

The Net Zero Fund Criteria

Net Zero Vulnerability

Through our Net Zero Fund we will strive to assist customers and communities in vulnerable circumstances to enable them to engage with the low carbon transition and ensure that no one is left behind on the journey to Net Zero.

We recognise that some of our communities are affected by circumstances that expose them to situations of vulnerability. Ranging from socio-economic factors, such as poverty or education, to health factors such as chronic illnesses, our customers and communities can experience complex and multi-dimensional situations of vulnerability.

As part of the Net Zero Fund, **we define a vulnerable customer as someone who:**

- **Is disadvantaged and less able to plan for, cope with, or recover from adverse situations linked to our activities in their community.** This could include customers affected by sensory loss or impairment, and those facing mobility problems. An example follows:
 - Customers who are blind, hard of hearing, or face difficulties in getting around their communities will be particularly impacted by any roadworks or similar disruption caused by our teams' works in their neighborhoods.

and/or

- **Faces one or more barriers in adopting behaviors and taking actions that would allow them to participate in and benefit from the energy system transition to Net Zero** (e.g. installing and actively using low carbon technologies). This could include customers on low household incomes or in fuel poverty, with low digital literacy, those facing mental or physical impairments or customers living in high-rise buildings or areas off the gas grid. Examples include:
 - Customers with low household income will not be able to invest in the adoption of low carbon technologies without financial support (e.g. installing heat pumps and solar panels)
 - Customers with low digital literacy will be prevented from engaging with an increasingly digitalised energy market (e.g. accessing tariff comparison and switching tools)
 - Customers with physical or mental disabilities will face obstacles in engaging with digital equipment required for them to engage and benefit from a flexible and decentralised energy system (e.g. reading smart meters, responding to demand response events)
 - Customers living in high-rise buildings will face obstacles in installing and benefitting from low carbon technologies (e.g. solar panels) without bespoke approaches.
 - Customers who are dependent on electricity-powered medical equipment, or those with mental health conditions, and/or visual and physical impairments are less willing to adopt new technologies fearing a greater likelihood of faults or malfunctioning.

The list of vulnerability situations above is non-exhaustive. We invite applicants to explain how the proposed project will either (i) support customers in planning for, coping with and recovering from adverse situations or (ii) remove barriers that will enable them to participate in and benefit from the energy system transition.