

The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

1a) Organisation/group name: Rhyze Mushrooms

1b) Project name : Three micro mushroom farms for Edinburgh community cafes

(2) Tell us about your organisation / group (what do you do?) (150 words maximum)

Rhyze Mushrooms C.I.C. is a non-profit community mushroom farm and education project based in Fountainbridge. At our urban farm we work with volunteers from our community to grow gourmet mushrooms on urban waste streams we collect from local businesses. Oyster mushrooms are powerful decomposers and can be grown on abundant waste streams including coffee grounds from cafes, sawdust from carpenters and cardboard. This circular production model is very sustainable, and can be carried out all year round.

The education side of our project aims to empower people in Edinburgh and beyond to grow mushrooms from waste, in their homes, gardens and community spaces. To date 450 people have attended one of our workshops, developing DIY mushroom cultivation skills. We also produce and sell mushroom grow at home kits, mushroom spawn and other materials needed to grow edible mushrooms at home or in your garden.

(3a) Please select the fund criteria which your project relates to (Select all that apply)

X Create opportunities for community leadership and learning on climate change

X Reduce greenhouse gas emissions within communities and contribute to the net-zero target for Edinburgh

X Generate sustainable projects for the benefit of local people to build resilience or adapt to climate change within communities

X Build relationships between neighbourhoods of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds to work together on just, equitable and accessible climate and resilience activities contributing to the cities net zero agenda, also ensuring that activities work towards reducing or removing barriers for disabled people in the transition to net zero.

Deadline for applications: 12th February 2023

The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

(3b) Tell us about the project you would use the money for. (500 words maximum)

We want to set up small mushroom farms in three community cafes around Edinburgh: training volunteers from these spaces to transform waste including cardboard and coffee from their cafes into delicious nutritious food they can cook and use in their cafe's kitchens.

Being able to grow our own food indoors from local waste is an incredibly valuable skill in a time of increasing climate instability, with extreme weather events threatening outdoor crops and food supply chains. Indoor mushroom cultivation can be practised year round at household or community levels which is very significant in a country where we have to import 90% of our fresh produce in winter.

The aims of the project are to 1) reduce waste and emissions by growing food with zero food miles from waste within cafes 2) engage new audiences in food growing, and its links to climate change by offering an accessible year-round indoor food growing project 3) Train people in mushroom cultivation skills to build resilience in our communities 4) build connections across Edinburgh by starting a network of community micro mushroom farms.

The funds would be used to pay for a mix of material and staff costs. These include the material costs of building an automated mini mushroom farm and the supplies needed to run it for a year. In a space the size of a cupboard we can set up a mushroom farm able to grow over 10 kilos of fresh mushrooms every month. The grow space would be located in a public facing part of the cafes to allow people to enjoy watching the beautiful mushrooms grow.

The staff costs would cover in-depth training for volunteers from the three community spaces we partner with. This training would include: a tour of our own mushroom farm; time spent with volunteers building their own micro-farm; 6 follow up sessions at the cafes where we carry out the mushroom 'inoculations' together, a special session on cooking mushrooms and some follow-up check-ins and support. Part of the staff costs would also cover prior research and consultation time to fine tune the growing process most appropriate to the resources and capacities of the three spaces.

Because mushroom cultivation can be practised indoors year round, sat at a table, without the need to stoop like most forms of food growing it is accessible for people with mobility issues, be that because of age or disability. Mushrooms also have a very short cropping cycle, taking only a few weeks to grow - making them an exciting project for the short attention span of children. We plan to use these features to engage a diverse group of people who may not usually participate in food production. As a final part of this project we would bring together people from the three cafes to take part in shared events, including meals. This would be an opportunity to share their experiences learning to grow mushrooms, and form a diverse network from across the city of new community mushroom growers.

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The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

4) Describe the project in no more than 30 words (this will be used for publicity)

Rhyze Mushrooms will help communities transform trash into food, training volunteers from three Edinburgh community-cafes to build and run mushroom farms: growing mushrooms from the cafe's coffee and cardboard waste.

5 a) Who do you hope will benefit from this project

The primary beneficiaries will be the volunteers across the three cafes who we train in mushroom cultivation skills, as well as users of the community spaces who will get to enjoy watching the mushrooms grow, and enjoy eating healthy and delicious hyper local food from their cafe.

(5b) Is your group open to all?



Yes



No

(5c) Will the project have a positive impact on any of the following protected characteristics?

☒ Disability

☐ Marriage
or civil
partnership

☐ Pregnancy
and
maternity

☐ Race

☐ Sex

☒ Age

☒ Sexual
orientation

☐ Religion
or belief

☐ Gender
reassignment

6) Where will the project be delivered?

The project will primarily be delivered in three community cafes in different parts of Edinburgh:

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The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

North Edinburgh Arts Cafe in Pilton, Bridgend Community Cafe in Craigmillar and Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre Cafe. We will also host some events and trainings at our farm in Fountainbridge.

7) Project start and end date?

We expect the project to start in April 2023 and end in April 2024.

8) How many people do you hope will benefit from your project?

We hope to engage 10 core volunteers at each cafe who will become the primary custodians of the mushroom farms. We hope to reach a further 40 people at each community space through workshops, training them in basic mushroom growing skills. We then believe at least 100 regular users of each space will get to engage with the project during events, and by eating the mushrooms that will be sold at the cafe. In total therefore we think this project will directly engage and benefit at least 450 people.

9) Is anyone else working with you on the project?

☒ Yes

☐ No

We will work with three community cafes in Edinburgh. We have spoke to and received expressions of interest from Bridgend Farmhouse Cafe, North Edinburgh Arts Cafe and the Oxgangs Neighbourhood centre Cafe

(10) Do you require permission from anyone or any additional insurance to carry out your project?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If yes please tell us about this

If we receive the funding we will begin a thorough consultation to co-develop the ideal micro-mushroom farm for the different needs and capacities of the three cafes we work with.

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The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

(11) Please outline a breakdown of the cost of delivering this project (including VAT).		(12) Do you have additional funding or income from charges which will contribute to this project? If yes, please detail below	
Goods/Equipment/Time etc	£	Source	£
3 X Mushroom farm ventilation and humidfication systems	810	Income from sales of meals which use mushrooms grown.	2160
3 x mushroom farm structure	1410		
3 x mushroom farm equipment	420		
3 x mushroom farm consumables for a year	2250		
60 hours planning and consultation staff time	900		
60 hours farm build staff time	900		
3 x farm tour + mycology workshops	1050		
18 x mushroom growing sessions at Cafes	2400		
Cross- community mushroom meet up event organising	450		
Total Expenditure	9990	Total income	

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