Ashden Award winners

In 2017 another 13 organisations from around the world joined our very special network, when they won an Ashden Award for their outstanding work. Like us they understand the transformative impact of sustainable energy. With benefits from increasing education and economic opportunities to improving health and well-being, access to sustainable energy is a win for people and planet.

205 Ashden Award winners since 2001

13m tonnes of CO₂ saved annually – equivalent to 3¼ hours of global annual emissions

88m+ lives improved

Solar power is reaching many more households in West Africa thanks to companies like PEG Africa, winner of the 2017 Ashden Award for Innovative Finance.
Ashden winners: the bigger picture

This year’s winners are working across the following areas:

### Clean air
- Big Birmingham Bikes
- Hangzhou Bicycle Service, China
- Nottingham City Council

### Energy for development
- Empower Generation, Nepal
- Futurepump, Kenya
- Mobisol, East Africa
- Pamir Energy, Tajikistan
- PEG Africa, West Africa

### Smart energy
- Ecolibrium Energy, India
- Smarter Grid Solutions, UK

### Sustainable buildings
- Haileybury Youth Trust, Uganda
- Passivhaus Trust, UK
- Switchee Ltd, UK

2017 winners - Previous winners
The Ashden effect

We believe that by finding, highlighting and supporting the best in sustainable energy solutions worldwide we can increase their impact and the number of people benefiting. Winning an Award increases profile and credibility and provides connections – peer to peer, with funders and with investors.

All of our 2016 international winners surveyed saw both a very significant growth in income and an increase in their activity in the year following their win, meaning that they were able to bring the benefits of clean energy, healthy buildings and sustainable transport to hundreds of thousands more families, households and businesses in developing countries.

All our 2016 winners report an increase in profile thanks to winning the Award.

Nazava Water Filters, based in Indonesia, told us that publicity about their win brought considerable attention from the media, funders and others working in the field of water and sanitation. They use the video we made about their work to give their sales presentations a new edge.

Increased credibility is another vital outcome – many report that being an Ashden winner is critical when it comes to securing investment to help them grow, whether raising share equity, debt finance or applying for new government funding.

Greenlight Planet told us that “we proudly display our Ashden Award win in all our booklets, presentations and website – giving us global recognition from a well-known and respected organisation in the field”.

In the UK the story is less straightforward with all our winners facing barriers due to policy uncertainty and low levels of investment. In response to this we are working with UK cities to raise the profile of our Award Winners, create favourable regional policy environments and realise the benefits of sustainable energy to create liveable, resilient, green cities.

“Few charities have Ashden’s reach and impact on energy in developing countries. It supports many of the leading organisations bringing access to clean energy to many thousands of people.”

Kieron Stopforth, Associate, Bloomberg New Energy Finance
Working with our winners

Open Energi
UK

The Award helped Open Energi gain new customers by enhancing credibility in a market where trust is vital. We introduced them to policymakers including the Mayor of London’s Smart Innovation team, and to potential clients and funders. Open Energi also benefited from tailored advice on business growth from our sponsor Impax. The Award money supported product development, opening up new markets for their demand response platform.

“Winning an Ashden Award has provided many opportunities for us to share our story and increase our profile and is helping to fund technology developments which will unlock flexibility from many more sources as the company scales up.”
David Hill
Commercial Director

SunFunder
Tanzania

In the year since winning an Ashden Award for its innovative financing for off-grid solar, SunFunder has had a busy year, moving offices from Arusha to Nairobi, and making the transition from start-up to SME. Over $30 million of vital working capital has now been loaned to solar businesses predominantly in East Africa, up from $8 million when they won. Introductions have been made through Ashden to Citi and SunFunder has also been named a Bloomberg New Energy Pioneer on the back of winning an Ashden Award.

“Ashden’s reputation is based not only on the superb exposure and support it channels to entrepreneurs but also its understanding of the challenges facing the sector – including access to finance for off-grid solar companies. We are grateful to Ashden both for the recognition of SunFunder’s role in solving this financing bottleneck and for shining a light on these issues more widely.”
Ryan Levinson
SunFunder CEO
A platform for winners

Our annual International Conference, chaired by the BBC’s Environment Analyst Roger Harrabin (centre), explored scaling clean energy innovation.

Our International Conference, ‘Scaling Clean Energy Innovation’, covered issues from disruptive innovation and capacity development to sustainable urbanisation. Run in partnership with Bloomberg New Energy Finance and with a high turnout from the financial sector, the conference gave the 2017 Ashden Award winners high profile exposure and meaningful networking opportunities with a key audience.

Later in the week a packed audience heard from former US Vice President Al Gore at our Awards Ceremony. Ten years on from his first keynote speech at the Ashden Awards Ceremony he received a standing ovation for his empassioned speech, as featured by The Guardian and other international media outlets.

“The sustainability revolution has the breadth and magnitude of the industrial revolution but it has the speed of the digital revolution.”
Al Gore
Every year **4.3 million** people die from the effects of indoor air pollution.

**Cooking up a storm**

Last autumn we held our first ever dedicated fundraising event, Party in the Park – Cooking for Life, to raise awareness of the problem of indoor air pollution and the role clean cookstoves can play to reduce it. As well as being an evening to remember with sensational world music and cooking demonstrations from world class chefs, the night culminated in an auction which raised over £100,000.

More than half of the audience on the night were new to Ashden and the money raised is helping us to continue our work supporting clean energy champions around the world.
Sharing knowledge

We have Ashden Alumni all over the UK and a few times a year we bring them together to share industry expertise, network and attend masterclass workshops for key skills like digital media, sales and fundraising. These masterclasses are held by external experts at the Ashden offices in London and in 2017 we welcomed Bank of America Merrill Lynch, CAG Consulting and a former head of campaigns at Greenpeace as speakers.

At the 2017 Ashden Annual Talk – to an audience of Ashden Award winners, MPs, practitioners and investors – speaker Lord Deben, the Chairman of the UK’s Committee on Climate Change, gave an optimistic but balanced analysis of the UK’s progress on meeting its carbon targets.

Our Ashden After Work series brings together Ashden winners, policy makers, funders, investors and energy experts to discuss and debate the serious business of reducing carbon emissions and saving lives.
Seeing is believing

It’s not every day that you get to visit the National Grid control room but, together with 2016 Ashden Award winner Open Energi, we were able to take a group of funders and policy makers to see the effects of demand-side management for themselves. This was one of our series of ‘Seeing is Believing’ events at which we offer unique opportunities for our winners to demonstrate the benefits of sustainable energy in action.

Throughout 2017 we’ve been highlighting the UK’s growing air pollution crisis through our Awards and work with our winners. We devoted one of our Ashden After Work events to the issue — Client Earth’s CEO James Thornton, some of our UK winners and other key stakeholders presented inspiring solutions as well as stark reminders of what more is urgently needed to address the problem.

Big Birmingham Bikes were a joint winner of the 2017 Ashden Award for Clean Air in Towns and Cities along with Nottingham City Council. Both were featured on ITV regional news as a result of their win.
By August 2017
LESS CO₂ had:

Worked with 269 schools across the UK

Cut schools’ CO₂ emissions by 17,000 tonnes

Saved schools £829,000

LESS CO₂, our free energy efficiency programme available to any UK school, continued to go from strength to strength this year and saw a 71% increase in the number of schools that participated compared with the previous year.

On average, schools that take part save 14% of their energy spend in addition to lowering their CO₂ emissions. In the coming year, with the help of LESS CO₂’s founding partner Bank of America Merrill Lynch, we will be looking to recruit more schools in areas of social and economic deprivation. In order to really embed best practice in energy saving, we are aiming to deliver the programme to even more schools by 2021. Find out more at lessco2.org.uk
Looking forward

Our call for entries for the 2018 Awards uncovered some fascinating trends. In rapidly expanding mega-cities we are seeing ‘big data’ and communications technology being harnessed by local innovators to tackle congestion and pollution. As communities in the developing world are electrified for the first time, we are seeing a significant shift from energy being used in the home to expansion into activities like milling and agri-processing. In the UK we are seeing greater market disruption with more sophisticated community energy initiatives, the adoption of blockchain and other digital innovation.

In India, although mobility is improving, we have seen less innovation in off-grid energy access — grist to our mill as we recognise the global importance of getting sustainable energy right in India where we are working to effect greater change.

Green cities will be a key theme for Ashden in 2018 as well as continuing support to winners and development of the Ashden India Collective.
The impact Ashden and its winners are having could not be achieved without the commitment of the companies, foundations and individuals who so generously support our work.

If, like us, you believe that sustainable energy is vital to shaping a better world, why not become a part of the story? You could sponsor an Ashden Award, help fund our programme work, or become an Ashden Friend.

Find out more about supporting Ashden
Contact our Director of Development Ed Dean on +44 (0)20 7630 2916 or email edward.dean@ashden.org
Or visit our website ashden.org/support-us/supporting-ashden