

Bid Writing Support for Future Clean Energy / Decarbonisation Projects

Guidance Notes, Eligibility and FAQs

Background

In 2025, Ambition North Wales will be launching a North Wales Clean Energy Fund. This will offer funding for capital projects relating to smart local energy solutions and wider decarbonisation projects in the third and private (SME) sectors across North Wales. It will also complement capital funding that is currently available via the British Business Bank's Investment Fund for Wales and the Development Bank of Wales' Business Green Loan Scheme, among others.

In readiness for this, the bid writing funding will provide support for North Wales organisations who have never applied for grant or loan funding before and/or those who have been unsuccessful with prior applications or can demonstrate other reasons why this support is necessary to ensure their clean energy project in North Wales moves forward.

This revenue funding is for bid writing support of up to £5,000 (inclusive of VAT) per successful applicant.

Eligibility

Community organisations and small enterprises¹, who can demonstrate they need support, are eligible to apply so long as they have a primary base in one or more of the six North Wales local authority areas (Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, and Wrexham) and can evidence trading out of a North Wales premises.

Funding is available for three small organisations/enterprises in each of the six North Wales counties on a first come, first served basis, which will be determined by the order in which emailed completed applications are received. Applications can therefore only be accepted via email. Any applications that are submitted incomplete will not be considered. All awards are discretionary and there is no appeals process. Making or submitting an application to the grant does not guarantee any funds will be provided for this bid writing support. All applications received in excess of three per county, will be held on a reserve list should subsequent funding become available (in the same first come first served order).

The Grant Applicant will be required to select their own bid writing supplier from a Preferred Supplier List that will be provided by Ambition North Wales.

¹ As defined by the UK Government definition [a small enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 50 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 10 million.

FAQs:

What is the funding for?

The funding available is a grant payment to support bid writing for organisations who are inexperienced in applying for capital grants and/or loans or who have been unsuccessful in prior funding applications.

The organisation must have a project that will result in one, or both, of the following:

- 1. Reduction in CO2 emissions through energy efficiency improvements.
- 2. The generation of renewable energy.

Who can apply?

Small community organisations and small enterprises are eligible to apply so long as the Organisation has its primary base in one or more of the six North Wales local authority areas (Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, and Wrexham) and can evidence its operations out of a North Wales premises. They will be prioritised for this funding (employees/volunteers of less than 50). All applicants must adequately demonstrate they need support in one or more areas of bid writing support which relates to an upcoming energy / decarbonisation related project in North Wales.

How much funding is available?

This is revenue funding for up to a maximum of £5,000 (inclusive of VAT) for bid writing support. Successful applicants will be provided with a Preferred Suppliers List to select a supplier from in order to provide the required support.

Can we include VAT in the grant funding application and then reclaim it?

If VAT is recoverable it cannot be grant funded.

Where a Supplier is VAT registered and includes VAT in their quote, this can only be grant funded if you, the Grant Recipient, cannot recover VAT (now or in the future). If you (the Grant Recipient) can recover VAT, your grant request will need to exclude VAT.

Any VAT that has been grant funded and then recovered by the Grant Applicant, will need to be repaid to Ambition North Wales.

How many organisations will be supported?

Initially, three organisations from each of the six North Wales local authority areas (Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, and Wrexham) will be supported on a first come first served basis providing they demonstrate appropriate need in the application form.

Any additional applicants will be held on a reserve list and will be supported if there are sufficient funds available. We strongly recommend submitting an application as soon as possible as applications will be assessed in order received via email only. Any incomplete applications will be considered as ineligible. All awards are discretionary and there is no appeals process. Making or submitting an application to the grant does not guarantee any funds will be provided for this bid writing support.

Where do we get the application form from?

The application form is available on the Ambition North Wales website: [add link].

It can also be requested from: energy@ambitionnorth.wales

When do we have to apply by?

The grant will be allocated to eligible and successful applicants on a **first come, first served** basis. Applications are accepted by email only and will be assessed in the order they are received. We strongly recommend you apply as soon as possible. The deadline is **30th September 2024** or sooner if funds become fully allocated.

Where do we submit a completed application to?

Completed applications should be sent to: energy@ambitionnorth.wales

Only completed applications will be considered. Any incomplete applications will be considered as ineligible.

What are the eligible areas?

A successful organisation must have its primary base in one or more of the six North Wales local authority areas (Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey and Wrexham) and can evidence its operations out of a North Wales premises.

Only one application per organisation will be considered, even if they have multiple locations in North Wales. Please ensure you identify your primary North Wales location in the application form.

What is the application expiration date?

Applications will be assessed on a first come, first served basis. As such, the application window will close as soon as all the funds have been allocated. At the very latest, the application window will close on 30th September 2024. If excess funds become available, Ambition North Wales reserves the right to extend the expiration date in one or more of the six North Wales local authority areas.

When does the funding need to be spent?

Successful applicants will be required to have undertaken the bid writing support, and finalised the invoicing, no later than 20th November 2024 for Wrexham, and 20th December 2024 for Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Isle of Anglesey.

Does this grant fund the actual energy/decarbonisation project?

No, this grant is to support bid writing only.

Market engagement feedback suggests that some smaller / less experienced organisations do not have the resource and/or specialism to successfully apply for larger capital grants and/or loans. These larger capital grant/loan applications tend to require more in-depth information on a project and often require specialist responses such as impacts to biodiversity and carbon emissions among many others. This grant, therefore, aims to help remove these barriers so that successful applicants have increased confidence in applying for future capital funding for their energy/decarbonisation project.

Why do you need information on the potential project if this grant does not fund it?

Providing indicative project information will help support signposting for project funds as they become available. It is acknowledged that project information changes as a project develops so the information will be treated as indicative at this stage.

There are several Funds (for example British Business Bank's Investment Fund for Wales and the Development Bank of Wales' Business Green Loan Scheme) which currently support various projects across Wales and providing project information in this application form will help Ambition North Wales signpost the funding need to the most appropriate resource.

Additionally, Ambition North Wales will be launching a fund in early 2025 to fund capital projects relating to energy / decarbonisation (separate eligibility and terms and conditions apply). All applicants will be required to separately apply for those capital funds, if required, and this revenue grant is being offered to enable that bid writing support for less experienced organisations.

What is the preferred supplier list?

Ambition North Wales has procured a list of preferred suppliers, who have represented that they can undertake bid writing support and any areas of specialism, where applicable. This list will be made available to successful applicants to choose from. The successful applicant will directly contact the chosen supplier to arrange the delivery of the bid writing support at a mutually agreed date but no later than the funding expiration date (see above).

Who pays for the supplier invoice?

Ambition North Wales will fund the successful applicant up to £5,000 (inclusive of VAT) for the bid writing support. The successful applicant will be required to obtain a quote from their chosen supplier prior to the support being given. Upon conclusion of the support, the supplier will provide the applicant with a final invoice. The successful applicant will provide Ambition North Wales with the invoice as evidence that the support has been received from the supplier. Ambition North Wales will then fund the successful applicant. The successful applicant has the responsibility to pay the supplier directly. The supplier will be required to provide Ambition North Wales with a separate evidence form (provided to the supplier by Ambition North Wales), which the successful applicant will help complete.

If a successful grant applicant is unable to fund the supplier before receiving the grant repayment, the grant applicant should notify Ambition North Wales for further discussion.

Is the grant considered to be a subsidy under the UK Subsidy Control Regime?

Yes, the grant payment is considered a subsidy and is being offered to successful applicants through the Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) exemption in section 36 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

Through MFA, businesses are able to receive subsidy up to a maximum threshold of £315,000 over a three-year period. This replaces the previous State Aid de minimis exemption. In order to ensure the MFA exemption can be used, we will ask you to provide us with written confirmation that our subsidy will not cause you to exceed your £315,000 entitlement. You will need to take into account any subsidies you have received in the last three years under the MFA exemption or under the State aid de minimis exemption or the exemption for 'small amounts of financial assistance' in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. If our subsidy would exceed your remaining entitlement under the MFA exemption, we will not be able to provide the grant to you.