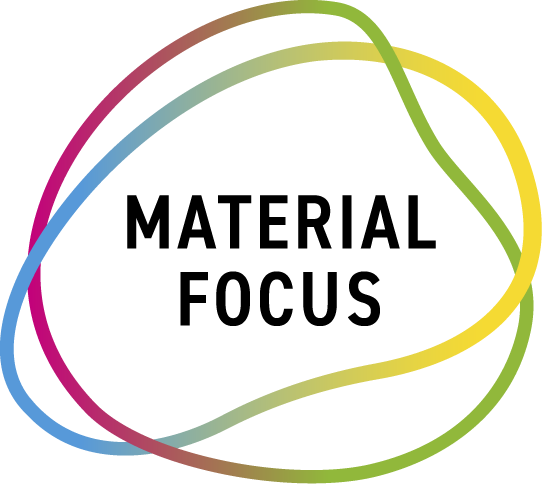
****

**Frequently Asked Questions**

V2: Updated 20/06/2025

➢ **What funding is available and what is it for?**

£1 million is available in the Circular Electricals Fund, which supports and accelerates new ideas aimed at **keeping consumer electricals - and their materials - in use for longer, and reducing e-waste**

Funding up to £150,000 is available per project.

For detailed information on the type of projects we are looking to fund, please refer to our Applicant’s Guide (found in the Applicant’s Pack zip file).

➢ **Who is eligible to apply for funding?**

A wide variety of organisations can apply, including industry bodies, non-profits, private companies, compliance schemes, universities, and research institutions.

Funding is available to registered organisations only, and individuals should not apply.

All UK-registered organisations, e.g. businesses registered with UK Companies House, are eligible for funding. Please note, we cannot fund international projects.

➢ **How much can you use AI to help with your application?**

We understand that AI is a useful tool for generating and populating documents. However, we want to be sure that the applicant has thought through the project requirements and is not reliant on AI to think for them. Please use your own words as much as possible.

**➢ What support will you get from Material Focus if your application is successful?**

Should your funding application be successful, Material Focus can provide opportunities for you to network with other successful applicants and industry. Depending on the type of project funded, this may take the form of workshops and / or networking groups. Should your project findings require industry feedback, consultation or outreach, we can facilitate this through our extensive network of partners, trade bodies and associations.

We use robust research and real-world data to inform our work - and you’ll have access to these insights too. You can also find a wide range of useful reports on our website, including research on reuse, recycling, and how people think and behave when it comes to electricals. You’ll find them [here](https://www.materialfocus.org.uk/material-focus-publications-and-research/).

We can also provide you with expertise relating to consumer survey questionnaires.

Please note: all funded projects must use Material Focus branding when promoting or communicating their project. Please refer to the Terms & Conditions in the Applicant’s Pack zip file for how public-facing materials must be managed.

➢ **How will the success of the project be monitored?**

Your project impact assessment will depend on your project’s objectives.

Some examples of good metrics to gauge impact include:

* **Social value** e.g. jobs created, skills developed, consumer savings, digital inclusion
* **Greenhouse gas emission reduction** e.g. CO₂ savings from extended product lifespan (kg CO₂ avoided per unit), reduction in emissions from material extraction (kg CO₂ per kg of recovered material), lower manufacturing emissions due to reuse & refurbishment
* **Amount of materials recovered** e.g. kg of recovered technology metals, percentage increase in material recovery rates, reduction in demand for virgin raw materials
* **Uplift in electrical recycling and reuse** e.g. tonnes of electricals recycled or reused annually as a result of the project, reduction in discarded electricals per user, increase in refurbished or reused products
* **Circular economy metrics** e.g. product lifespan extension (%), reuse rate (%), Material Circularity Index (MCI) https://www.thinkstep-anz.com/services/product/material-circularity-indicator-mci-calculator/.

Regular progress reports will be required from you throughout the duration of the project.

Once your project is complete, you will have three months to complete your final project impact report and exploitation plan. This must be delivered to us before we can release the final 20% of funding. An exploitation template is available for review but is not required with the application.

**➢ What should the project duration be?**

We expect the majority of projects to be delivered across a 12-month period. This may differ on a case-by-case basis e.g. where seasonal factors are important to consider.

**➢ If I am unsuccessful, can I reapply?**

There will be no option to reapply in this funding window (14th of May-14th of August 2025) as we will wait to assess all applications together, after 14 August.

If funding remains after the assessments of applications from the first round, we may reopen the Circular Electricals Fund in 2026, however this is not guaranteed.

**➢ How many applications can I submit?**

Each Project Lead may submit no more than three applications, and each must present an entirely different innovative project.

* **What happens if one of the project partners defaults on a deliverable during the project?**

The funding terms are between Material Focus and the lead applicant. You should ensure that your risk assessment fully considers the performance of your project partners. It is your responsibility to consider how you set up payments related to their performance.

* **My project has more than one partner; how are payments dealt with?**

The funding terms are between Material Focus and the lead applicant so Material Focus will only make payments to the lead applicant. We will agree on a payment schedule at the Project Inception Meeting. It is your responsibility to ensure that your project partners are paid in line with any agreements you make.

**Project Focus**

* **Can a project focus on new product design, materials, and new business models?**

Yes. Projects can cover one or more of the project types.

* **Can a project focus on business and professional electrical products?**

No. The fund is targeting consumer products - those products mainly used in households or by consumers. Dual use products such as laptops and smart phones are included.

* **Can a project focus on batteries?**

The fund is targeting consumer electricals only and does not include projects focussed on batteries. Battery-containing products such as cordless vacuum cleaners are eligible.

* **Are Electric Vehicle or EV related technologies eligible?**

No.

* **Can the funding be used on electricals collected in the UK but with the activities or end use taking place in another country?**

No. Funding is available for UK activities only and for projects delivered in the UK in their entirety.

* **Can international organisations apply for funding?**

Organisations that are registered in the UK can apply for funding for projects being delivered in the UK.

* **Does the funding cover the Channel Islands?**

No. The funding only covers the UK, not crown dependencies.

* **My project may produce commercially sensitive data? How will this be dealt with?**

As a general rule, sensitive data should be aggregated and anonymised, and only data that you are comfortable sharing in an email should be shared in documents or reports. Any commercially sensitive data or intelligence that you share with Material Focus should be marked as such.

**What does the funding cover?**

* **Can the funding be used to buy tools and equipment?**

The funding can not be used to buy capital equipment, vehicles or machinery. Funding may be used to purchase small equipment such as tools and monitoring or testing equipment. This equipment must be used specifically and solely to deliver the project. The funding will not cover new or replacement equipment or tools you would ordinarily use in your business operations.

* **Does the funding cover PV panels?**

PhotoVoltaic (PV) panels which are used in domestic applications e.g. houses are eligible. PV panels from large solar arrays used to generate electricity for the grid are not covered.

* **Can universities claim overheads?**

We will consider university overhead costs up to a maximum of 20% of the total project funding - provided that they are related to personnel, facilities, or equipment being utilised specifically on the project. You should provide a full and detailed breakdown in your budget breakdown.

* **How will you ensure that the judging panel will be impartial?**

Terms of reference will be drawn up for the judges which will ensure impartiality and the declaration of any conflicts of interest. Do not include commercially sensitive information in your application. If one of our judges is a competitor, please flag this to us. For the list of judges please see the applicant’s guide.

**Intellectual property**

* **I would like to keep the IP created as part of my project - can this be organised?**

We have received a number of questions regarding Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).

As a result of this we have reviewed our terms and conditions and updated the IPR clauses.

Any pre-existing IPR owned by a project partner at the start of the project stays with them.

Any IPR developed during the project will be owned by Material Focus. We will grant an exclusive, perpetual, royalty free and non-transferable licence to the grant recipient - you’ll then be free to use it for the sole purpose of benefiting and/or promoting the circular economy.

If, as the grant recipient, you wish to use the IPR developed in the project for wider commercial opportunities (other than benefiting or promoting the circular economy) you will need to make a written application to Material Focus for an extended licence. Material Focus may then in its sole discretion grant an extended licence.

Our full and updated terms and conditions are available within the applicant’s pack. Please read them carefully for more information.

**Electricals Recycling Fund or Circular Electricals Fund**

* **Does the fund cover electrical waste collection services?**

The **Circular Electricals Fund** *does not* cover the expansion of existing collection services, or the trialling of new collection or drop off approaches. These activities are eligible for funding from the **Electricals Recycling Fund**. The Circular Electricals Fund is focused on extending the life of electricals - and their materials through innovation in material use and recovery, design and business models.

* **Can local authorities apply for the Circular Electricals Fund?**

The Circular Electricals Fund is open to applications from all types of organisations. The fund aims to extend the life of electricals - and their materials - through innovative material use and recovery, design and business models.

Before applying, please consider how your project fits with the criteria outlined in the Applicant’s Guide (within the Applicant’s Pack [here](https://www.materialfocus.org.uk/partnerships-with-material-focus/circular-electrical-fund-form/))**.** The Circular Electricals Fund is looking for fresh ideas that address the following key challenges in consumer electricals:

* Materials - Using and recovering materials more efficiently to conserve resources, reduce waste, and recover value (e.g. bioleaching, biodegradable circuit boards, low-carbon materials)
* Product design - making electricals more durable, repairable, upgradeable, and long lasting
* Business models - developing new business models that prioritise service over ownership, which can reduce waste and encourage product reuse.
* **How do I know if my project fits into the Electricals Recycling Fund or Circular Electricals Fund?**

[The Electricals Recycling Fund](https://www.materialfocus.org.uk/partnerships-with-material-focus/electricals-recycling-fund/) supports projects which make it easier for the public to fix, donate and recycle their existing consumer electricals. The fund aims to expand existing services and trial new solutions.

[The Circular Electricals Fund](https://www.materialfocus.org.uk/partnerships-with-material-focus/circular-electricals-fund/) supports ideas to keep electricals – and their materials – in use for longer – through innovation in material use and recovery, design and business models

If you're a local authority or a community project expanding, trialling or offering new and practical ways for people to repair, reuse and recycle their electricals, you should first consider the funding criteria for the **Electricals Recycling Fund**. This fund was designed for this and includes reuse and repair.

For the **Circular Electricals Fund**, you must show that your project idea focuses on accelerating or supporting innovation and the development of the circular economy. We want to see things that are novel, significantly improved, and innovative. Innovation means the introduction of new ideas, methods or products to bring resource efficiency improvements, solve problems, and advance the circular economy. Novel may include a new way of thinking or approach, leading to significant improvements in resource efficiency e.g. introducing new concepts, methods, or products, and disrupting existing systems.

We encourage potential applicants to review the criteria for both funds before deciding which they want to apply for.

* **How do I know if my innovative approach is more suited to the Electricals Recycling Fund or the new Circular Electricals Fund?**

The Electricals Recycling Fund supports projects which make it easier for the public to fix, donate and recycle their existing consumer electricals. The fund aims to expand existing services and trial new solutions.

The Circular Electricals Fund supports ideas to keep electricals – and their materials – in use for longer – through innovation in material use and recovery, design and business models

[Examples of projects](https://www.materialfocus.org.uk/partnerships-with-material-focus/funded-project-electrical-recycling-easier-across-uk/) under the **Electricals Recycling Fund** include:

● Collection of waste electricals alongside other niche waste streams (e.g. textiles, batteries, furniture).

● Collection of waste electricals using the return journey/ spare capacity during collection/ delivery of parcels.

● Use of automated booking systems to manage demand and logistics of collection.

● Using new, low-energy, low-CO2 modes of transport for collections (e.g. e-cargo bikes).

● Diversion of electricals for reuse/recycling during household (kitchen) refits, moves or clearances.

● Drop-offs via automated locker companies.

● Shared drop-offs at large shopping centres.

● Drop-offs at post offices, major supermarkets, large shopping centres or retail parks.

● Collection points at large offices or office campuses.

● Projects that include the repair of small electricals.

The **Circular Electricals Fund** is looking for ideas that address the following key challenges in consumer electricals:

* Materials - Using and recovering materials more efficiently to conserve resources, reduce waste, and recover value (e.g. bioleaching, biodegradable circuit boards, low-carbon materials)
* Product design - making electricals more durable, repairable, upgradeable, and long lasting
* Business models - developing new business models that prioritise service over ownership, which can reduce waste and encourage product reuse.
* **Can I apply for repair and refurbishment projects under the Circular Electricals Fund?**

The Circular Electricals Fund supports ideas to keep electricals – and their materials – in use for longer – through innovation in material use and recovery, design and business models

The types of repair and refurbishment covered are:

* Repair: developing open-source repair guides, toolkits, or marketplaces for replacement parts
* Product as a service: leasing models which allow for repair and refurbishment of products
* Trade-in & refurbishment programmes: establishing scalable take-back schemes to refurbish and resell used electricals (usually at the point of sale)
* B2B sharing platforms: developing platforms for businesses to share high-value electronic equipment to reduce redundant purchases
* Deposit return schemes: implementing incentives for consumers to return end-of-life products (usually to retailers or producers) for responsible recycling or refurbishment.
* **What happens if I apply for the Circular Electricals Fund but Material Focus thinks it’s eligible under the Electricals Recycling Fund?**

If an application meets all of the relevant criteria for Material Focus funding but is more relevant for the Electricals Recycling Fund, we will write to you and request any additional information to allow us to assess it for that fund.