



# Community Climate Action Fund – Overview

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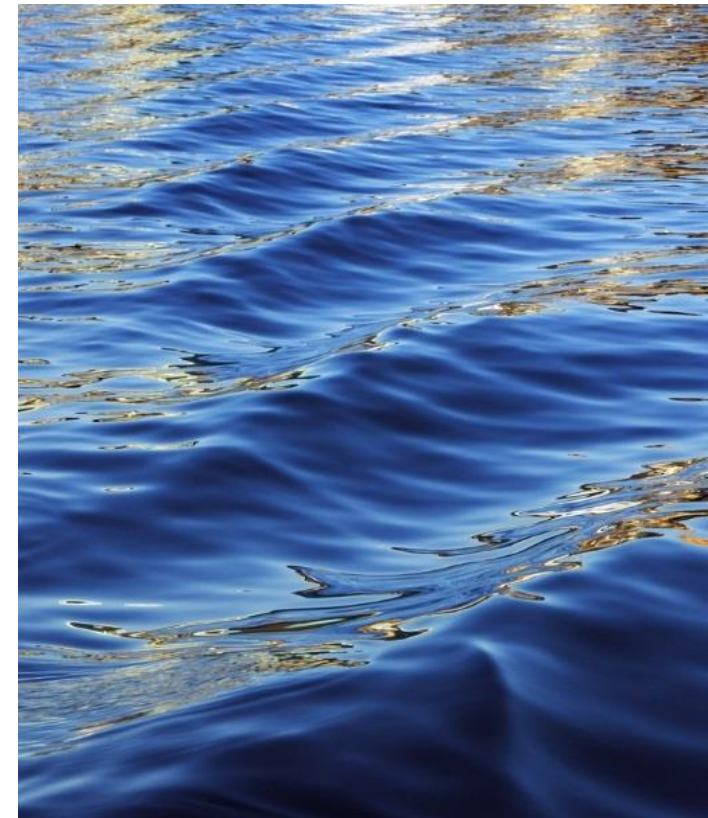


Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall

**GNÍOMHÚ AR SON NA HAERÁIDE**

**CLIMATE ACTION**

Donegal County Council





# Agenda

1. Background to Programme
2. Programme Objectives
3. Overview of Climate Action Fund
  - Strand 1: Building Low Carbon Communities
  - Strand 1a: Shared Island Funding
4. Eligibility
5. Project Themes
6. Evaluation and Application

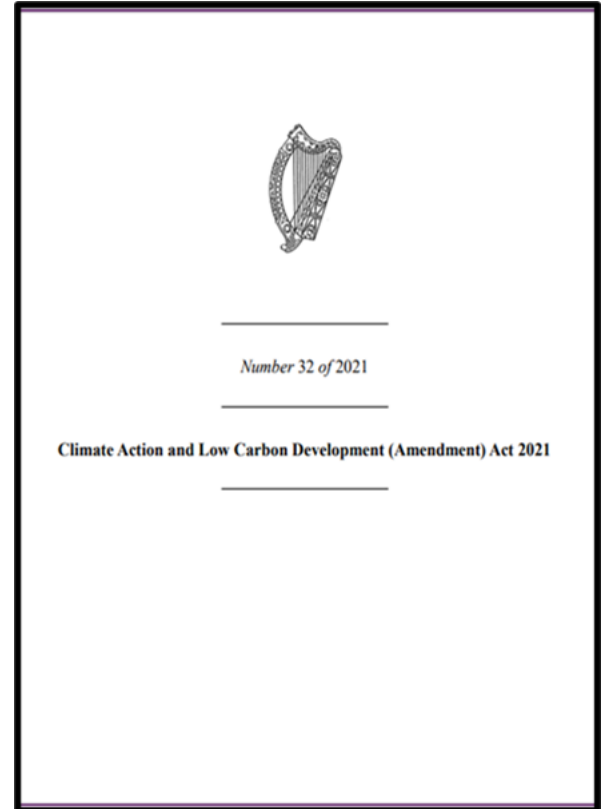


# Background

The Climate Action & Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021

**Places on a statutory basis a 'national climate objective', which commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally-sustainable and climate-neutral economy**

- *51% overall reduction in GHG emissions by 2030*
- *Climate neutral by 2050*



# Community Climate Action Programme

## Objectives

- The Community Climate Action Programme is a new programme to support small and large, rural and urban communities to take climate action at a local level
- **'Shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in a coherent way to contribute to national climate and energy targets'**





# Overview of Community Climate Action Programme

## Strand 1

Building Low Carbon Communities -  
€24m nationally

County Donegal - €699,000

**“...to support and  
empower communities,  
in partnership with their  
LA, to build low carbon,  
sustainable  
communities...”**

## Strand 2 – closed

Climate Education, Capacity  
Building and Learning by  
Doing - €5m ( An Pobal)

Creative Climate Action - €1m  
(Creative Ireland Programme)

## Strand 1a

Shared Island Community Climate Action  
Nationally - €3m

# What is the Community Climate Action Fund for?

Eligible projects are those which achieve direct climate actions through:

- Reducing greenhouse gases
- Increasing production or use of renewable energy
- Improving energy efficiency or climate resilience
- Nature based projects enhancing biodiversity
- Supporting the low carbon economy
- Providing innovative solutions to climate change





# Strand 1: Building Low Carbon Communities



# Strand 1: Community Climate Action Fund

## STRAND 1: Building Low Carbon Communities

- €699,000 allocated to Community Groups in Co. Donegal
- Online Application Form accessed through the Donegal County Council website
- **Opening date:** 29<sup>th</sup> December 2023
- **Closing date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024



# Strand 1: Community Climate Action Fund

## Overview

- 100% project funding for vouched expenditure
- Open to community groups
- Direct climate action projects - capital expenditure items  
(Education/capacity building projects are currently not eligible under this fund)
- Projects must be delivered within 18 months from the letter of offer

*This is a competitive fund and we expect more project applications than the value of funding available*

# Community Climate Action Fund

## Furthermore:

- The project must be in line with the aim/purpose of the fund
- Only one application per organisation may be submitted
- Costs submitted are for the sole purpose of implementing the project itself
- Option to prefund projects by 25% - on a case-by-case basis
- Projects are encouraged to cut across several themes and be included as part of one application

# Who can apply?

## Community Organisation Eligibility:

- Must be a **not-for-profit** organisation
- Must be located in **County Donegal**
- **Must be registered** with the PPN or connected with other collectives such as The Wheel, Tidy Towns and /or a community group with Articles of Association or a Constitution, which hold an AGM, and for which approved minutes are available.



## Groups Not Eligible

- Private individuals
- Commercial undertakings (including sole traders)
- Schools
- National community and environmental organisations

### **Ineligible Costs include:**

- Audits and feasibility studies costs
- Staffing and Training costs
- Operational Costs such as Travel, Banking, Legal costs



# Project Sizes

| Project Scale         | Project Value          |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Small Scale Projects  | Up to €20,000          |
| Medium Scale Projects | €21,000 up to €50,000  |
| Large Scale Projects  | €50,000 up to €100,000 |

# Project Themes



**Ideally projects would involve more than one theme but this is not a requirement**

# Theme 1: Community/Energy

These projects aim to reduce the climate impact of buildings in communities by using less energy, utilising renewable energy and avoiding heat loss.

This can include:

- LED lighting
- Small community renewable energy projects (solar, hydro, wind)
- Retrofitting community buildings (windows & doors, insulation, heat pumps)



## Theme 2: Travel

Projects which contribute to emissions reductions related to travel

This can include:

- Electric Vehicle Charging Points
- Improving access to cycle ways
- Cycle Parking/Racks
- Bike repair hubs
- Safe or active travel routes
- Reductions in carbon footprint in services

*Link in with The Active Travel Team in DCC*





## Theme 3: Food and Waste

Projects that reduce food waste, promotes locally grown/sourced food and food security

This can include:

- Developing community gardens to promote local food production
- Allotments
- Food markets
- Food Banks



## Theme 4: Shopping & Recycling

Projects of interest under this theme would increase the variety and number of recycling facilities in the local community and initiatives aimed at reducing, reusing and recycling to support the circular economy

This can include:

- Community repair hubs
- Upcycling projects
- Swap shops eg. Toy/Equipment reuse
- Books/musical instruments library
- Water filling stations
- Elimination of single use plastics



# Theme 5: Local Climate & Environmental Action

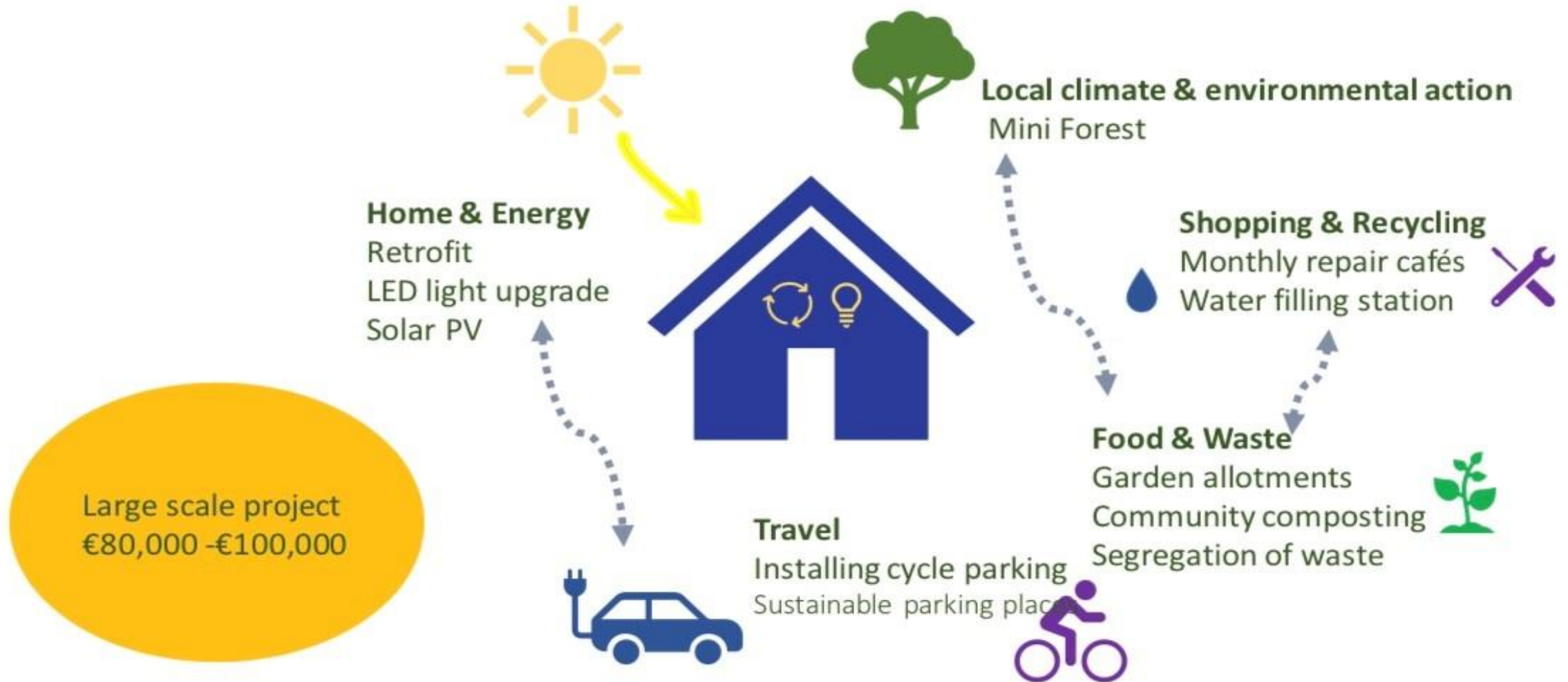
We are interested in projects that take a holistic approach to managing the local environment to support climate action and biodiversity

This can include for example:

- Mini forests
- Forest schools
- Dispersed orchards
- Pollinator projects
- Climate resilience projects



# Example: Community group building and grounds





# Evaluation Process

## 1. Evaluation



All projects will be evaluated on their own merits against the following criteria to ascertain those that will support the programme objective which is to;

***'Shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in a coherent way to contribute to national climate and energy targets' .***

Projects should aim to achieve reasonable emission reductions/energy efficiency improvements, build capacity within local communities on climate action and biodiversity and maximise community gain

# Selection Criteria

1. Relevance and Impact
2. Innovation and Scalability
3. Value for Money
4. Achievability
5. Partnership Approach
6. Governance Arrangements

All applications will be reviewed and assessed by an evaluation committee against the selection criteria to determine that the project is suitable for funding.

# Evaluation Process

## 2. Selection:

Following evaluation, the final selection of projects may take account of:

- The desirability to fund a variety of different projects across multiple themes
- The geographical distribution of projects

Selected projects will be put forward to the Department for approval.

## 3. Approval:

The Minister for the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) will decide what projects are approved and any specific conditions of funding.

# Approximate Timelines

2024

|          |         |          |       |       |     |      |      |        |      |
|----------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|------|
| December | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | Sept |
|----------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|------|



|  |                                   |                           |                                      |
|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Application Window</b>  | <b>Evaluation &amp; Selection</b> | <b>Evaluation by DECC</b> | <b>18 Months Completion</b>          |
| Plan, cost, complete & submit Application Form by 22 <sup>nd</sup> March | By DCC Evaluation Committee       | Approval of projects      | <b>Letter of Offer</b> if successful |



## Build the Sustainable Community You Want!

- Discuss with your community group to find the best ideas in the community
- Discover what is needed the most
- What local groups already do these projects?
- Who will take the lead on the project?
- Who should you collaborate with?
- Include as many people as possible in the community and ensure as many as possible benefit from your plans!
- Try to put in an application that covers all the themes and connects them
- Contact the Community Climate Action Officer to discuss your project



# Strand 1A: Shared Island Funding



## Strand 1a – Shared Island Community Climate Action

- €3 million nationally is being provided by the Government's Shared Island Fund to support cross-border and all-island community climate action initiatives.
- Strand 1a projects will address the same five themes as Strand 1 and must have a clear North/South basis, with a cross-border partnership approach and impact.
- Strand 1a applications must be made by a lead organisation in this jurisdiction, with at least one partner organisation in Northern Ireland.
- Strand 1a applications from Co. Donegal will be submitted to Donegal County Council using the online Application Form.

# Strand 1a – Shared Island Community Climate Action

- Strand 1a applications must comprise a cross-border project in partnership with an organisation in Northern Ireland.
- **Partner organisations must be a not-for-profit organisation, a Local Authority, or a community or environmental organisation, registered in Northern Ireland.**
- At least 50% of awarded funding will be for project delivery in Northern Ireland.
- Communities may apply for a project under Strand 1 and may also apply for a separate project under Strand 1a.
- Evaluation – Similar process and criteria for project evaluation as used for Strand 1 with an additional cross border partnership criteria.

# Strand 1a-

## Shared Island Community Climate Action

Specific areas that may be particularly suited to this fund include:

- Valuing Networks for Nature
- Sustainable Farming
- Just Transition
- Peatland restoration
- Renewable Energy
- Flood Forecasting
- Coastal Erosion



# Application Form





## Application process

- Online Application Form
- Only one application per organisation may be submitted
- Can leverage with other funding sources, provided it's not duplicate funding. e.g. SEAI, LEADER, An Pobal, Tidy Towns, Town and Village Enhancement etc.
- 25% prefund option availability
- Funding only available for costs incurred after project selection

# Application Form – Online Form

- Online Application Form accessed through the Donegal County Council website: [CCAF Online application](#)

## Section 1: Details on your group/organization

- Who, What, Where etc.

## • Section 2: Project Details

- Description of the project, Project Costs, procurement details, climate and environmental benefits of the project.

## • Section 3: State Aid Questionnaire

- Determine if the funding is State Aid (could it distort competition and affect trade. If yes, list all other De Minimis state aid granted within the past 3 fiscal years).

## • Section 4: Authorisation and Statutory Consents

- Ownership, Planning consents for land/buildings for work required.

## • Section 5: Declaration

# Supporting Documentation

- **Organisation/Groups Governance arrangements**

Terms of reference, constitution, AGM minutes, Charitable status no., Tax Reference No., PPN Registration No., Tax clearance access no.

- **Partnerships**

Letters of support

- **Quotes**

Minimum of 3 quotes for materials, equipment, goods

- **Consents/permissions**

Confirmation of ownership or 5-year lease, planning regulatory permissions, rights of access

- **De-minimus self-declaration, if the group answered yes to State Aid**

# What is De Minimus State Aid?

De Minimus Aid is small amounts of state aid given to an undertaking cannot exceed €300,000 over 3 fiscal years.

De Minimus: Aid deemed so small that it doesn't distort competition/trade between member states

- 3 Questions in Application Form: Q31-Q33

1. Does the funding confer an advantage on one or more undertaking over others?
2. Does this funding distort or have the potential to distort competition?
3. Does the awarding of this funding have the potential to affect Trade between EU Member states?

If your group answers 'Yes' to all 3 questions you must sign the De Minimus Self-Declaration and list all other De Minimus state aid granted within the past 3 fiscal years.

# Public Information Sessions – January 2024

| <b>Date:</b>                  | <b>Time:</b> | <b>Venue:</b>  |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--|
| 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 | 7pm- 8pm     | Letterkenny Public Service Centre, Eircode F92TNY3       |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 | 7pm- 8pm     | Dungloe Public Service Centre, Eircode F94H4CF           |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> January 2024 | 7pm- 8pm     | Carndonagh Public Service Centre, Eircode F93YV1N        |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 | 7pm- 8pm     | The Base Enterprise Centre, Stranorlar, Eircode F93 VAK6 |
| 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 | 7pm- 8pm     | Donegal Town Public Service Centre, Eircode F94DK6C      |

# Further Information

Fiona Kelly

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Email: [climateactionfund@donegalcoco.ie](mailto:climateactionfund@donegalcoco.ie)

For more information please visit:  
[www.donegalcoco.ie](http://www.donegalcoco.ie) (Climate Action)


[CCAF Online application](#)



**Comhairle Contae  
Dhún na nGall**  
Donegal County Council







Questions  
&  
Thank You

