



# SSE Community Investment Portal - FAQs

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) from grant applicants / awardees about SSE's online Community Investment Portal, and answers to these, are provided below. Please check the FAQs in the first instance to see if the answer to a your question features here.

# 1. About SSE's online Community Investment Portal

## What is SSE's online Community Investment Portal?

[SSE's Community Investment Portal](#) allows grant applications to be made to SSE's community funds online and allows successful applicants to manage their grant awards online too. It is part of our grant application and grant management system for our community funding. The system is a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system based on Salesforce, a leading cloud-based software platform. The Portal is our customer facing part of the system.

## Why has SSE introduced an online portal for community funding?

By using an online portal, we aim to improve the experience of those applying to our community funds. It will be easier to apply for a grant and applicants will be able to view key information on their applications and any grants awarded, in one place. The new system will also enable SSE to manage the grant applications we receive more easily, communicate better with applicants, and report on our community funding to demonstrate the socio-economic value it brings.

## How does SSE's online Community Investment Portal work?

All applications to SSE's community funds and scholarship funds are now made through our Community Investment Portal.

To apply, find the webpage for the fund you wish to apply to on our [website](#) and click on the 'Apply' button. This will take you to the Community Investment Portal, where you will be asked to confirm your eligibility to apply for a grant from your selected fund and then to either create a user account (see FAQ '[how do I create an account?](#)') or, if you already have a user account, to log in. Once you have done that, you'll be invited to work through a series of screens to answer questions and upload any important documents we require, before submitting your application.

Once an application is submitted, its status is shown under the '*my applications*' section in the portal. Any grant awarded will be shown under the '*my grants*' section, along with any grant conditions and any reports we require. Grantees can upload project reports via the portal and information to fulfil their grant conditions too. However, we will continue to communicate all funding decisions by e-mail.

## Do I need any specific technical knowledge to use the portal?

No, the portal has been designed to be user friendly, for people with little or no experience in using online application systems. Guidance is provided throughout the application screens and in the Fund guidance notes (downloadable from the Fund [webpages](#)), in plain English.

## Will you still accept grant applications in other formats?

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, we will not be accepting applications to our community funds in other formats, such as in Microsoft Word or in .pdf format. If this presents a specific issue for your application, please [contact](#) the Community Investment Manager for the fund you are applying to and we will try to help.

## 2. Data Safety and Security

### What personal information do you ask for?

We ask for your name and your contact details, such as postal address, a phone number, and an e-mail address.

### What happens to my personal information once I have submitted it?

We use this information you provide within your grant application for several purposes. For example, to contact you about your application or any grant award. If you are applying for a scholarship or a near neighbour grant (Ireland only), the information may also be used to determine whether you are eligible for an award. More information on how we store, use, and process your personal information is provided in our [privacy notice](#).

### How long will you retain my personal information for?

If you are awarded a grant, we will retain your personal information for 18 months after your grant is marked as complete on the system (i.e. from when you provide us with a satisfactory final report on your funded project or activity). If your grant application is unsuccessful, we will retain your personal information for 18 months from the decision date. After these timescales, your personal information will be deleted from our system.

### How can I request that my personal information be deleted?

You can request that we remove your personal information from our system at any time by contacting your SSE Community Investment Manager. Please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com)

## 3. Account management

### How do I create a user account?

You will be asked to create a user account (secure login) for the SSE Community Investment Portal the first time you begin the process of applying for a grant. Once you have confirmed your eligibility to apply for a grant from your selected fund, you will be presented with the Portal login screen. Click on '*not registered?*'. You will then be asked to enter your name and e-mail address. Once you have done this, click '*sign up*'. You will then be sent an e-mail. Follow the instructions within it.

Note that your **username** will be your e-mail address plus '.sse' at the end.

Please follow the above process to set up your Portal user account. If you have any problems during this process, please read our [troubleshooting FAQs](#).

### Where can I login to the portal?

Once you have created a user account following the process outlined above, you can login to the Portal here <https://ssecommunity.my.site.com/s/login/>

Please do not create a user account (do not click on '*not registered?*') from this page – if you do, we will have no way of knowing which group (for lcoal or regional / major project funds) or individual (for scholarship / near neighbour awards) you are apply on behalf of.

### I've forgotten my username, how do I find it?

Your username is the e-mail address you used to register your account plus '.sse' at the end. It will also be provided in the e-mail you received when you first created your user account.

### How do I change or reset my username?

You cannot change your username as each is unique to the system and is based on your e-mail address plus '.sse' at the end. If you want to change the e-mail address that is currently associated with your account, please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com). If you wish to register with another e-mail address, you will need to create new account - see FAQ "[How do I create an account?](#)".

### How do I change or reset my password?

To change your password, for example if you have forgotten your password or have concerns regarding the security of your password, go to <https://ssecommunity.my.site.com/s/login/> and click on '*forgot your password?*'. You'll be asked to enter your username (the e-mail address associated with your account plus '.sse' at the end) and click on '*reset password*'. You will then be sent an e-mail to the e-mail address that you entered. Follow the instructions within it. If you have any problems during this process, please read our [troubleshooting FAQs](#). If you continue to have problems, contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com)

### Can I share my login details with others?

We ask you not to do this as it could pose a security risk to our system.

## How do I find the email address associated with my account?

This will be the e-mail address you used when you registered for an account for SSE's Community Investment Portal. If you have multiple e-mail addresses and cannot recall which you registered with, please check each in turn. If you still cannot find it, please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com)

## How can I delete an account?

For audit purposes, accounts cannot be deleted from SSE's Community Investment System, they can only be made inactive. This restriction is a feature of Salesforce, the software platform we are using, and cannot be overridden. If you wish to make your account inactive, or if you wish to have your personal information deleted from an account, please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com)

## My account has been disabled, what can I do?

If you are unable to login to SSE's Community Investment Portal, please check that you are entering the correct username and password on the login page. If you are still unable to log in, or if you have received a message that your account has been disabled, please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com) to find out why and whether it can be re-activated. In some cases, you may need to set up a new account.

## How can I update the information SSE hold about me or the group I represent?

You can update most of the information about you as an individual or about any group that you have provided on SSE's [Community Investment Portal](#) by logging in and clicking on '*My Details*' on the Home page. From here, select the applicant (group, scholar or near neighbour) you would like to provide updated details for. If you need to provide us with an update on any information that is not featured here, such as a revised governing document for your group, please [contact](#) your SSE Community Investment Manager.

## 4. Applying for a grant

### Where can I find information on SSE Renewables' community funding?

You can find information on the funding SSE Renewables makes available to communities in Great Britain and Ireland at <https://www.sserenewables.com/communities>

You can find information on Scholarship funds that SSE Renewables makes available to individuals living near our assets in Great Britain and Ireland at <https://www.sserenewables.com/communities/scholarship-funds>

### Am I eligible to apply for a grant?

Information on eligibility criteria for our funds is provided in the guidance notes for applicants that can be downloaded from the relevant fund webpage on our [website](#). Applicant eligibility criteria for a fund is also presented on the Portal prior to you being able to access the application form. You must confirm your eligibility before the application form is made available. See also the FAQ '[Where do I find the application form?](#)'.

### Where do I find the application form?

All applications to SSE's community funds and scholarship funds are now made through our Community Investment Portal. First, find the webpage for the fund you wish to apply to on the Communities pages on our [website](#). Here you will find information about the fund including downloadable guidance notes for applicants. Please read these, checking that you / your group are eligible to apply for a grant.

To apply, click on the '*Apply*' button on the fund webpage. This will take you to the Community Investment Portal where you will be asked to confirm your eligibility to apply. Once you've done that, you will be asked to either create a user account (see FAQ '[how do I create an account?](#)') or, if you already have a user account, to log in. The application form will be made available in the Portal - you will be invited to work through a series of screens to answer questions and upload any important documents we require, before submitting your application.

If you have started an application and are not yet ready to submit it, you can return to it later. You can find your draft application under the '*My Applications*' section in the Portal. To start drafting again, click on 'launch' next to your draft application. You may need to log in to the Portal again to do this.

### Can I save my progress when drafting an application and come back again to it later?

Yes, the information you have entered in each page in the online application form will be saved where you have completed all questions on the page and successfully clicked '*save and continue*' at the foot of the page. Your draft application will be available to start editing again when you log back in using your same login details. To find your draft application, click on '*My Applications*' on the Portal home page.

### I can't continue to the next screen in the application form, why?

Some fields in the application form are mandatory, so you cannot continue to the next page without providing an answer to those. In addition, some fields have data validation active which means the correct

type of information must be entered (e.g. numerical values). This will be flagged in any error messages that feature on the page where you cannot continue. Please ensure you enter the correct information in the correct format.

## **Can I apply for a grant on behalf of a group that does not have a bank account?**

Yes, if your group does not yet have a bank account please contact us before starting the application form to provide more information on your group's status and to receive instructions on how to complete the '*bank details*' section of the application form.

## **Do I have to complete a declaration when submitting my application?**

We ask applicants to our scholarship funds to re-confirm their eligibility and agree to our terms and conditions of grant prior to submitting their application. We ask this because successful applicants to these funds will not be asked to agree to our terms and conditions thereafter; these will be sent directly to The Student Loans Company along with the grant payment.

If you are applying to any of SSE's other funds, you will instead be asked to agree to our terms and conditions if you are offered a grant, and prior to us paying this to you or your group.

## **What type of files can I upload as part of my application?**

Most file types are supported by the upload function in the system, but for security reasons we cannot view any .zip files you upload. If you do attempt to upload a file in .zip format, you may be able to complete the upload process, but we will not be able to open or view the file. Please therefore ensure any documents you wish to submit as part of your application are provided in an alternative format.

## **Where can I find a copy of my submitted application?**

Once you have submitted your application, we will send you an email confirming it has been received and, up to 30 minutes later, another e-mail containing a link to download a copy of your application (in pdf format). Click on the link and follow the instructions given thereafter. Please note that this e-mail will be from a no-reply address – if you need any additional support, please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com)

We recommend you save the copy of your application for your future reference, for example to help you complete any reports we require if you are awarded a grant.

You can also request a copy of your application at any time by logging in to the portal and clicking on '*My Applications*' in the portal Home page. From here, click on the application you'd like a copy of and then on '*Copy of application*'. You will receive an e-mail up to 30 minutes later with instructions on how to download a copy of your application. Again, please note that this e-mail will be from a no-reply address – if you need any additional support, please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com)

## **What happens after I submit my application?**

Once the application deadline for the fund you have applied to has passed, our Community Investment staff will check that your application meets our eligibility criteria and the aims or priorities for the fund. Applications that do not meet these requirements may be rejected at this stage. Applications that do meet these requirements will then be considered for an award.

## How are award decisions made?

Decisions on awards from our community funds are made in different ways depending on the fund you have applied to.

Decisions on applications from community groups are normally made either by a panel of local representatives (local funds) or a panel of sector experts (regional funds) and are based on information applicants have provided about their project, group, and the need for a grant.

Decisions on applications from individuals for scholarships (UK and Ireland) or for near neighbour payments (Ireland only) are made by SSE's Community Investment staff and are based on whether the application passes the eligibility requirements for the fund in question.

## How do I check the status of my application?

You can check the status of your application by logging into the [SSE Community Investment Portal](#) and clicking on '*My Applications*' on the Home page. The status of the application will be shown as either 'draft', 'submitted' or 'closed' (closed application will show a further status of either awarded, rejected, cancelled, or deferred). If your application has resulted in a grant being awarded, information relating to the grant will be shown under the '*My Grants*' section, again accessed from the portal home page.

## When will I find out if my application has been successful?

Please refer to the information on decision timescales provided on the webpage for the fund you have applied to. You can access our fund webpages from <https://www.sserenewables.com/communities>

## 5. Managing your grant award

### Where can I view my successful grant applications?

You can view information on your grant award(s) by logging into the [SSE Community Investment Portal](#) and clicking on the 'My Grants' section featured on the home page. You will also be able to view and complete any outstanding conditions against your grant and any reports that we require in relation to your grant.

### Where can I view / provide updated information on my grant conditions?

You can view any outstanding conditions relating to your grant award(s) and provide any updates in relation to them by logging into the [SSE Community Investment Portal](#) and clicking on the 'My Grants' section on the Home page. From here, select the grant and then the condition you wish to view or provide an update on.

You can provide a free text update an/or upload related documents. Your SSE Community Investment Manager will then be notified that you have provided an update and will review the information you have provided. We will contact you if we require any further information.

### How can I find out whether my grant has been paid?

If you are unsure whether your grant has been paid, please check your bank statement in the first instance. Grant payments from SSE normally have a reference beginning PA-00. If you cannot see a payment from us of the amount you are expecting, please [contact](#) your SSE Community investment Manager.

### How can I find out when my project reports are due?

You can view details of any outstanding reports relating to your funded project by logging into the [SSE Community Investment Portal](#) and clicking on the 'My Grants' section in the Home page. From here, select the grant you wish to view reports due for.

We will also send you reminders by e-mail (no more than two!) in advance of any report falling due. (Note: if you have not submitted a report by the date on which it is due, you'll be sent further reminders by e-mail).

We do not ask for reports from those who have received a scholarship or near neighbour grant.

### How can I submit a project report?

You can complete and submit a report on your funded project by logging into the [SSE Community Investment Portal](#) and clicking on the 'My Grants' section in the Home page. From here, select the relevant grant and then click on the link to the report that you are ready to complete. This will take you to a series of screen to complete. You can also upload any relevant documents (e.g. photos, evaluation reports) here too. Once you are happy with your report, click 'submit'.

Your SSE Community Investment Manager will then be notified that you have submitted a report and will review the information you have provided. We will e-mail you to let you know whether the report has been accepted or we require further information.

We do not ask for reports from those who have received a scholarship or near neighbour grant.

## 6. Troubleshooting & further help

### What browser should I view the SSE Community Investment Portal in?

The Portal should be visible and function correctly in any major web browser. However, if you are having problems such as browser error messages, we recommend viewing the portal in Google Chrome and seeing if that resolves the issue.

### I get an error message when I try to log in, what can I do?

This could be due to the internet browser you are using. The Portal works best in Google Chrome but should work in all other major browsers. If you are not using Google Chrome, please try logging in to the portal via that browser.

If you are still experiencing problems logging in, please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com) for assistance.

### I haven't received an e-mail with a link to an application form or a form relating to my grant, why not?

It is possible the e-mail has been moved into your 'spam' or 'junk' folder by your e-mail provider. Please look for it there and, if it is there, add the SSE e-mail address it was sent from to your 'Safe Senders' list – this will prevent emails from that address being moved into your spam or junk folder in future. This can be done by either:

- adding the address in your safe senders list, or
- marking the e-mail as not junk and checking the box '*for this and all future messages from the relevant SSE e-mail address*'.

If the e-mail is not in your spam or junk folder, please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com)

### I can't click on the link to the application form or a form relating to my grant, why not?

There are several reasons you might not see links enabled in your email messages. Please try the following steps:

- check to see if an *InfoBar* at the top of the e-mail informs you that links are disabled. If so, click the button in the *InfoBar* to enable external content;
- add the SSE e-mail address to your 'Safe Senders' list to prevent emails going to your junk folders. This can be done by either adding the address in your safe senders list or marking the e-mail as not junk and checking the box 'for this and all future messages from [the relevant SSE e-mail address]'.

### How do I raise any other issue with my account?

Please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com) providing as much information as you can about the issue you are experiencing.

### I have another question about / issue with the portal. Can I talk to someone?

Please contact us at [communityfundsupport@sse.com](mailto:communityfundsupport@sse.com) and we will be happy to arrange call with you. Alternatively, you can [contact](#) your SSE Community Investment Manager.