



Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund Guidelines 2024

The key dates for the *ESB 2024 Wind Farm Community Funds are as follows:

Fund opening date: Tuesday 17th January 2024

Fund closing date: Friday 8th March 2024

Contract Issue: By May end 2024

Please note, no applications or required accompanying documentations will be accepted after the closing date.

Applicants can expect to be informed of the outcome of their application no later than May end 2024. Please note, if we are experiencing any delays due to application volume, we will inform you of same.

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1. About the Wind Farm Community Funds

The Wind Farm Community Funds were established by ESB and their joint venture partners: Galetch Energy, Greencoat and Enercon, with the intention of helping the communities neighbouring our wind farms to become more sustainable through the support of positive local initiatives and activities. The funds seek to address current and emerging issues, needs and opportunities within communities, enriching lives and creating brighter possibilities for local residents.

SECAD Partnership CLG administers these 21 Irish community funds which surround eighteen wind farms owned by ESB subsidiary companies, and three other wind farms such companies co-own with Galetch Energy, Greencoat and Enercon.

Please keep a copy of these guidelines to hand when completing your application, if you need help or guidance at any stage, please contact SECAD at +00353 (0)21 4613432 / info@secad.ie

Further information is also available on our information website <https://windfarmcommunityfunds.ie/> with an information [section for new applicants](#)

Applications to the funds can be made at: <https://www.communitybenefitfunds.ie/>



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2. Introduction to the Wind Farm Community Funds

Prior to making an application it is essential that you read this document, which sets out general grant making criteria, and in particular the eligibility criteria for the Wind Farm Community Funds. Details of each individual fund are outlined below.

The 'Suggested Award Value' amounts in the table below may be used as a guideline.

ESB owned Wind Farms:

Wind Farm Name	Suggested Award Value*	AOB Radius	Fund Available (2024)
Black Banks Wind Farm, Co. Leitrim	€2,000	10Km	€8,925
Cappawhite Wind Farm, Co. Tipperary	€5,000	10Km	€82,183.73
Carnsore Wind Farm, Co. Wexford	€1,000	10Km	€10,412.50
Carrane Hill Wind Farm, Co. Sligo	€1,000	10Km	€2,975
Castlepook, County Cork	€5,000	10Km	€52,687.94
Derrybrien Wind Farm, Co. Galway	€5,000	10Km	€52,062.50
Garvagh Glebe Wind Farm, Co. Leitrim	€3,000	10Km	€22,750
Grouselodge Wind Farm, Co. Limerick	€2,000	10Km	€13,125
Grousemount Wind Farm, Co. Kerry	€3,000 +	10km**	€178,798.95
Moneypoint Wind Farm, Co. Clare	€3,000	10Km	€27,675.34
Mount Eagle Wind Farm, Co. Kerry	€1,000	10Km	€5,950
Tullynahaw Wind Farm, Co. Roscommon	€2,000	10Km	€19,250
Woodhouse, Co. Waterford	€2,000	10Km	€17,500
Carrickatane Wind Farm, Co. Londonderry	£2,500	7km	£19,687.50
Crockagarran Wind Farm, Co. Tyrone	£2,000	10km	£15,312.50
Curryfree Wind Farm, Co. Londonderry	£2,000	7km	£13,125
Crockdun Wind Farm, Co. Tyrone	£2,000	10km	£16,406.25
Eglis Wind Farm, Co. Londonderry	£2,500	7km	£19,687.50

Co-owned Wind Farms:

Wind Farm Name	Suggested Award Value*	AOB Radius	Fund Available (2024)
Crockahenny Wind Farm, Co. Donegal (ESB & Enercon)	€1,000	10Km	€4,969
Mountain Lodge Wind Farm, County Cavan (ESB and Galetch Energy)	€2,000	10Km	€18,891.25
Raheenleagh Wind Farm, County Wicklow (ESB & Greencoat Renewables)	€5,000	10Km	€56,977.64

**Awards may exceed the above suggested value if a project is identified as being of significant benefit to the community, please note the suggested values are a guideline, applicants can apply for the amount that best suits their project*

Successful applicants may not be awarded the full amount applied for and instead may be awarded a percentage of their application costs. Applicants are requested to seek a percentage of funding from other sources i.e. public funding, savings, borrowings etc. This demonstrates community involvement and commitment to projects.

Please ensure you have considered this before submitting your application and have examined how the group may fund a shortfall.

With regards to the Fund Available (2024), the figures referenced above may include existing commitments to community projects.

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3. Area of Benefit

The fund will prioritise applications from local community groups and organisations from within the area of benefit and located close to the Wind Farms. Applications from outside area of benefit will only be considered if their project directly addresses a current or prospective need/issue/opportunity relating to the communities nearest the wind farm.

*Please refer to the table in page 2 which details the Area of benefit (AOB) radius for each wind farm

To find out more on each wind farm fund, please go to <http://www.windfarmcommunityfunds.ie/the-funds/>

****Defined Area of Benefit Grousemount**

Zone 1

(a) A 2km corridor along the delivery route from Ballyvourney, through Coolea to the Grousemount Wind Farm site entrance, up through Coolnoohil, the Glen (Morley's bridge) and on to Kilgarvan via R569.

(b) A 2km radius around the Grousemount Wind Farm site boundary.

Zone 2

(a) A 10km radius around the centre of the Grousemount Wind Farm.

(b) A 1.5km corridor of the grid connection to Ballyvouskill 220kV Substation

Note: Applications from groups outside of these Zones may also make applications to the Fund. However, such applications will need to be very clear in terms of their impact for the people that live particularly in Zone 1 in order for their application to be considered.

4. Who and what the funds can support

Typically, the fund is available to community and voluntary organisations for projects which are based within a given distance of a particular wind farm. A maximum of one application can be submitted from each group / organisation per annum.

The fund supports projects / activities which clearly benefit at least one of the following categories:

- Education and skills
- Health, safety and wellbeing
- Environment and habitat conservation
- Energy efficiency and sustainability
- Culture and heritage (*Gaeltacht and Irish Language)
- Recreation, sport and social inclusion



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5. How to make an application

If it is your first time applying to the funds, please visit our page '[A Beginners Guide to Completing an Application](#)'

Please also take a look at our website <https://windfarmcommunityfunds.ie/> for further information on the funds.

Go to the application portal at www.communitybenefitfunds.ie

You will be asked to submit the following documents with your application, at a minimum:

- **A copy of your organisation's bank**, online bank, credit union / post office account, statement.
- **A copy of your organisation's signed and dated constitution** (a template is available on request from SECAD or [here](#) on our website). Please note, at a minimum a constitution should include confirmation that:
 - the organisation has charitable purposes;
 - is not for profit in nature; and that
 - no directors or trustees are remunerated.
- **Quotations are required** to verify the value of each item that you are seeking funding support from the Wind Farm Community Funds to purchase, as follows:
 - If any individual item is less than £/€5,000, you need one quote for that item.
 - If any individual item costs £/€5,000 or more, you must provide three quotes from three different suppliers, or evidence that you tried to obtain three quotes

For works relating to renovation / construction / refurbishment / groundworks / installation etc, the following is required:

- A lease or letter of permission from the owner to undertake to proposed works is required if the applicant group is not the owner of the premises/location
- Planning permission, or a letter of exemption / email from the relevant Local Authority

If your project includes construction, renovation, installation, groundworks or, you must provide either evidence of Planning Permission, or a Letter of Exemption / email from your Local Authority.

It is important to note that it is the responsibility of the applicant group to provide the relevant permissions. Further information on the planning process and contact details for Local Authorities are available at the links below:

<https://www.housing.gov.ie/PLANNING/LEAFLETS/PLANNING-LEAFLETS>

<https://www.housing.gov.ie/local-government/administration/local-authorities/local-authorities>

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/planning-offices-ni>

Please note applicants that do not submit required documentation with the application form e.g. planning permission, planning exemption or owner permission, may not proceed to evaluation.

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6. Overhead costs

The 2024 Wind Farm Community Funds will accept applications for overhead costs, subject to the conditions outlined below:

- Properties will be required to have a [BER rating](#) / [EPC Cert](#), if applying for heating costs. Please note, it is advised that buildings with a very low energy rating should apply for remedial works first and should link with SEAI for ROI and the Energy Saving Trust for NI.
- Similarly, where an application is for lighting costs, any required energy efficient works or upgrades should be undertaken prior to making an application for running costs.
- Confirmation there are no major structural defects i.e., roof/ wall/ door are intact & sound, glass in windows etc.
- Repairs must be completed before operational application will be considered.
- Maximum application amount is subject to an upper limit of the Suggested Award Value (please see table above).

Please note, projects approved for funding will be required to complete an energy audit prior to contract offer. This audit can be conducted by the funder(s), or by the applicant. It is a condition of the funds that groups applying for Operational Costs must liaise with SECAD prior to submitting an application.

7. National Schools

If a school wishes to apply to the fund, they must demonstrate that their project would not normally be funded by the Department of Education and Skills. If in doubt, please contact SECAD.

Please note that due to the presence of public grant initiatives, applications relating to the purchase of IT equipment for National Schools will not be considered as eligible applications to the Wind Farm Community Funds.

Applicable to the fund from 2016 onwards and cognizant of the overall eligibility criteria, the Wind Farm Community Funds will welcome applications from National Schools in the following thematic areas:

- Eco-education projects including environmental and biodiversity
- Creativity & the performing arts, including art, heritage, music, literature and culture
- Community amenities accessible to the broader public
- Initiatives that encourage outdoor education e.g., edible garden, outdoor classroom, wildflower meadow

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8. Multi Annual Funding / Legacy and Strategic Planning*

Support to larger projects can be facilitated through a multi-annual agreement. In cases such as these, a contract is issued to the group for an overall sum, which is then paid in set instalments on an annual basis e.g., £/€6,000 x 4 year = £/€24,000.

*Please see

<https://www.communitybenefitfund.sie/help/> for further details.

In order to be considered for multi-annual funding, the following must be demonstrated in an application:

- The project will commence in the first year of the contract (accompanied by appropriate sign off / verification as outlined in contract, e.g., Engineers / Architects report)
- Only legacy / strategic projects will be considered for multi annual support e.g., community hall renovation, development of sporting facilities, upgrade of basic services.

Please note, it is envisaged that no more than 30% of a fund may be allocated to multi annual projects in any one year.

The fund cannot support projects/activities, if one or more of the following apply:

1. Projects operated by individuals/private sector or for-profit organisations.
2. Projects which primarily benefit organisations that apply restrictive 'members only' conditions to access.
3. Projects where work has commenced prior to application, however separate stage of a project can apply.
4. Projects which directly replace statutory activities/funding.

9. The fund cannot support projects/activities, if one or more of the following apply, contd.:

5. Projects which provide unnecessary duplicate activities/services/infrastructure within the community.
6. Projects which do not directly benefit the local community and are not deemed as 'not-for-profit.'
7. Projects where duplicate funding from other sources exists, however match funding is welcomed.
8. Projects which conflict with or adversely affect the aim, objectives or policy of ESB or any other associated companies.
9. Projects which directly promote or advance:
 - any particular religion or faith
 - any particular political party.
 - any type of hunting or shooting.
10. Projects which seek to purchase/cover the cost of the following:
 - Recoverable VAT costs.
 - Insurance.

The fund does not normally support

Statutory or other accountable bodies (including schools), unless they can provide evidence that the project is community-led, open, accessible and for the benefit of the community and not a statutory responsibility.

VAT

Please note, if your organization is VAT registered, no claim for payment may be made for the VAT element of expenditure.

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10. Project Plan & Budget

It is important to take some time to think through your community project, and to consider carefully what costs should be included in your project budget. It is essential to note that payment cannot be made until the project is complete and the goods are in hand.

Common Pitfalls

- Incomplete Applications
- Poor project description
- Did not read the criteria
- Blank answers to questions
- Missing paperwork
- Project costs do not tally with quotes
- The projects falls outside the 'area of benefit'

If undertaking construction/electrical works of any nature, please be aware that an Engineers Report, RECI certification, installation report or ROSPA report in the case of playgrounds, will be required at Claim Stage, the costs associated with this report may be included in your application (please ensure a quotation is provided).

Take some time to consider the project you wish to submit for support and make a plan so that you will have the required documentation available to submit before the closing date.

11. The Global Goals for Sustainable Development

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 global goals set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015.

The SDGs address the global challenges we face and cover social, environmental and economic development issues such as poverty, education, inequality, climate, water and food crises. They provide a focus for how businesses, governments and civil society can tackle these challenges in order to promote a more sustainable future for all.



We ask that in your application you identify which goal your group/project most closely aligns with.

Please visit this website for further information on each goal.

<https://irelandsdg.geohive.ie/>

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12. Once you have submitted your application

You will receive an e-mail to confirm receipt of your application with a copy of your application form in an attached PDF document, which may be printed for your records.

SECAD will then make checks to ensure the applicant organisation and project meet the funds' eligibility criteria. Complete, eligible projects will proceed to evaluation stage.

In some cases, an application may be deferred, SECAD may then request additional information to be provided in order that your application can be reconsidered during a subsequent call.

13. The Decision-Making Process

The decision to award a grant depends on the Wind Farm Fund under which the application was submitted. The recommendation is generally made by SECAD to the funder(s) and in some places, may involve a Community Evaluation Panel. Please note the decision of the Wind Farm Community Funds is final. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application no later than the end of May 2024.

Please note, consideration will be given to projects that are currently in a multi annual contract, when determining the allocation of funds during evaluation.

**Please note, canvassing or lobbying of panel members will result in automatic disqualification.*

14. Evaluation Criteria

Each application received by the fund will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	
Project Location	Proximity of project / beneficiaries to the Wind Farm. Is the project located within the Area of Benefit or in a 'service centre' (e.g., a neighbouring town or village) outside the AOB, but that is used by the people living within the target area?
Demonstration of the need and potential impact of this project on the people and communities who live within the target area	Projects should demonstrate that the project is addressing an expressed need within their community. An understanding of the benefits of the proposed project is also required. The relevance of the project to the communities within the AOB is considered, both at a local and strategic level.
Project Life-Span / Appropriate project timelines & costs	Project life span refers to the anticipated longevity of a proposed project. In the case of festivals / events, the scoring may be informed by anticipated impact, in addition to track record. Applicants should show that their project will be completed within 12 months of receiving a signed contract offer. Applications should also demonstrate that the project is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fully costed, • well-organised, and • represents good value for money, including estimated number of users on weekly / monthly basis
Contribution to thematic objectives of the Fund	The Fund aims to support projects and initiatives that will benefit the area surrounding Wind Farm. Priority will be given to projects that bring socio-economic benefit to the area including investment in large strategic projects in the appropriate service centres. The Fund can be used as matching finance for other grants.

- Groups which have not been supported by the funds in the last two years, may be prioritised for support.
- Please note applicants that do not submit required documentation with the application form e.g., planning permission, planning exemption or owner permission, may not proceed to evaluation.

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15. Feedback

Throughout SECAD's grant-making policy and specific fund/programme criteria, care is taken to assess all applications against criteria in a consistent and equitable way.

Although decisions are final, SECAD can provide feedback on unsuccessful applications, if requested.

Please click [this link](#) to download a feedback form, once complete, send it via email it to info@secad.ie to receive a response.

16. Contract Offer

Successful applicants will receive a provisional grant offer and contract via an online electronic signature platform, which must be accepted, signed and returned within 15 working days.

Please note the provisional grant offer email may stipulate conditions which will need to be fulfilled within the 15-day timeframe.

Along with the contract, successful applicants will receive the relevant grant claim log in details and guidance notes relating to the drawdown of funds.

Please note, no expenditure in relation to grant aided elements of the project should be incurred until the signed contract has been received by the applicant group.

Breach of Terms and Conditions

In the event that SECAD considers an applicant has breached the terms and conditions of grant aid, SECAD reserve the right to request the return of the total grant awarded. SECAD may also stipulate that no future applications for funding will be accepted from the organisation

for a minimum of two years and then only if the organisation can provide evidence that action has been taken to strengthen their capacity, which will include evidence of support sought from appropriate support/umbrella organisations.

17. Project closing dates

All Contracts contain a closing date after which time your grant offer will lapse and cease to be payable, generally this is 12 months from date of issue.

If, for some reason, your project has become delayed and will not be completed by the closing date, **please contact SECAD immediately.**



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18. Grant Claims Process (Claim for Payment)

On completion of the approved project, each applicant group will be required to upload the required documents, to demonstrate that project expenditure was undertaken. Please remember that for funding to be paid out, you must submit all the necessary documentation required.

In order to issue your 'claim for payment' please log back into the portal:

www.communitybenefitfunds.ie

using your original login details, please [click here](#) to reset your password if needed.

Click on the relevant 'claim' button and this will take you to the first page of the claim form.

At a minimum you must answer the questions asked and upload the following:

- A copy of your [invoice/receipt](#)
- [Pictures of your project/purchase](#)
- **IF** the project spend exceeds £/€3,000, a copy of your groups [bank statement](#) showing the transaction/s

SECAD advises that cash payments are minimised or avoided.

In the event a group does not complete the project in full accordance with the contract, SECAD may not make the final payment and may seek reimbursement of the initial funding provided to the group.

Please note that if documentation is missing or incomplete, this will delay processing of your claim.

18. Grant Claims Process (Claim for Payment) contd.

When processing your grant payment SECAD will make the payment to the name of the group or company stated on the 'Offer Contract' and funds will be paid via EFT to the account details provided with your application.

Project Monitoring

SECAD and funder(s) reserve the right to undertake a monitoring visit to any of the funded applicants. Where multi-year funding is agreed, an appropriate monitoring framework will be implemented.

Case Studies and Testimonials

The last section of the claim form asks for a testimonial from the applicant group and a picture suitable for future publication.

This is for use in future reports and/or case studies, please ensure you have the permission of everyone photographed before submitting an image and in the case of minors, parental/guardian permission.



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19. Payment Structures

There are three different payment structures which will be detailed on your contract, should you receive an offer of funding.

At any stage in the process if you need to discuss your groups individual needs, please contact SECAD.

Payment Type	Description	In order to qualify	Projects which will not be considered for this payment type	Payment Schedule
60% Upfront Payment on commencement of the contract	To assist community groups, successful groups receive an advance payment of 60% of the award value, once the contract has been signed by both the applicant and SECAD	To qualify for advance payments, projects must fulfil the following qualifying criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of goods, services and equipment only • Maximum contract value £/€6,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi annual projects • Projects which include construction / renovation / installation or landscaping works • Projects where any permissions are required, including but not limited to planning permission, owner permission, heritage / conservation officer etc 	<p>Once the contract has been agreed and signed by both parties, SECAD will transfer 60% of the contract amount to the group / organisation bank account nominated by the applicant.</p> <p>The final payment will be made in line with 'issuing your Claim for Payment' outlined earlier</p>
80% Upfront Payment on commencement of the project	To assist community groups, successful groups receive an advance payment of 80% of the award value, immediately prior to project start-up	To qualify for advance payments, projects must fulfil the following qualifying criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your project must involve construction / renovation / installation / electrical or landscaping works or require permissions • You group may be in receipt of a multi annual award 	Projects which involve the purchase of equipment, goods and/or services, these groups will automatically qualify for a 60% upfront payment on commencement of contract	<p>Once the contract has been agreed and signed by both parties and project work is due to begin, the group are asked to contact SECAD with a proforma invoice from their contractor and a schedule of works from their contractor, once received SECAD will transfer 80% of the contract amount to the group / organisation bank account nominated by the applicant.</p> <p>The final payment will be made in line with 'issuing your Claim for Payment' outlined earlier</p>
100% Payment Retrospectively	Payment is issued to the applicant group on completion of the project and on submission of a claim for payment	All projects are eligible for this payment structure	All projects are eligible for this payment structure	<p>100% of the contract value is paid on completion of the project and in line with 'issuing your Claim for Payment' outlined earlier.</p> <p>Once a claim for payment has been received SECAD will transfer 100% of the contract amount to the group / organisation bank account nominated by the applicant.</p>

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20. Contact Information

Please get in touch with SECAD if you have any questions:

Tel: +00353 (0)21 4613 432

E-mail: info@secad.ie

Web: www.communitybenefitfunds.ie
www.windfarmcommunityfunds.ie

SECAD Partnership CLG
Midleton Community Enterprise Centre,
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Midleton,
Co. Cork