



SUPPORTING
ENTERPRISES TO
REACH NET ZERO



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

Devon Net Zero Innovation Fund – Round 2 Guidance Notes

Introduction

This fund is in place to enable collaborations between Devon enterprises and University of Plymouth academic researchers. The aim is to help Devon enterprises to develop new products or services for the low carbon sector, with funding of up to £7,500 per company to cover academic time.

Key Information

- **Deadline** for applications – 31 March 2022 (12.00 midday) (*after this time, no applications can be accepted*)
- **Timescale** – the collaborative project must be completed by the end of November 2022
- **Budget** – up to £7,500 will be allocated per collaboration (no match funding is required). It is anticipated that the majority of the fund will be used to employ a research fellow/associate lecturer (up to 25% of the bid can be for consumables used by the University of Plymouth in this collaboration)
- **Applications** – please email all enquiries and final applications to sustainabilityhub@plymouth.ac.uk, clearly entitled “DNZIF Application – Company Name”
- **Funding source** – the Low Carbon Devon project is a £2.6m programme supported by an investment from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Key Dates:

The call will open on Monday 31 January 2022, with a closing date of Thursday 31 March 2022. Scoring of applications will take place in April 2022 and upon approval, partnerships will have 6 months to deliver their project.

Who can apply?

- Applications will need to be led by an eligible* Devon enterprise – in partnership with a University of Plymouth academic(s).
- Existing or new collaborations are welcomed.

Objectives of the DNZIF

This fund is designed to encourage new industries to emerge and to boost investment in the development of low carbon products and services, through:

- Enabling Devon enterprises to address key low carbon challenges and opportunities through new product / service development
- Enabling at least 10 eligible Devon enterprises to develop new, products / services for the low carbon economy (minus those funded by DNZIF Round 1).
- Enabling Devon enterprises to collaborate with University of Plymouth academic researcher expertise that falls outside of the Low Carbon Devon Industrial Research Fellow (IRF) expertise (i.e. Green Walls, Power Electronics, Energy Efficiency in Buildings (Occupant Behaviour) and Creative Industries)
- Supporting diversification of technology from one industrial sector to another to support low carbon ambitions
- Being the proof of concept that could lead to further funding – e.g. Innovate UK, KTP, Net Zero Innovation Portfolio (NZIP), Clean Growth Fund.

Eligibility

- The industrial partner of these collaborations will need to be an ERDF-eligible Devon enterprise (see below *)
- Eligibility questions will be included in the application form; applications from non-eligible enterprises will not be assessed, but may be referred to other funded opportunities within the University or other funding opportunities known to the LCD team.
- The academic partner will need to be an employee of the University of Plymouth.
- Each award is for a maximum of £7,500 and can only be used to buy out University of Plymouth academic researcher time and related consumables (up to 25% of the total budget). This is to fund new, or deepen existing collaborations between the University and a business, leading to the development of new products or services for the low carbon sector, or that lead to low carbon results – e.g. feasibility studies, market assessments, proof of concept, prototyping and commercial development.
- This call is open to all sectors and all research disciplines, as long as there is an impact on lowering carbon emissions.

Other Information

- Applicants should base their project time-plan and budget on a nominal academic hourly rate of £25/hour. Upon confirmation of a successful award, the actual hourly rate allocated to this project (and resulting time) will be based upon a named academic researcher's actual hourly rate (so may go up or down from the application made).
- The award will pay for academic research and development time only
- Successful applicants will need to produce regular updates on activity throughout the funded period and a final report / case study and evidence of activity.

Assessment Criteria

The Awards Panel is seeking applications from businesses and University of Plymouth academics where a strong collaboration is proposed between the two parties

- Does the proposal clearly demonstrate how a new product / service will be developed?
- Does the project demonstrate a clear market for the new product / service?
- Does the proposal have clear deliverables and timescale leading to new product / service development?
- Does the proposal represent value for money?
- Is the proposal innovative?
- Do both parties in the project team have relevant experience?
- Does the University of Plymouth expertise in the proposal fall outside the existing LCD Industrial Research Fellow expertise (i.e. Green Walls, Power Electronics, Energy Efficiency in Buildings (Occupant Behaviour), Creative Industries) – therefore adding value?
- Proposals must demonstrate how they meet at least one of the key objectives of the fund (see above)
- The Awards Panel would like to see applications with the potential for further ongoing collaboration between the partners of the project (which the LCD project will support the development of, if required).

*Is my company eligible? Your company must: employ fewer than 250 people; have turnover of less than €50m and / or the annual balance sheet of less than €43m as per [EU guidance](#); have received less than €200k in de minimis public grants in the last 3 years

Application process

- DNZIF Application Form and Guidance Notes are available on the Low Carbon Devon website (<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/sustainability-hub-low-carbon-devon/devon-net-zero-innovation-fund>)
- Specific queries can be raised at any time during the application period (sustainabilityhub@plymouth.ac.uk)
- All eligible completed applications will be submitted to the Awards Panel for consideration and scoring
- Memorandum of Understanding and final eligibility paperwork finished and issued
- Kick-off meeting held with the LCD team
- Ongoing reporting will be required as well as final report and a statement from the company that this work is contributing towards the development of a new product / service

Indicative Timescales (these dates may change)

Open for applications and queries	31/02/22
Closing date	31/03/22
Scoring	Early April 2022
Successful partnerships contacted with results	Mid April 2022
Kick-off meetings with successful partnerships (confirmation of funding allocation details, value, timeframe and confirmation to proceed)	Early May 2022
Decision to award communicated and final MOU signed (feedback to unsuccessful)	May 2022
Quarterly progress report and meeting	June – November 2022
Project completion	November 2022
Final report and outcome (new product development letter – C29** and short summary report)	December 2022

Governance

The Awards Panel will be comprised of University staff and external advisors to assess all applications. The role of the panel is to appraise applications and agree awards. The Low Carbon Devon project team will issue the offer letters and will carry out the ongoing contract management with the successful applicants. The successful enterprises will be project beneficiaries.

***C29 definition – the development of a new to firm product or service (new functionality or production technology)*