



CLARION
HOUSING GROUP

THE WILLIAM SUTTON PRIZE 2023

Guidance for applicants

ABOUT THE WILLIAM SUTTON PRIZE

There is growing recognition for faster development and more widespread adoption of innovation in the affordable and social housing sector. Coupled with the ever-growing need for high quality and sustainable homes are numerous sector-wide challenges, from climate change to demographic shift, that require urgent attention.

As the country's largest housing association and a sector leader, we recognise our role in developing new thinking and ideas that address many of these challenges, to create a more sustainable and positive future for residents, communities and the planet.

But we cannot do this alone.

Solving these complex, inter-organisational problems requires collaboration with forward-thinking individuals and organisations on the ground who are pioneering new ideas and innovations.

The William Sutton Prize, presented by Clarion Housing Group, is a leading innovation catalyst, which cultivates and incubates high potential ideas that tackle some of the sectors' most urgent sustainability challenges.

The Prize invites disruptors and innovators to submit their best ideas and solutions to the unique challenges posed in each edition.

Through a mix of grant funding and a package of tailored business support, the William Sutton Prize helps winners turn outstanding ideas into real-world products, services, solutions and interventions that make lasting improvements to the built environment and local communities supported by the sector.

Clarion would not exist today without William Sutton, a pioneering 19th century entrepreneur who founded the UK's first door-to-door parcel delivery service and donated his fortune to provide much-needed affordable housing. His spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship lives on through the Prize and all that we embrace at Clarion.

What is the scope of this year's edition?

The theme this year is: 'Achieving a fair transition to a net zero carbon future'

We are looking for **new and breakthrough** ideas that can help the social housing sector and residents to reduce their carbon emissions and transition to a net zero future in a fair and sustainable way.

No idea is too big, or too small. What is important is that ideas have high potential for impact and scalability across the sector.

In addition to welcoming any idea that helps the sector and residents reduce carbon emissions, we are particularly interested in receiving submissions that also work towards one or more of the following interrelated sustainability outcomes:

- 1 Making homes more energy efficient and reducing bills for residents (for example, through introducing new technology, retrofitting and engagement with communities to deliver net zero carbon)
- 2 Using nature to improve the health and wellbeing of residents across new and existing homes
- 3 Improving indoor and outdoor air quality (for example, by generating clean, renewable energy on site)
- 4 Building resilience to the impacts of climate change in new and existing communities (for example through new technologies or utilising nature)

ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply?

The William Sutton Prize is open to disruptors, innovators, researchers and creators — of all shapes and sizes — with high potential ideas that can transform the sector's impact on the environment.

We are particularly interested in hearing from architects; designers; social and tech entrepreneurs; engineers; scientists; academics and researchers; construction contractors; social enterprises and CICs.

You don't necessarily have to have worked directly in the social housing sector before. What's more important is that ideas can have a tangible impact on the fair transition to net zero, with the potential to create lasting change on a national scale.

What types of organisations can apply?

Applications can be accepted from both not-for-profit and commercial organisations. These may be registered charities, community interest companies, social enterprises, community groups or registered companies, amongst others.

Organisations must be registered to work in England and must be able to specify how their idea will make a positive contribution to helping the affordable housing sector and its communities achieve net zero by 2050.

Successful projects should take place in England.



I am an individual can I still apply?

Yes, individuals resident in the UK and aged over the age of 18 years old are eligible to apply.

We are looking to identify good ideas and individuals who can show entrepreneurial thinking on how the UK affordable housing sector and its communities can achieve net zero by 2050.

It is important to note that prize money cannot be paid into a personal bank account. As such, and as part of the application process, we will ask individuals to confirm they agree to at least one of the following requirements:

- 1 to work with a partner organisation to receive payment and/or support delivery of your chosen idea;
- 2 to be prepared to register as a constituted organisation to receive any prize money for the development of the winning idea.

What type of ideas are we looking for?

The Prize is open to all types of ideas and projects — be they design, technology, community, business practices, commercial models — from any sector or discipline.

At what stage does my idea have to be?

Ideas and innovations should be at an earlier stage in their life cycle, although not the very initial conception state. We actively encourage submissions that wouldn't usually get support because they are deemed too under-developed or too radical.

The key is for your application to present a viable and considered plan for taking your idea forward. Our judges are looking for innovative and creative ideas that meet the key aims of the prize category.

What's on offer?

Winners will each receive between £5,000 and £50,000 in grant funding and a tailored package of business support from Clarion to help grow their ideas and turn them into reality.

- 1 **Grant funding:** Applicants can bid for between £5,000 and £50,000 of grant funding to further develop their idea. The amount of funding requested should reflect an amount that is needed to take the idea to the next stage of its development.
- 2 **Tailored support:** Winners will also receive a 12–18 month programme of business support from Clarion to help further research, develop, test or scale their ideas.

Depending on the needs of the winners, this may include the following:

● Business support and advice

Business planning and routes to market

Legal advice

Commercial/procurement processes

Health and safety

● Mentoring

1-2-1 coaching and mentoring with Clarion Group Business Sponsors

Shadowing opportunities

● Research and testing

Research and evaluation guidance

Access to user groups

Sites for testing, validating and piloting

● Networks

Invitations to events

Introductions to networks and contacts

William Sutton Prize Alumni Network

All finalists will:

- **be invited to the awards ceremony to celebrate the ideas and provide an opportunity to network with members of Clarion and the wider sector**
- **become part of a William Sutton Prize Alumni Network to connect and gain support from like-minded peers**

What can the prize money be used for?

The prize money is intended to **support the undertaking of next steps to progress your idea**. For example, this could include engaging with a partner to refine or continue to work-up your idea, project management costs associated with taking the idea forward, costs associated with piloting your idea or costs for consulting with the communities your idea intends to benefit.

What costs will the prize cover?

- ✔ Support for project management
- ✔ Engagement of third party services for design, delivery and development
- ✔ Costs associated with piloting a concept, product or service
- ✔ Costs for further research, consultation or engagement
- ✔ Costs associated with evaluating or measuring the impact of ideas
- ✔ Costs associated with replicating or scaling-up a new, or emerging, concept, product or service
- ✔ Any other associated costs considered reasonable or essential by the Panel

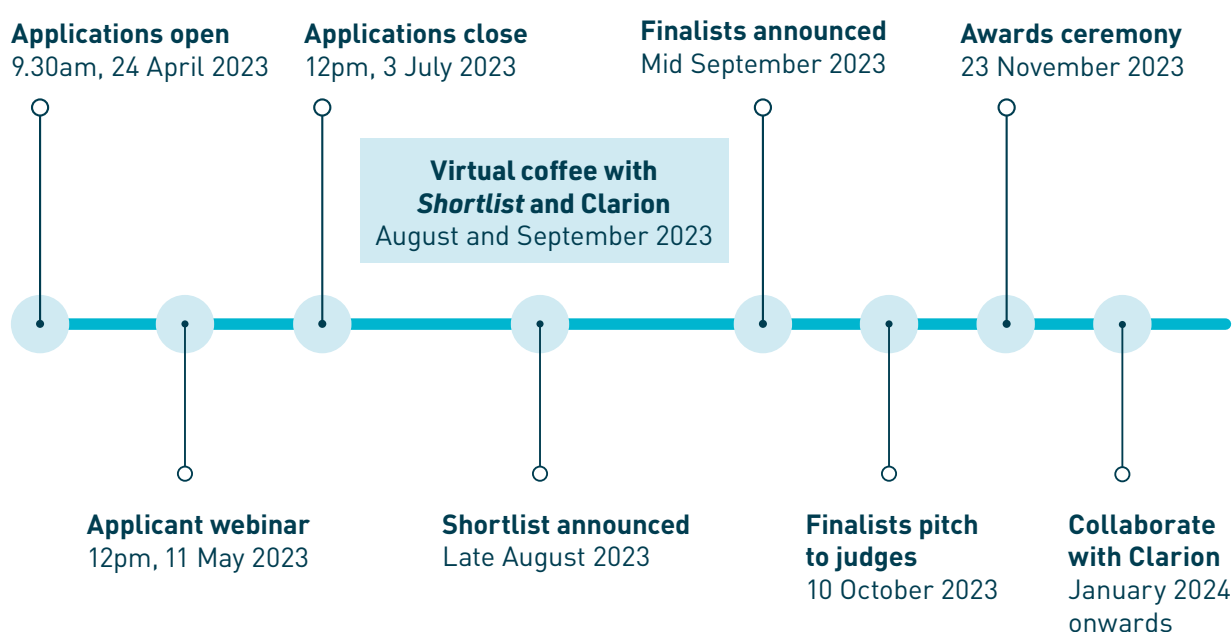
What costs won't the prize cover?

- ✘ Costs for activities that have already taken place
- ✘ Costs for activities that stand to only benefit an individual
- ✘ Costs that support activities based outside of England
- ✘ Fees for academic or vocational courses/ tuition fees/examinations
- ✘ Personal expenses incurred during activity delivery
- ✘ Any party political activity
- ✘ Any activities where individuals are excluded on religious grounds, ethnicity, gender, sexuality
- ✘ Any other costs considered unreasonable or non-essential by the Panel

What is the total prize pot available?

Our total prize pot is £75,000. We can support up to 5 projects, and are interested in hearing about ideas which need all levels of funding between £5,000 and £50,000.

Application timeline and key dates



How do I apply?

All applications must be submitted via our **online application system Flexi-Grant**. You will be required to register on Flexi-Grant and activate your account in order to access the online application form. <https://clarionfutures.flexigrant.com>

If you have any additional access needs, or would like support in making an application, please email williamsuttonprize@clarionhg.com

What is the application process?

Online applications must be submitted by **12 noon on Monday 3 July 2023** in order to be considered. Late entries will not be accepted.

Who decides the winners?

The William Sutton Prize Assessment Committee and Judging Panel oversees the selection of shortlisted applicants and winners based on set criteria.

Stage 1 APPLY

- Download the Guidance and/or attend a Zoom workshop to help plan and prepare your submission
- Complete your submission online by 3 July 2023
- Our Prize Panel will carefully review each application against key criteria (see next page)
- Applicants who are selected to go forwards will be invited to meet members of Clarion to talk more about their ideas

Stage 2 SHORTLIST VIRTUAL COFFEE

- Submissions most closely aligning with the prize criteria will be short-listed and invited to an informal 45mins virtual coffee with members of Clarion in August or Sept. The purpose is for both parties to get to know each other, and discuss how Clarion could help support the development of your idea
- Once all the sessions are complete, the Prize Panel will announce the Finalists, who will be invited to pitch their ideas to the William Sutton Prize Judges

Stage 3 FINALIST PITCH

- Finalists will pitch their ideas to our judging panel made up of senior members of Clarion Housing Group and high-profile sector leaders
- You'll have 5–10 minutes to pitch your idea to the Judges followed by 15–20 minutes of Q&A

Stage 4 AWARD CEREMONY

- All shortlistees will be invited to attend the Awards Ceremony in London on 23 November 2023
- As well as celebrating all the short-listed submissions and announcing the winners, you'll have the opportunity to network with members of Clarion and those from the wider sector

Stage 5 COLLABORATE

- Winners will be individually invited to an Impact Planning Workshop, where they will co-create an impact plan with key members of Clarion to define and agree how Clarion will help the development of their idea over the next 12 months
- In parallel, an evaluation plan will be put together and implemented to monitor and assess the progress and impact of the partnership

How will entries be assessed?

All applications will be reviewed using a standardised assessment framework. It is important to keep the following five criteria in mind when completing your application.

● Challenge/problem/need

Is there a clearly defined challenge, problem or unmet need?

Has the level of need for the proposed idea been clearly demonstrated?

Is the problem large or significant for the sector?

● Innovation and uniqueness

Does the idea tackle the identified problem/challenge well?

Is it new or original?

What is its uniqueness?

Is it feasible (how easy or difficult will it be to deliver)?

● Impact potential

What is the scale of potential impact/what is the depth of potential impact?

How will it make a positive impact on residents/communities/the environment?

How will success be measured? Are the outcomes clearly presented?

● Scalability

Is there a longer-term vision/opportunity?

How replicable/scalable is the idea?

Is there potential for scale?

Is it viable or sustainable (i.e. what is the longevity of the idea beyond the funding)?

● Financials

How will the funding be spent?

Is there a clear spending plan?

Is it a sufficient/reasonable amount against the spending plan and intended outcomes?

What sort of supporting documents should I upload?

You will have the opportunity to **upload up to six supporting images or documents** to help the Judges **better understand your product, concept or service**. We encourage the submission of images, plans, technical drawings, and supporting narrative or case studies that demonstrate both the impact of your entry and progress of your idea to date. However, please keep in mind that we receive a large number of applications so it is important you present your idea and supporting documents in a **clear and succinct** way.

We also encourage you to make sure you provide a comprehensive overview of your idea in the answers of the online application form, and not refer too heavily on your supporting documents. **The Judges will be assessing your entry primarily on your application form answers** and any supporting documents will be supplementary to this.

Do I have to submit a budget?

We will not require a detailed budget or business plan, however the Judges will need to understand the estimated costs to demonstrate how the prize money will be used for the development or enhancement of your idea. Entries will be judged on the quality and potential of the idea, not a detailed business plan.

My application has been shortlisted, what happens next?

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an informal 45-minute virtual coffee with members of Clarion in August or September 2023. The purpose is for both parties to get to know each other, and discuss how Clarion could help support the development of your idea.

What will happen if I cannot make the shortlist virtual coffee session?

Virtual coffees will be taking place in late August and during September, so there should be enough time to find a window that works for everyone. If, for whatever reason, the session does not take place by late September, we will unfortunately not be able to take your submission forward.

I've been selected as a finalist, what happens next?

Finalists will be invited to a Judges' Panel Day on 10 October 2023 to pitch their idea to the panel. You'll have around 5–10 minutes to pitch your idea to the Judges followed by 15–20 minutes of Q&A. Full details will be sent directly to shortlisted applicants with the relevant requirements at least four weeks before the Panel Day.

What will happen if I cannot attend the Judges' Panel Day?

The Judge's Panel Day will be taking place on 10 October in London. We would encourage all applicants to hold this date once confirmed.

If you are unable to attend in person, we will make every effort to enable you to participate virtually.

If you are unable to attend either in person or virtually, we will unfortunately not be able to take your submission forward.

What will happen if I cannot attend the Awards Ceremony?

If you are unable to attend in person, we will make every effort to enable you to participate virtually.

If you are unable to attend either in person or virtually, we will contact you.

Will you fund travel and accommodation to the Panel Day and Awards Ceremony if I live outside of London?

If you live outside of the M25, we are able to support Finalists with their travel and accommodation costs. Please contact the Prize Team for further details.

My application was not shortlisted or selected as a finalist, what happens next?

Unfortunately, the Prize is not able to support every eligible application received. Unsuccessful applicants will receive emailed notification of the reason their application was not taken forward. All unsuccessful applicants will be eligible, and welcome, to reapply in future rounds.

I have a disability, what adjustments do you offer?

Clarion is committed to ensuring that the William Sutton Prize is accessible to everyone. If you have a disability or a chronic health condition, we can offer adjustments to the application e.g. submitting your response in an alternate format as well as the Judges Panel Day and Awards Ceremony.

Please contact our Prize Team at williamsuttonprize@clarionhg.com to discuss.

How do I get support with my application?

For support completing your online application form, queries regarding the deadline, eligibility criteria or submitting your proposal can be emailed to our Prize Team at williamsuttonprize@clarionhg.com

How will you use my information?

So we can process your application and keep you informed about the judging process, results and the subsequent awards event we require clear consent from you to process the data you have supplied to us. This data will be collected, retained and securely processed strictly for the purposes of administering the William Sutton Prize. Data which has been gathered through your application is required for the organisation and administration and of the William Sutton Prize and will be retained by Clarion Housing Group in line the appropriate data retention policies.

Your contact details are required so we may correspond with you as an applicant regarding the status of your submission and the associated awards event. We will also require clear consent to contact you with regards to future William Sutton Prize application rounds, associated awards events and future funding opportunities. After giving consent for your data to be processed in this way, you may at any time withdraw your consent or request any clarification on how your data has been processed by contacting williamsuttonprize@clarionhg.com

The online application form will have a data consent statement for you to agree to before submitting your form. Full details of Clarion Housing Group full privacy notice can be found [here](#).



Clarion Housing Group

Level 6
6 More London Place
Tooley Street
London
SE1 2DA

 clarionhg.com

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