supplier. For any work costing over £25,000 you should include 3 written quotes and a letter explaining how you decided to use the selected supplier.

5.4

Section 5.4 asks about other sources of funding you may have for this project other than LEAF. There is no requirement for matched funding for LEAF. However it will help your chances of being successful if you can show that you have accessed funding from elsewhere. Include all cash contributions here, but also record in-kind contributions where a value can be reliably attributed (e.g. days of volunteer time donated where you have a justified day-rate).

Section 6: declaration & signatures

Your application must be signed off by two people. One of these should be the chief executive or equivalent of whichever organisation would receive the grant if you are successful. Please print out and sign the declaration form then scan it and upload it to your application using the online application system. If you are not able to scan and upload the declaration please post it to us at: LEAF Programme, Energy Saving Trust, 1 Caspian Point, Caspian Way, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF10 4DQ

PLEASE NOTE: If we do not receive a signed declaration with your application it will not be processed. If sending your declaration by post, please make sure that the declaration is postmarked on or before the deadline date and that this is clearly stated in the application form.

Glossary

This glossary explains the meaning of terms for the purposes of applications to the Local Energy Assessment Fund (LEAF).

Community benefit organisation/ organisation for community benefit

A community benefit organisation reinvests any profits, either into the work of the organisation or into other things benefitting society/the community. These organisations are sometimes called 'social enterprises'.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the end result of a project. They represent changes that will happen as a result of your project and are generally longer term in nature. Outcomes would include things such as: "Increased uptake of domestic energy efficiency measures".

In planning your outcomes you should consider: What will change? Who will change? When will the change happen? How much change will there be?

Deliverables

Deliverables are the specific activities or things that will be produced by your project in order to achieve your outcomes. Examples of deliverables might be; a community energy efficiency survey or a programme of workshops and "meet the installer" sessions on energy efficiency measures.

Community energy efficiency survey

A community energy efficiency survey investigates what type of houses and buildings exist in an area and how local householders and potentially organisations use energy. It assesses how much electricity people use, how they heat their buildings and what energy saving measures or renewable energy systems are installed already. This information is used to generate an assessment of overall energy use and a carbon footprint. The survey might also look at people's awareness of energy and climate change issues and behaviour in relation to energy use.

The survey should also then suggest measures that could be used to reduce energy use and the carbon footprint of the area. This can then be used to develop an implementation plan for energy efficiency and microgeneration installations in local buildings. This plan should consider how new mechanisms such as the Green Deal, Energy Company Obligation (ECO), Feed in Tariffs and the Renewable Heat Incentive could be used to help with implementation.

Area-wide renewable energy study

An area-wide renewable energy study looks at the potential for development of renewable energy within a community. The study looks at the characteristics of the local area and assesses the potential for the use of the various renewable energy resources at different scales. It then makes recommendations for which technologies could be implemented in different applications. The study should also consider how mechanisms such as Feed in Tariffs, the Renewable Heat Incentive and revolving loans could be used to help implement some of these projects.

Outline feasibility study

An outline feasibility or pre-feasibility study looks at the basic question of whether or not something is possible and worth doing. For example, whether a location is suitable for a wind turbine or not, whether there are any obvious reasons why you couldn't set up a local district heating network. It will estimate the amount of energy or money you could generate but is unlikely to include any long term monitoring of energy use or renewable energy resources.

Outline studies can be sufficient to make decisions on smaller projects using more predictable resources and provide a good guide to what might be possible. However in some cases where the outline feasibility suggests that a project may be viable, it might be necessary (particularly for larger projects) to carry out more detailed monitoring to confirm the estimates in the outline study and produce detailed system designs.

Local supply chain

In the context of LEAF, this refers to local companies that manufacture, supply, install or maintain energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and products, such as insulation and renewable energy systems. Developing a strong local supply chain of companies able to provide these energy-related services can help to make energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies more affordable and accessible in your locality.