



Department for  
Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

# BIG ENERGY SAVING NETWORK 2017/18

## Guidance for Applicants

October 2017





# BIG ENERGY SAVING NETWORK

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The Guidance for Applicants can be found on the BEIS section of GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/big-energy-saving-network-grant-offer-fund>

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [besn@beis.gov.uk](mailto:besn@beis.gov.uk)

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# Big Energy Saving Network 2017/18 – Guidance Notes

Completed applications should be received by email to [besn@beis.gov.uk](mailto:besn@beis.gov.uk) by **5pm on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017** [mailto:](mailto:besn@beis.gov.uk). We will also accept printed applications in the post or hand-delivered.

## **Enquiries to:**

Big Energy Saving Network  
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy,  
Abbey Orchard 1  
1 Victoria Street,  
London, SW1H 0ET  
Email: [besn@beis.gov.uk](mailto:besn@beis.gov.uk)

Each organisation must complete the entire form and provide evidence of qualified staff and/or volunteers that can fulfil the Champion role. If applying for more than one Champion, you only need to submit one application form. **However, you must complete Section 2 separately for each of them. You will find additional space to complete this at Annex 1 of the application form.** If you require further forms please contact [besn@beis.gov.uk](mailto:besn@beis.gov.uk)

Where multiple Champions from the same organisation plan to work together to deliver a project, it is acceptable for individual Champions to divide the work, for example, one may focus on reaching consumers whilst another on frontline workers.

Applicants are required to submit additional documentation alongside their application form.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement.

## **Key dates:**

**6<sup>th</sup> October 2017** – applications open

**27<sup>th</sup> October 2017, 5pm** – deadline for receipt of electronic applications

**10<sup>th</sup> November 2017** – aim to notify successful applicants, issue grant agreements and links to online training modules.

Any activity funded through this competition must be completed by **30<sup>th</sup> March 2018**.

# Summary of Key Requirements

Below are the key points for organisations to consider before making a BESN application:

1. Applications for grants can be made by eligible third sector and legally constituted organisations (a full list is on page 14) located anywhere in Great Britain.
2. Each grant is for a sum of £5,000 per Champion, which is made up of an initial payment of £4,000 and a further £1,000 if the agreed objectives of the grant are met in full within the grant period.
3. Organisations that have been awarded funding through NEA are not precluded from applying for funding through the BEIS BESN. However, Champions appointed by NEA **are not eligible** to also apply for BEIS funding.
4. There is no maximum number of Champions organisations can apply for, although we will consider the geographic spread of grants to be awarded as part of our assessment of bids to ensure that we have Champions across all regions of Great Britain.
5. Eligible organisations can either apply to deliver a single Champion-led project or they can bid for funding for multiple Champions; each leading and delivering their own programme of outreach, or working together to deliver a collective programme.
6. Each Champion is required to deliver proactive advice to 100 vulnerable consumers on energy issues via an 'assisted action' approach (by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018).
  - a. The primary aim is to help vulnerable consumers switch to a cheaper tariff and/or supplier, but additional support provided can include:
    - help with debt to their supplier,
    - help to access assistance such as Warm Home Discount,
    - help to access energy efficiency schemes.
7. Each Champion is required to deliver training to 40 frontline workers to enable them to provide advice on energy issues to consumers they assist through their day-to-day work (completed by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018).
8. Reporting requirements:
  - a. Monthly performance data to BEIS.
  - b. Champions are also required to maintain and keep records, including:
    - i. sign in sheets for consumer and frontline worker events,
    - ii. records of one to one advice sessions,
    - iii. frontline worker training feedback forms.

# Introduction

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is pleased to announce the launch of the 2017/18 BEIS Big Energy Saving Network (BESN).

The BEIS funded BESN programme is in addition to the previously announced National Energy Action (NEA) funded BESN programme for 2017/18. It is however, intended that the two programmes will be delivered concurrently.

Organisations that have been awarded funding through NEA are not precluded from applying for funding through the BEIS BESN. However, an application made for a Champion which has been appointed by NEA **is not eligible** to apply for BEIS funding also.

BEIS welcome applications from all third sector organisations and would like to see applications from new organisations to the network.

BESN is a programme of training, support and grant funding for eligible third sector organisations to deliver an extensive programme of outreach to vulnerable consumers, focused on helping them reduce their energy costs through assisted action on tariffs, switching and the take up of energy efficiency offers.

We invite eligible third sector organisations to submit applications to:

1. nominate Network Champion(s) who will co-ordinate and deliver support to consumers and front line workers,
2. administer and oversee a programme of outreach,
3. collect and provide prescribed evaluation and monitoring information,
4. where possible, complement delivery through use of additional staff/volunteers.

# Background

There is considerable evidence that vulnerable consumers are often among those most disengaged from the energy market and lack the confidence necessary to save money by taking action on tariffs, switching and improving energy efficiency.

Consumers who don't regularly switch are highly likely to be on the most expensive tariffs and the Network's primary aim is to support vulnerable consumers to switch and save.

The Big Energy Saving Network complements campaigns such as Big Energy Saving Week and Energy Best Deal in bringing together trusted third sector and community bodies to provide targeted, personalised advice that can help bring down the energy costs of some of Great Britain's most vulnerable consumers.

The Network has been very successful in engaging vulnerable consumers face to face and through training of frontline workers, reaching over 500,000 people in the first 4 years.

*"Our involvement in the BESN has allowed us to reach and assist a multitude of consumers in our community who we would otherwise never have had the opportunity or resources to contact, and we are delighted to have saved our community an estimated £5,017 on their annual energy bills."*

# What does being a member of the Big Energy Saving Network involve?

## BESN Training

Every BESN grant funded project will be co-ordinated by a Network Champion. Each named Champion will receive specialised training which will be developed and delivered in a format that is beneficial for both new members of the Network and returning Champions. The training will include information on tariffs, switching, assistance for vulnerable consumers and incorporate practical guidance on how to deliver your BESN project and meet the specified reporting requirements.

*“As a Champion, the BESN has given me the training and support to provide accurate advice and assistance to my clients. Based on this information I went through the switching process for my own benefit which gave me considerable confidence when talking to others, as well as saving me money. I have now taken several clients through the switching process to ensure they are on the right tariff and payment method, whilst also saving them money”*

## Project Requirements

Each funded Champion needs to complete the BESN e-learning training and achieve a pass mark.

Once trained, **each BESN Champion** is responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of their project, including:

1. Delivery of proactive advice to 100 vulnerable consumers on energy issues via an ‘assisted action’ approach (by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018).
  - a) ‘Assisted action’ means helping consumers take action to reduce their energy bills or access assistance they otherwise would not have done without BESN
  - b) The primary aim is to help vulnerable consumers switch to a cheaper tariff and/or supplier, but additional support provided can include:
    - i. help with debt to their supplier,
    - ii. help to access assistance such as Warm Home Discount,
    - iii. help to access energy efficiency schemes.
2. Delivery of training to 40 frontline workers to enable them to provide advice on energy issues to consumers they assist through their day-to-day work (all activity to be completed by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018).
3. Reporting on activity including:



- a) Supplying monthly performance data, including reporting on key milestones in the delivery of outreach via Interim and Final Reports.
- b) Providing a case study of vulnerable consumers helped and/or frontline workers trained.

In addition, it is suggested Champions recruit and train additional volunteers, including cascading the e-learning amongst colleagues, to help deliver the objectives of the project, in particular to assist at outreach events and in providing one to one advice.

Champions will be the point of contact for their project's volunteers and responsible for overseeing the activities of any volunteer(s) and for ensuring that the advice both they and their volunteers give remains accurate and up to date.

Successful Champions will be provided with a range of supporting material, access to further sources of help and advice and contact details for further support from the programme delivery team.

### Single and Multiple Champions

There is no maximum number of Champions organisations can apply for although we will consider the geographic spread of grants to be awarded as part of our assessment of bids to ensure that we have Champions across all regions of Great Britain.

Eligible organisations can either apply to deliver a single Champion-led project or they can bid for funding for multiple Champions; each leading and delivering their own programme of outreach, or working together to deliver a collective programme. For clarification:

- Multiple Champions from the same organisation must deliver the aggregate outreach criteria for their total number of Champions: for example, an organisation with three Champions must deliver to at least 300 vulnerable consumers and train at least 120 frontline workers to meet the programme requirements.
- Where multiple Champions are used, it is acceptable for individual Champions to focus **either** on reaching consumers **or** frontline workers, as long as the aggregate outreach criteria are achieved.
- All Champions will be required to be trained to deliver the objectives of BESN.

You will also need to include details of any Champions who successfully applied for NEA funding as part of BESN on your BEIS BESN application form.

# How can you successfully deliver the BESN?

The primary objectives of the Big Energy Saving Network programme are:

- To provide assisted action for the maximum number of vulnerable consumers possible with the funding available, helping them save money on their energy costs through attendance at BESN Champion and/or volunteer led outreach sessions.
- To deliver a training programme to frontline workers who come into regular contact with vulnerable consumers, so that they can give direct help and advice to consumers to help them save money on their energy costs where practical.

## Who are vulnerable consumers?

For the BESN programme this includes but is not limited to fuel poor households, people on low incomes and/or on benefits, people with disabilities or long term health conditions, those who use prepayment meters, those without internet access and those who have not switched before.

## Who are frontline workers?

Frontline workers are employed professionals such as Local Authority, Housing Association, health-care or social care staff and volunteers that come into regular contact with vulnerable consumers as part of their day-to-day activities.

## What do we mean by delivering 'outreach' and 'reaching' vulnerable consumers and frontline workers?

The objectives of the BESN will only be met if outreach events and training offer opportunities to vulnerable consumers to use the help and advice to reduce their energy costs.

In practice, this means that consumers need to receive help and advice from the Champion or volunteer, with the opportunity to receive one to one advice as required, for it to be counted towards the outreach target of 100 consumers. Ways in which you might do this include:

- one to one personalised advice,

- delivery of a Network consumer event (see below for the type of events which work well), where advice is then provided face-to-face, or followed up afterwards with a one to one session.

Advice given via the telephone or information leaflets passed out at large scale public events where there are insufficient resources and/or volunteers to provide personalised advice, will **not** count towards a Champion's targets.

Similarly, training delivered to frontline workers must be delivered in a format which enables them to subsequently feel confident to provide advice to their vulnerable clients. In practice this means delivering a training session which allows participants sufficient time to go through the Network material with the Champion or volunteer and raise any questions they may have. This type of delivery can then be counted towards your target of training 40 frontline workers.

*“Daljit works at a community centre for vulnerable people and attended a training session delivered by a BESN champion. Daljit found the training very useful and following the session felt more knowledgeable and more confident providing this advice. Since the session Daljit has advised consumers about switching and the Warm Home Discount”*

## What kind of consumer events and training sessions work well?

The key to successful delivery of your project is to be flexible with your approach and ensure that:

- Events are held in a suitable location – for example the venue should be accessible to all potential attendees.
- Consumer events need to be suitably advertised – a Network outreach event should be publicised through existing contacts and also via press and social media. This will help to encourage consumers to bring along any relevant information such as a copy of their most recent energy bill.
- Make full use of your organisation's contacts, links with community groups and established partnerships with frontline organisations in your area. Champions and volunteers should also be proactive in developing further links to help publicise the Network and ensure that the right consumers are being reached.
- Schedule your BESN consumer sessions as part of existing events where vulnerable consumers already meet. This also applies to your sessions for frontline workers – try to schedule your training as part of pre-existing team meetings, offer to deliver your session at the organisation's premises and tailor your BESN presentation to meet their needs and learning requirements.
- Events and training sessions need to be of an appropriate duration to convey the key messages of the programme. This will enable time for the one to one assisted

action that follows and ensure that frontline workers are confident to deliver advice to their clients.

Examples of successful events include:

- Attending health clinics such as asthma, flu or diabetes clinics to provide advice
- Attending food bank drop in sessions
- Parent and toddler groups
- Debt advice clinics
- Library events
- Having a stall at a local market to provide advice
- Housing Association community events
- Attending community group events
- Advice to different faith groups in the community
- Advice at the Job Centre Plus
- Local Authority referrals for assistance

## Why are Volunteers important?

The Network model encourages Champions and volunteers to work together to deliver the aims and objectives of the programme. Successful Champions are encouraged to recruit and train two volunteers per Network project. Additional volunteers could be of particular benefit to organisations where only one Champion and/ or member of staff is leading delivery.

Volunteers can help Champions to organise and deliver outreach events as well as generating a positive legacy for the key messages of the programme to continue after delivery ends.

It will be important that Champions are open and accessible and can provide encouragement and guidance to volunteers as they go about delivering consumer advice sessions.

# Reporting requirements

As part of the programme, organisations are required to collect and submit:

- 1 Monthly performance data to BEIS. These will consist of monthly reporting (the Department is likely to use an internet based reporting system) covering:
  - Summary of consumer and frontline worker activities, including details of planned events
  - Monthly and cumulative total of consumers and frontline workers engaged
  - Details of the actions consumers have taken to reduce their energy bills
2. Interim report - overview of progress to date, potential risks to delivery and proposed steps to mitigate risks
3. Final report – feedback on how the project was delivered, including suggestions as to how BESN could be improved for future delivery
4. Case Study from each organisation by the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Champions are also required to maintain and keep records, including:

- a) Sign in sheets for consumer and frontline worker events
- b) Records of one to one advice sessions
- c) Frontline worker training feedback forms

Each Champion will be required to submit one case study setting out how they have been able to help a vulnerable consumer take action as a result of their Network activity either through one to one advice to a consumer, or from feedback of a frontline worker that received BESN training (in the capacity of their job or volunteering role).

We recognise that collecting information, particularly from consumers, can be a challenge, but this information is very important because it provides evidence of delivery for audit purposes and helps the Department demonstrate the impact of the programme. It also helps us to understand better what your organisation and Champions have achieved and the impact of this on individual consumers and frontline workers.

## Funding available and applicant eligibility

Each successful grant is for a sum of £5,000 per Champion, which is made up of an initial payment of £4,000 and a further £1,000 if the agreed objectives of the grant are met in full within the grant period.

BEIS may seek to recover all or part of the initial payment if there is insufficient evidence that the objectives of the grant have been met. BEIS will refer to monthly and other reporting requirements, together with sample checks of sign-in sheets and feedback forms to assess whether the terms of the grant have been met.

The grant can be used to cover such expenses as staff costs, venue hire (if required), publicity, printing, IT, translation costs, travel and other associated expenses incurred to run events and/or make home visits.

By applying for the grant the applicant organisation agrees to ensure the Champion's attendance at organised BESN training opportunities.

Applications for grants can be made by the following eligible third sector and legally constituted organisations located anywhere in Great Britain:

1. Charities
2. Parish Councils
3. Community Interest Companies
4. Community Co-operatives and Community Benefit Societies (Industrial and Provident Societies)
5. Voluntary Associations
6. Development Trusts
7. Faith Groups
8. Registered Social Landlords

Funding will not be available for commercial activity and applicant organisations should check with BEIS if they are in any doubt as to their eligibility to apply for grant funding.

Whilst Local Authorities are not eligible to apply for this funding, we recognise they can play an important role supporting the delivery of BESN projects in their local area. We would therefore encourage eligible organisations to demonstrate if they will be able to work in partnership with a Local Authority, for example working with their staff, expertise or resources in the delivery of their project.

# Grant criteria

Applicants should answer all of the application questions, clearly setting out how they meet the following criteria (weightings which BEIS will consider when evaluating bids are given in brackets).

**Question 1 – 40% weighting:** Experience and qualifications of nominated Champion(s): when assessing applications we will be looking for prospective Champions to have verifiable experience and skills in the delivery of advice to vulnerable consumers and the training of frontline workers or professionals. We will look for relevant experience and/or qualifications, particularly in relation to giving energy advice. If you are applying for more than one Champion please use the template found at Annex 1 for all additional Champions and include with your application form.

**Question 2 – 25% weighting:** Your organisation: when assessing applications we will be looking for evidence of why your organisation is well placed to deliver the BESN. We will particularly look for examples of your organisation's experience engaging vulnerable households and delivering advice and training, links with local partners who support vulnerable consumers and infrastructure to support vulnerable consumers. We will also be interested to receive applications which show ways of working with partners in the health sector.

**Question 3 – 25% weighting:** Project delivery: you should identify what type of consumer events you propose to deliver/attend and how your organisation intends to deliver frontline worker sessions. You should identify how you intend to resource your events; for example, will there be support from volunteers or will it solely be the Champion(s). We will be interested to see how your organisation will market and publicise its BESN activities. It is important to remember that you need to show how your organisation will use the BESN funding to provide help and advice over and above your organisation's existing programme of work. If you intend to apply for multiple Champions and they are going to work together please ensure you clearly explain how you will approach this. We want to see the types of actions you will help consumers to carry out, such as understanding their energy bills, switching tariff or supplier, accessing assistance, and how you will go about these activities. There should be key milestones in your project plan, such as when you plan to start delivery, key events your delivery will focus around and when you expect to achieve 50% of your targets.

**Question 4 – 10% weighting:** Mitigating risks: You should explain how your organisation is going to mitigate against the three risks we have identified in the application form. We will be looking for credible actions and strategies which provide confidence that the programme outputs remain achievable.



# Assessment process

BEIS would like to receive applications and appoint Champions from across Great Britain and will consider the geographic spread of grants to be awarded as part of our assessment of bids.

The BESN Team will acknowledge receipt of applications within five working days.

Applications will be judged by a panel (comprising of BEIS and National Energy Action (NEA) officials) on the basis of the criteria set out in this document.

Once we have selected successful applicants, grant offer letters will be issued. Further participation in delivery of the Network, including grant of funds, will be conditional on applicants agreeing to terms and conditions applicable to the grant. These will be set out in the grant offer letter.

# Data protection

To inform assisted action on tariffs and switching, successful organisations are required to collect information on consumers' income and energy use. Each grant funded organisation will also need to provide evaluation data to BEIS to inform the success of the Network's activities.

Applicant organisations need to have in place policies and procedures on the collection and retention of personal information which are compliant with the Data Protection Act (1998).

It is important that individuals are given notice that their information will be used by central Government to inform their policies and are provided with the following fair processing notice, in addition to any fair processing notices used by applicant organisations for their own purposes:

*The information you give [me/us – i.e. the Champion's organisation] will include personal data. We are required to share some of these personal data with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). BEIS may use these personal data for statistical, monitoring and research purposes, including for the purposes of running future schemes like this one, and may share them with other organisations, including other Government departments.*

