

CLLD: an EU funding opportunity for local, community-based initiatives on climate change and sustainability.

In January 2014, the EU will launch a series of new funding initiatives, one of which, CLLD, could provide direct opportunities to fund local projects and initiatives on climate change and sustainability.

What is CLLD?

Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) in the EU context is an approach to local development that involves local partners (from the public, private and community sectors) working together to develop and implement a local development strategy that respond to local needs and opportunities. This approach builds on the experience of the EU LEADER programme. Local partnerships engaged in CLLD can become the local delivery agents for EU funds, which are directed towards projects and initiatives that support the implementation of the local development strategy.

How is it funded?

For the period 2014 to 2020, CLLD will remain a mandatory part of the Rural Development Programmes funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). This is known as the LEADER Axis (see below). It will also remain part of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)(see below). However, it will now also be a possible option under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF), which opens up the potential for CLLD in urban areas and broadens the scope to cover a wider range of issues. Local partnerships adhering to a CLLD approach could have the option of seeking funds from one or more of the above sources to fund their local development strategy. The fund or mix of funds used will depend on the focus of the strategy.

How can Transition groups, Ecovillages and other community-based initiatives on climate change and sustainability benefit?

Local, community-based action on climate change and sustainability is foreseen as an eligible area of activity for support under CLLD. There are three main ways in which local groups active in this area may be able to benefit:

1. If there is already a local partnership in your area, you may be able to apply to this partnership for funding for specific projects/actions;
2. As a members of the local community sector, you may also be able to seek representation on the local partnership and/or have an active input into the design and implementation of the local development strategy (groups wishing to pursue this might want to join forces with other similar groups in their area);
3. One or more local groups (Transition, Ecovillages, etc..) in an area might want to lead the establishment of a local partnership.



Groups in rural areas where there are existing LEADER groups or other local partnership might be best served by focusing on 1 and 2 above. However, groups in urban or other areas where there are no existing local partnership may also have the option of pursuing 3.

What should interested groups do next?

Every Member State of the EU will be able to decide how CLLD is to be applied within their own area of jurisdiction. For example, some may decide that CLLD can only be applied in rural and fisheries areas, while others might also make it available in urban areas. In some countries, different regions may also adopt a different approach. Therefore, the first step should be to check what the situation is in your country or region. This can be done by contacting the ministry responsible for EU structural funds or rural development funds (see link below).

When you know what the situation is, you need to find out if there is an existing local partnership in your area (the ministry may also be able to tell you this, or check the LEADER and FARNET links below). If there is, then this could be your next point of contact, in order to explore points 1 and 2 above.

If there is no local partnership in your area then you need to find out if one is being formed or you could discuss with the ministry the option of establishing one (point 3 above). For groups considering leading the establishment of a new local partnership, it is important to note that funding is also available for preparatory actions (costs associated with setting up a new local partnership and preparing a local development strategy). Costs incurred from the 1st of January 2014 could be eligible for this support. Please check this with the relevant ministry.

More information

A comprehensive guide to CLLD for potential beneficiaries will be published before the end of 2013. This and other relevant documentation are being posted at:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/experts_documents_en.cfm#3

Information on LEADER, including existing local partnership in rural areas (LAGs):

http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader/en/leader_en.cfm

Information on CLLD in the EMFF (FARNET), including existing local partnerships in fisheries areas (FLAGs): <http://www.farnet.eu>

Single portal on EU finance (including country contacts for structural and rural development funds): http://europa.eu/youreurope/business/funding-grants/access-to-finance/index_en.htm.