

Support Service for Citizen-led Renovation - Phase II

ENER/2023/OP/0036/B3/SER/2022-525/SI2.909732



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Support service for Citizen-led renovation

The [support service for Citizen-led renovation](#) is an initiative of the European Commission that aims to empower citizens to carry out energy renovations and on-site renewable energy installations. This support service is rooted in the fundamental principles of equal opportunity and transparency, which can serve as catalysts for broader motivation and engagement in energy-efficient renovations. It aims to show that observing the success of peer projects can inspire and motivate community members, encouraging more people to participate in energy-efficient renovations. The ultimate goal is to distil actionable initiatives through the selection of Pilot projects, enable a supportive learning environment for capacity building, and engage with a diverse network of energy communities.

How do you define Citizen-led renovation?

Citizen-led renovation (CLR) is a voluntary activity by a community initiative that aims to empower citizens to engage in and carry out energy renovations and implement on-site renewable energy installations. The approach places citizens in the forefront, allowing them to decide on and undertake energy renovations voluntarily. The [EU Green Deal](#) acknowledges the crucial role of citizens in the energy transition, emphasising their role as a driving force. This approach aligns with the concept of energy communities outlined in the [Clean Energy Package](#), as they can play an important role to complement other initiatives that aim to boost renovation. Cooperatives and other citizen-led collective action schemes can leverage collective mechanisms to allow homeowners to obtain better financing and technical conditions. Furthermore, citizen-led initiatives are built on mutual trust and rely on it as a key component for their activities.

How do you define an energy community?

An Energy Community, encompassing both Renewable Energy Communities (RECs) and Citizen Energy Communities (CECs), is a legal entity that operates on the principles of voluntary and open participation. It is designed to serve the collective energy needs of its members or shareholders, who may be individuals, local authorities, or small enterprises. The primary aim of these communities is to provide environmental, economic, or social benefits to their local areas, with a strong emphasis on community well-being.

Central to the support service for Citizen-led renovation, energy communities play a pivotal role. The support is channelled through these communities, enabling and empowering them to engage actively in energy-efficient renovations and the implementation of on-site renewable energy projects. This alignment with energy communities ensures that the CLR initiative is deeply integrated with local energy actions and community goals, enabling a more sustainable and inclusive energy future.

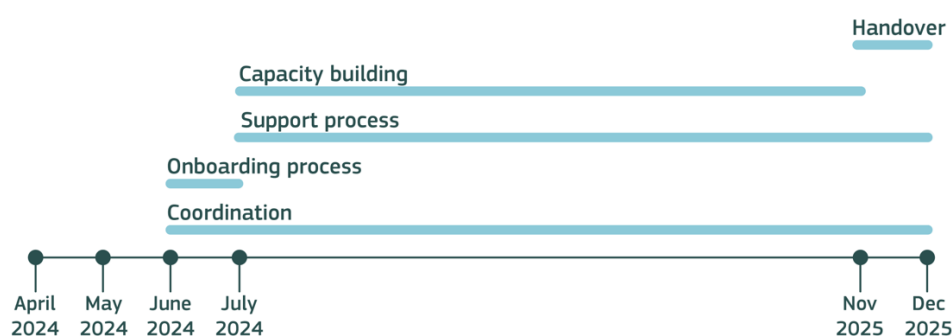
WHAT SUPPORT WILL BE GIVEN THROUGH THE SUPPORT SERVICE?

Phase I of this initiative laid the groundwork, establishing a framework for citizen participation and testing innovative models of community engagement in energy projects. The call for applications under Phase I opened on 24 April 2023 and lasted 6 weeks. Four Pilots in Ireland, Portugal, Belgium and Bulgaria were selected and will receive support from March 2023 until December 2024. Further information on the activities developed with Pilots are available [here](#).

Moving into Phase II of the support service for Citizen-led renovation, the focus is on expanding and deepening the impact of the programme. The call for applications under Phase II is open as of **10th of April 2024** and will close on the **31st of May 2024**.

The support service itself will be composed of 3 support pathways:

Pathway 1 (Pilots) is designed to provide customised assistance to between 5 and 8 Pilot projects committed to initiating a series of renovation projects. These projects should aim to achieve an investment of EUR 500,000 in energy efficiency, leading to at least 30% energy savings, alongside a further EUR 500,000 investment in renewable energy solutions connected to the renovated infrastructure. However, if you fall short of the investment amount, we still encourage you to submit an application and we can tailor a support service that meets your needs. This pathway emphasises collaboration, offering individual support, peer-to-peer exchanges, and common learning activities. Participants can be individual energy communities, a group of energy communities or a consortium including at least 1 energy community. The maximum number of partners to join a single application is set to 5. The indicative timeline is presented below:

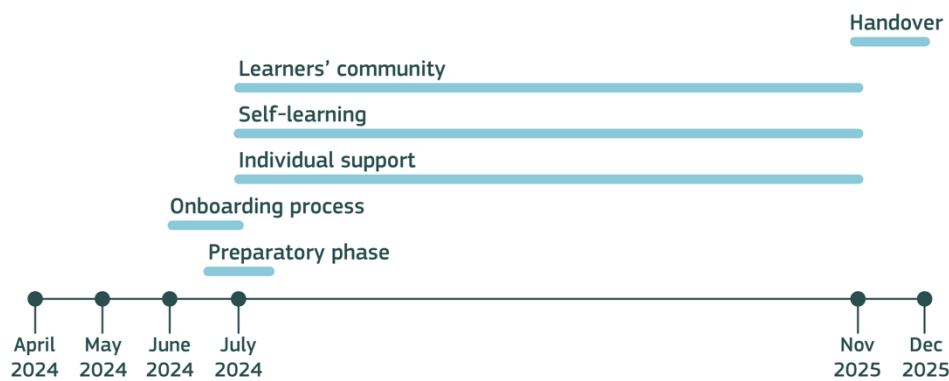


- **Coordination** (June 2024 to December 2025): This period involves specific coordination for each Pilot, where a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is assigned to each selected Pilot. The SPOC, a local expert, will ensure effective communication, planning, and implementation of the Pilot projects.
- **Onboarding process** (June 2024 to July 2024): The onboarding process includes formal and administrative steps, preparing the mapping of the local situation, and conducting local onboarding workshops. This phase sets the foundation for the Pilot's journey.
- **Support process** (July 2024 to December 2025): The support process, encompasses project development assistance, managing the Pilot journey, and adjusting it as needed. Key activities during this phase include multi-day workshops for business plan

development, technical design preparation, and other vital components for the successful operation of the pilot projects.

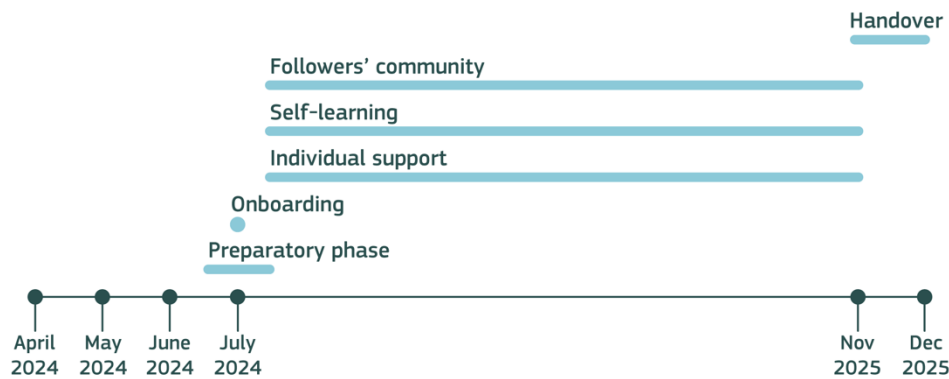
- **Capacity building** (July 2024 to November 2025): The capacity building, running almost parallel to the entire project, focuses on building the capacities of the pilot entities. It includes various training, workshops, peer-to-peer exchanges, and field visits, tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of each pilot.
- **Handover** (November 2025 to December 2025): Preparation for post-support service operation, planning for future steps and collaborations.

Pathway 2 (Learners) focuses on providing capacity building to 15 learners, which aim to implement a citizen-led renovation project in the future but are less mature as initiatives or have less available resources to follow the timeline of Pathway 1. Applicants can also include emerging energy communities facing challenges in meeting expected investments within the support service timeline. Learners will receive a comprehensive package, including one-on-one consultancy, a learners' community package with webinars, peer-to-peer exchanges, and topical working groups (provided in English). The indicative timeline is presented below:



- **Preparatory phase** (mid-June 2024 to mid-July 2024): Selection of Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for each Learner, initial mapping of context, needs, challenges, and opportunities.
- **Onboarding phase** (June 2024 to July 2024): An event to facilitate networking, knowledge sharing, and understanding of individual and collective needs. This leads to tailored individual journey scripts for each Learner.
- **Individual support phase** (July 2024 to November 2025): This phase involves detailed one-on-one consultancy, focusing on aspects like survey support, business model development, stakeholder engagement, and plan co-creation. This support is provided by SPOCs with additional expert input as needed.
- **Self-learning** (July 2024 to November 2025): Access to a variety of online learning materials, training modules, and a self-assessment tool for creating bespoke learning paths.
- **Learners' community** (July 2024 to November 2025): A combination of webinars, Peer exchanges, and ad-hoc discussions within an online community to facilitate learning and sharing experiences.
- **Handover** (November 2025 to December 2025): Preparation for post-support service operation, continuation of the Learners' community, and planning for future steps and collaborations.

Pathway 3 (Followers) targets capacity building for 40 Followers, which are at an early stage of their citizen-led renovation journey but demonstrate a clear interest in this area. The offer under this pathway consists in a package of various capacity building activities, opportunities to exchange with peers, and dedicated one-on-one guidance sessions. Followers’ applications do not necessarily have to include energy communities but can be citizen groups, local authorities, NGOs, and others. Joint support material will be provided in English. The indicative timeline is presented below:



- **Preparatory phase** (June 2024 to July 2024): Similar to Learners, this phase involves allocation of Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for each Follower, preparation for an interactive online onboarding event, development of an online self-assessment tool, and setting up learning materials and community platforms.
- **Onboarding** (July 2024): Online event focusing on introducing the support team, concept pitching by initiatives, and interactive sessions to assess goals and needs.
- **Individual support** (mid-July 2024 to November 2025): A package of 10 hours of flexible consultancy spread across the support period, focusing on various aspects of citizen-led renovation.
- **Self-learning** (mid-July 2024 to November 2025): Utilisation of the self-assessment tool to access online learning materials, templates, webinars, and other resources tailored to the Followers’ needs.
- **Followers’ community** (mid-July 2024 to November 2025): Engagement in webinars, discussions, and exchanges within a dynamic online community, enabling cross-learning and sharing experiences.
- **Handover** (November 2025 to December 2025): Planning for the continuity of initiatives post-support service, including a final online event for sharing best practices, lessons learned, and discussing future capacity-building needs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SUPPORT?

Pathway 1 (Pilots) require applicants to be located in an EU Member States, and that at least one entity within the consortium is an established energy community. Applicants must demonstrate their energy community status by either providing legal verification or ensuring adherence to the principles outlined in the Renewable Energy Directive (2018/2001) and the Electricity Directive (2019/944). Eligible candidates will commit to achieve a 30% energy savings target from the renovation project they aim to implement and must ensure that they do not receive any funding for support activity providing technical assistance to existing

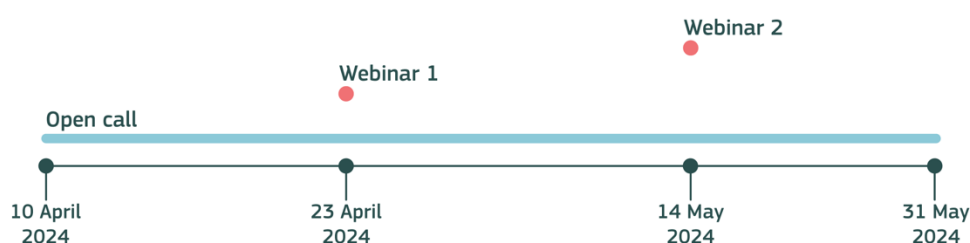
renovation projects. Moreover, they will need to send a signed letter of intent to commit to Pathway 1 timeline and objectives. Ideal candidates should have a solid foundation in project management, financial planning, and community engagement, ensuring their capability to meet the demands of Pathway 1.

Pathway 2 (Learners) is open to emerging energy communities which are still in the process of becoming an established energy community. Eligible applicants must be located in an EU Member States, must demonstrate they are not receiving conflicting funding for the same types of technical assistance. Moreover, they will need to send a signed letter of intent to commit to the timeline and objectives of the CLR support service. Ideal applicants should exhibit a clear vision for potential projects they want to implement, a solid structure that will enable to launch renovation projects in the future and a keen willingness to learn. Therefore, the selection will favour those with a proactive learning attitude, access to necessary resources, and a clear potential for moving from learning to implementation.

Pathway 3 (Followers) is designed to be more inclusive, welcoming applicants who, while not fully meeting the stringent requirements of Pilots or Learners, show a clear commitment to the programme's overarching goals. The eligibility requirements for applicants are to be located in a European country¹ and to submit a letter of intent to commit to the timeline and objectives of this pathway. Eligible participants include organisations that aim to become energy communities as well as citizen groups, local authorities, NGOs, and others less structured organisations. Smaller or less experienced energy communities at the very beginning of their journey towards sustainable energy practices are also eligible. Ideal candidates should manifest interest in exploring the citizen-led renovation and energy community concepts, have a clear understanding of resource limitations and constraints and set realistic goals based on their current capacity as well as the learnings and objectives they want to achieve by participating in Pathway 3.

How can candidates apply for the support service?

Candidates interested in receiving the support service must apply through an online application form available here: [EU Survey – Citizen-led Renovation \(Phase II\)](#). The call has been launched on 10 April 2024 and it will close on the 31 May 2024 at 23:59h CET. Further information is available on the support service for Citizen-led renovation [website](#).



¹ The term 'European country' as used here encompasses any sovereign state located in Europe, irrespective of its membership in the European Union.

For applicants with incomplete information, an email will be sent requesting the missing details. Subsequently, a phone call will be placed within five business days to facilitate an efficient resolution by prompting responses to the email. Notification of the outcome will be sent to applicants within two weeks after the closure of the call. Each candidate will receive a comprehensive evaluation report via email, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement identified during the review. Selected candidates will be required to confirm acceptance of the offer within seven calendar days. If you would like a meeting to support and discuss your application, please email us at: info@citizenledrenovation.com

What information is requested from the applicants through the application form?

Applicants shall send the information requested through the application form, consisting of an online survey. The application form is composed of two sections: the primary screening survey gathers fundamental details about the organisation and assesses the fulfilment of eligibility criteria, while the pathway survey evaluates applicants' capacity to meet expectations and adhere to the objectives of the selected pathway. Both sections are integrated within a single round of application, as follows. Once application is submitted candidates will be awarded a score based on the level of details provided in their answers.

PRIMARY SCREENING SURVEY: The application form commences with an initial screening phase, common to all applicants and designed to gather fundamental details and to assess the applicant's eligibility status. For applicants that identify as energy communities but cannot provide any legal verification a specific section of the survey will verify whether or not they adhere to the principles of voluntary participation, autonomy, effective control, openness defined in the EU Clean Energy Package by the [Renewable Energy Directive](#) and the [Electricity Market Directive](#).

Basic details asked in this section are:

Name and contact details of responsible person for the application:

- Name of organisation
- Geographical location of activities/projects
- Year of establishment
- Website
- Description

Energy community verification questions are:

- Identification as an established or emerging energy community or interest in becoming one in the future
- Alignment with a typical energy community set up
- Voluntary participation from local actors is allowed
- A list of local actors currently involved as members

- The voting system/decision making processes ensure reflect the principle of equitable participation
- The majority of voting rights are held by local stakeholders
- Current and potential board members of the organisation(s) predominantly consist of local actors

Questions determining the eligibility of your application are:

- Primary focus for the support service if your community group is selected
- Absence of double funding for the same supporting activities as the ones offered by the support service for Citizen-led renovation
- Investment in energy savings to trigger at least 30% of reduced energy consumption compared to the initial situation
- Letter of intent declaring the commitment to participate in the support service signed by 3-5 members
- Authorisation by the other members representative to submit the application

PATHWAY SURVEY: Depending on the answers provided during the primary screening survey, the applicant is recommended one of the three Pathways. However, this is just a recommendation, and the applicant can decide to apply for a different pathway than the one suggested. Below are presented the award criteria that are going to be used to evaluate applications for each pathway.

Award questions in Pathway 1 (Pilots):

- Applications focusing on enhancing energy efficiency within the residential sector will be highly scored. Inclusion of non-residential buildings is also acceptable.
- High scoring will be awarded to applications that provide detailed descriptions of the specific renovation measures to be implemented, demonstrating their feasibility and alignment with the objectives and scope of the CLR.
- Applications that detail the integration of renewable energy solutions, including proposed technologies, consideration of local conditions, regulatory compliance, and feasibility within the project timeline, will be highly scored.
- Applications highlighting specific technical assistance needs, their potential impact, and plans post-assistance will be highly scored.
- Providing details on funding strategy to implement the renovation support services, and focusing on accountability and transparency to avoid double funding will be highly scored.
- Applications specifying the total investment for improving energy efficiency and renewable energy production within the project timeline will be highly scored. Investments amounts should provide credibility to the specified renovation plans.
- Providing details on community's collective expertise, capacity, and skills, including project management, construction, renewable energy source (RES) development, legal frameworks, and financial management, will be an added value to the application.

- Detailed description of past experiences in community-based renovation or renewable energy projects or readiness and future plans to engage in such initiative for communities new to this field will be highly scored.
- Applications that include details on novel approaches or solutions that significantly enhance the project's impact and effectiveness will be highly scored.
- Providing plans for mobilisation of citizen involvement in the support service and illustrating communication activities to promote the project and disseminate its findings, and/or similar activities done in the past are key components to obtain a high score on this section of the application.

Award questions in Pathway 2 (Learners):

- Applications that provide clear details regarding the renovation measures to be implemented, highlighting feasibility and alignment with the objectives and scope of the CLR, will receive a higher score.
- Applications that specify the renewable energy technologies the project plans to integrate and provide an estimate of investment amount will receive a higher score.
- Clear identification of specific needs for technical assistance, its potential impact, and the applicants' plans following the completion of the support will be positively scored.
- Applications that can demonstrate how the proposed timeline aligns with the CLR schedule will be highly scored.
- Providing details on funding strategy to implement the renovation support services, and focusing on accountability and transparency to avoid double funding will be scored highly.
- Providing details on the project ideas or concepts and the team's relevant expertise in key areas required to successfully implement these projects will be an added value.
- Applications that clarify how the organisation's governance structure actively involves citizens in the management and decision-making processes of the renovation projects will receive a higher score.
- Detailed description of past experiences in community-based renovation or renewable energy projects or readiness and future plans to engage in such initiative for communities new to this field will be positively scored.
- Applications that include details on novel approaches or solutions that significantly enhance the project's impact and effectiveness will be scored highly.
- Providing plans for mobilisation of citizen involvement in the support service and illustrating communication activities to promote the project and disseminate its findings, and/or similar activities done in the past are key components to obtain a high score on this section of the application.

Award questions in Pathway 3 (Followers):

- Applications that include details on the types of renovations planned, the building types targeted for these renovations, and the integration of renewable energy installations to enhance the project's sustainability will receive a higher score.
- Clear identification of specific needs for technical assistance, its potential impact, and the applicants' plans following the completion of the support will be positively scored.

- Identification of constraints (regulatory, financial) and limitations (capabilities, regulations) that might affect the active participation in the programme will be an added value to the application.
- Applications that are able to demonstrate how the proposed timeline aligns with the CLR schedule will receive a higher score.
- Applications that provide a vision or initial plans for engaging citizens within the context of the project, highlighting any preliminary strategies or ideas, will be positively scored.

How does the evaluation process work?

A detailed scoring system is used to evaluate applicants' answers to the pathway questions. Each application is independently reviewed by two separate organisations as part of the CLR Support Service consortium to ensure a fair and unbiased assessment. The final score is an average of the two assessments. The scoring ranges to 1-5 points: low, below average, average, above average, high. This further safeguards the fairness of the selection procedure, as the evaluation is primarily based on the factual information provided in the application. Following the submission and review of the applications, applicants will be emailed to provide verification of the information given in the survey.

How are applicants informed about results?

After the assessment and scoring are complete, all applicants are informed of the outcomes by e-mail. Those who are selected for any of the pathways will receive detailed instructions on the subsequent steps, including timelines, resource allocation, and expectations. Unsuccessful applicants will be provided with constructive feedback to help them understand their application's strengths and areas for improvement.

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