



Sustainable Schools' Challenge

The Sustainable Communities for Learning (SCfL) have launched an innovative **Sustainable Schools' Challenge** through the existing Programme and governance framework.

Building on the Net Zero Carbon mandate across the Programme, we are inviting applications from local authorities that can demonstrate **innovative** and **collaborative** design, development, delivery and management of two new schools that can make a positive contribution to the environment and surrounding landscape. The collaboration will include learners, staff, parents, community and supply chains through all stages of design, construction and operational life of a truly sustainable school.

Aimed at primary schools an allocation of up to **£30 million** will provide **100% funding** for these two projects, £15 million per project (projects other than primary schools will be considered).

Lessons learnt from these two projects will inform wider programme bidding guidance, including any research and skills gaps, in strengthening our commitment towards decarbonisation and environmental protection.

The Challenge will draw upon the sustainability aspects of the New Curriculum and how our young learners translate this into their own 'sustainable community for learning', **their** school in **their** community.

Throughout the delivery process, project teams from the two successful schools/LA's will be expected to contribute to lessons learned which will be fully considered, feeding directly into a **Case Study** linked to our Guidance. A key objective of the Challenge is to stimulate the whole supply chain to fully consider opportunities and innovative delivery solutions that are often restricted under normal practice.

Local Authorities are invited to nominate one of their pipeline projects, or a new project (as long as delivery within 3 years can be evidenced) and develop a bid for an innovative solution to our current **Climate and Nature Emergency**. Evaluation of bids will follow the current appraisal framework, ensuring alignment with key education priorities through the Business Case

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Scrutiny Group and the Education Investment Panel. An additional panel of academic professional and industry representatives will be established to judge the bids focusing on the innovative environmental and sustainability approach of each case. A shortlist of six to eight projects will be confirmed and each local authority and school reaching this stage will be given the opportunity to present their proposal and take questions from the panel which will take place **week commencing 28 November 2022**. The panel's decision will be final.

The Sustainable Schools Challenge is seeking innovative applications for the development and delivery of two primary schools in Wales, one in the north and the other in the south, that can demonstrate an exemplar commitment towards environmental sustainability and stakeholder engagement throughout all stages of the design, build and operation of a new school. Designed to complement their environment, projects should enhance the character of their setting and to the quality of Welsh life.

Along with your design and delivery teams, working closely with your children, young people, and staff so that they can shape their learning environment, bids should encompass all sustainability aspects of the built environment and its surroundings.

What will the Panel be looking for?

- A project that encompasses the built environment and the surrounding landscape in a way that enriches pupils' daily life
- The level of user and stakeholder engagement throughout all stages of the project, including occupation
- Connects the occupants and users to the building
- Includes innovating technology to provide new services, apps and/or platforms
- Efficient in the use of energy, water, space, materials
- Of architectural quality
- Contribution towards a Circular Economy including re-use and recycling of materials considering end of life use
- Longer elemental lifespan and lower whole life cost
- Value for money
- Innovative ways to enable facilities to be shared without compromising security and the feeling of ownership
- Flexibility of space usage
- Future flexibility to enable spaces to be changed

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- Building technologies that are simple but effective
- A building that will educate its users through its design and links to the curriculum
- A place to nurture relationships
- Living building in one with nature, e.g., living walls bringing the outside in to the building
- Biophilic design¹
- Passive design
- Enrich the biodiversity of the whole site and surrounding and where possible link to nearby natural landscapes.
- Food generation
- Community use
- Community learning, enabling the technology and innovation to inspire and educate the surrounding community
- Strong commitment and link towards Active Travel – making connections and joining up with wider local, regional and national networks/plans.

A Strategic Outline Business Case should be received by 03 November 2022.

Business Cases should highlight the **environmental criteria** and the method of **collaboration** to maximise the **learning** and involvement of pupils, staff, parents, governors, community together with the whole design and supply chain. The Challenge provides a unique opportunity for learners to engage, and demonstrate how their school positively contributes towards sustainability, and in playing a key role in shaping the delivery framework for all future schools delivered through the SCfL Programme.

Built where possible, predominantly from local natural materials (i.e., wood, stone etc.) proposals will be judged against a range of environmental criteria including use of recycled and/or natural materials, whole life carbon, levels of natural daylight, good levels of insulation, low energy consumption, on-site green power generation and storage, water harvesting and re-use, Active Travel and linkages to local networks, and resilience towards temperature fluctuation and the wider challenges of climate change.

¹ Biophilic design is a concept used within the building industry to **increase occupant connectivity to the natural environment** through the use of direct nature, indirect nature, and space and place conditions. Used at both the building and city-scale, it is argued that this idea has health,