

Q&A: Switched on Towns and Cities Challenge Fund

Q. What is the aim of the fund?

A. This is a capital fund which aims to facilitate a step-change in the uptake of plug-in electric vehicles in Scotland's towns and cities. It has been designed to support intensive, high impact actions within a town or city to further incentivise, encourage and promote the uptake of electric vehicles.

Q. What activities will the fund support?

A. Typically, projects will be expected to focus on a combination of activities which might:

- deepen and significantly expand the provision of publicly available EV charging infrastructure into new as well as existing areas of a town or city.
- address EV charging issues associated with tenement buildings or residential properties that lack off-street parking.
- focus upon the development of EV-friendly 'districts' within a town or city.
- locate infrastructure for destination charging (e.g. close to public amenities, sport centres, public transport hubs).
- replace a significant proportion of public sector fleet cars or light vans with plug-in alternatives.
- provide other volume ready plug in vehicle types.
- provide infrastructure to enable incentivised car parking/use of restricted road lanes etc.
- adopt intelligent management systems to support local EV incentives (e.g. management systems for free parking etc).
- provide infrastructure and solutions for EV taxi ranks and/or facilities for EV car clubs.
- integrate EV infrastructure into wider energy systems including renewable generation and storage.

The Challenge Fund has been designed to give extra credit to projects which contain significant activity aimed at implementing practical and convenient solutions to address EV charging for residents living in tenement properties or with no off-street parking.

Q. What organisations are eligible?

A. The Challenge Fund will be targeted at local authorities who are well placed to deliver on local incentives for electric vehicle uptake. Applicants will need to demonstrate existing EV leadership and this will be taken into account in

assessment of bids. Other Community Planning Partners¹, as well as wider public sector bodies with local bases in a relevant town or city are eligible project partners.

Q. How much funding available?

A. Switched on Towns and Cities will be run as a transparent, competitive capital fund with each project expected to have eligible costs in the range of £1.5 million to £2.5 million. Up to 100% of costs may be supported by grant although an applicant's ability to provide match funding will be considered as part of the assessment of bids.

The level of funding on offer is considered to be at a level to deliver significant impact within a town or city and to support 'exemplar' projects that can genuinely deliver a step change in EV uptake.

Q. How many awards do you plan to make through round 1?

A. Transport Scotland is planning to have an annual call for bids and to make up to 5 awards through the first round of funding.

Q. What towns or cities are eligible?

A. Each bid will need to focus on a single town or city. It will be up to the relevant local authority in collaboration with project partners to prioritise which town or city this will be. We expect bids to be targeted at those towns or cities with proportionately high population numbers for the local authority area in question.

Q. Fit with other programmes?

A. The Challenge Fund will be complementary and additional to the funding available to all 32 local authorities through the ChargePlace Scotland and Switched on Fleets programmes. It also builds upon investments currently being made in low carbon transport hubs through Transport Scotland's ERDF Low Carbon Travel and Transport programme.

Q. In-depth feasibility support?

A. For local authorities unable to submit bids to the first round, Transport Scotland is offering in-depth feasibility study support. This will be available to those who can demonstrate pre-existing leadership on the electric vehicle agenda. Delivered through the Energy Saving Trust it is hoped that this support will drive a pipeline of projects to future rounds of the Challenge Fund.

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¹ A Community Planning Partner is defined in [Schedule 1](#) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015