

## CLT Start Up Fund Voucher Scheme Application guidance for applicants

### Eligibility criteria

The CLT Start Up Fund Voucher Scheme has 4 key eligibility criteria. These are detailed on our website: <http://www.nweurope.eu/projects/project-search/shicc-sustainable-housing-for-inclusive-and-cohesive-cities/> If you have any questions about whether your organisation meets these criteria, we would be happy to discuss your concerns.

The eligibility criteria are:

1. Applicants must be based in the North West Europe region
2. Applicants must be working in an urban location – at least or greater than 10,000 residents
3. Applicants must be incorporated (or be working towards incorporation) in a form which meets the project definition of a CLT:
  - a. CLTs are non-profit, democratic, community-led organisations. They develop and manage homes that are affordable to low and median income households, as well as other assets that contribute to thriving local communities. They act as long-term stewards of these assets, ensuring they remain permanently affordable. This is achieved through mechanisms that ensure that any additional value generated is retained within the CLT
4. Applicants must be working towards a scheme which prioritises the delivery of permanently affordable housing. We will occasionally consider schemes which are delivering other assets in addition.

### What can we provide?

We will provide support from a CLT specialist for up to ten days to help you work through your initial ideas for a CLT and turn these into a realistic plan of action. Your application should tell us what you are thinking about, and why. The more detail you provide, the better we will be able to match you with the right advisor.

### Application process

All applications to the Fund are considered by a panel of project partners, who will make the final decision whether to award a grant. Your application will be presented at the next meeting after it's received by us.

We will let you know the outcome in writing within 2 weeks of the Panel meeting. We will always offer you feedback on your application.

Exceptionally, the Panel might ask an applicant to provide further information before they make a decision. If this is the case, we will work with you to get the information to the Panel for a decision as quickly as possible. This may not be until the next Panel meeting.

If you are approved for a grant and conduct a scoping day, we will then consider whether you should progress to through further support. We'll make this decision once we've had your feedback, and

your expert’s feedback, on the first scoping day. You might decide on this first scoping day that a CLT isn’t for you, or that your proposals will not be viable. If so, this will be the end of our involvement.

However, if your plans show potential and you wish to continue to form a CLT, we will consider awarding vouchers. We will discuss this in detail before a decision is made.

### Queries and contact

If you have any questions about the application process or how to complete the application form, please don’t hesitate to contact us:

Polly Adams-Felton, Grants and CLT Support Coordinator at the National CLT Network  
[polly@communitylandtrusts.org.uk](mailto:polly@communitylandtrusts.org.uk)

Alternatively, you can contact your local SHICC project partner.

### Completing your application form

Our general advice to applicants is fairly straightforward:

- Write in clear, simple language – avoid jargon
- Be as clear as possible about your aims, and what you are planning to deliver (or at least your initial ideas)
- Provide evidence and detail in support of your application where you can
- Do tell us about what enthuses you, and mention anything unique about your scheme
- Be honest – in some cases, you might feel we are asking for information that you just don’t have yet. We expect this – groups apply to us at all sorts of stages. If you’ve not finalised something, tell us your initial thoughts but don’t make up information you don’t have.
- Always tell us about partnerships – we are interested
- If you have a track record – tell us about it!

More specifically, you should answer the application questions bearing in mind the following guidance:

Question	Notes/ What we are looking for
1	<p>We want to know how you have come to the point of applying to the Start Up Fund. We assume that this is because you have seen a need for affordable housing in your community and you hope to address it through a CLT.</p> <p>We’re interest in both what you have witnessed and what has motivated you, evidence that has been gathered by other organisations and evidence that you may have gathered yourself.</p> <p>The best place to look for solid evidence on the housing need in your local area is to look at your local authority’s housing needs assessment. If you haven’t looked at this already, it will be useful for you to be able to quantify and better understand what housing stock already exists, what is planned and what is needed.</p> <p>You should be able to find this document by using a search engine. Try typing in ‘housing needs assessment’ along with the name of your local authority and</p>

	<p>hopefully somewhere in the list you'll find the appropriate document. If you can't find it do get in touch with the housing department of your local authority who should be able to help.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>Many CLTs wish to address a number of issues in their community or to address a specific area of housing need. You might feel that there isn't enough greenspace, your area has a high number of empty homes or that you don't have a strong sense of community.</p> <p>We're really interested to hear about these other driving forces, as often, they're as important to people as the affordable housing itself. Please tell us about any other assets you plan to incorporate as part of your project or are already running as well as any specific areas of interest aside from affordable housing.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p>Here we would like you to think about all relevant people to your project. Your steering group will likely make up the majority of this list but there may also be others in your community that you have drawn on for support e.g. local businesses, local leaders. We're also interested in the relationships you have built with other key bodies like housing associations and local authorities.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p>You don't need to go into vast amounts of detail, but do tell us about the key (relevant) skills within your group. You've selected certain people to be on your steering group – other than their willingness, why do you want them to be involved?</p> <p>A whole host of skills are beneficial to a CLT. As well as housing-specific technical skills such as architecture, project management or surveying, don't neglect more general skills such as negotiation, volunteer management, financial or business skills, legal knowledge, press and publicity, or a strong understanding and knowledge of your local community.</p> <p>If you are struggling to note down what relevant skills an individual may have, perhaps think about their profession or their involvement and connections in your local community. This can be a useful exercise to identify any skill gaps in your steering group.</p>
<b>5</b>	<p>The information you have got together for question 4, should help you to answer question 5. Please don't be put off of letting us know where you have skill gaps – we don't expect you to have all areas covered!</p> <p>You may find it helpful to work through the National CLT Network's Organisational Health Check (available on our website, <a href="http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/start-a-clt/step-4-governance-and-legal-structures">http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/start-a-clt/step-4-governance-and-legal-structures</a>) to think about any areas where your steering group needs additional support.</p> <p>This is a useful opportunity for you to think about how you will fill those gaps. Perhaps you would like to work with your local press but don't know where to start. In this case, you could use a part of your stage 3 funding to provide a member of your steering group with media training. It may be that you need to hire someone to fill gaps that aren't so easy to provide training on.</p>

	<p>In this question, it is important to us that you are able to identify skills that you are missing.</p>
<b>6</b>	<p>We're interested in understanding what you have done so far to engage your local community. It may be that this is an area you are looking to work on which is absolutely fine, we would be grateful if you could let us know of any plans that you do have.</p> <p>We would really like to know about everything from popping a leaflet in the local shop to arranging public meetings.</p> <p>Is it also useful for us to know what the level of support from your local community has been so far. If you have had any negative opposition to your project, please do let us know. This will not prejudice your application in any way and we understand that all schemes have their objectors.</p>
<b>7</b>	<p>It's really helpful for us to get an idea of who you have already been talking to, but don't worry if you haven't done a lot of this yet – groups come to us at all different stages!</p> <p>We're not only interested in engagement with local authorities, it's also useful to understand if you have worked with any other relevant authorities or organisations.</p> <p>If possible, provide details of how you have engaged with different stakeholders and what support they have offered. It is useful to understand how your local authority has responded to your work and plans so far</p>
<b>8</b>	<p>Here is your opportunity to let us know what motivates you, what you wish to address and how you plan to do it!</p> <p>You might live in an urban area that isn't able to retain young people due to high house prices or you may live in a city where the level of housing stock isn't this issue but you have a large number of empty homes. Alongside societal and affordability issues, you might have strong environmental aims or a wish to support the elderly or disabled...the possibilities are endless! Whatever it is that's making you tick, we want to know about it.</p> <p>Please do provide as much detail as possible in this section. You may not have solid plans yet but we are interested in hearing about the change you would like a CLT to make to your community. This can be much wider than the provision of affordable housing.</p>
<b>9</b>	<p>As in previous questions, we understand that you may not yet have made any significant progress. If you have identified a site or a number of sites, have started thinking about partnership options or other areas this is the space to let us know.</p> <p>Do not worry if it feels as though little progress has been made – the purpose of this scheme is to support you going forwards and make achievements.</p>

<b>10</b>	Perhaps your local authority has offered a small grant or you have done a collection at local events – we’re interested in everything, big and small!
<b>11</b>	If there are any particular areas where your group needs additional support, document this here. Don’t worry if your group does not have any specific issues but are looking for some more general support – technical advisors have wide ranging experiences and are able to support groups at all stages.