Efficiency for Access Research and Development Fund
Frequently Asked Questions

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1. Introduction

A. What is the Efficiency for Access Coalition

Efficiency for Access is a global coalition working to promote high-performing appliances that enable access to clean energy for the world's poorest people. It is a catalyst for change, accelerating the growth of off-grid appliance markets to boost incomes, reduce carbon emissions, improve quality of life, and support sustainable development.

Efficiency for Access consists of 20 Donor Roundtable Members, 19 Programme Partners, and more than 30 Investor Network members. Current Efficiency for Access Coalition members have programmes and initiatives spanning 62 countries and 34 key technologies.

The Efficiency for Access Coalition is coordinated jointly by CLASP, an international appliance energy efficiency and market development specialist not for-profit organisation, and UK's Energy Saving Trust, which specialises in energy efficiency product verification, data and insight, advice and research. The Low Energy Inclusive Appliances programme is Efficiency for Access' flagship initiative.

B. Where is the funding coming from for the Efficiency for Access Research and Development Fund?

Funding for the Agritech call of the Efficiency for Access Research and Development Fund is funded by UK aid, from the UK government via the Transforming Energy Access TEA platform, and the IKEA Foundation.

C. When does the call open and close?

The call opens on 15 November 2023 and will close on 17 January 2024 at 23.59 GMT.

2. Applying to the Efficiency for Access Research and Development Fund

A. How do I apply?

Please ensure you read the Guidance for Applicants, prior to applying to the Fund. Applying to the Fund is a two-stage process. The first stage involves registration of your organisation on the Efficiency for Access registration and application page. If you have previously registered, you will need to re-register as the system has been upgraded and new information is required as part of the registration process. Once you are registered you may submit an application form on the same Efficiency for Access registration and application page. In the application form, you will be asked to provide details of your project, including a project budget spreadsheet and supporting documents. After your application form is submitted, it will be assessed by an Efficiency for Access assessment panel.

B. When can I apply?

The Fund is now open to registrations and applications. Applications must be submitted by 17 January 2024 by 23.59 GMT.

C. Who can apply?

Any legally registered and physically established business, academic organisation, non-profit, public-sector organisation, or research and technology organisation based in any country in the world may apply.

D. If my project is more focused on commercialisation or proving a business model, what should I do?

If your proposed project is focused beyond production innovation, such as testing a new business model, or testing new products in different geographies or sectors, then you should apply to the [Powering Renewable Energy Opportunities (PREO)](#) programme call for applications.

E. How does Efficiency for Access select grant awardees and what due diligence is involved?

Applications will undergo an assessment by up to two Efficiency for Access assessors and independent technical experts, selected from a full assessment panel. The applications will be assessed consistently, using the same set of scoring criteria, which is specified in the Guidance for Applicants. Once every application has been assessed, the assessment panel will meet to determine the applications to be funded based on the assessment scores and potentially applying a 'portfolio' approach. A 'portfolio' approach may be used to ensure funding is spread across multiple scope areas, geographic locations, stages of Research and Development R&D, project durations, project costs, and levels of project risk. We understand the risks involved in Research and Development and welcome applications for projects that are both high risk and high reward (impact). Unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome of the assessment and may request feedback.

The successful applications will then undergo technical due diligence, which may involve requests for further information and data, interviews, and a site visit. Applicants that pass technical due will undergo financial diligence, involving the checking of audited accounts, and must complete a Due Diligence and Safeguarding Questionnaire. Please note that we understand that some organisations may not be able to answer some due diligence questions affirmatively. Should this be the case for your organisation, please do not let this deter you from applying as we may seek to mitigate these risks in other ways. Successful applicants that pass due diligence will be notified that they are to be awarded a grant.

F. What are the criteria used for assessment of R&D projects?

Please refer to Section 6 "Applying and Assessment" of the Guidance for Applicants, which provides the assessment criteria and scoring guide.

G. Does the R&D project have to be focused on a specific part or a complete solution?

R&D projects may focus on both a specific part or a complete solution.

H. What is meant by a weak-grid?

A weak-grid is an electrical grid that is not reliable, e.g. there are numerous power cuts, or voltage levels tend to fluctuate outside of standard values.

I. What do we mean by partners, sub-contractors or supporting parties, and what are the conditions of partnerships?

Partners, sub-contractors and supporting parties are third-party or external organisations that will play a role in the project. The name of these organisations should be provided with a description of their role and the status of their confirmation of participation. Sub-contracting services supplied by partner organisations should exclude any profit element and be charged at cost. Where a partner is also a sub-contractor within a project, it is important that the organisation in receipt of the project funding stays within state aid limits.

If you apply as a partnership, the lead partner will assume responsibility for the project and will be the recipient of the grant funding. At least 50% of the staff budget must be allocated to the lead partner, i.e. staff costs allocated for all other partners and sub-contractors must be less than 50% of the total staff costs. In addition, more than 50% of purchases for capital equipment and other costs must be made by the lead partner.

J. Does my R&D project have to be conducted in a specific country or region?

No, R&D projects may be carried out in any country or region. However, please note that an additional ~8% in score will be given to projects that implement at least part of the project in a UK aid priority country. The UK aid priority countries are —
Afghanistan, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo (Democratic Republic of the), Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt (Arab Republic of), Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Tanzania (United Republic of), The Occupied Palestinian Territories, Togo, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (República Bolivariana de), Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

K. How long may projects be conducted for?

R&D projects supported under the closed call must have completed final project reporting, including final report, external communications report and presented to the Efficiency for Access team by no later than 31 May 2025.

L. Does my application have to be in English?

Yes, we do not have the ability to assess applications submitted in languages other than English.

M. What do you mean by matched funding?

Matched funding can be provided in two ways:

- In cash— direct financial contributions to the project from the applicant and/or third parties such as donors (individuals, foundations, governments), impact investors or venture capital firms. You may be asked to provide evidence of the matching commitment that details the conditions, timescales as well any other considerations.
- In kind— in kind matched funding includes any significant and quantifiable contribution to the project that is not financial. This may include use of goods, services and facilities, as well as provision and access to equipment. Evidence will need to be provided to the Fund team when submitting milestone reports for the relevant, applicable milestones.

N. Can I make updates to my application after submission?

No, you will not be able to update an application once it has been submitted.

O. Will I have to submit any other forms after completing the application form?

The successful applicants will undergo technical due diligence, which may involve requests for further information and data, interviews, and a site visit. Applicants that pass technical due will undergo financial diligence, involving the checking of audited accounts, and must complete a Due Diligence and Safeguarding Questionnaire.

P. How will I know the status of my application and how can I enquire about the status?

Efficiency for Access will provide you with confirmation emails after the submission of both the registration form and application form. You will then receive emails when the status of your application assessment changes.

If your application progresses to the due diligence, Efficiency for Access will contact you to request additional information. Efficiency for Access may reject an application at any time, and if this occurs you will receive an email notifying you. If your application is recommended for funding, you will receive an email notifying you of this. Efficiency for Access will then negotiate with you to finalise the award of the funding.

Q. Will I receive feedback on my application if it is not successful?

Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback once they are notified of the outcome. We will endeavor to provide feedback where possible but cannot guarantee it.

R. Can I submit other applications or similar applications in future funding calls?

Yes, you may submit other applications or a similar application in future funding calls.

S. Does my organisation have to undergo a financial audit to apply?

You do not have to undergo a financial audit in order to apply. However, in some cases, Efficiency for Access may require a financial audit if your project progresses to the due diligence stage.

3. Receiving Funding

A. What does the Efficiency for Access Research and Development Fund provide?

- Grant funding.
- A dedicated funding support team at Efficiency for Access.
- Partnership facilitation assistance — connecting you to relevant partners to help you scale your innovation.
- Global exposure — Efficiency for Access will help to promote successful project outcomes through our communications platforms. Efficiency for Access has a wide international reach and a brand with global recognition.

B. What are the responsibilities of and reporting requirements of grant awardees?

Awardees are responsible for the following activities and documentation during the project:

- Developing a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan with the assistance of the Efficiency for Access M&E team, which must be approved before the completion of milestone 1 of your project.
- Submitting milestone reports, a final project report and supporting documentation according to the requirements outlined in the grant agreement.
- Providing financial reports where requested.
- Requesting approval for any changes in project objectives, milestones and staff.
- Notifying Efficiency for Access when receiving additional funding from another source for this or any related project.
- Briefing Efficiency for Access personnel online, over phone or in-country on project progress and outcomes.
- Complying with Efficiency for Access branding requirements.
- Mutual agreement on any additional provisions.

C. Does my organisation have to contribute to project costs to be eligible?

Yes. The proportion of funding you are eligible to receive for your project costs is dependent on the size of your organisation:

Organisation size	Staff headcount	Turnover	Or	Balance sheet total	Proportion of funding available for eligible project costs
Micro	<10	≤ £ 2 m		≤ £ 2 m	Up to 90%
Small	< 50	≤ £ 9 m		≤ £ 9 m	Up to 70%
Medium-sized	< 250	≤ £ 45 m		≤ £ 39 m	Up to 60%
Large	> 250	> £ 45 m		> £ 39 m	Up to 50%

The remainder of the project cost must be contributed by your organisation. If you apply as a partnership, the organisation size refers to that of the lead partner, who will assume responsibility for the project and be the recipient of the grant funding. At least 50% of the staff budget must be allocated to the lead partner, i.e. staff costs allocated for all other partners and sub-contractors must be less than 50% of the total staff costs. In addition, more than 50% of purchases for capital equipment and other costs must be made by the lead partner.

D. Are there specific activities for which funding can't be used?

Eligible and ineligible project costs are listed below:

Eligible project costs	Ineligible project costs
Personnel costs	Profit
Services	Bonuses
Direct overheads	Dividend payment
Travel costs - direct	Interest payment/financing costs
Equipment and materials	Currency exchange
Indirect Overheads: • General office costs • Admin support • IT/HR/support function	Recoverable VAT/local taxes
	Loss of income/opportunity cost
	Patent costs
	Other costs

Please note that VAT will only be funded where you can demonstrate that you cannot reclaim it, so all costs must exclude reclaimable VAT.

E. Can funding be allocated for salary support?

Yes, funds may be spent on personnel costs.

F. Does Efficiency for Access have guidance regarding acceptable overhead (percentage) for our proposed budget?

When specifying personnel costs in your budget, a maximum overhead rate of 25% may be claimed as project costs. Please be aware, however, that we may ask for evidence of how your overhead rate has been calculated, so please ensure you are able to provide this on request. Additionally, if you are claiming an overhead rate of 25%, you may not charge separately for items that would normally be included in overheads, such as general office costs, etc.

G. How are payments made to awardees?

In your application form, we ask that you propose project milestones and milestone dates. We suggest that you optimise the number of milestones proposed under your project, you can submit no more than seven

within the application form. Once the project commences, awardees will be required to submit a milestone report and supporting documentation at the end of each milestone before grant funding is disbursed for that milestone. We shall use reasonable endeavours to make payments within 4 weeks of receiving a complete claim. Efficiency for Access will also conduct project verification visits as needed.

H. Do I need to provide receipts for project expenses?

Yes, you will be required to submit relevant receipts and/or invoices for your expenses as evidence of project costs.

I.   Does Efficiency for Access take board seats with its awardees?

No, Efficiency for Access will not take board seats. However, Efficiency for access welcomes awardees to share any board meeting materials and/or read-outs from meetings, as appropriate.

J. Do I have to advertise Efficiency for Access as the source of the funding? What are the branding requirements if I am awarded the funding?

Efficiency for Access encourages awardees to highlight the source of funding where appropriate, such as when you highlight other funding partners. We will share our publicity guidance that provides information on how to communicate about your project. We request you share your external news with Efficiency for Access prior to publicising it.

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