



Cronfa Gymunedol Fferm Wynt  
**PEN Y CYMOEDD**  
Wind Farm Community Fund CIC

Review of the fund delivery  
and setting direction for  
the next 5 years

# SECTION 1: ABOUT THE FUND

In December 2016 the Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Fund opened for business, offering a new, substantial source of funding across four valleys. Prior to the launch, Wind Farm operators Vattenfall had consulted widely, gathering local ideas. The £1.8 million a year index linked Fund will run until 2043 and invests in the priorities identified by local communities.

The Fund is managed by an independent, locally accountable Community Interest Company with a Board of non-executive Directors, who are legally responsible for all investment decisions and delivery of the strategy and a small but dedicated staff team that have worked hard to integrate into the local community and work with strategic partners.

## Pen y Cymoedd Wind Energy Project

Pen y Cymoedd is currently the largest onshore wind farm in England and Wales – its 76 turbines have been generating enough power for 188,000 homes since September 2017. Vattenfall has been involved in energy generation for over 100 years, and the company's overarching aim is to make fossil fuel free living possible within one generation. The wind farm is situated on Welsh Government land, managed by Natural Resources Wales. Of the £400 million investment to build the wind farm, 52% went to businesses in Wales, securing work for more than 1,000 workers. Today, a 23-strong Operations and Maintenance Team is based at Hwb Pen y Cymoedd on the wind farm site. The Community Fund continues to work closely with Vattenfall staff and very much appreciates their enthusiastic support.

**“We are really supportive and proud of the impact that the fund has had in its first 5 years against priorities set by the community. Pen y Cymoedd fund and its governance are an excellent example of how community benefits funds from renewable developments can make a real, lasting difference to communities and can be central to building social, cultural and economic resilience. It shows what a partnership between communities, energy developer and local independent funding body can do.”**

**Pat Delaney**, Pen y Cymoedd Site Manager



## Statement from Chair and Executive Director

“From the outset, the new Directors of the Fund were inspired by the wealth of ideas generated locally and we are determined to develop a strategic approach that builds on the amazing assets and strengths of our communities to make a real and lasting difference. The Fund continues to reach out to communities regularly and has been delighted by the huge interest shown.

One of the Fund's strengths is its capacity to help both enterprises and community organisations. Another is its capacity to foster creativity and innovation and work in partnership with others to have the greatest possible impact. This impact report and refreshing of the vision forms part of a regular cycle of review, informed by our communities to highlight its area of focus. It sets out a framework for community priorities but also a clear statement of intent for what the fund hopes to prioritise and help achieve over the next 5 years.

We appreciate your help, enthusiasm, and engagement, and extend our gratitude to Vattenfall and the communities of the upper Neath, Afan, Rhondda and Cynon valleys.”

**Martin Veale**, Chair

**Kate Breeze**, Executive Director

# OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The community's vision is what guides the fund so that the Pen y Cymoedd area is a dynamic, exciting, vibrant place to live and work with happy, healthy, active, sustainable, and connected communities.

The role of the fund is to make the community's vision a reality – using the resources we have, to sustain and enhance the economic, social, cultural and environmental assets of the area of benefit.

## **When looking at proposals the fund has always and will continue to consider:**

- Is the outcome something that is needed in the fund area (does it address a need or respond to an opportunity)?
- Has the applicant demonstrated they can deliver this project?
- Is this the right fund for the project?

### **if so, we also consider**

- Is there evidence / consultation to support the proposal?
- Is it bringing added value to the community?
- Is the project viable?
- Is it sustainable\* and, if not, what will happen next?

(\*Sustainable can mean financially but also socially, economically, culturally and environmentally sustainable)

### **The fund has always and will continue to:**

- Encourage bids that are bold and ambitious
- Raise aspirations by identifying opportunities, nurturing potential and encouraging a can-do attitude
- Hold events to showcase what the fund has supported and allow communities to share experiences, and learn from their successes and challenges
- Look for initiatives that preserve and improve local assets (such as people, money, employment, and infrastructure) empowering local people to affect change
- Promote inclusivity and access and remove barriers to participation
- Work in partnership with a variety of people and organisations and complement statutory provision
- Take risks to pilot and test innovative and imaginative ideas
- Improve connectivity and connect communities
- Develop Pen y Cymoedd as a long-term investor in the area
- Encourage and promote environmental sustainability

Following extensive community and stakeholder consultation before the fund even started, Vattenfall summarised all the wide-ranging priorities identified in a Prospectus – published on our website:

**[www.penycymoeddcic.cymru](http://www.penycymoeddcic.cymru)**





## 2016

fund launched with roadshow and staff team and Board in place

## 2020

flood relief and COVID grant schemes launched

**108**

Vision Fund Awards made up to **December 2022** distributing funds of just over **£6.32 million**



## November 2017

monitoring and evaluation consultants engaged



**392**

Micro Fund grants awarded up to **December 2022** distributing grants of **£1,327,022**



## March 2017

first 36 Micro Fund grants awarded and quickly followed by first Vision Fund awards

## 2019

first loan offered



PyC offered

**£20,000**

in flooding response funds to support those who had been directly affected during the flooding in **2022**

**£530,000**

was awarded in Covid-19 support funding. From this there was:

**51**

Covid-19 survival funds who received a total of

**£363,249.63**

**£518,000**

of PyC investment has supported helping more women to become economically active including **17** full time and **51** part time jobs



Funded major heritage and cultural projects including St Elvans, Rhondda Arts Festival Treorchy, Resolven Miner's Welfare Scheme and many more

**23**

Covid-19 related projects, who received a total of

**£167,435.56**

Supported sports and leisure groups with everything from volunteer training kit to new multi-use games areas, training facilities and splash pads

**87**

jobs created and a further **151** jobs sustained overall

Supported

**18**

new high street start-up businesses from photography to wedding dresses, candle shops to new restaurants and cafes



**£8.8 million**

has been leveraged in match funding, bringing an additional boost to the local economy

# OUR FUNDING MODEL

## Micro Fund



We recognise that great ideas can sometimes be realised by the injection of relatively small sums of money at the right time on a one-off basis. The Micro Fund offers grants up to £5,000 to support important aspects of community life and to support enterprise development.

This could include, for example: buying small items of equipment; minor capital works; activities, events and projects; business development and start-ups; pilot projects.

Micro Grants can help cover the costs of community events, give the finishing touch to a larger scheme or can be the stimulus to a start-up; they can help publicise a service or support feasibility studies to develop bigger schemes.

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## Vision Fund



The Vision Fund offers grants and loans over £5,000 (capital and/or revenue) to support activities that help to deliver the priorities of the community. New and developing businesses, voluntary sector and community groups can all apply. Although public sector bodies are not eligible, we welcome partnership working.

### Applicants will need to show how their proposal:

- is visionary, bold and ambitious
- involves partnership working with others
- is sustainable in the longer term – maximising local value and benefits
- represents value for money



## Other ways of working

- Where we can see opportunities to work in partnership with other agencies, we can and will. Examples of this include:
  - Working with NPT CVS and Interlink RCT to engage development workers specifically to support the fund area of benefit.
  - 40 community buildings received energy audit surveys working with Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Interlink RCT, Neath Port Talbot CVS and RCT CBC.
- Loan Offer - As well as grants we also offer loans to profit making businesses, where appropriate. We will discuss this with you when you approach the fund.
- When applicable we will also consider ring fencing funding to address themes, commission projects that are community-led and consider third-party distribution and direct investment.
- Direct Investment - In late 2019, we worked with the owners and others to ensure the Afan Lodge's continued contribution to the prosperity of the Afan valley and wider communities. The hotel is now a subsidiary business of PyC CIC, which is managed and run on the fund's behalf by local staff - unleashing its potential to expand its offering in a variety of ways. PyC CIC has done this as part of its remit and mission to help stimulate and regenerate economic activity throughout the Fund's area of benefit.

## Depending on how much you are asking for, there are different application processes

- Up to £26,000 is a one-stage application and anything over £26,000 is a two-stage process (an Expression of Interest, which will be considered by Board and then if it is potentially supportable you will be invited to move to a second stage application).
- For proposals over £150,000 you may also be asked to meet with and present your proposal to the Board.

The fund reviews the application processes regularly and will continue to work to improve the process and remove any barriers to applying. Our message has always been, talk to us!

Before submitting a proposal, you must get in touch with us to discuss your plans. In the first 5 years we met with 1200 groups and businesses as well as attending many networking events, funding fairs and meet the funder sessions.

If you have an idea, talk to us.

If you have suggestions about the way we work, please talk to us.

# 5 YEARS ON - TIME TO REFLECT

Originally developed in 2015, the Community Vision for the Pen y Cymoedd Wind farm was developed by over 4000 individual responses from local people and highlighted opportunities for bringing added and new benefits to the area to drive local development. The vision was the communities' own work and creation, it was not something that others have decided will be good for them.

During 2022 we undertook a significant engagement and consultation process with communities to establish what had been achieved in the first 5 years and what the priorities should be for the next 5 years.

## What we did

- Held a series of facilitated workshops with over 121 stakeholders and community members
- Published an online survey for whole of community
- Published a newsletter and survey that went to every household in fund area
- Organised a series of 1:1 interviews
- Sent out flyers and posters to 120 community venues
- Attended 12 events to engage with a further 184 people
- Postcards from the future project with youth groups
- Worked with NPT CVS, Interlink RCT, local authority, local councillors and elected representatives and many other partners

**"This has made it possible for us to map out assets, investigate the possibility of creating specialised funds, and understand the communities, ecosystems, and environments in which they exist. Building trust is a prerequisite for genuine participation via a variety of approaches and we should always be asking 'Is it better than before?' We appreciate the participation of each partner, organisation, person, and group along this process."**

**Kate Breeze**, Executive Director

## Postcards from the Future

Local youth groups joined the refresh by completing postcards from the future. Young people were asked to write a postcard to a loved one in 10 years' time telling them what their area was like.

This was a fantastic opportunity to hear what young people imagine for the future of the fund area and we are so thankful to the people that helped us with this:

- **Gwynfi Miners Community Hall**
- **Building Blocks Family Centre**
- **Blaenllechau Youth Project**
- **Cynon Artsy Lens and Nature**

"Hi mam, the weather is good, and I have just been on my kayak on the reservoir, the lake provides water and energy for the valley and the lake has attracted lots of new wildlife. I am going to play dodgeball with my friends in the amazing new sports centre."

"Hi Gran, I have a new job working in the organic farm on the mountain. Mam buys all our fruit and veg there, the farm supplies all the local shops. The museum is fab now and you should see me on the zip wire. I love living here, there is so much to do, and everyone is friendly. There are loads of jobs going in the new adventure parks and the hall now has a cinema, a café, and a gym."

**Postcards from the future!**

Thank you for your help

Cronfa Gymunedol Fferm Wynt  
**PEN Y CYMOEDD**  
Wind Farm Community Fund CIC

**THANK YOU**

enquiries@penycymoeddcic.cymru / 01685 878785

# SECTION 2: OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS

The following section identifies the focus of the fund for the next 5 years. This does not replace original prospectus but instead outlines what the community has asked the fund to focus on.

## Jobs and the Economy

The fund will promote and grow local businesses, create job opportunities and attract enterprise and investment to the area, creating high-quality, secure jobs.

### Commitment

**The fund is committed to supporting initiatives that:**

- Develop jobs skills of the future
- Develop/expand/diversify local businesses
- Attract new businesses into the area
- Encourage a more circular economy: eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials locally (at their highest value) and regenerate nature. We will help local businesses to be more financially, environmentally and economically sustainable
- Support local businesses to sustain jobs and growth
- Support local people on their journey towards employment by removing barriers of all kinds to employment at all stages and for all ages
- Develop jobs that focus on reducing carbon emissions, restoring nature and making environmental improvements
- Raise the employment aspirations of people, in particular disadvantaged people living in the valleys
- Encourage entrepreneurship, sole traders, social enterprises and co-operatives
- Provide quality, secure jobs

### How the fund will work with others

The community want the fund to be advocates for innovation and employment, so we will work with business support agencies, local authorities and other partners. We will ensure businesses of all descriptions receive the ongoing development support they need, and the fund will work to leverage that into the fund area.

We want to take risks and having a loan and grant offer allows us to do this. We will also encourage business-to-business support from recipients of fund support.

**The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:**

- Independent retailers / local businesses
- Community adult education
- Youth education and employment
- Chambers of commerce
- Social, voluntary, sports groups and community hubs
- Social enterprises

## The fund will support initiatives in the next five years that:

- Help independent businesses to become more financially secure and sustainable
- Offer pre-start support for potential local businesses and entrepreneurs
- Develop the financial and business knowledge and skills of local entrepreneurs and small business owners
- Set up pop-up spaces to showcase local products and services
- Provide jobs for local people using their existing skill sets
- Develop and build peoples' aspirations in particular those of disadvantaged people
- Support individuals who are underrepresented in the jobs market
- Promote the area to encourage local footfall
- Encourage people and skills to stay in the area across all sectors
- Develop and regenerate high streets and villages
- Connect with education and skills organisations and other employment initiatives
- Provide appropriate and affordable workspaces whether that be for offices, shops or manufacturing
- Help businesses improve productivity and use digital infrastructure and technology to streamline processes
- Support partnership working and lead and drive development

### Love Treorchy, Rhondda Valley



When Treorchy Chamber of Trade approached the fund in 2018, they had a vision to create the Visit Treorchy brand and transform how businesses supported each other and promoted

the area. The fund supported them with a grant of £24,904 to create a website and social media, have professional photographs taken and brighten up the town for summer and Christmas. Treorchy then went from strength to strength doubling the numbers of chamber of trade members, voting to become a Business Improvement District and being awarded Champion High Street of the UK in 2019.

Treorchy is now a well-kept, attractive high street with amazing businesses and organisations based there.



## Lunabell, Neath Valley



In December 2020, Stephanie met with the fund and a Business Wales advisor to talk about her business idea and what she needed to do to make her ambitions of owning her own company a reality. Her dedication to promoting other nearby firms was clear and with the help of a £4,289 Micro Fund grant from Pen y Cymoedd, Lunabell Glamping and Picnic Events was established in 2021, and it continues to grow and thrive today.

The fund is happy to have funded this company and Lunabell now caters to all events, from private parties and glamping in your backyard to weddings and baby showers.

## Gentle Care, Afan

Responding to local need and a gap in the market, Gentle Care set about offering local care by local people in the Afan Valley. Established in late 2018, with support from Business Wales, NPT CBC and local health Board, the company registered as a domiciliary care provider. The team worked tirelessly throughout 2019, building on their business plan and sourcing financial support to launch the much-needed service and in 2020, Pen y Cymoedd awarded a Vision Fund award of £58,141 made up of loan and grant.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic the business is doing well, investing in training and support for staff and now employs 22 people.

“Without the support from Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund, we would never have been able to launch our service, supporting 22 jobs across the Afan Valley. It has supported us in setting up an office base, creating the foundation for the whole business. It has allowed us to recruit and to expand as we have needed, to meet the needs as they arise. We cannot thank Pen y Cymoedd Community Fund enough”

**Barbara Trahar** Director



# Tourism

The fund will support proposals that promote, encourage, and support tourism to the area.

## Commitment

**The fund is committed to tourism initiatives that:**

- Encourage visitors to stay, enjoy activities and spend money in the fund area
- Promote the Welsh language and local culture
- Develop and celebrate the cultural and industrial heritage of the area
- Develop the infrastructure to support visitors and tourists e.g., car parks, toilets, seating
- Encourage local people to visit and benefit from attractions in the area
- Are a catalyst to increasing jobs in the area

## How the fund will work with others

It will actively work with Council Tourism teams, Visit Wales, Natural Resources Wales and any other organisations that are supporting and encouraging tourism in the area.

**The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:**

- Independent retailers / local businesses and entrepreneurs
- Chambers of commerce
- Landowners
- Social, voluntary, sports groups and community groups
- Heritage and Culture projects

## The fund will support initiatives in the next five years that:

- Develop local products e.g., food, drink, crafts or local activities and attractions
- Develop cafes, meeting venues, visitor centres and other amenities that will bring people to the area
- Develop outdoor attractions to encourage use of the natural environment
- Encourage and develop ecotourism - tourism involving responsible travel and sustainable transport to natural areas, sustainable accommodation, conserving the environment and improving wellbeing of local people
- Create a range of accommodation and hospitality offers across the area to retain value of tourism to local economy
- Integrate with other tourism initiatives including marketing and encourage collaboration between tourism providers, attractions, hospitality and local community

- Utilise current attractions
- Pilot creative ways to attract visitors to the area
- Better market and promote tourism opportunities to bring visitors to the area with a greater online presence
- Increase signposting and awareness of resources

## Afan Lodge



In 2019, Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Fund CIC (PyC CIC) was approached and worked with the owners and others to ensure Afan Lodge's continued contribution to the prosperity of the Afan valley and wider communities.

The PyC Board agreed that the hotel was a great asset in a location that had huge potential. The business had been shown to operate profitably

in the past and could do so again in the future, with the right level of proactive business and financial management and following appropriate due diligence, PyC successfully agreed, with the owners and their bankers to purchase the business directly to maintain the facility as a key business in the valley. The decision was taken to enable Afan Lodge to realise its strategic potential, preserving local employment and allowing for future broader developments, for the benefit of all stakeholders. It is now a wholly-owned subsidiary business of PyC CIC which is managed and run on the fund's behalf by local staff – unleashing its potential to expand its offering in a variety of ways. PyC CIC has done this as part of its remit and mission to help stimulate and regenerate economic activity throughout the Fund's area of benefit.

### Aberdare Splashpad £143,994.25



### Hetty the Horsebox, Cynon – £18,235



### Sisters of Send Mountain Bike Festival, Afan – £16,066



# Climate and the Environment

The fund will support communities to care for and improve the natural environment, reduce environmental impact and become more sustainable.

## Commitment

### The fund will support climate and environment initiatives that:

- Encourage, provide and improve access to the local natural environment and facilities in a sustainable way
- Work with community to develop and manage local natural environments (this could include trails, developing biodiversity or local food production etc)
- Make steps to address the causes of climate change in the locality and beyond
- Make steps to reduce carbon dependency by the community
- Consider practical steps to reduce environmental impact of group, individual or businesses in area
- Are community led and motivate and inspire the community to protect and value their environment
- Provide education and upskilling around reducing environmental impact and green energy solutions and encourage behaviour change
- Provide training and jobs in practical new technologies to support green jobs of the future

## How the fund will work with others

To addressing the causes of climate change, reduce environmental impact and work with communities to value and use their natural environment. It will build relationships with those addressing causes of climate change and focused on reducing environmental impact and work with Natural Resources Wales, local authorities, existing organisations and bodies and stay aware of Welsh and UK government initiatives. The fund will respond to community-led solutions and innovative ideas for new projects and businesses.

### The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:

- Independent retailers / local businesses and entrepreneurs
- Environmental groups and organisations
- Landowners
- Social, voluntary, sports groups and community groups
- Schools, colleges and education settings

## The fund will support initiatives in the next five years that:

- Encourage wildlife and improve biodiversity e.g., flowers, tree planting, hedging
- Promote and install sustainable energy to support community assets in the area
- Clean up and improve the local environment e.g., litter, wildfire prevention, fly tipping
- Encourage parks, allotments, community gardens, orchards and other such initiatives
- Pilot new, innovative ways to improve the environment, encourage behaviour change and reduce carbon emissions e.g., increase awareness of food miles
- Improve signage, pathways, rights of way and safety throughout the area (including seating and lighting) to allow more people to safely use their local environment
- Promote the natural environment as a resource for both the local community and the wider public
- Develop walks, nature trails, viewpoints
- Encourage greener transport or promote low carbon living
- Educate the community on environmental, green energy and climate crisis issues

### Seven Arches Landscape and Wildlife Group - £871.70



Environmental group that needed start-up funding for equipment to improve and restore the walkways, paths and public open spaces around the old railway line along the river in the Afan valley.



## Soaring Supersaurus - £4,989.90



Funded to run a pilot project in Treorchy in collaboration with The Lion and the cluster schools for Treorchy Comprehensive. They work with schools on an introductory education package around plastic waste and recycling and create a challenge around plastic collection from within the local community, personal collection with family and friends and collection from local businesses. The pupils come to shred plastic they have collected and prepared and learn a bit about the recycling process and the shredded plastic then goes back to workshop to make new items.

## SEW Rivers Trust - £49,252



A grant of £49,252 allowed SEW Rivers Trust to run a 3-year project called "River Cynon, A River for All" in the upper Cynon valley. The funding allowed them to engage the local communities residing alongside and close to the northern reaches of the river Cynon (and its tributaries such as the Dare) in the value of the river.

There were a range of benefits and outcomes, for local communities and participants and for local biodiversity and the environment. A Project Officer was employed to do the work and raise the profile of the river to raise awareness of its importance to local ecosystems and the many species it hosts and support communities to use it more for leisure and relaxation.

# Connections and Transport

The fund will support the development of improved, affordable, accessible, safe and sustainable travel options and transport infrastructure in the area, so local people can travel within their community and further afield.

## Commitment

### The fund is committed to funding connections and transport / travel initiatives that:

- Provide sustainable transport solutions for the area that could include cars, electric vehicles and scooters, walking and cycling trails, horse riding trails, community vehicles
- Are accessible to all members of that community
- Provide affordable transport options for people to access local services, social opportunities and employment
- Connect with other transport services both within the locality and beyond
- Reduce the environmental impact of transport in area
- Allow the community to create and sustain routes that are appropriate for them

NB, we recognise that different communities within the fund area have their own unique geographical challenges and opportunities and will encourage proposals that address these specific local issues.

## How the fund will work with others

PyC is committed to working with a wide range of partners including transport providers, local authorities, local groups, businesses and organisations. We will be pro-active in working with others to bring more funding into the area and better support local transport, travel and connections. The fund can pilot schemes that are community-led and support people to try new initiatives in area.

### The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:

- Social, voluntary, sports and community groups
- Independent retailers / local businesses
- Relevant national transport organisations
- Environmental groups
- Community transport organisations

## The fund will support transport and travel connections initiatives that:

- Encourage connected transport links in the area
- Encourage use of car sharing, cycles, e-bikes and e-vehicles
- Enable workforce mobility



- Improve transport connections throughout the day
- Explore innovative, creative community travel options
- Develop and improve cycle and walking trails
- Work with other providers to develop and improve local services
- Improve local transport information
- Improve transport links to community venues and spaces and local businesses
- Encourage zero carbon emissions travel
- Upgrade and maintain routes that the community value for walking, cycling, horse riding etc
- Reduce barriers to walkers and cyclists and improve signage and connections

## Digital

The fund will support digital connectivity, skills and inclusion, and support proposals that use digital to meet other priorities. Communities will be better connected and included and influence digital take-up.

### Commitment

#### The fund is committed to funding digital initiatives that:

- Support digital connectivity, access to devices and infrastructure which is fit for purpose
- Identify where digital barriers exist and set out local plans and shared learning to overcome issues and identify opportunities
- Increase digital skills and confidence
- Provide access and options for digital learning and improvement relative to each group, business or organisation
- Encourage a learning culture, sharing the availability of free resources and links to known programmes of support
- Use local or external examples of successful digital adoption to build confidence through showcasing what traders and retailers are not currently aware of
- Offer specialist digital support and confidence-building in identified areas
- Help community groups and local businesses to address security and compliance issues
- Help businesses and entrepreneurs to make better use of digital and improve IT and digital skills for employees

## How the fund will work with others

The fund will be pro-active working with others to leverage funding into area and link with Welsh Government's Digital Strategy to add value to awards by making connections and linking groups with available eligible services.

## The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:

- Independent retailers / local businesses and high streets
- Community adult education groups
- Youth education providers
- Social groups, voluntary groups, sports clubs and community venues

## The fund will support digital activities in the next five years that:

- Integrate consideration of digital into our assessments, encouraging all applicants to consider where digital can add value
- Challenge incremental advancement in adopting digital, small pragmatic steps towards improvement
- Ask businesses to include their approach to digital in their business planning
- Encourage an open sharing network of how good digital practices are adopted. Encourage of the model of 'peer-to-peer' learning created by the local community with a view to inspire others to give things a go.
- Proactively support the exploration of interventions to overcoming barriers to digital inclusion.

Where it is known that organisations are struggling to fulfil the application process online, we will match these groups with local services that can help them. If a group is unable to fulfil the online form, we will consider whether long-term digital upskilling could be offered to group members as a supplementary condition of the award

## People and Work - Joining the Digital Dots, Rhondda - £21,819



People and Work have been supporting people of all ages learn new skills and access training for over 35 years in Wales. They have always been at the forefront of developing new and exciting projects and are committed to working with other organisations, to ensure their projects have the lasting impact they had once hoped. From their work with schools and groups across RCT, the team at People and Work had already established two community coding clubs

across the Rhondda, but identified that to ensure these were sustainable longer term, they would need to support volunteer leaders to take over, whilst developing six new clubs across RCT, enabling young people to gain the skills and experience and how to access careers within this industry in the future, with the help of a Pen y Cymoedd grant to support a one year project, to engage volunteers, build capacity and code clubs across RCT, whilst making those connections within the industry. Working

alongside the likes of RHA, they are offering a joint up approach to deliver support to develop skills and confidence to get online, whether that is for a bit of shopping, to see friends and family or to enjoy some of the old favourite films.

“Pen y Cymoedd’s funding for 2019-2020 opened a lot of doors and possibilities for further work in the digital field”

**James Hall** Project Manager

## Culture and the Creative Industries

**The fund will support the development of community spirit, increase cultural activities and widen participation to all, improve cultural amenities, encourage visitors and develop and encourage the Welsh language. The fund will also support opportunities to create and sustain employment in creative industries.**

### Commitment

#### **The fund is committed to funding cultural and creative initiatives that:**

- Incorporate cultural activities that are relevant to the local community
- Remove barriers and widen access to cultural activities
- Incorporate local and broader Welsh culture, linking with other areas and initiatives
- Use local physical and geographical assets so that spaces are available for cultural activities
- Encourage community spirit
- Attract both local people and those from further afield to the area
- Develop and encourage the Welsh language
- Increase sustainability in the sector
- Help encourage mentors and development support

### How the fund will work with others

PyC is committed to working pro-actively with a wide range of partners – including national bodies, local groups and organisations, and local authority arts and theatres – to draw funding into area to support cultural activity and employment opportunities in the creative sector. The fund area has a rich cultural heritage and future, and we will showcase projects that have worked well and encourage co-operation.

#### **The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:**

- Social, voluntary, arts and community groups
- Independent retailers / local businesses
- Cultural and Arts venues and other potential cultural spaces
- Independent artists, designers, makers, musicians

## The fund will support cultural activities in the next five years that:

- Provide new, innovative and creative ways of showcasing local culture
- Develop local creative skills and employment opportunities, nurturing and encouraging creatives to live and work locally
- Demonstrate the involvement of the wider community, including groups often excluded from cultural activities
- Are open to the whole local and wider community
- Encourage local cultural expression and creativity
- Support the development of local cultural spaces, both indoors and outdoors
- Support community ownership of cultural activities

### Our Space, Across fund area - £81,458.80



“Music and Culture puts us on the map!” The project brings together a complete cross section of the PyC area in an ambitious collaborative high-tech project to conceive, perform and deliver, a high-end recording of ten new compositions, showcasing our shared heritage in the new cutting-edge audio format, Dolby Atmos. Not only will this project work with 10 ensembles across the fund area from male voice choirs to new women’s choirs and Welsh

language groups but it will provide work placement and mentoring as well as CV references for a minimum of 40 creative industries students from across the Pen y Cymoedd Area, in a cutting-edge field.

As well as obvious benefit to the ensembles, attendees of workshops and college students there is real potential that the ‘Our Space – Ein Lle Ni’ recordings will enable them to create more high-end jobs locally, recruiting some of the students they have mentored, as well as continuing to use some of the ensembles/musicians. The extent of their engagement and consultation means there is a real buzz from communities and groups for the potential of this project - the funding will cover marketing, equipment, events and salaries and sessional costs for 4 amazing creative professionals living and working in the valley.

## **Ladies of the Lake, Rhondda - £2,689.95**



The fund has supported various choirs, bands, events and musical groups. One of those is Ladies of the Lake, a new female choir in the Rhondda Fach. They needed support after COVID to buy music, equipment and host an afternoon tea to welcome back members and hopefully attract new members and they benefitted from a grant of £3,310 that gave them boost to push activities forward and bring more community members into the activity.

## **St Elvans Community Heritage Project, Cynon - £491,869**



Pen y Cymoedd Wind Farm Community Fund was delighted to support the development of a major new community resource for Aberdare and the Cynon Valley. St Elvan's Church is an iconic building in the heart of the town re-invented itself for the 21st century and beyond. The Church's Community Heritage Project was awarded a Vision Fund grant of £491,869 by the Community Fund – along with £786,700 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, £47,000 from Cadw, £40,000 from the National Churches Trust and £12,000 from the James Pantyfedwen Foundation. The pioneering proposals for St

Elvan's, which towers as a landmark above the town, centred on a complete refurbishment and the creation of a community heritage space to make a more welcoming facility for all those who live in and visit the Cynon Valley. Plans included the creation of a cafe and Tourism Information Centre, an arts and crafts area, an exhibition area, additional rooms on mezzanine levels for community use and the provision of interactive history facilities.

Not only will this iconic building have been safeguarded, but its redesign provided a range of new community facilities for Aberdare and the surrounding area. We were particularly pleased to be supporting the creation of a new Community Heritage Officer post, the recruitment and training of a volunteer team and the provision of work & educational placements. The Welsh language and Welsh culture have a long and powerful history in the Valley, and the project will highlight and celebrate this rich heritage.



# Health and Wellbeing

The fund will support proposals for physical and mental health and wellbeing provisions for all that are accessible and complement but do not duplicate statutory provision. The fund will help develop communities that are healthy and active and sustainable activities that achieve lifestyle change in these communities.

## Commitment

**Many activities that support good physical and mental health are often not identified specifically as health and wellbeing, so the community have asked us to support health and wellbeing initiatives that:**

- Support mental and/or physical health and wellbeing in a variety of ways, including more informal activities and spaces that have impact on wellbeing
- Provide accessible services to people of all ages and needs, and remove barriers based on gender, ability, economic status or geography
- Connect with other community initiatives that are providing health and wellbeing solutions
- Support the development of necessary infrastructure for sporting and other activities that can be used safely and more widely by the community. This could be improving standard of current facilities, increasing access to those facilities or creating new facilities where a need has been identified
- Provide local opportunities to be healthy, active and engaged through activities in community facilities and in the natural environment
- Address issues of poor nutrition, addiction, support for carers and other community health issues
- Increase opportunities for people to use walking and cycling trails

**NB We will fund proposals that complement, but do not duplicate statutory provision.**

## How the fund will work with others

We will work directly with groups, organisations and businesses that are providing solutions, but will also look to complement statutory health provision and local authority activities. We will make sure that delivery organisations and support agencies are aware of the opportunity to use our fund to create new, innovative solutions. We will link with CVCs, Social Prescribing officers and Local Area Co-ordinators.

**The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:**

- Social, voluntary, sports groups and community groups
- Community health providers and organisations
- Support organisations, such as food banks and support services
- Independent retailers / local businesses and entrepreneurs
- Schools, education and training settings



## The fund will support initiatives in the next five years that:

- Mean low level health and social issues can be dealt with locally leading to more resilient communities
- Provide opportunities for local people to meet up and socialise improving wellbeing and sense of community
- Support and develop confidence, personal life skills, independence and resilience
- Work with all ages from the very young, children, young adults and adults through to older people
- Encourage accessible sporting and recreational activities and facilities both indoors and outdoors that are well maintained and used by the community
- Encourage better general health and fitness
- Support solutions for community health issues such as addiction
- Promote and signpost related activities
- Introduce or pilot new and innovative ways of supporting health and wellbeing
- Involve service users in decision making
- Engage and involve volunteers to benefit the organisation and the physical and mental wellbeing of the volunteers themselves
- Use the natural environment to boost wellbeing and improve both mental and physical health
- Provide support to people on low income including nutrition advice, food pantries and debt advice to ensure that mental health and wellbeing issues do not arise because of these issues
- Support the wellbeing of carers of all ages

## Signposted Cymru, Cynon



Received a grant of £5,000 in 2021 to establish their base in Cynon Linc and offer initial and immediate intervention with early prevention for individuals struggling and needing support with mental health and well-being issues.

## IronWorX Gym, Cynon



£75,000 was awarded to IronWorX Gym in Hirwaun as a mixture of loan and grant to offer a first-class fitness facility with specially designed space, equipment, and knowledge. They promote health, fitness, and well-being within the community for all ages and provide a hub for clubs (existing and new such as running, walking, cycling clubs) to meet and store equipment even if they are not members.

# Community Spaces / Buildings

The fund will support the development and retention of community spaces and buildings (indoor and outdoor).

## Commitment

**The fund is committed to funding community initiatives that:**

- Encourage maximum use of community buildings and spaces
- Align with community needs
- Provide a resource for community members, bringing people together
- Increase accessibility to community buildings and spaces and have considered how people will travel to and make use of the facility
- Support organisers and coordinators of community building and spaces
- Encourage the sustainability – both financially and environmentally – of community buildings and spaces
- Increase the range and diversity of community activities and spaces
- Encourage connections with other local initiatives and avoid duplication
- Ensure that all communities – big or small – have access to facilities
- Create outdoor spaces that encourage outdoor living and activities and offer the opportunity to use the environment to educate.

We will only support community spaces and buildings that have considered how to reduce environmental impact and costs and are accessible and inclusive.

## How the fund will work with others

We are committed to working pro-actively with a wide range of partners including other funders, local groups and organisations, businesses, and local authorities. We will work together to protect, support, and develop the spaces that are valued by the community, and widen access to facilities, spaces and buildings.

## The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:

- Social, voluntary, sports groups and community hubs
- Education providers and groups
- Environmental and sports groups
- Independent retailers / local businesses
- Landowners

## The fund will support initiatives in the next five years that:

- Develop facilities, including seating, sports areas, covered spaces, toilets, play areas, buildings and all other spaces valued by the community
- Support the upkeep and maintenance of buildings
- Consider innovative approaches to providing maintenance and management for community spaces and buildings
- Encourage biodiversity in green spaces
- Reduce environmental impact
- Effectively promote their services and ensure barriers to access are removed
- Support and develop the use of community spaces and buildings for arts, sports, learning, social interaction, or mental and physical wellbeing
- Make the area more attractive to both local people and visitors and ensure safe access for all the community to enjoy
- Provide quality engagement and activities for all ages
- Introduce new innovative ways to sustain community spaces including rental of rooms, cafes, gyms, and connections with private business

## Blaengwrach Community Council Park, Neath



With a population of nearly 2000 and responsibility for three community facilities across the villages the Community Council undertook a community consultation, and it was clear that the community wanted to develop the Welfare Park into somewhere that all ages of the

community could enjoy, for many years to come. Pen y Cymoedd was asked to contribute towards their overall plans at the site and with significant match funding in place, PyC awarded £99,000 to create a bespoke mining themed new fixed play area, multi-use games area, and bandstand to be used by all ages and for events.

Pen y Cymoedd are committed to looking after community spaces and future developments that have been planned out with and by the community, supporting long lasting facilities for all the community to enjoy for years to come.

### **Resolven AFC Ltd, Cam Gears Club - awarded £111,442.32 as a grant/loan mix**

Resolven AFC was established in 2012 and the club building itself needs improving and the trustees approached the fund with a vision to have a modern multi-purpose club that is fit for purpose and caters for all sports and leisure activities that promote the health and wellbeing of the village of Resolven and surrounding areas. They had been working hard on improving the facilities over a number of years and have used lockdown to further develop the vision in consultation with users and members. However, they were in a position where the next job had to be the roof as there is significant water ingress, and this is impeding any further improvements. Pen y Cymoedd awarded them £111,442.32 as a grant / loan mix that paid for scaffolding, asbestos removal, new roof and new interior ceiling.

The need for the work was evident as was the commitment and drive of Ieuan, John and the rest of the trustees to transform the future of the

venue. As a fund we want to support community spaces (indoor and outdoor) that align with community needs and ensure there is a sustainable network of well used community buildings.

“For too long the size of the building has worked against the membership we have made constant minor repairs. A vibrant new committee decided to apply to PyC for much needed help. We have invested in upgrading and modernising the bar, creating a family friendly outdoor area, extensive decorating and soft furnishing for the big hall. We have also made improvements to the toilet facilities and storeroom extension. We are determined to transform ‘our club’ to its former glory, with extensive use by the existing community whilst embracing a wider dynamic.”

#### **Resolven AFC Trustees**

## Arts Factory, Rhondda



Back in 2018 PyC supported Arts Factory Rhondda with a £145,980 grant.

The main aim of the project was to support them to take their enterprise activities to the next level – helping it to grow, become sustainable and much less reliant on fund raising. However, it also supported refurbishment of areas of the groups iconic Trerhondda chapel base providing more space for hire, and an upgrade of the IT equipment

used by the whole organisation ensuring that an important high street building in the centre of Ferndale was refurbished for community use, and continue to play an important part in the thriving townscape

The fund then also supported Sunrise Community Garden with funding of £7,828.50 initially to build their community garden and then to expand and grow their activities.

They are a voluntary community based gardening group that helps and teaches people of all ages from all walks-of -life and were offered a piece of land next to The Arts Factory storage unit on Highfield Industrial Park in Ferndale - turning a waste piece of ground into a community garden with support from Arts Factory.

# Skills Development, Training and Learning

The fund will support the development and delivery of skills, training or learning that is relevant for our changing society, ensuring provision for residents of all backgrounds, ages and abilities.

## Commitment

**The fund is committed to funding initiatives that:**

- Engage and change behaviour around energy and sustainability through education
- Use the environment to educate and provide better outdoor education facilities
- Provide education and training that's relevant to the needs and opportunities in the community and raises aspirations
- Support the development of children and young people

- Support people into employment and address economic inactivity
- Support individuals with specific additional needs
- Support businesses to future proof their organisation and become more sustainable
- Introduce new and innovative subjects and learning methods, including digital learning opportunities
- Focus on skills that increase independence, and create opportunities for residents to support each other
- Provide skills development and training for communities, volunteers and businesses.

## How the fund will work with others

PyC is committed to working with a wide range of partners – including national bodies, local groups and organisations, and local authorities, schools and colleges – to complement statutory provision and bring added benefit and opportunities into the fund area.

We will promote co-operation rather than competition, raising awareness of what's available and working pro-actively with others to leverage funding and opportunities into area.

### **The fund can support a wide range of organisations including for example:**

- Local training providers
- Community Education and Skills Providers
- Youth education and employment services
- Independent retailers / local businesses / entrepreneurs
- Social, voluntary, sports groups and community hubs

## **The fund will support initiatives in the next five years that:**

- Encourage personal life skills, confidence, independence and resilience
- Encourage skills in – and the use of – technology
- Develop financial sustainability for individuals and businesses
- Subsidise activities for children and young people that are accessible to everyone
- Support individuals looking for a career change or people who are returning to the workplace
- Provide learning and skills development for people of all ages and abilities
- Predict jobs of the future and provide our communities with the skills they need
- Provide local learning opportunities that link with employment opportunities and sector growth in those areas



## Community Impact Initiative, Across fund area - £276,265



Back in late 2020 we funded The Community Impact Initiative for their ambitious Building Resilience in Communities project.

The project is supporting 100-130 marginalised individuals aged 16+ over a 3-year period from across the Pen y Cymoedd region, to improve their health and wellbeing, develop their personal, practical and employability skills, achieve accredited qualifications, move closer

towards the labour market, and make positive life changes through the restoration of empty properties within our local communities.

“The Cii is thrilled to secure Pen y Cymoedd funding to deliver the innovative BRiC project throughout the Neath, Afan, Rhondda Fawr, Rhondda Fach and Cynon valleys. It is our collective intention that BRiC empowers our local communities to take positive steps that will lead to sustained community improvement and regeneration. We would like to provide the Pen y Cymoedd management team and board of directors with a heartfelt thank you for believing in the aspirations and benefits of the project, and for supporting us in our ambitions to deliver lasting community change.”

**Trystan Jones** Chief Executive

## Under the Sky Growing and Learning - £194,258, Neath



3-year environmental project working with and training community members.

## Afan Trail Volunteers, £4,818.92, Afan

Funding to enter 5 of their volunteers on a Natural Resources Wales (NRW) recognised course for strimming and edge cutting and equipment needed.



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