

# **GREEN FLAGS FOR FUNDERS**

## **Best Practice for Climate Funding**



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# 1. DEFINITIONS

## **Climate Actions**

All climate action falls into either mitigation or adaptation.

**Mitigation** is used in climate policy to describe actions taken to reduce climate change.

- Reducing waste
- Investing in green energy
- Reduction of emissions through the usage of goods and services in supply chains

Mitigation can be measured as contributing to the Scottish Government's commitment to net-zero by 2045.

**Adaptation** is used to describe actions that prepare and/or build resilience for the impacts of climate change.

- Increasing food security
- Supply chain and community resilience to local and global climate impacts
- Extreme weather event protection and recovery plan and actions

## **Climate Emergency**

Recognition and declaration made by governments and organizations to acknowledge the severity of the situation and commit to action.

## **Climate Risk Assessment**

A process that analyses the potential impacts of climate change on a specific location, sector, or organization, in response to the climate emergency.

## **Circular Economy**

An economy in which waste is reduced as much as possible (or avoided completely), where products are reused, repaired or recycled, and where the environment is protected and restored.

## **Eco-anxiety**

Fear, worry and/or a sense of dread about the climate crisis and the possible impacts of not taking early and effective action to manage it.

## **ESG Strategy**

An ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) strategy is a business's comprehensive plan for integrating sustainability and ethical practices into its operations and decision-making.

## **Green Champion**

Green champions are people who are often passionate about climate action and sustainability in their home lives, and who see an opportunity to boost action in their work.

## **Green jobs**

Jobs that support the use of or move to renewable energy; protect and restore the environment; or help people and wildlife adapt to climate change.

## **Greenwashing**

When organisations present themselves as taking serious and effective action to protect the environment but in reality they are not making meaningful or misleading people about their climate actions.

## **Just Transition**

The Climate Change Act 2019 embeds the principles of a Just Transition. This means as Scotland reduces emissions and responds to a changing climate, these actions continue to tackle existing inequalities and do not exclude people financially further. The goal is that the move to a low-emission economy leaves no one behind.

## **Net-zero**

Net-zero is when human activity is not adding more carbon to our atmosphere than planet Earth is naturally able to absorb and store. The Scottish Parliament Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) Act of 2024 set out a target date for net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. It scrapped interim 2030 and 2040 net-zero targets.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

*54% of respondents to the Scottish Third Sector Tracker currently anticipate that climate change will have no impact, or only a small impact, on their organisation.*

Unfortunately, this is a misconception.

The climate crisis is already impacting communities across Scotland and is set to have a massive impact on organisations and users in the third-sector, from service disruption, building damage, higher operational costs, and greater pressure on the vulnerable communities you support.

Funders are increasingly making climate action a core priority, expecting applicants to demonstrate how they are preparing for and responding to these challenges. This includes incorporating climate adaptations and mitigations into their projects and long-term strategies.

This booklet, developed in collaboration with the **Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network** and the **Midlothian Climate Action Network**, provides essential support for organisations new to focusing on climate issues. It outlines the real impacts of the climate emergency and offers practical guidance on how to access funding to prepare for them.

### **This guide will help you to:**

- **Identify** climate risks to your services and users.
- **Integrate** climate resilience into your planning and service delivery.
- **Use available tools and data** to assess your impact and vulnerabilities.
- **Apply for funding** that supports climate adaptation and mitigation projects

Whether your goal is to protect a community building from flooding, reduce emissions, or better support vulnerable users during extreme weather, this resource is designed to help you take the next steps.

### 3. ASSESS YOUR RISKS

**Climate impacts** will have to become a standard part of your risk assessments and strategies.

Funders increasingly expect to see how your organisation is safeguarding its services from climate-related disasters and how your projects contribute to a sustainable transition. This shows that you are prepared to maintain service continuity and manage costs, even when faced with extreme weather.

#### **Adverse Weather Impacts**

***Disruption to services and users' ability to access them***

***Damage to buildings and assets or make them unusable***

***Increase in operating costs and legal requirements***

Events like storms, floods, and heatwaves pose direct operational threats.

They can lead to, for example:

- Power outages or increased energy costs.
- Building damage or closures, making services unavailable for long periods.
- Travel disruption from road closures, preventing users and staff from reaching you.

Preparing for these disruptions is a key part of climate resilience. Importantly, this also presents a funding opportunity. Specific funds and grants exist to help charities install adaptations and secure their projects for the future.

# 3. ASSESS YOUR RISKS

## Vulnerable People

Climate change does not affect everyone equally. If your organisation supports vulnerable groups, they will be at greater risk. Your funding applications should explain how you will mitigate these specific climate risks for the people you serve. Groups often most affected include

- Older people
- People with disabilities and long-term health issues
- Children and young people
- Low-income households
- People experiencing homelessness
- Carers
- Migrants and refugees
- People living in rural or isolated areas

## Our Place Tool

Our Place provides placed based climate lens tools to help assess how vulnerable people in your community may be impacted .

[www.ourplace.scot/Place-Standard-Climate](https://www.ourplace.scot/Place-Standard-Climate)



## 4. UNDERSTAND YOUR NEEDS

Assessment tools are vital for identifying your organisation's and users' specific needs.

Assessment tools can help third-sector organisations identify what third-sector organisations and their users' needs may be. Using these tools can help plan what you may plan to use your funding for and provide evidence for why you need it. Using these resources helps you plan how to use funding effectively and provides strong evidence to justify your application.

### ***Growing Climate Confidence's Net Zero Check-up***

This tool by SCVO can measure your organisation's carbon emissions and help you understand your environmental impact, providing a clear starting point for reduction projects and funding requests.

[scorecard.climateconfident.scot/net-zero](https://scorecard.climateconfident.scot/net-zero)

### ***Adaptation Scotland's Climate Resilience Checklist***

This tool by Adaptation Scotland offers a checklist and case-studies to help identify adaptations that protect your "People, Products and Services, Premises, Processes and Place" from the impacts of extreme weather.

[www.adaptation.scot/take-action/sme-resilience-checklist](https://www.adaptation.scot/take-action/sme-resilience-checklist)

### ***Adaptation Scotland's Climate Ready Places Infographic Map***

Adaptation Scotland also offers the Climate Ready Places infographic map, showcasing real-world adaptation examples from across Scotland, offering inspiration across multiple sectors, communities and environments.

[www.adaptation.scot/take-action/climate-ready-places](https://www.adaptation.scot/take-action/climate-ready-places)

## 4. UNDERSTAND YOUR NEEDS

### ***Met Office's Local Authority Climate Explorer***

The Met Office has compiled extensive research and data to provide insight into climate risks the UK is projected to face. The tool allows you to view specific projected climate impacts for your area, which is crucial for building evidence in funding bids.

[www.climatedataportal.metoffice.gov.uk/pages/lacs-assess-your-risk](https://www.climatedataportal.metoffice.gov.uk/pages/lacs-assess-your-risk)

### ***The National Lottery Community Fund***

This National Lottery Community Fund is a great resource for understanding what types of climate projects actually receive funding. It features insights, success stories, and a full evidence library on climate risks faced by the third sector and how organisations have successfully funded projects. Reviewing these successes is invaluable for understanding what funders support and ensure your proposals are grounded in proven, effective strategies.

[www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk)

### ***Research Organisation***

Staying informed with leading research bodies helps you understand the profound social impacts of climate change, which is critical for advocating for your most vulnerable users in funding applications. some examples are:

- **Climateexchange:** Publishes research and analysis to support the Scottish Government's transition to net zero through evidence-based policy advice. [www.climateexchange.org.uk](https://www.climateexchange.org.uk)
- **Joseph Rowntree Foundation:** Provides research on the intersection of climate change with poverty, homelessness and other marginalised communities. [www.jrf.org.uk/publications](https://www.jrf.org.uk/publications)

Keeping up-to-date with research can help you identify what is needed for your most vulnerable users and how best to argue for funding.



# 5. YOUR CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

## Developing an ESG Strategy

An **ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance)** strategy is a formal plan that outlines your organisation's commitment to climate action. It provides a clear framework to guide decisions, define priorities, capacity, and responsibilities, and evaluate your impact.

### To build your strategy, you can follow these steps:

- **Assess user and staff priorities:** What climate risks could they face? Which of your services or projects are most vulnerable to disruption? Consult your users and staff, their input will help define which actions are most important for your organisation.
- **Evaluate where you are:** What resources do you already have? What knowledge gaps are there? To do this effectively, use established climate frameworks like the United Nations Global Compact and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These tools help you define your scope and set goals that match your charity's size and capacity.
- **Define your goals:** The gap between where you are now and where your stakeholders want you to be is where you will set your objectives. Your strategy should outline the specific actions needed to close this gap.
- **Create an Action Plan:** Ensure your actions are achievable and time-bound. Identify potential roadblocks and how to tackle them. Most importantly, create clear methods for measuring your progress and impact.

A clear ESG strategy makes it easier to identify what is achievable for your organisation.

Keep your projects focused and funder-friendly by using the SMART framework (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound).

# 5. YOUR CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Remember, funders do not expect you to solve the climate crisis alone. They want to see how your project will contribute to their objectives within your capacity.

Do not underestimate the value of smaller, local actions. Significant climate objectives are often achieved through many cumulative efforts. A small, well-planned project in your community can have a profound impact and is just as valid as a larger one.

When planning your application, research examples of both large and small climate actions for inspiration. Focus on what is achievable and meaningful for your organisation and the people you serve.

Climate Objective	Small Actions	Large Actions
<b>Reduce Carbon Footprint</b>	LED lights, smart thermostats, and remote work	Office retrofit, solar panels, and carbon audits
<b>Sustainable Procurement</b>	Recycled paper, no single-use plastics, and use local suppliers	Sustainable procurement policy and low-carbon supply chains
<b>Climate Education &amp; Awareness</b>	Staff green tips and social media posts	Climate training, public events/workshops
<b>Collaborate for Impact</b>	Join climate networks and attend events	Co-run initiatives and lead sector-wide coalitions
<b>Nature-Based Solutions</b>	Pollinator plants and green office garden	Tree planting, rewilding, and use land for climate projects
<b>Ethical Investment</b>	Review pensions, trustee conversations	Divest from fossil fuels and invest in ethical funds

# 6. NATIONAL CLIMATE PLAN

Funders, especially those linked to the Scottish or UK government, have legal obligations to help meet national climate targets. This means prioritising projects that align with these goals. Even independent funders often follow these plans. A strong application shows you understand these priorities and how your project helps achieve them.

The Scottish National Adaptation Plan 2024-2029 outlines the government's key commitments for tackling climate impacts, which directly guide its funding decisions. Aligning your project with these priorities can strengthen your application.

## **Key Funding Priorities from the Plan:**

### ***Adaptation Finance***

Using funding to make climate adaptation less risky. This includes expanding Regional Adaptation Partnerships (e.g., Climate Ready South East Scotland), which offer local advice and support tools.

[www.climatereadyses.org.uk](https://www.climatereadyses.org.uk)

### ***Equity & Justice***

A legal commitment to a fair and just transition, ensuring no one is left behind in a move towards a sustainable future. Applications can highlight how their services protect vulnerable people during this shift.

[www.justtransition.scot](https://www.justtransition.scot)

### ***Public Engagement***

Commitment to fund education, awareness, and behavioural change, delivered through the Climate Engagement Fund for charities empowering people to take action.

[www.gov.scot/publications/climate-engagement-fund](https://www.gov.scot/publications/climate-engagement-fund)

### ***Local Empowerment***

Supporting local decision-making by funding Community Climate Action Hubs. Being part of the Midlothian Climate Action Network will mean you have access to seed funding, climate training, and Midlothian-specific climate information and actions, demonstrating your community connections to funders.

[www.midlothianclimateaction.org.uk](https://www.midlothianclimateaction.org.uk)

# 7. LOCAL CLIMATE PLAN

Local strategies<sup>1</sup> outline Midlothian Council's climate priorities, which directly influence what funders (and by extension, applicants) are expected to deliver. These documents can be used as evidence evidence for defining your climate strategy and the practical actions your project should take.

While focused on public bodies, the [Midlothian Council's Climate Change Strategy](#)<sup>2</sup> offers valuable insight into their environmental priorities for the community. Aligning with the national plan, it advocates for:

- **Net-Zero Alignment:** Projects must demonstrate a positive impact on emissions and/or climate resilience.
- **Place-Based Action:** Collaboration with community groups and planning networks.
- **Support for Vulnerable Groups:** Addressing inequalities in energy, housing, and health.
- **Low-Carbon Energy Systems:** Funding for heat networks, building retrofits, electric vehicles (EVs), and renewables. (Further detailed in the [Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy](#)<sup>3</sup>).
- **Community Education:** Promoting carbon literacy and climate action awareness.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Investing in biodiversity, flood management, and tree planting.
- **Monitoring & Sharing:** Tracking progress and sharing learning across the sector.

You should use these strategies to anchor your proposals in local data and demonstrate collaboration on the council's targets.

The **Midlothian Climate Action Hub and Network** can be a key partner and a vital resource for organisations. The Hub runs events and trainings, distributes seed funding, hosts climate circles, and provides resources on local climate impacts and actions. It can also help members access external advice, resources, and specialized training upon request. Membership offers networking opportunities, collaborative project ideas, and access to up-to-date information to make your application climate-ready.

<sup>1</sup> [www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/1231/environment](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/1231/environment)

<sup>2</sup> [www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/737/climate\\_change\\_strategy](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/737/climate_change_strategy)

<sup>3</sup> [www.midlothian.gov.uk/LHEES](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/LHEES)

## 8. WHAT FUNDERS VALUE

Most funders base their climate policies on a set of recurring key principles. These are often detailed in climate statements or policies on their websites, with certain principles emphasized based on their specific focus.

If not explicitly stated, consider how the communities they support are impacted by climate change and address this directly in your application.

### Recurring Key Principles

- **Evidence-based decisions:** Staying informed on the climate crisis to ensure funding supports effective, evidence-based actions.
- **Building resilience:** Committing funds to projects that address both the causes and impacts of climate change to ensure a safe future.
- **Decarbonising operations:** Reducing their own and their grantees' carbon footprints by supporting changes in travel, green energy, and divesting from fossil fuels.
- **Amplifying voices:** Prioritising the perspectives of those most impacted by climate change, such as people in poverty, those vulnerable due to health or age, and communities in the Global South.
- **Embedding climate goals in all processes:** Integrating climate considerations into all decisions and making actions easy to record and report, which strengthens community and sector-wide knowledge.

Not all projects may have a direct focus on tackling climate change, but these principles show how your work can still build resilience and reduce indirect impacts.

## 8. WHAT FUNDERS VALUE

### **What if my project is not focused on climate action?**

Even if your project doesn't seem directly related to climate action, you can still demonstrate how it fulfills a funder's key principles. Small, thoughtful actions show you are proactive and climate-aware.

#### **Examples for Any Organisation:**

- **Stay informed:** Keeping staff and users up to date and aware of what to do in adverse weather fulfills the principle to stay up to date on the crisis.
- **Decarbonise:** Changing energy providers or offering services that users could walk to are clear examples of reducing your carbon footprint.
- **Amplify local and vulnerable voices:** Creating a safe space for vulnerable people to share their climate concerns and discuss solutions directly amplifies the voices of those most impacted.
- **Be proactive:** Simply showing you have researched how climate change affects your community and operations highlights your organisation as one that is serious about adaptation.

Even making these small changes can help unlock funding that will help you protect your organisation and users from the worst projected impacts of climate change.

### **What if funders don't make their climate policies clear?**

While certain funders do prioritise commitment to tackling climate change, they may not explicitly advertise this or make their stance clear. This may be to maintain impartiality or to keep focus on their primary mission.

To understand these priorities, research a funder's partnerships or public commitments they may have signed that may provide insight into aspects of climate action they want their projects to consider. A good example to look out for are signatories of **The Funder Commitment on Climate Change (FCCC)**.

## 8. WHAT FUNDERS VALUE

### The Funder Commitment on Climate Change's Six Pillars

Prominent funders such as The Robertson Trust, Corra Foundation, Foundation Scotland, and The National Lottery Community Fund have all signed this commitment, agreeing that:

*"All foundations, whatever our charitable mission and field of expertise, can play a part in addressing the causes of climate change and supporting adaptation to its effects."*

A yellow circular logo with the text "FUNDER COMMITMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE" in black, stacked vertically.

FUNDER  
COMMITMENT  
ON CLIMATE  
CHANGE

Applicants to these funders should consider how their project supports the FCCC's Six Pillars:

- **Educate and Learn**
- **Commit Resources**
- **Integrate (climate into all decisions)**
- **Steward our Investments for a Post-Carbon Future**
- **Decarbonise our Operations**
- **Report on Progress**

These are similar to the key principles found in many climate policies, however when writing applications it will be beneficial to address them explicitly.

The FCCC website is a valuable resource. It lists all signatory funders and publishes annual reports on their progress. These reports can reveal what funders see as successful, what support they offer, and what they are prioritising, providing crucial insight for your application.

 [fundercommitmentclimatechange.org](https://fundercommitmentclimatechange.org)

## 9. USING AI IN APPLICATIONS

AI tools are increasingly common and can be tempting to use them in funding applications. However, this needs careful consideration, as it can potentially harm your proposal. Especially for climate or job creation grants.

### Funders AI policy

Always check a funder's specific policy on AI usage. For example, The National Lottery Community Fund allows AI assistance but highlights significant risks with using this tool:

- **Accuracy:** AI can make mistakes or fabricate information to try and please its users. It can also miscalculate budgets by missing key details. Always verify all content.
- **Privacy:** Inputting sensitive information risks a GDPR breach, as AI tools may store and use your data. Avoid imputing personal and organisational details.
- **Authenticity:** AI can't tell your unique story. Generated material is often generic and fails to capture your charity's voice and how you specifically impact your community.

As AI use becomes widespread, funders are likely to get more applications. In some instances, it may even be used to evaluate projects as well. Understanding its limitations helps your proposal stand out.

### The Significant Climate Impact of AI

Currently, AI has a substantial environmental footprint:

- AI uses 49% of the energy consumption of data centres. By 2026, this usage is expected to reach over 1,000 TWh, roughly equivalent to the entire annual electricity consumption of Japan.
- Researchers estimate that a ChatGPT query can consume between 5 to 90 times more electricity than a simple web search.
- AI cooling demands have significantly increased water use, with Microsoft's increasing by 34% and Google's by 20%.

Using a tool with such a high environmental cost can undermine the net-zero commitments and mitigation strategies presented in your application.



# 10. GREENWASHING

As climate action becomes a greater priority, funders are increasingly aware of green-washing, where organisations misrepresent, overstate or falsely claim climate strategies and actions to appear more eco-friendly than they are. To ensure your application is viewed as sincere, viable, and genuinely committed, ensure you avoid common pitfalls:

- **Be specific** in what climate issues you are addressing and how your actions will deliver tangible benefits. For example, instead of "switching to greener energy," specify that it will "reduce our organisation's emissions by 35% compared to last year." Be transparent about past shortcomings to show how your project changes this.
- **Back claims with evidence**, using available data, third-party audits, or certifications. Assess your organisation's baseline and use established frameworks from trusted sources like Adaptation Scotland to argue the reasoning for your planned climate actions.
- **Integrate environmental goals** as a core part of your organisation's future, not an add-on. Reference a clear Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) strategy to show long-term commitment. Funders want to fund lasting resilience, not a one-off action.
- **Ground your action in the needs of your community** to highlight your commitments are more than just a trend. Use surveys or stories shared by your staff and users to show your efforts are a direct response to those you support, reinforcing your project's ongoing role in Midlothian.
- **Do not overpromise.** Acknowledge the limitations, upfront costs, and learning curves involved in climate projects. Being transparent and realistic about what you can achieve can go a long way to build trust with funders.
- **Commit to measure and improve** the impact of your actions. A clear plan for tracking progress demonstrates serious intent and a commitment to continuous improvement.

# 11. MEASURING CLIMATE ACTION

A core part of any funding application is explaining how you will measure the project's impact and evaluate its success.

To be measured effectively, climate actions should be specific, achievable, and have a clear deadline. Measuring at three key stages provides funders with clear evidence of their support's value

## **Establish a Baseline**

Show your organisation's starting point by assessing your current climate readiness.

- **Risk assessment tools** can be used to show how climate will impact your users and services.
- **Carbon calculators** can show your current environmental footprint.
- **Flood maps and climate projections** can show the dangers of adverse weather to your services.
- **Supply-chain review** can identify the climate vulnerability of external suppliers crucial to your services.
- **Show existing strategies and gaps**, such as current policies, training, or identified gaps.



# 11. MEASURING CLIMATE ACTION

## Report Ongoing Progress

Monitor activities and gather evidence throughout the project to demonstrate progress. This can help to show how and why the project went as planned or where challenges affected outcomes

- **Collect feedback and testimonials** from users at key stages.
- **Collect visual evidence**, such as photos or video from the progress of your project over time.
- **Collect case studies** where you record people's stories to illustrate project's human impact.
- **Collect formal metrics on engagement**, such as number of users, the activities they engaged in, or learning they have gained.
- **Collect quantifiable data on environmental impact** like energy reduced, emissions saved, or other climate metrics relevant for the project.

## Evaluating Success

Compare your final outcomes to the original goals defined in your application. Key questions to help measure your impact include:

- How many users engaged with the project?
- How much did you reduce your carbon footprint?
- To what extent did it strengthen resilience to climate impacts?

A strong application will already have measuring tools in place to demonstrate success.

- **Before-and-after comparison** using the same tools used to established your baseline.
- **Independent audits** or verification of your results
- **Community and partner testimonials** highlighting the value of your climate actions
- **Social Return on Investment (SROI) frameworks**, which help quantify social and environmental benefits in financial terms
- Long-term monitoring to track lasting impact beyond the project.

# 12. ADAPTATION

Dedicated grants exist to help organisations adapt to adverse weather and build climate resilience. Applying for these grants requires showing an understanding of how climate will impact your organisation and the specific adaptations you plan to implement.

These funds can support a wide range of projects designed to prevent service disruption, such as installing cooling for heatwaves, providing emergency power for storms, or creating natural flood protections.

## Examples of Key Funds:

### **Midlothian Climate Action Hub – Seedcorn Grants**

- **Funds:** Small-scale local climate projects, like tool libraries, food growing initiatives, community mapping, and tree planting.
- **Eligibility:** Community groups and charities based in Midlothian.

[www.midlothianclimateaction.org.uk/seedcorn-fund](http://www.midlothianclimateaction.org.uk/seedcorn-fund)

### **CARES – Let’s Do Net-Zero Community Buildings Fund**

- **Funds:** Energy efficiency upgrades and renewables (e.g., heat pumps, insulation) to decarbonise community-owned buildings.
- **Eligibility:** Charities or community groups that own or have a long-term lease on a building.

[localenergy.scot/funding/cares-community-buildings-fund](http://localenergy.scot/funding/cares-community-buildings-fund)

### **NatureScot – Nature Restoration Fund (NRF)**

- **Funds:** Nature-based solutions like creating wetlands, tree planting, river restoration, and pollinator corridors.
- **Eligibility:** Local authorities, charities, and community-led partnerships.

[www.nature.scot/funding-and-projects](http://www.nature.scot/funding-and-projects)

### **SSEN – Powering Communities to Net-Zero Fund**

- **Funds:** Projects improving resilience to storms, heatwaves, floods, and outages (e.g., generators, shelter equipment, local plans).
- **Eligibility:** Registered charities, community councils, and not-for-profits in the SSEN network area (includes Midlothian).

[www.ssen.co.uk/about-ssen/our-communities/powering-communities-to-net-zero-fund/](http://www.ssen.co.uk/about-ssen/our-communities/powering-communities-to-net-zero-fund/)

# 13. TALKING ABOUT CLIMATE

Effective communication is just as important as a strong project idea. The words you choose strengthen your credibility and connect your work directly to a funder's priorities, turning a good proposal into a compelling one.

## Key Communication Tips

- **Highlight why your project is essential** and what outcomes you expect using relevant data. Funders don't expect you to solve the climate crisis, they just want to see you understand its impacts on your community and how your project supports their goals.
- **You are the Expert.** You don't need to be a climate scientist, just an expert on how *your* project addresses the emergency.
- **Avoid jargon**, instead use clear, relatable language. Connect climate change to the lived experiences of your community.
- **Be transparent** and honestly address potential challenges

## Choose your words effectively

Research shows how you talk about climate matters. A single action, like installing a rain garden, can be framed in different ways. Tailor your description to resonate with what the funder values most.

### **Conservation & Biodiversity**

*"...will create a new wetland habitat to support local biodiversity ... conserve and protect native pollinators and provide a feeding ground for birds."*

### **Community Resilience**

*"...safeguards our community centre from flooding ... ensure we can remain a critical hub of support for vulnerable residents even in extreme weather."*

### **Social Justice & Equity**

*"...protects our low-income and elderly service users from the disproportionate impact of urban flooding ... making our community more accessible and secure."*

### **Public Spaces & Wellbeing**

*"... transform a neglected, flood-prone area into a beautiful, native green space ... provide a calming area for mental wellbeing and encourage outdoor activity."*

### **Carbon Reduction & Net Zero**

*"...selected native plants will capture and store carbon, contributing to local net-zero goals ... reduce energy of municipal water treatment facilities by natural management"*

# 13. TALKING ABOUT CLIMATE

Mastering how to talk about your work is a powerful skill. The following resources provide guidance, research on public attitudes, and training to help you communicate with clarity and confidence.

## **Climate Outreach**

Climate Outreach is a lead organisation in climate communication. Their toolkits and research are great resource son how different groups across the UK feel about climate change and on how to talk about different issues, helping you tailor messages on net-zero and adaptation to resonate with funders.

[climateoutreach.org/btc/2025](https://climateoutreach.org/btc/2025)

## **Culture for Climate**

This practical guide helps third-sector organisations communicate about climate change effectively. It includes actionable steps, from choosing the right metaphors to leveraging co-benefits.

[www.cultureforclimate.scot/guide/guide-to-talking-about-climate-change](https://www.cultureforclimate.scot/guide/guide-to-talking-about-climate-change)

## **Groundwork**

Ground work offers comprehensive guide offers a detailed checklist and top tips for writing successful applications, covering everything from evidencing need and budgeting accurately to understanding your funder and avoiding common pitfalls.

[www.groundwork.org.uk/project-fundraising-tips](https://www.groundwork.org.uk/project-fundraising-tips)

## **Climate Emergency Training**

Build climate confidence with accredited Carbon Literacy Training from Keep Scotland Beautiful. This course provides essential knowledge on climate science and practical solutions, helping organisations develop a credible, informed approach to climate action.

[www.keeptoscotlandbeautiful.org/climate-emergency-training](https://www.keeptoscotlandbeautiful.org/climate-emergency-training)

## **Your Funder**

Always check your funder's website for their own application guides, writing tips, or preferred language. This can offer direct insight into their priorities and strengthen your proposal.

# 14. STAYING INFORMED

After reading this leaflet, you should feel prepared to confidently discuss your climate actions and how you have:

- Identified climate risks to your organisation and users
- Assessed your charity's capacity to respond to climate change
- Understood what is important to your staff and service users
- Planned specific climate actions and your reasons for them.
- Developed methods to measure your organisation's climate impact

But the climate landscape evolves rapidly. New laws, best practices, and funding priorities emerge constantly. To ensure the continuity of your services and secure future funding, staying informed is essential. The third sector will be increasingly relied upon to address climate impacts, making localised and up-to-date knowledge critical.

Prioritise recent, Scotland-specific data and advice. The following organisations are valuable for staying current:

*Midlothian Climate Action Network (MCAN)*  
*Scottish Government*  
*Keep Scotland Beautiful*  
*ClimateXChange*  
*Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS)*  
*Friends of the Earth Scotland (FoES)*  
*NatureScot*  
*Adaptation Scotland*  
*Charity Digital*  
*Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)*  
*Climate Outreach*

For the latest funding opportunities, regularly check:

**SCVO Funding Scotland**

[scvo.scot/funding](https://scvo.scot/funding)

**Midlothian Climate Action Hub**

[www.midlothianclimateaction.org.uk/funding-tips/external-funding](https://www.midlothianclimateaction.org.uk/funding-tips/external-funding)

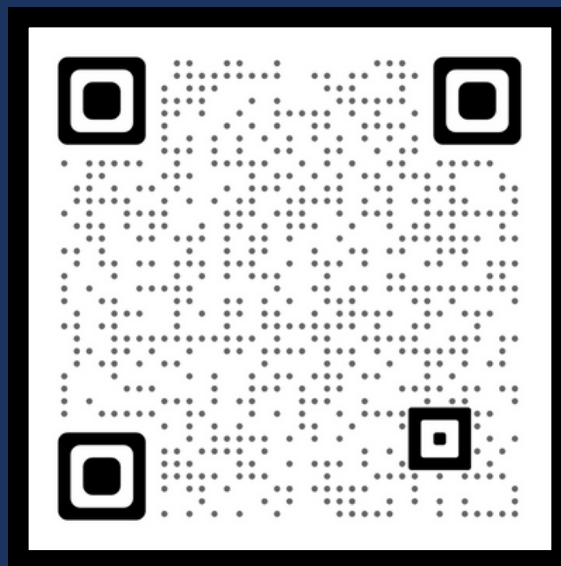
**Or subscribe to the MCAN Newsletter:**

[www.midlothianclimateaction.org.uk/contact/newsletter-signup](https://www.midlothianclimateaction.org.uk/contact/newsletter-signup)

***Good luck with your climate funding!***

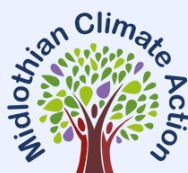
With the climate crisis bound to have an impact in communities across Scotland, funders are increasingly making climate action a core priority, expecting applicants to demonstrate how they are preparing for and responding to these challenges.

We have put together this booklet to help you navigate climate funding and best practices .It outlines the real impacts of the climate emergency and offers practical guidance on how to access funding to prepare for them.



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