

Green Business Fund – application guide

v.1.0 March 2026



About the Green Business Fund

Objectives of Fund

Milton Keynes City Council is committed to proactively support our transition to a low carbon economy, whilst ensuring our businesses can grow and thrive. A pot of revenue funding is available for projects that help businesses across the city become more sustainable to help with the Council's aim of achieving carbon net zero for the city by 2030.

The aim is to fund initiatives that provide support to multiple businesses to reduce emissions or become more resource efficient. Projects must demonstrate a clear benefit to a wider group of organisations, rather than to a single business.

Value notes

Grants of up to £25,000 are available. No match funding is required.

Who can apply

Any legally constituted organisation in the public (including town and parish councils), private (including sole traders, partnerships and limited companies) and community and voluntary sectors can receive funding from the Green Business Fund to deliver an approved project that supports registered businesses within the City of Milton Keynes administrative area. An approved project is a project governed by a funding agreement between the relevant Lead Authority and the project deliverer.

Organisations located / registered outside of Milton Keynes are eligible to apply for funding however all supported activity must take place within the Milton Keynes local authority area.

Eligible expenditure

- Professional Services (e.g. carbon baselining and reduction pathways, energy or resource efficiency audits)
- Software, digital tools and platforms (licences for carbon accounting tools, costs to develop or adapt tools that support SMEs)
- Training, workshops and events (development and delivery of sustainability-related training and certification, specialist training and courses, materials and digital resources where there is specific need)
- Outreach and engagement

What can't be funded?

The following costs are **not** eligible for support through the Green Business Fund:

- Activities focused on a single business
- Capital expenditure (e.g. solar PV, heat pumps, insulation)
- Improving applicant's own premises or operations
- Costs already covered by another grant, subsidy, or funding source

- Routine business costs not linked to the project
- Staff costs not linked to delivery of the project

How to apply

Applications are open until 4pm on 30 April 2026 and should be submitted via email to carbon@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Following the closing of the fund, the City Council will assess all eligible applications within two weeks against the assessment criteria and applicants will be notified of outcomes in early May 2026. All applications can receive written feedback on request. If successful in principle, the City Council will move to complete full eligibility checks, including subsidy control.

How bids will be assessed

Applications will be considered by an assessment panel, with officer recommendation. Applications are approved in principle by the Sustainability Team and funds released following recommendations to senior officers/Cabinet member. The panel will score bids against the following criteria:

Strategic Fit

- How well the proposal aligns with the objectives of the fund.
- The extent to which the project provides sustainability benefits to multiple businesses across Milton Keynes.

Quality of the Proposal

- Clarity of the project plan, activities, and delivery model.
- Evidence of need and justification for the proposed intervention.

Deliverability

- The applicant's capacity, experience, and readiness to deliver the project.
- Realistic timeline, milestones, and delivery approach.

Outcomes

- The scale, relevance, and achievability of proposed outputs (e.g. number of businesses supported).
- The credibility of estimated outcomes (e.g., carbon savings, resource efficiency improvements).

Value for Money

- Whether the costs are reasonable, proportionate, and directly linked to project delivery.
- Evidence that the funding will achieve meaningful impact relative to the level of investment.

Contacts

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