



## **Oileáin Árann Climate Action Fund**

### **Pilot Decarbonisation Zone Fund FAQs**

#### **Topics:**

#### **1 Funding queries**

#### **2 Organisation/Project eligibility**

#### **3 Eligible Costs**

#### **4 Questions on EOI Forms and Advertising**

#### **5 General Queries**

#### **6 Evaluation of Applications**

#### **1 Funding queries**

**Q. Is there an option to prefund projects?**

**Answer:** Prefunding is not available for this grant.

**Q. If the applicant needs to apply for a loan (ie. Credit Union loan) does the amount applied for have to include the interest amount that will apply to the loan?**

**Answer:** The interest would not be eligible for Climate Action Fund expenditure. Payment would be made up of proof of eligible expenditure in relation to the project, not for servicing a loan.

**Q. Can funds be leveraged with SEAI grants?**

**Answer:** Yes, provided it would not result in duplicate funding.

**Q: Can a large project combine funding from the DZ Fund with alternate Government funding if it is broken down into components?**

**Answer:** The component would have to be assessed individually and stand up on its own merits, exclusive of the alternate funding, against the objectives of the programme. It must also be noted that there cannot be a duplication of funds. It must be clearly demonstrated that the individual component(s) can be advanced in fulfilment of the objectives without being subject to or compromised by the delivery of the larger project.

## **2 Organisation/Project Eligibility**

**Q. Are schools eligible to apply if they are publicly run?**

**Answer:** Yes, schools can apply provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

**Q: Are Naíonras/preschools eligible to apply?**

**Answer:** Naíonras and preschools can apply provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

**Q: Are the following groups eligible to apply (assuming they have Articles of Associations/ constitutions, hold AGM and have minutes etc.):**

- **Housing Associations (e.g. estates or apartment blocks)**

**Answer:** Yes, Housing Associations can apply provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

- **Social Enterprises.**

**Answer:** Yes, Social enterprises can apply provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

**Q. Are Partnerships/consortiums eligible under Strand 1? For example, more than one community is involved in the project.**

**Answer:** Partnership is permitted. There would have to be a lead partner identified.

**Q. If land/ property/ other assets are provided for the project by a public or private body what are the rules for its inclusion regarding the future (leasing etc.)?**

**Answer:** Where a project will be delivered from a site/building(s)/floor space that are not in the ownership of the Local Authority, it must be in the ownership of the partner organisation of the Local Authority or either party must have a minimum five years lease or agreement in place from date of project completion.

**Q. Is storage, rent and set up an eligible expense?**

**Answer:** No, renting/leasing is not an eligible expense.

**Q: Are Sustainable Energy Communities eligible to apply?**

**Answer: Yes, SECs can apply,** provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

**Q. Are Credit Unions eligible to apply for funding?**

**Answer: Yes, Credit Unions can apply,** provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

**Q. Does a not-for-profit community organisation have to be registered with a PPN?**

**Answer:** No, they can also be connected with other collectives, and/or be a community group with Articles of Association or a Constitution, which hold an AGM, and for which approved minutes are available. They must have connections with the community or be connected to another group which has connections with the community.

**Q. The nature of climate action and breadth of community interests means that projects can vary significantly in importance, scale, nature and extent. How can we ensure the programme can be optimised for maximum effect and impact?**

**Answer:** The programme will attract a significant range of projects under each of the themes. Notwithstanding the initial process of adjudicating the eligibility of the applicant(s) the task sits with the local authority to assess each project on its own merits and in combination with other projects likely to in pursuit of the DZ objectives. This means that projects should achieve reasonable emission reductions/energy efficiency improvements, work to empower and build capacity on climate action and through that maximise the community gain as broadly as possible. Galway County Council will ensure insofar as is practical that there is variety in projects.

**Q. Would an application to replace halogen flood lighting with LED at a local community sports club be eligible?**

**Answer:** Each project will be assessed on its own merits and in the context of the delivery of objectives of the programme, as per question above. It is a competitive fund. If there is a more appropriate funding mechanism that could be leveraged that should be explored for example, sports capital grants. Duplication of funding is not allowed. No new lighting projects will be supported, as such projects will not result in a reduction in emissions.

**Q Would branches of a national not-for-profit community organisation be eligible to apply?**

**Answer:** Yes, however, only one application per organisation is accepted so each branch would have to be independent enough to be considered their own organisation.

### **3. Eligible Costs**

**Q. For eligible costs, is it similar to the DZ Climate Action Fund?**

**Answer:** There are similar eligible costs. However, this fund includes training and education. Accordingly, costs associated with courseware, toolkits etc. would be eligible under this fund.

**List of eligible/ineligible costs:**

#### Eligible costs:

#### All costs included for this grant must:

- Be for the sole purpose of implementing the project and shall not be used for any other purpose.
- Not duplicate public funding received from other sources for the same purpose.
- Must be verifiable e.g. supported by evidence of compliance with public procurement in Ireland, an invoice and receipt of payment.
- Be reasonable in their nature and amount i.e. not excessive and it what would be incurred by a prudent person in the conduct of delivering a project of this nature
- Be considered necessary for the delivery of the project
- Up to 100% funding may be provided from the DZ Climate Action Fund. Other funding may be leveraged for projects (e.g. with LEADER, Tidy Towns, Town and Village Enhancement funding, etc.). However, the DZCA funded component must be able to stand on its own merits and be independent of the other funding. Duplication of funding is not permitted.

Costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis, as it is impossible to ensure that all costs are included in this list above. This is a new and innovative programme, some costs will be considered based on the nature of the application and justification and rationale provided by the applicant.

#### **Non-Eligible Projects and Activities**

#### The Decarbonisation Zone Climate Action Fund will not formally fund activities involving:

- Projects that solely benefit an individual
- Insurance
- Accommodation and subsistence
- Costs for which more appropriate funding opportunities already exist are ineligible, where it is clear that DZCA funding is a substitute for other public funding which is currently available
- Notional costs e.g. the room hire within the applicant's own premises
- Legal Fees

This list is not exhaustive.

#### **Note:**

- Applicant organisations nor their partners cannot include the cost of using their own equipment or premises i.e. items such as the use of a photocopier or use of their own rooms for meetings.

**Q. Can communities get reimbursed for assessments done during the application period (if they are chosen) for example energy audits?**

**Answer:** No, funding is only available for costs incurred after project selection.

#### **4 Questions on EOI Forms and Advertising**

**Q. Regarding the EOI forms and the amounts (€) entered is this excluding Vat or Including Vat figure?**

**Answer:** Acknowledging that the VAT may be quite expensive for these groups all costs submitted as part of the application process should be inclusive of VAT. However, some groups may be able to reclaim VAT. These groups should submit expenses exclusive of VAT. VAT Declaration must be stated on the application form.

## **5.General Queries**

**Q: Can we start rolling out the programme before the Grant Agreement is in place?**

**Answer:** No. This is to ensure that timelines are adhered to, and milestones are met. Community outreach/awareness raising may begin before the grant agreement is in place.

**Q: Does the project have to be completed in its entirety within a 12-month period?**

**Answer:** Yes, the project has 12 months to complete but projects may complete earlier than 12 months. In certain circumstances extensions may be granted by written consent.

**Q: Are physical inspections on the site of projects required?**

**Answer:** Galway County Council will inspect the projects, as per the grant agreement requires that site visits should be allowed.

## **6. Evaluation of Applications**

The programme aims to ensure that projects are selected in a transparent and fair manner, according to clear criteria where due consideration is given to all eligible expressions of interest. Applications will be assessed on the following Criteria:

<b>Selection Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Minimum Mark</b>	
Relevance and Impact	30%	15%	The project meets the objective to shape and build a low carbon community, and can clearly demonstrate the impact of the project in contributing to Ireland's climate and energy targets.
Innovation and Scalability	20%	10%	The project contains practical innovation/(s) and/or approaches. It has the potential to be scaled up or replicated in other communities post funding. The project has a lasting impact.
Value for Money	20%	10%	The costs applied for are reasonable, represent an efficient use of resources and are commensurate with the quality and nature of the activities proposed. Realistic, specific and relevant outputs and outcomes are identified, which are

			commensurate with the level of investment.
Achievability	10%	5%	The organisation/partnership has the appropriate expertise to deliver the proposed project. The proposal is clear and coherent and is deliverable within the timeframe. Key milestones are specified with an explanation of how these will be monitored.
Partnership Approach	10%	5%	Any Partner/Consortium roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined with partnership agreements in place (where applicable). The proposal demonstrates how all key stakeholders will be involved in the planning and implementation of the proposal.
Governance Agreements	10%	5%	Any necessary governance and financial management systems, controls and processes are in place to meet the requirements of the programme. Where applicable, evidence of tax compliance and registration with relevant bodies is supplied. Details of track record in managing other state funding is supplied.
	<b>100%</b>	50%	