



Feedback following Round 2 – January 2019

Introduction

This document provides feedback on common issues with applications to the Energy Redress Scheme to date. It provides suggestions on ways to avoid issues that arose with some applications in Rounds 1 and 2.

We recommend that all potential, and previous, applicants to Energy Redress read through this document, to help with future applications to the scheme.

Choosing your project

The Energy Redress Scheme is highly competitive, with applications often totalling 5 to 10 times the amount of funding that's available. This means we are not able to fund every project that meets the scheme criteria and even high quality applications may not be shortlisted due to the numbers of applicants and the amount of funding available.

We are committed to achieving the maximum positive impact from the Energy Redress Scheme funds, so keep this in mind when planning your project. If your project is likely to only benefit a small number of people, could you expand it or work with other organisations to reach more people?

The Energy Redress Scheme is unlikely to fund energy saving or renewable energy generating measures in a single building, unless you can demonstrate a wider impact and can explain how you will share what you have done with people who could replicate it.

Completing the application form

When completing your application form please **check for consistency** across all sections. This is especially important if your project has changed as you were developing it. Specifically check whether you have represented your outcomes, targets and associated activities consistently.

Try to keep your project idea as simple and straightforward as you can and avoid repeating the same information in different sections. The scheme guidance contains an explanation of what we mean by aims, outcomes, targets etc.

Your application must clearly and concisely provide details of your organisation, your delivery experience and project location, to provide context for your project and why you think it is needed. If your organisation is part of a national network of organisations but your project is being delivered by a regional office within its area of operation, the application form should be written using information relevant to the regional delivery of the project.

You should complete the **Innovation section**, whether or not you are specifically applying for an innovative project. It can improve your score and it is a way to highlight any innovative approaches, technologies or techniques used in your project.

Try to maximise the long term impact of your project. Sometimes it is important to do something short term and immediate to support vulnerable people - such as support with paying bills - but consider whether there might also

be an opportunity to have a longer term impact. For example, adding energy efficiency advice and/or measures into your project can help to tackle the root cause of problems with energy bills, increasing the long term impact and cost effectiveness of your project.

The Energy Redress Scheme guidance is designed to help you through the process of completing the application form. You can download the guidance document here: <https://energyredress.org.uk/application-pack>.

Targets

Please provide some target figures for the activities you will deliver during your project e.g. number of home visits, briefing sessions, events, or the numbers of households you will help with advice or other interventions.

Be sure to explain specifically what you will monitor, how you will monitor it and why you have chosen those indicators. It is worth taking time to show that the indicators you have chosen will demonstrate that you have delivered your listed outcomes. If you are struggling to decide on indicators, Annex 1 in the guidance document provides some suggestions <https://energyredress.org.uk/application-pack>

When setting your targets, think about the amount of grant you are requesting and how you will demonstrate good value for money. To ensure the best impact for vulnerable consumers, redress funds should be spent on project delivery rather than only on your ongoing service costs and overheads. Applications that appear to be only funding core costs will receive lower scores.

Costs associated with monitoring and evaluating the impacts of your project are an eligible expense for redress projects.

Energy advice projects

A high proportion of the projects applying for redress funds include the delivery of energy advice. This makes it important to provide as much detail as you can about the advice you will provide and your target audience, in order to show how your project differs from others. Assessors will be looking for projects that demonstrate they:

- Will provide high quality advice (we consider the City and Guilds in Energy Awareness or equivalent as a minimum requirement for home energy advisors);
- Have thought through how the advice will lead to the maximum positive impact for the people advised e.g. through changes in behaviour, financial savings and/or installation of measures;
- Are able to monitor the impact, and reach, of the advice e.g. financial savings or numbers of measures installed;
- Have considered safeguarding, data protection and lone working issues, especially if providing home visits.

Please note that training for advisors is an eligible expense for Energy Redress Scheme projects so you can include it within your budget.

If your project is looking to use volunteer energy champions to increase the reach of your project, please explain what training/guidance they will receive to carry out their role and how they will be supported to deliver any project outputs they are tasked with.

Capital measures and crisis funds

The Energy Redress Scheme can provide funding for capital measures e.g. energy efficiency or renewable energy measures, however it cannot be used to replace, or provide top up funding for, ECO measures, or where the RHI is applicable. It also should not be used by Housing Associations to undertake work that they have a statutory duty to do.

If you are applying for capital measures, be specific about what the measures will be, the eligibility criteria you will use to determine who will receive them **and how you will ensure measures are installed safely and to a high standard.**

Whilst Energy Redress Scheme funding can be used for small grant funds that are distributed to vulnerable customers, you must be specific about what the funds will be used for, how you will determine eligibility and what ongoing support or advice you will provide to the beneficiaries.

Project budgets

When completing the Project Budget section of the application form, please ensure that the total project cost from the three sections, correlates with the level of grant you are requesting and any match funding that you have i.e. the grant request and match funding = the actual project cost.

When preparing your project budgets, staff costs should be actual costs plus overheads, rather than a commercial day rate. Commercial day rates are only chargeable by organisations whose services you have procured. This is covered in more detail in the guidance document.

If you are charging an overhead rate within your staff costs, you should **not** include items that would normally be included in overheads, such as office rental or utilities in the 'Other Costs' section.

If you are including payments to partner organisations within your application, please make it clear in the 'Project Activities' section, what the partners will be doing for their share of the grant.

When installing energy efficiency measures or low-carbon and renewable technology, your application form must clearly state the cost per measure (a range is acceptable) to allow value for money to be assessed. This information can be included as a supporting attachment. Uncertainty about costs being claimed will result in a lower score and may risk your project not being shortlisted.

Match Funding

The Energy Redress Scheme can fund 100% of the cost of your project but if you have match funding from other sources this can make your project more cost effective and demonstrates that other organisations are keen to see the project delivered. Please explain where any match funding is coming from in the 'Additionality' section of the application form and be clear about what elements of the project the match funding and the Energy Redress Scheme funding will cover.

Risk Management

The risk section of the application form is very important but has been an area of weakness for many applications so far. This section is an opportunity to demonstrate that you have thought through the consequences of delivering your project and have a plan to minimise risks.

Ensure that you consider the full range of risks associated with delivering your project, including the health and safety of those involved and also risks to project delivery due to changes in circumstances e.g. staff leaving, volunteers dropping out, lack of take up of advice.

The installation of measures and changes to the fabric of properties comes with its own set of risks. Your application should consider the impact and mitigation of these risks, which for example can include the poor quality or unnecessary installation of measures.

To ensure the safety of people, inform us of any relevant safety policies that you have in place, for example Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Lone Worker policies. This is especially important if you are offering home visits or one to one sessions out in the community. Ensure that your activity and processes are compliant with GDPR. These policies can be listed as mitigation against relevant risks in the 'Risk Management' section.

Additionality

Ensure that you explain how your project will work alongside any relevant services from UK, Scottish or Welsh Governments or other organisations in your area. If you cannot think of any relevant services, check Annex 2 in the guidance document, which lists some of them.

You should also think about other local authority and voluntary sector services in your area and consider how your project could work alongside, or with them, to increase its impact.

Our aim is to ensure the maximum positive impact from the Energy Redress Scheme funding, so assessors pay especially close attention to whether projects may be adding value to or duplicating/conflicting with other existing services.

Letters of Support

It is not a requirement to include letters of support with your application but if you have mentioned partner organisations within the application form, it is helpful if they can confirm their support for the project with a letter.

Timelines and grant payment

Following the closing date of an Energy Redress Scheme funding round it takes a few weeks to assess all the applications and produce a shortlist for the Independent Assessment Panel. The panel meets around 1 month after the closing date and we aim to let successful applicants know as soon as possible after the panel meeting.

Grant offer letters are then prepared and hopefully agreed within a month. Grants are paid quarterly in arrears on receipt of a monitoring report and claim.