

The Edith M Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust

Community Radio Environment Network (CREN)

#QWHJGVGY5X submitted on 15 April 2025

1.1 Please summarise what you are seeking from us

We are seeking funding to deliver a rather special event: a week of community radio programming, called 'Our Earth Week', providing ideas, audio material and other resources for programmes and short features, coordinated and delivered across and by at least fifty community radio stations around the UK, to coincide with the first week of November's UN Climate Change Conference in Berem, Brazil. We estimate this would cost £11,500.

Tell us more about your project and the impact it will have on those it aims to help, and how it will bring about significant change

Our Earth Week is a unique event, bringing together community radio stations across the whole of the UK. It's a week of coordinated, concerted effort to educate, inform and entertain, not just on the impact of climate change, but also awareness and acknowledgement of local ideas, initiatives and solutions. The aim of the event is to help communities become more aware and more resilient in the face of climate breakdown, and more fundamentally, to live in a way that is harmonious with nature. One of the central themes of Our Earth Week is that we are all in this together, no matter who we are, and where we come from. The event is friendly, accessible and entertaining, and includes conversation, fun features, 'specially recorded interviews and reports, music and soothing soundscapes.

Community radio has been going since 2002 in the UK, and there are now more than 300 stations across the country. Originally called 'access radio', it was a system of licensing small, micro-local, non-profit stations serving local communities and staffed overwhelmingly by volunteers. Being locally based and using volunteers meant community radio could serve small and diverse community groups, including so-called 'communities of interest' within geographical areas, eg, people of colour, immigrants, older people, people with disabilities and LGBT. The stations have a small paid management team but specialise in training volunteers in the skills and art of radio programming – most presenters are volunteers.

As the climate crisis has worsened, and the public's concerns have grown (two thirds of all voters in the 2024 General Election said they were worried about it), interest has increased in communities about how to tackle the problem. A key issue has been how to enable communities to feel empowered to do something about it - to have hope and solutions rather than doom and gloom; to promote a feeling of togetherness and progress, not of difference or conflict. Our Earth Week is harnessing that deep local connection that community radio has with its audiences, especially important now that the BBC is no longer serving very local communities, but rather regional ones.

Our Earth Week aims to do two things, to educate, inform and entertain radio listeners, but also to encourage radio producers to offer more climate content, and to develop a better understanding of the issues such as climate migration. Many community stations are now producing eco shows after taking part in Our Earth Week and have said their presenters are more climate-aware after taking part, and that this is feeding into their regular shows. So presenters talking about subjects like immigration in their town, for example, will be offering a more thoughtful perspective that should reduce the risk of potential conflict.

Any impact on listeners is hard to measure but a Nottingham University study commissioned by Ofcom showed that 74% of community radio listeners said they were more likely to trust information they heard on community radio than national broadcasts, and the same number said they would be more likely to act on such information. The same study also noted "there is clear evidence that community radio fosters a greater sense of connection to others and to the community than other radio outputs do".

As OEW grows in scope we hope that community radio will become the place listeners go to find out

about how they can help to make their own communities more resilient in the face of climate change. Climate crises create conflict and division, and OEW aims to try and reduce that conflict by helping communities to become stronger, more resilient and more prepared for what's to come.

1.3 Which grant-giving categories does your project fulfil?

D - Peace work connected with climate breakdown

1.3d Peace work connected with climate breakdown

Extreme climate events such as food shortages and heatwaves can lead to conflict and social breakdown. Research from 2024 shows community radio has an overwhelmingly positive impact on listeners, is highly trusted and promotes community cohesion. Our Earth Week seeks to build on that by providing ideas, stories and solutions to inspire action for future-proofing across more than 50 communities.

1.4 Which country is the project based in?

United Kingdom (GB)

1.5 Will the project continue after initial funding has ended?

No

1.6 How will the project be monitored and evaluated?

Our charity will send a short questionnaire to community radio stations taking part, to assess what worked well and why (and what didn't work well and why). In addition, on enrolment in OEW, stations will be asked, where possible, to assess the impact on communities, eg, feedback from callers. That information and any supporting evidence will also be collated through the questionnaire and summarised in our reporting to the Charity Commission and the Trust.

2.1 Expenditure

EXPENDITURE ITEM	AMOUNT	NOTES
Producer fee 1, 3 days per week for 3 months (from start September to end November)	£6,075	Involves recruiting radio stations for Our Earth Week, designing and developing database of audio resources, supporting stations in preparing local materials
Producer fee 1, 5 days per week for 3 weeks (including Our Earth Week itself, November 10th - 14th)	£2,250	Finalising the programming of Our Earth Week, coordinating across the network to plan and deliver the week and providing direct support to stations
Intern fee, 3 days per week for 4 weeks (including Our Earth week itself, November 10th - 14th)	£1,200	Learning and development for the intern, while intern provides support to Producer - 1 week preparing the role, three weeks in post
Project management software for 3 months	£750	Professional fees for use of Trello or a similar programme
Publicity	£300	Social media inputting
Music copyright fees	£500	Use of clips in audio resources
Printing	£200	
Evaluation	£225	Questionnaire to participating stations and analysis of responses
TOTALS	£11,500	

2.2 Income

INCOME SOURCE	TARGET AMOUNT	AMOUNT RAISED	NOTES
0	£0	£0	The project is not designed to generate income. Its impact is expected to be social, environmental and improving community cohesion
	£0	£0	
TOTALS	£0	£0	

2.3 What is the total amount (in £ sterling) your organisation is requesting from The Edith M Ellis Trust?

£11,500

2.4 Has your organisation made an application to The Edith M Ellis Trust before?

No

2.5 Please state your organisation's annual turnover (in £ sterling)

£0

2.6 Do you wish to upload your audited accounts or financial statement?

No

2.7 Please tell us where payment should be made if your application is successful

The Community Radio Environment Network

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3.1 Your name

KEVIN PATRICK TINSLEY

3.2 Your contact telephone number

07849676133

3.3 Your position within the organisation

Secretary to the Board of Trustees (voluntary)

3.4 Your email address

kevinpatricktinsley@gmail.com

3.5 Organisation name

Community Radio Environment Network (CREN)

3.6 Please state the status of your organisation

UK registered charity (1212654)

3.7 Please summarise what your organisation does

CREN is a national network for people working at the intersection of sound, climate, and nature, all with the aim of sounding Nature's voice. Its objectives are to achieve benefits for nature and the environment by educating, informing and entertaining through community radio programmes, news, arts projects and national events, like Our Earth Week.

3.8 UK correspondence address for organisation

Kevin Tinsley
Secretary to the Board of CREN Trustees
43 Sommerville Road
Bristol BS7 9AD

3.9 UK telephone number

07849676133

3.10 UK charity number (if applicable)

1212654

3.11 Year established

2025

3.12 Website (if applicable)

<https://thecommunityradioenvironmentnetwork.com/>

3.13 Social media accounts (if applicable)

<https://www.instagram.com/crenvironmentnetwork/>

<https://www.instagram.com/our.earth.week/>

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61553373902391>

4.1 How did you hear about The Edith M Ellis Trust?

Other

4.1b Other

Grants Resources Information News (GRIN), a subscriber database (<https://grin.coop/>)