

The Edinburgh Community Climate Fund

(1a) Organisation/group name:

Earth in Common

(1b) Project name:

Workplace Wellbeing Days, and youth wellbeing projects - MineCroft which we will continue, and the creation of a new Youth Croft Steering Group on The Croft.

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

Earth in Common is a grassroots movement, reclaiming common good land, and transforming urban wasteland into a vibrant community via our pioneering Urban Croft model. We work towards tackling: a broken food system and agrobiodiversity loss, social inequality, and Restorative Climate Justice (championing Indigenous peoples as biosphere stewards). Our partnership with Mother Elizabeth Organic Farm in Malawi directly relates to our Urban Crofts concept here in Leith, which draws upon Scottish roots and knowledge.

EiC and our wonderful volunteers have created habitats for nature to return and in return have created a healthy habitat for many locals. The Croft became a regular stop to escape the daily grind, or to meet friends or classmates. In a nutshell, The Croft and its community is open to anyone who wishes to get involved, or to those who seek some sanctuary in biodiverse nature for a while; this is perhaps our greatest strength.

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

- ☒ Create opportunities for community leadership and learning on climate change
- ☐ Reduce greenhouse gas emissions within communities and contribute to the net-zero target for Edinburgh
- ☒ Generate sustainable projects for the benefit of local people to build resilience or adapt to climate change within communities
- ☒ 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.

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

'The biophilia hypothesis states that human beings have the innate predisposition to connect with the natural world and translates from Greek as, 'love of living things.' Since its inception Earth in Common has worked towards fostering this connection with and a love for the natural world. Our belief is that we are nature, for those to really care about the threat that climate change has on our very human survival it is an imperative for our community to feel connected to the natural world thus enabling them to take care of our collective future. This project plan seeks to immerse those who feel least connected. We aim to work with three distinct groups in order to improve our overall climate change awareness.

MineCroft's

An inclusive education framework invites young people to join our experienced staff to practice: outdoor crafts and survival skills, building fires and safely maintaining them, learning communication skills and sharing stories. We believe that empowered urban communities play a vital role in our young people's wellbeing and offer an integrated experience for disadvantaged individuals. Specifically, regarding disadvantage, trauma and poverty, one such partner is Scottish Adoption (sessions for adoptees; many have experienced trauma; <https://www.scottishadoption.org/stories/the-log-blog/>)

Youth Steering Group

During the course of their duties, staff encounter young people who exhibit challenging behaviour; some are substance-abusers. We strive to adopt a person-centred approach, balancing the desire for The Croft to be a safe and welcoming place for all and with compassion for, and tolerance of, troubled individuals. EiC recognise that with specific funding, we could greatly improve our services and significantly help access for many more young people. A Youth Steering Group would enhance our impact, empowering young people, and allowing us to set target outcomes with immediate benefits to locals and the area. With the help of EiC staff, the group will decide upon, design, and construct projects throughout the year. We will teach them how to see a project through, learn some eco-construction techniques and to grow their feelings of ownership/responsibility for nature, and the community. Moreover, documenting our approaches and outcomes would become part of our Urban Croft's toolkit and mentoring programme.

Workplace Wellbeing Days

In order to offer wellbeing support to the wider working economy EiC has recently launched our Group membership program; within which we have introduced Workplace Wellbeing Days for organisations from both the third and private sectors, whereby organisations can engage with their natural environment and contribute to corporate social responsibility (CSR). Employing the resources and skills of the last decade EiC intends to work collaboratively with groups to offer employees and custodians of organisations an escape from the regular working day, to reflect and learn skills for wellbeing; ultimately contributing to overall work satisfaction, happiness, and productivity. The day will include a choice of our Green Workshops, and a mixture of Crofting activities, alongside lunch from our community hub building.

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(4) Describe your project in no more than 30 words (this will be used for publicity). (31 words)

Earth in Common and our [Urban Croft model](#) work towards tackling: the broken food system/agrobiodiversity loss, social inequality, and Climate Justice.

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

Leith Community Croft is close to several areas of extreme deprivation, esp. Cables Wynd House (SIMD zone S01008787), one of the most deprived in Scotland. Leith has a dense population & poor greenspace. Children from the poorest backgrounds will have little contact with nature (no gardens, hiking trips or country holidays). There is considerable evidence of the harm that lack of contact with nature can do ('Nature Deficit Disorder') & of the multiple benefits of nature play/outdoor education, of which we have proof from our own work, incl. with children with suspected ADHD, parental substance misuse, etc. (<http://tiny.cc/LCCiPnurture>). Also, Leith is culturally & socio-economically diverse, & many feel isolated & lonely. This project will bring together children & parents/carers from widely differing backgrounds (special effort made to attract those from deprived areas), & draw them to the Croft, with our cafe, growing spaces & other 'green'/community-building/educational projects.

There are six SIMD data zones in the most deprived 20% near us (including the 11th most deprived in Scotland). 24.1% of Leith households experience material deprivation. Leith has the *lowest open space provision* per head of population of Edinburgh's NP areas.

25.3% of the population in Leith identify as BME. 21.9% were born outside the UK. Compared with those living in other parts of Edinburgh, there is much less of a sense of belonging and not as many local social relationships.

Criminal activity is very high (> 3,400 recorded cases/100,000 population).

5% have a mental health condition compared with 4.4% across Scotland. Leith has higher alcohol-related hospital admissions rates than the Edinburgh average and alcohol-related crimes are higher. Of the 73 drug-related deaths in Edinburgh in 2014, 15 occurred in Leith.

Although more people are economically active than the Scottish average, and have a higher level of education, this probably exacerbates the isolation and hopelessness of those who are poorly educated and unemployed, and may partly explain the substance abuse and mental health problems.

Motivated by the above, which was reinforced by our first-hand experience and our many surveys (available on request), we developed our urban croft concept: green space and activities bringing together diverse people. While our lockdown community feeding scheme uncovered extreme deprivation and mental health issues, it also revealed how effective our volunteering opportunities and the ambiance of our urban croft are at promoting mental health (report available).

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(5b) Is your group open to all?

☒ Yes

☐ No

If no, please explain:

(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 this project be delivered?

EiC will deliver these projects on site at Leith Community Croft. Each of the activities included within the projects would run during the day and from either The Croft outdoors and weather permitting, or from within EiC's community hub building with fully accessible amenities.

Earth in Common
Leith Community Croft
4a John's Place
Leith
Edinburgh
EH6 7EL

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(7) Project start date: 1st May 2023
Project end date: 1st May 2024

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

500 people

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

☐ Yes

☒ No

If yes, please tell us about this:

(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:

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(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	£
Staff costs-	£13,400	n/a	
Materials and resources -	£3,200		
Marketing/IT/Admin/insurance-	£2,500		
Total Expenditure	£19,100	Total income	

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