Innovations in Pacific Island Countries next focus for Powering Renewable Energy Opportunities (PREO) grant funding.

An open call, announced today, is offering grant funding up to £200,000 per project to support productive use of renewable energy (PURE) enterprises to demonstrate and strengthen their business models to scale their impact in Pacific Island Countries.

The open call marks the first expansion of [Powering Renewable Energy Opportunities](https://www.preo.org/) (PREO) beyond sub-Saharan Africa, widening its focus to include Pacific Island Countries-focused projects, with the support of UK aid through the Transforming Energy Access (TEA) platform. This opportunity is the second of three planned PREO funding rounds, with over £7m dedicated for catalytic grants over next four years to support innovative, renewable energy-based projects, working to improve incomes, build climate resilience and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Proposals for projects to be delivered in any of the following countries: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, will be considered for selection to receive grant funding between £50,000 – £200,000. To be eligible, projects must be locally-relevant, addressing demonstrated needs of the population in the target country. They must also be targeting the commercial viability of a productive use of renewable energy (PURE) product and/or service – encompassing for example agricultural, commercial and industrial activities that generate income and are powered by renewable energy.

Angus Vantoch-Wood, Senior Manager at the Carbon Trust, leads the delivery of the programme.

“Over the past four years PREO has proven to be an effective springboard for African innovators focused on accelerating the productive use of renewable energy. The impact of PREO-supported projects on local job creation and emissions reduction has demonstrated what is possible through catalytic funding and tailored support, and paves the way for the further expansion of this impact. We are excited to be on the cusp of broadening the focus of PREO to Pacific Island Countries though this latest funding opportunity.”

PREO’s mission is to support enterprises harnessing renewable energy to improve incomes, build climate resilience and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Since the programme’s inception in 2019, it has successfully awarded over £5m in grant funding from UK aid and the IKEA Foundation to 34 projects across 12 sub-Saharan African countries. Alongside grant funding, the programme has also provided technical assistance to a further 20 companies through dedicated sector specialists and will continue to provide this alongside the new round of grants. Across the 34 projects supported so far with catalytic grants, a total of £24m in public and private follow-on capital has been raised.

An example of PREO’s impact is [Ashden Award](https://ashden.org/awards/)-winning enterprise [SokoFresh](https://sokofresh.co.ke/), which provides farm level cold storage-as-a-service, coupled with a digital access-to-market platform to integrate small and medium scale farmers into commercial-scale supply chains. PREO funded SokoFresh’s first two cold hubs for horticulture, and subsequent expansion into fishing. The Kenyan company has demonstrated a 27% reduction in post-harvest losses and generated 13 jobs as a result of this project. Following the success of the PREO-funded project, SokoFresh has been able to expand its reach and set up cold storage hubs in five additional counties in Kenya: Garissa, Nyeri, Makueni, Kiambu and Tharaka Nithi.

Denis Karema, Co Founder and CEO at SokoFresh said;

“Support from PREO has been crucial in the start-up phase of SokoFresh. Coming out of the research phase, PREO gave us the opportunity to set up the first pilots. We were able to purchase the first 2 cold storages with the contribution of PREO funding, build an MVP for the market linkage platform, and get the concept from ‘on paper’ into reality. Once we were up and running, it was quite easy to convince others of the need and viability of what we’re doing. PREO was absolutely catalytic to proving the concept in real-life and bringing us to the next stage.”

Interested innovators should visit [the PREO website](https://www.preo.org/) to download the full application pack.

Since 2019, PREO has been supported by the [IKEA Foundation](https://ikeafoundation.org/) and UK aid via [the Transforming Energy Access](https://tea.carbontrust.com/) platform and delivered by [the Carbon Trust](https://www.carbontrust.com/) and [Mercy Corps Energy 4 Impact](https://energy4impact.org/).

For more on PREO’s impact to date, download the latest report [‘Powering Prosperity: The socio-economic benefits of the productive use of renewable energy (PURE) in Africa’](https://www.preo.org/reports/powering-prosperity-the-socio-economic-benefits-of-the-productive-use-of-renewable-energy-pure-in-africa/)

**ENDS**

For further information please contact:

The Carbon Trust press office on +44 (0)20 7170 7050 or [press@carbontrust.com](mailto:press@carbontrust.com).

**About the grant funding opportunity**

This round of grant funding is funded by UK aid via [the Transforming Energy Access](https://tea.carbontrust.com/) platform. Up to 8 projects will be selected to receive funding in this latest round, with £50,000 – £200,000 grant funding available per project. The deadline for submissions is 26 May 2024, at 23:59 UTC. Locally-led projects are encouraged, but applicants can be based outside of the geographic scope, provided the project has a local partner or office located in one of the target countries - Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu. Innovators can use PREO grant funding for activities including covering the upfront capital costs of initial field units, operational expenses, building capacities, and ICT systems. As a result, the innovators should show they have the potential to successfully demonstrate positive unit-economics, refine and improve their business model, and gather critical business data needed to back up the business plan and attract sufficient commercial capital that would otherwise materialise far more slowly.

**About PREO**

PREO’s overall mission is to enable enterprises to harness clean energy to improve incomes, build climate resilience, reduce reliance on fossil fuels and raise private sector investment. The programme is funded by the IKEA Foundation and UK aid (via the Transforming Energy Access platform) and is delivered by the Carbon Trust and Energy 4 Impact. To date, it has awarded 34 catalytic grants to private sector and non-profit enterprises across 12 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. [https://www.preo.org/about/](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.preo.org%2Fabout%2F&data=05|01||065f68b013de4fc2dd1908db9eeaf336|96e14e5a57ac48d7851d12f54eff5a60|0|0|638278504182993875|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|3000|||&sdata=BkH6x6qjzGaaLkK5UDbVumVNC3SGRr4DWCtincmM5B8%3D&reserved=0)

**Productive use of renewable energy (PURE) definition**

Agricultural, commercial and industrial activities that generate income and are powered by renewable energy sources are known as productive uses of renewable energy (PURE). PURE can be employed at various levels, such as pumping water for irrigation, cold storage for food, mechanical processing of crops, electric mobility for taxi drivers and fishing boats, healthcare services, mobile phone charging, and providing internet access. PURE comprises solutions that replace and improve on conventional fossil-fuel solutions (such as a solar maize grinder replacing a diesel maize grinder), or new solutions where affordability prevents access to an existing solution (such as irrigation by diesel pump, which is not economically viable in many areas).

**PREO LinkedIn** - [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/powering-renewable-energy-opportunities\_preo-open-call-pacific-island-countries-activity-7181691482880249856-rcU-?utm\_source=share&utm\_medium=member\_desktop](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.linkedin.com%2Fposts%2Fpowering-renewable-energy-opportunities_preo-open-call-pacific-island-countries-activity-7181691482880249856-rcU-%3Futm_source%3Dshare%26utm_medium%3Dmember_desktop&data=05%7C02%7CSolomoneF%40spc.int%7C9b7ff2443dbf45a961f708dc54c7115e%7Cf721524dea604048bc46757d4b5f9fe8%7C0%7C0%7C638478461985398466%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=SBwxruTEo03uDHIGIFWsPcGyCf3oysZUg0nQoLTvr8A%3D&reserved=0)

**and PREO X** -  [https://x.com/PoweringPREO/status/1775924883450429747?s=20](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fx.com%2FPoweringPREO%2Fstatus%2F1775924883450429747%3Fs%3D20&data=05%7C02%7CSolomoneF%40spc.int%7C9b7ff2443dbf45a961f708dc54c7115e%7Cf721524dea604048bc46757d4b5f9fe8%7C0%7C0%7C638478461985409128%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=F48JA78MOcC3QePNoWWMzkVuk9V%2FvMQex1zLrLEztEs%3D&reserved=0)

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**PREO website application page** - [PREO OPEN CALL: Pacific Island countries 2024 - PREO Powering Renewable Energy Opportunities](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.preo.org%2Fapply-for-a-grant%2F&data=05%7C02%7CSolomoneF%40spc.int%7C9b7ff2443dbf45a961f708dc54c7115e%7Cf721524dea604048bc46757d4b5f9fe8%7C0%7C0%7C638478461985416074%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=3QHW5sdiA0gyyWz78IaOCSrYAY6P6EXR%2FOnusKKWEY0%3D&reserved=0)

**Webinar registration page -** (Also linked on the website application page above) - [PREO Open Call: Pacific Island Countries 2024 Application Information + Q&A Tickets, Thu, Apr 18, 2024 at 8:00 AM | Eventbrite](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2Fe%2Fpreo-open-call-pacific-island-countries-2024-application-information-qa-tickets-876037009277&data=05%7C02%7CSolomoneF%40spc.int%7C9b7ff2443dbf45a961f708dc54c7115e%7Cf721524dea604048bc46757d4b5f9fe8%7C0%7C0%7C638478461985423105%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=vwkrruxrZD7I80T4j9gCLXBzMEWwyxtl3rHD8Gn9Ep0%3D&reserved=0)