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Introduction to SSE and the Pfizer UK Climate Action Programme

The Pfizer UK Climate Action programme is initiated and funded by Pfizer and will be delivered by the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) who will have full responsibility for candidate selection and administration of the programme on Pfizer's behalf.

The partnership between SSE and Pfizer UK aims to support 10 forward thinking leaders who are creating social value around fighting climate change. The Pfizer UK Climate Action Programme will not only feature 10 learning sessions, 1:1 mentoring and funding, but also provide 10 climate change focused leaders the opportunity to build a vital peer support network, to collaboratively explore key challenges through action learning. The programme aims to give social entrepreneurs the best possible chance of scaling their impact, trading and sustainability through access to support and funding, and therefore supporting each organisation's ability to fight climate change.

We are inviting carefully selected candidates to apply for this programme. Those who secure a place on the programme will join the hundreds of SSE fellows working to support systematic change.

SSE was founded in 1997 by Sir Michael Young. We work with around 1000 social enterprises a year, helping leaders to start, scale and strengthen organisations that make a positive difference. But we're not a traditional school. Learning with SSE is

inspiring, action-based and accessible - no textbooks.

Since 1849, Pfizer has spent decades at the forefront of some of the most profound changes in technology and medicine. Building on their legacy of ambitious climate action goals, Pfizer is committing to achieve Net-Zero across their value chain by 2040. More information about Pfizer's claim action goals can be found here: <https://www.pfizer.co.uk/responsibility/environmental-sustainability/climate-action>.

To find out more, please read these guidance notes and [sign up](#) for one of our information sessions. If you are unable to join, a recording of the session will be uploaded [HERE](#).

Accessibility and our commitment to inclusion

If this document is formatted in a way that is not accessible to you and/or if you would like support to submit your application then please email Diego Yopez at diego.yopez@sse.org.uk so that we can aim to meet your access needs in the best way possible.

We recognise that discrimination of all sorts infiltrates every part of our society, and we are working hard to counter that wherever we find it. We actively encourage applications from organisations led by women, racially minoritised communities, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, people with lived experiences and leaders working in areas of multiple deprivation. We also want to ensure geographic representation from across the UK.

Who should apply for this programme?

We are looking to support leaders of social enterprises from organisations based in the UK who are providing social value through activities related to fighting climate change and can demonstrate:

- Ambition to scale up and increase impact and income.
- Working towards environmental sustainability for positive impact on people and planet.
- Looking to work collaboratively to devise and deliver solutions to support environmental objectives.
- Aiming to create volunteering opportunities, e.g. undertaking activities that encourage direct positive impact.

Applicants must show they are committed to promoting environmental sustainability, reducing carbon footprints, or enhancing biodiversity through:

- Delivering measurable environmental activities which support communities to work towards net zero or
- Educating and raising awareness about climate change through activities that support environmental protection and improvement in their communities.

Examples of activities of the above could include (and not limited to):

- Enhancing or restoring the natural environment, including habitat creation, increasing biodiversity such as increased numbers of pollinators, etc.
- Community food growing projects.
- Creating new green spaces for the benefit of the local community.
- Reducing waste and increasing recycling.
- Offsetting unavoidable emissions, for example by planting trees.
- Reconnecting people with the environment and increase awareness of ways to protect and enhance it.
- Co-design/creation. Working collaboratively to devise and deliver solutions to support environmental objectives.
- Green skills and training and education for a just transition to net zero.
- Influencing behaviour to reduce waste and use resources more efficiently in the performance of the contract.
- Creating volunteering opportunities which supports direct positive impact on the environment.
- Greener homes & built environment or supporting those in poor quality (damp, poorly insulated, poorly heated) housing
- Air quality improvement or supporting those affected by poor air quality
- Renewable energy projects: Solar panel installations on schools, community centres etc.
- Sustainable transportation initiatives: Bike-sharing programmes, car-free days.

Other criteria:

- The applicant must be a leader of the organisation with strategic control (usually the CEO, the founder, director, or board member).
- The organisation must be registered, incorporated and trading for at least 2 years.
- Annual income should be over £34,000 i.e. in the last financial year or the last 12 months.
- Evidence of successful past projects or initiatives in the environmental

sustainability space, including documented outcomes or impact.

- Is a Community Interest Company (CIC) or a charity, or has another legal structure with required clauses:
 - a social purpose or objects
 - a restriction on profit, so that most profits are returned for social purposes
 - an asset lock
- Based in the UK, as are the majority of the population it serves.

Applicants will be asked on application if they are involved directly with healthcare provision or decision makers in this field to enable consideration of any conflict of interest for Pfizer UK.

The learning programme

SSE's learning programmes are very different to traditional teaching and no educational qualifications are needed to join. Expect to try new approaches and learn through doing. The programme will push, challenge and support you to leverage your network for enhanced impact. You will learn from experts, leaders and social entrepreneurs who will speak openly about the realities of running an organisation so you can learn from their experiences. You will also create new connections with other social entrepreneurs and build a support network of likeminded individuals striving to fight climate change.







This FREE learning programme will take place from **February to September 2025**, through a blend of online and in-person learning (see programme dates) and bespoke one-to-one support. It includes:

- 10 study days - with a focus on leadership, scaling up and business development, featuring expert and witness sessions from experts in social enterprise and climate action sector.
- Opportunities to network with likeminded peers to support learning and reflection.
- 4 online [Action Learning Set](#) sessions designed to support your resilience and wellbeing.
- A £2500 grant from Pfizer UK to support your scale up plans.
- Exclusive access to 1:1 mentoring sessions from a member of the Pfizer UK team.
- Access to the SSE Community, a virtual learning environment and the gateway to your relevant course materials and additional resources. You will be able to connect and communicate with your peers and learning facilitators directly via this site and access your online sessions.

Our expert facilitators will adapt the programme with the aim of ensuring everyone's needs are met, as well as creating a great group dynamic. Some of the topics we are likely to cover in the programme are:

- The Social Value Model and understanding Social Return on Investment (SROI)
- Scaling up operations: tools for growing impact and income while maintaining social and environmental value.
- Leadership for growth: developing the mindset and strategies for leading social enterprises through scale.
- Measuring social and environmental impact
- Marketing and communications - intelligent activism
- Developing your network
- Systems change and collaborative communities

The programme at a glance:

	Access a grant to support your growth plans.		Create a resilient, growing organisation.
	Adapt to changes in external environments.		Develop emotional resourcefulness.
	Build and benefit from new networks.		Create social and environmental impact.

Programme dates and location

The in-person sessions at the start and end of the programme will be delivered in-person at a venue in London. Overnight accommodation will be provided for those outside of London and travel expenses with receipts can be reimbursed. The rest of the sessions will all take place online. Please note these are provisional dates so may be subject to change:

Session 1: Tuesday 25 th February 2025	In person (London)
Session 2: Wednesday 26 th February 2025	In person (London)
Action Learning Set 1: Tuesday 11 th March 2025	Online
Session 3: Tuesday 25 th March 2025	Online

Session 4: Tuesday 22 nd April 2025	Online
Action Learning Set 2: Tuesday 6 th May 2025	Online
Session 5: Tuesday 20 th May 2025	Online
Session 6: Tuesday 3 rd June 2025	Online
Action Learning Set 3: Tuesday 17 th June 2025	Online
Session 7: Tuesday 1 st July 2025	Online
Session 8: Tuesday 22 nd July 2025	Online
Action Learning Set 4: Tuesday 9 th September 2025	Online
Session 9: Tuesday 23 rd September 2025	In person (London)
Session 10: Wednesday 24 th September 2025	In person (London)

Not sure if the Pfizer UK Climate Action Programme is right for you? [Sign up](#) for our information session or check out our other programmes [here](#).

The grant

Pfizer UK is offering a grant of **£2500** to each organisation. The grant can be used to support your learning and the development of your venture. This could cover your salary costs during the learning programme and support you to work “on” - rather than “in” - your venture. Successful applicants will be given the first instalment of £1500 at the start of the programme, and the remaining £1000 at the end of the programme. In order to receive the full grant, you will need to attend at least 80% of the course.

What can I spend the grant on?

Your grant must be used to support your learning and to put that learning into practice through increasing your trading and impact within your organisation.

You can use your grant towards items such as:

✓
Salaries, sessional fees and freelancer costs to support you to grow your social enterprise and put your learning into practice.

We cannot fund any of the following:

✗
Support for project work outside the UK.

✓ Developing new products or services	X Assets over £1,500 in value, including refurbishment of buildings or purchase of vehicles.
✓ Marketing and publicity: e.g. developing a website to support your trading	X Private benefit that is not “incidental” (see FAQs) and payment of fines
✓ Travel and subsistence costs, including for attending the programme	X Work that has taken place before the grant was awarded, including costs associated with the application or interview.
✓ Supplementary training for yourself or others, directly relevant to your project	X Academic qualifications and driving lessons
✓ Other costs that you can show are relevant putting your learning into practice	

Making an application

You must apply online by 12pm, 10th December 2024.

Apply via our [online application form](#).

We will aim to let you know whether you have been shortlisted for interview by 16th December 2024. Informal interviews will take place in January 2025.

We will aim to make a final decision on places for the programme by end of January 2025 and you will be informed as soon as possible. The programme will begin in February 2025 (see programme dates section for more info).

Application support

Questions: A downloadable set of application questions are available on request (contact Diego at diego.yepez@sse.org.uk) but you will need to apply using the online form [HERE](#). Please be aware that responses for each field in the application form are limited to 50 characters. For longer answers, please upload a Word document. If you encounter any issues, feel free to contact us.

Online Information Sessions: To find out more about the programme, help you understand the criteria and how to apply. You can book on to an online information session [HERE](#). We will record the information sessions and will upload the recording on our [website](#).

Helpdesk: Ask questions and get advice on completing your application by contacting [Diego](#) at diego.yepez@sse.org.uk

One-to-one support: If you have difficulty filling in forms because of dyslexia, language or disability, or need one-to-one advice about applying, we have a limited number of one-to-one sessions available so please get in touch if you need this.

FAQs

1. What organisational structure will I need to have for the programme?

When you come on the programme you must have a formal organisation in place, which has a constitution or governing document. We expect this to include a social purpose, a requirement that most of its profits will be returned for social purposes, and an asset lock. You could be a charity (including a charitable company, a CIO or an unincorporated charity), a CIC, or another form of not-for-profit or partial profit-making organisation.

2. What does £34,000 income mean?

We mean all income, including grants, donations and trading income. Don't include loans or equity investments.

The income level is a guide for who might be at the right stage for this programme. We are really looking for people who are looking to scale their organisation and significantly grow their impact and trading.

You should have had at least £34,000 income in the last financial year or secured for this financial year. A budget or planned income is not enough, it should be secured.

If you have under £34,000 income, one of our other programmes may be a better fit for you so please visit our website for more details.

3. What if I have particular needs, which may prevent me from fully taking part in the learning programme?

We are keen to enable people with disabilities and other access issues, to join our programmes. There is a separate small fund held by SSE to enable students who have particular needs to access the programme. This will be agreed on an individual basis. If you have specific needs and are concerned about this, please contact us to discuss.

4. What happens if my project will work with children under 18 or vulnerable adults?

If you work with children or adults in vulnerable situations, you will be required to provide us with your safeguarding policy, which includes getting enhanced checks for people who require them.

5. Can I apply for this programme if I have criminal convictions?

Previous participants have included people who have criminal convictions, some of whom have used their experience to make a difference to the lives of ex-offenders. You do not need to let us know about previous convictions unless they are relevant to your application.

If you have unspent convictions for fraud or convictions which may affect your ability to run your project, including working with children, young people or adults who are vulnerable, you must let us know. We may undertake checks during the course of the application assessment.

6. Can I apply if I have already been on an SSE programme?

You are welcome to apply if you have previously had training and support from SSE. However, we cannot accept applications from anyone who will be on another SSE programme which lasts more than 6 months and runs beyond January 2025.

7. Can I apply if I am connected to the SSE or Pfizer UK?

We cannot accept applications from people who are staff or trustees of SSE or Pfizer UK. If you have a close connection with SSE or Pfizer UK (staff or trustees) then please contact us before making an application. You will also be asked on application if you are involved directly with healthcare provision or decision makers in this field to enable consideration of any conflict of interest for Pfizer UK. Please get in touch if you have any queries on this.

8. What do we mean by “private benefit”?

As a charity we can only support work that is for the public benefit, and not for private gain. We cannot support “non-incidental” private benefit. You can pay yourself and others a salary or fees for work you are doing for your project, as this is “incidental”. You can also pay yourselves or others rent or fees for work undertaken for your project, if this is at market or below market levels.

If you have shareholders, you will not be able to pay dividends to private individuals during the programme, though you may agree with us to pay yourself a dividend in lieu of salary. You should not use our grant for work not connected to your project, or to pay ex-gratia payments, fines or for entertainment for individuals which should be declared for tax purposes.

9. What happens if I cease to be linked to the organisation that has the grant?

The programme is specifically for you as a social entrepreneur and leader of the organisation you are developing. There is a requirement that you remain a leader of that venture during the grant period. If you fail to do so, or you cease to be associated with the venture that receives the grant, any unspent grant and access to the learning programme may both be withdrawn.

Other information

Privacy and data protection

SSE has a Privacy Policy which is available [here](#). SSE also has a [Data Protection Policy you can read here](#).

Equal opportunities

SSE is committed to equal opportunities. We expect our staff, participants and grant recipients to comply with equal opportunities in any activities supported by SSE.

At the end of the application form we ask for you to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form about the person applying for this programme.

This will be used for statistical purposes, and it will not form part of your application assessment. If you do not wish to provide the details requested, you have the option to opt out from providing this information.

Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of the running of the programme, SSE has a complaints procedure which is available [here](#).