



THE
**RURAL ENERGY
COMMUNITY**
ADVISORY HUB



Technical Assistance Guidance Document





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Introduction

The Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub is an initiative on behalf of the European Commission that has the mission of empowering the development of community energy action in European rural areas. The key activities of the Advisory Hub are supporting rural community and energy transition projects to identify best practices, providing technical assistance to selected rural energy communities, and providing networking opportunities to local stakeholders. The rural energy communities that will receive technical assistance from the Advisory Hub will serve as examples of rural energy communities that should inspire widespread, socially inclusive energy transition efforts in the rural areas. The Advisory Hub will work in tandem with the EU Covenant of Mayors network, the European Network for Rural Development, and the EU initiative [Energy Communities Repository](#). For more detailed information about the Advisory Hub and its activities, you can learn more [here](#)

The Advisory Hub will provide direct technical assistance to rural energy communities selected via one call for applications. The technical assistance in the form of expert support will help improve the development and implementation of projects in a variety of areas, depending on the need of each individual rural energy community. Please note that one rural energy community can request **multiple technical assistance activities** within one application.

This document provides guidelines for the submission of applications from interested rural energy communities.

The Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub and the Energy Communities Repository

In parallel with the Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub, the Energy Communities Repository will be providing technical assistance to non-rural energy communities. Due to the similarity in focus, the two EU projects closely collaborate to ensure that there is no overlap in activities. Please note that it is not possible to receive support from both EU projects, so you are strongly encouraged to apply for the most suitable initiative for technical support.

Both projects will assess the eligibility of a received application for technical assistance according to the joint understanding of what is a rural energy community and determine if the application falls under the remit of their project. In case it is determined by the Advisory Hub that the received application is not eligible for this project, the received application could be transferred to the Energy Communities Repository. This will allow your application to be assessed by the Energy Communities Repository to determine if your application is eligible for the provision of their technical support.



Who can apply?

Applications can be submitted by specifically **rural energy communities**; this is understood to be energy communities per the definition of the European Union¹²³ (i.e. Renewable Energy Communities or Citizen Energy Communities) of which the community itself and/or its activities/project(s) are located in rural areas. The project uses the [Degree of Urbanisation](#) (DEGURBA). DEGURBA is a classification that indicates the characteristics of an area, and based on the share of local population living in urban clusters and urban centres, DEGURBA classifies Local Administrative Unites (LAU) into three types of areas:

1. Cities
2. Towns and suburbs
3. Rural areas

If an energy community and/or the activities/project(s) of an energy community are located in an LAU classified as a 'rural area' per the DEGURBA classification, the energy community is considered a rural energy community. Consequently, the energy community would fall within the remits of the Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub and be eligible for technical support. Energy communities that have activities related to the energy technology biogas (e.g. pumping) would be automatically classified as rural energy communities as well.

For example, an energy community is officially registered as a cooperative (legal entity) in Brussels and has its main activities/project(s) in Brussels as well. Per the DEGURBA classification, this location is a city and so this energy community would not be classified as a rural energy community. However, if this same energy community has its main activities/project(s) located in Hoogstraten, it would be classified as a rural energy community as the location of the main activities/project(s) of the community are in a location that is classified as a rural area per the DEGURBA classification. Furthermore, if the main activities/project(s) of this energy community located in Brussels are related to the energy technology biogas, it would also be seen as a rural energy community no matter the location of the energy community or its main activities.

Eligibility criteria

Please see below a table with the eligibility criteria that a rural energy community must meet to be eligible for technical assistance support from the Advisory Hub.

Eligibility criteria	
Criteria	Description
1. Energy Community	The community fits within the EU definitions (i.e. Citizens Energy Community (CEC) or a Renewable Energy Community (REC)) for energy communities, based on activities of the community, membership, participation structure, governance / actors in control, and its primary purpose.

¹ [the Recast Renewable Energy Directive](#)

² [the Recast Internal Electricity Market Directive](#)

³ [Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on common rules for the internal markets in renewable and natural gases and in hydrogen](#)



Activities	<p>RECs can cover a range of activities referring to all forms of renewable energy in the electricity and heating sectors, and are entitled to produce, consume, store, and sell renewable energy, including through renewables power purchase agreements, to share renewable energy within the community, and to access all suitable markets</p> <p>CECs can operate within the electricity sector and can cover all types of electricity (i.e. renewable and fossil-fuel based (i.e. technology neutral)), and may engage in generation, including from renewable sources, distribution, supply, consumption, aggregation, energy storage, energy efficiency services or charging services for electric vehicles or provide other energy services to its members or shareholders</p>
Membership	<p>For RECs, participants can be natural persons, micro, small, and medium enterprises, or local authorities, including municipalities, whose participation does not constitute their primary economic activity and are in the proximity of the energy community.</p> <p>For CECs, participants can be all categories of entities (e.g. natural persons, local authorities (including municipalities), public companies, associations, and micro, small, medium and large enterprises whose participation does not constitute their primary economic activity)</p>
Participation structure	<p>In accordance with the applicable national law, participation is open to local entities based on open and voluntary participation for RECs.</p> <p>Membership of CECs is based on voluntary and open participation and open to all categories of entities but decision-making power should be held only by those members or shareholders that are not engaged in large-scale commercial activity and for which the energy sector does not constitute a primary area of economic activity</p>
Governance of the community / Actors in control	<p>RECs should be effectively controlled by participants that are located in the proximity of the renewable energy projects that are owned and developed by the community and whose primary economic activity is not in the energy sector</p> <p>CECs should be effectively controlled by natural persons, local authorities (including municipalities), or small enterprises.</p>
Primary purpose	<p>The primary goal of the community is to provide environmental, economic, or social community benefits to its shareholders, members, and/or the local areas where the community operates rather than financial profits.</p>
2. Geographical scope	<p>The community and/or the activities/projects of the community must be located in a rural area as defined by the Degree of Urbanisation classification within the borders of the European Union.</p>
3. Organisational / legal form of the community	<p>The composition of the community has to fall into one of three categories: a legal entity, an informal community of actors, or a collective of actors.</p>
4. Eligibility of members	<p>All community members must be eligible to participate in the project per EU regulations.</p>
5. Commitment of members	<p>Members of the community must show to be committed to the community, its project(s), and its longevity, demonstrated by a letter of intent signed by various members (three to five) of the community.</p>
6. Primary community representative	<p>One community member will function as the representative of the community and will be responsible for all communication between the applying community and the Advisory Hub providing the technical assistance.</p>

Types of Technical Assistance support available

The support by the Advisory Hub involves the provision of a wide range of technical assistance services tailored to the needs of rural energy communities. One rural energy community can request **multiple technical assistance services** within one application. Technical assistance will be provided in the form of **extensive support** (extensive tailored support when the mobilisation of significant resources in time of expertise and time is



deemed necessary; 20+ expert days) or **concise support** (concise targeted support for straightforward and clear activities; up to 5 expert days). The table below provides an overview of potential areas, though it is not an exhaustive list.

Category of support	Examples of support	Examples of activities
Investment financial assistance &	Support to develop a business plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Providing guidance on how to develop a business plan ▶ Drafting of a business plan or review of a business plan ▶ Interviews with key local stakeholders
	Support to develop a financing/investment model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mapping of existing financing/investment models ▶ Providing guidance and assistance to the develop and preparation of a suitable financing/investment model ▶ Review of a financing/investment model (if existing) ▶ Risk assessment
	Identification of public and/or private funding and financial support available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mapping of relevant EU funding available ▶ Mapping of national and/or regional funding and support schemes available ▶ Mapping of private (co)funding options ▶ Matchmaking with potential private investors
Technology- and system-related advice	Advice on energy technology, efficiency, and system-related topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mapping of potential REC activities suitable for the given context (e.g. production, sale, supply, aggregation, collective self-consumption, sharing, distribution, energy services, electro-mobility services, etc.) ▶ Mapping and sizing of potential and suitable technology options for the given project ▶ Advice on demand flexibility, energy efficiency measures, storage and peer-to-peer trading within energy communities, and between energy communities and the market, including on technologies (e.g. blockchain) ▶ Support with grid connection process ▶ Assistance with the preparation of energy audits
Legal/regulatory support	Legal advice for the establishment and governance of projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assessing the relevant national and local legal and regulatory framework and identifying the opportunities and challenges for the realisation of the project ▶ Legal advice for the establishment of a rural energy community / energy project to determine which ownership and legal form is best suited to the selected beneficiaries (e.g. cooperatives, partnerships, companies with a community interest, foundations, non-for profit organisations, trusts, associations, etc.)
	Legal advice for operationalizing and implementing of projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Legal advice for overcoming regulatory challenges faced by the beneficiary in the specific local circumstances (e.g. land management, local planning laws, environmental permitting, etc.) ▶ Facilitating interaction with local/regional authorities
Communication support	Promoting the activities of the rural energy community,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Preparation of promotion articles (e.g. blog posts, press-statements for local written or online newspapers, etc.); banners, posters, brochures, booklets, flyers; social media content; support



	including at the local level	and guidance on outreach, communication and promotion strategies
Capacity development and knowledge transfer support	Providing capacity development and knowledge transfer activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provision of trainings and transfer knowledge workshops on relevant topics of interest for several beneficiaries or identified as common / cross-cutting challenges for similar projects ▶ Assistance with the organisation of peer-to-peer exchanges between the beneficiary and another community

How to apply

To apply for technical assistance, applicants must fill in and submit the application form electronically via EUSurvey. The application form can be completed in any of the 24 official EU languages. The full list of questions is included later in this document, along with guidance notes for answering each of them.

Applications can be submitted from 5 September 2022 until 31 December 2022. They will be assessed in two rounds: a first round of applications will be assessed after 31 October 2022, and a second round of applications will be assessed once the last call closes on 31 December 2022.

The information included in the application for technical assistance will be considered sensitive and confidential. Personal data will be processed pursuant to existing law applicable to data protection in the European Union.

The application process

The application process is designed to make a final selection among the rural energy communities that will receive technical assistance from the Advisory Hub. The application process works as follow:

Steps	Explanation
Application submission	The applicant completes and submits the online application form before the final date of the call for applications (31 December 2022)
Pre-assessment	The Advisory Hub will perform a pre-assessment check on the received applications to determine if the applying rural energy communities is eligible to receive technical assistance from the Advisory Hub. In case of unclarities or gaps, applicants will be contacted to provide clarifications. Applications from communities that are not eligible to receive assistance from the Advisory Hub could be exchanged to the related project, Energy Communities Repository, to be assessed based on their eligibility criteria. Non-eligible applicants will be duly informed after the finalisation of this step.
Assessment	Eligible applications will be evaluated by specifically selected members of the Advisory Hub to assess which of the applying rural energy communities would benefit the most from receiving technical assistance from the Advisory Hub. This will be done based on a set of assessment criteria, which are provided later in this Guidance Note.
Selection	Based on the assessment of the applications, the experts that are part of the Advisory Hub will develop a list of rural energy communities that they propose to select to receive technical assistance. The proposed list is reviewed and approved by the European Commission.



Notification

Applying rural energy communities will be informed about the outcome of their application. Feedback will be provided to Communities that are not selected, and they will be encouraged to re-submit an improved application if applicable.

The application process is designed to encourage applications, not to exclude them. If an application is not selected during the first assessment round, the rural energy community can re-apply with an improved application for the second assessment round; the first round of applications will be evaluated after 31 October 2022, and the second round of applications will be evaluated after 31 December 2022. 31 December 2022 is also the closing date for the application process.

The implementation process

Following the notification that an application has been selected, the Advisory Hub will contact the successful rural energy communities and in cooperation with them, design a tailored programme for the provision of technical assistance for that specific rural energy community. The process for developing the programme for the provision of technical assistance will be as follows:

Steps	
Preparation of technical assistance	The Advisory Hub will assign a suitable Expert for the necessary technical assistance support, and in direct cooperation with the rural energy community and assigned Expert develop a specific Terms of Reference and a tailored workplan for the execution of the technical assistance
Execution of technical assistance	Based on the agreed workplan, the Expert will execute the agreed upon technical assistance. During the implementation period, the Advisory Hub will remain in contact with the Expert and rural energy community to ensure the support is being executed properly and to mitigate any potential issues.
Feedback on technical assistance	Once the Expert has finalised the technical assistance, the Advisory Hub will interact with both the rural energy community and the Expert to gather feedback which will be part of the overall learning cycle of the Advisory Hub.

If additional follow-up support is necessary after the technical assistance provided, the rural energy communities can reach out to the Advisory Hub directly and ask for **extension support** (up to 5 expert days). This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. More information about this procedure will be made available to selected rural energy communities at a later stage.

Assessment criteria

The application process as described above will help the members of the Advisory Hub decide if a rural energy community is eligible to receive technical assistance as well as assess how the requested technical assistance could support the rural energy community. They will look for evidence that the applying rural energy community has a clear understanding of what it needs to do to further develop, how the technical assistance would help in achieving their objectives, and that the rural energy community is committed to actively working with the allocated expert(s).



This assessment of applications will be done based on a set of predetermined assessment criteria. To improve the chances of being selected, it is strongly advised to **clearly show in the application how the rural energy community fulfils the assessment criteria**. They are as follow:

Assessment criteria	
1. Type of actors	The rural energy community exists out of a varied collective of members (e.g. natural persons; micro, small, medium, large enterprises, local authorities, etc.) all with a vested interest in the project and its outcome(s).
2. Level of maturity	The level of maturity of the rural energy community is clear (e.g. <i>setting-up, developing, operating</i>), as well as how the assistance would help the community develop further.
3. Level of future sustainability	The rural energy community has a vision on how to stay active in the long-term and that the assistance would be beneficial for the sustainability of the community (e.g. longevity of the rural energy community).
4. Need of assistance	The rural energy community clearly explains why it needs external technical assistance and within which timeframe.
5. Type of assistance	The rural energy community clearly explains what type(s) of assistance it is requesting to resolve the identified need(s).
6. Impact of the assistance	The rural energy community clearly explains how it envisions the requested assistance to help resolve the identified need(s) of the community (e.g. specific results & outcomes)
7. Level of reasonability	The requested assistance is reasonable considering the nature of the application.
8. Level of scope & resources	The requested assistance is within the scope (e.g. timeframe) and resources of the envisioned technical assistance.
9. Support from local authority	A rural energy community can show to have the support of a local and/or public authority, either in the form of a letter of intent, membership, or another proof.
10. Best practice potential	The rural energy community could inspire socially inclusive energy transitions efforts in rural areas. This means that the community demonstrates an innovative design, form, or activities which demonstrate interesting potential for broader uptake.
11. Support from EU/national/regional schemes	The community is currently not supported by any other EU/national/regional schemes.
12. Commitment of human resources	The rural energy community demonstrates strong commitment and adequate capacity to collaborate and engage in the process of technical assistance.

Contact the Advisory Hub

For questions concerning the application form and/or process, you can contact the Advisory Hub at rech@ecorys.com. Before contacting the Advisory Hub, we encourage you to carefully read this guidance note



and the application form itself. Please note that under no circumstance advice will be given on how to improve an application from a rural energy community or matters related to this. Advice will only be given on technical aspects related to the application form and application process for technical assistance of the Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub.



Question guidance for the application form

This annex lists all questions included in the application form and provides the applicant with further information to help make the application a success. Please contact rechah@ecorys.com for any queries regarding the application form or process.

Question		Guidance
Part 1 – Eligibility		
Please answer the questions below in order to determine if the applying energy community can be classified as either a Renewable Energy Community or a Citizens Energy Community based on the EU definitions		In order to be eligible for the provision of technical assistance, the applicant has to be an energy community as defined by the EU in the Recast Renewable Energy Directive or the Recast Internal Electricity Market Directive . These directives define two types of energy communities: Renewable Energy Communities and Citizen Energy Communities. The two forms of energy communities differ on various points and the following questions will help to establish if and what type of energy community the applicant is.
	What is the energy technology (or multiple technologies) the rural energy community focuses on?	Only pick the technologies that are the main focus of the rural energy community.
	In case of 'other', please describe	Be direct and use clear language
	What type of activities does the rural energy community focus on?	Only pick the activities that are part of the main activities / project(s) of the rural energy community.
	In case of 'other', please describe	Be direct and use clear language
	What types of actors can become a member and/or shareholder of the rural energy community?	Multiple answers are possible; make sure you include all relevant types of actors.
	What types of actors are currently members of the rural energy community?	Indicate the members that have officially committed to being a part of the rural energy community, those parties that are at the moment of submission of the application are simply interested do not have to be indicated.
	What is the voting system of the rural energy community?	Be as explicit and conclusive as possible in your explanation of the used voting system in case none of the proposed options are a good fit for the system used.
	In case of 'other', please describe	Be direct and use clear language
	Which actors have voting rights in the rural energy community?	Multiple answers are possible; make sure you include all relevant types of actors.



Question		Guidance
	Which actors have majority in the voting rights in the rural energy community?	Multiple answers are possible; make sure you include all relevant types of actors.
	Which actors can become a board member in the rural energy community?	Multiple answers are possible; make sure you include all relevant types of actors.
	Which actors are currently board members in the rural energy community?	Multiple answers are possible; make sure you include all relevant types of actors.
	If applicable, what is the mission statement of the rural energy community (e.g. statutory objective)?	Please indicate what the goals and objectives (i.e. mission) of the rural energy community are; be as explicit and conclusive as possible.
	Where is your rural energy community based (e.g. registration of legal entity if applicable)?	<p>This information will be used to determine if the energy community is located in an area classified as 'rural area' per the stipulations of the Degree of Urbanisation.</p> <p>Note that the applying energy community and/or its main activities has to be located in area classified as 'rural areas' per the Degree of Urbanisation classification in order to be eligible for the provision of technical assistance by the Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub.</p>
	If different from the legal address, what is the geographical location of the main activities/projects of the rural energy community?	<p>This question is optional and can be skipped by rural energy communities that have yet to start implemented activities/project(s).</p> <p>This information will be used to determine if the rural energy community is located in an area classified as 'rural area' per the stipulations of the Degree of Urbanisation.</p> <p>Note that the applying energy community and/or its main activities has to be located in area classified as 'rural areas' per the Degree of Urbanisation classification in order to be eligible for the provision of technical assistance by the Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub.</p>
	What is the arrangement of the rural energy community?	Pick one of the options provided.
	If the answer is 'legal entity': Please indicate the legal form	In case the rural energy community has a legal form, pick one of the options provided.
	In case of 'other', please describe	Be direct and use clear language
	Please provide a Letter of Intent signed by three to five community members to show the commitment of the rural energy community	It is important that the rural energy community Representative and various other members dedicate the necessary time to collaborate and engage with the expert(s). This is to ensure that the provided support will be useful and adapted to the community.



Question	Guidance
Who will be the rural energy community Representative that is the primary contact person for this application and the technical support services if granted?	The Representative will be the responsible person representing the members of the rural energy community for the application and technical assistance support. The Representative must be available and entitled to work in collaboration with the supporting expert(s) in case of successful application. The applicant is asked to provide the name of the Representative, the role within the rural energy community, and contact information.
To ensure adequate administrative, technical, and political support for this application, I confirm that I am authorised by the other members of the rural energy community in the role of the rural energy community Representative to submit this application	Confirm that the Representative has been authorised by members of the rural energy community to submit the application.
Part 2 – General Information	
What is the name of the rural energy community?	Provide the full name of the applying rural energy community; if an acronym is commonly used, provide this as well.
Please provide a general description of the rural energy community and its key-objectives.	Describe the most important aspects of the rural energy community to give a general idea of the what, the why, and the how of the rural energy community.
Please answer the following questions to establish in what stage the applying rural energy community currently is (i.e. setting-up, developing, operating);	<p>The Advisory Hub has identified three different stages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Starting up → The rural energy community is in its starting phase and has yet to start its activities; it is establishing legal structures, administration, governance style, etc. 2. Developing → The rural energy community is continuing to develop and has started to identify potential activities / project(s), making risk assessments, and preparing to start activities. 3. Operating → The rural energy community has started to implement activities / project(s) and is operating as a functioning rural energy community.
	When was the rural energy community established?
	Please provide the month and year of when the legal form of the rural energy community was established; if there is not yet a legal form, please indicate the month and year in which the first steps of setting-up the rural energy community were taken.
	Does the rural energy community have a vision document?
	The vision document outlines the ambitions for the future of the rural energy community, as well as key objective(s) to achieve these. If this question is answered with 'Yes', the rural energy community is understood to be, at minimum, in the setting-up phase.
	Does the rural energy community have a business plan?
	A business plan describes the types of services the rural energy community will provide, the service offer, and/or preliminary financial plan, and/or an analysis of the market that the rural energy community are planning on engaging in. If this question is answered with 'Yes', the rural energy community is understood to be in, at minimum, the developing phase.



Question		Guidance
	Does the rural energy community have a legal form?	This refers to the registration of your legal entity with the notary and/or the establishment of a founding capital. If this question is answered with 'Yes', the rural energy community is understood to be in, at minimum, the developing phase.
	Has the rural energy community started operating its activities/project(s)?	i.e. Has the rural energy community started to build a wind turbine, provided a supply contract, provided flexibility aggregation services, etc. If this question is answered with 'Yes', the rural energy community is understood to be in the operating phase.
If applicable, what is the business model of the rural energy community?		Indicate which business model the rural energy community has.
	If case of 'other', please describe	Be direct and use clear language
Has the rural energy community received any direct support (e.g. financial or any other form) from other EU, national, or regional scheme?		Indicate any type of direct support that the rural energy community has or is currently receiving. We would like to know about any type of support given, no matter the shape or form.
	In case of 'yes', please explain what the additional support that is needed would be that is not already covered by the other schemes.	Be direct and use clear language
Does the rural energy community have support of a local authority (incl. municipalities)? The support should apply specifically to the project(s) and has to be confirmed in some form (e.g. membership, a letter of intent, email, any other form of proof).		Note that this support can be shown in many forms; for instance the participation of an authority to the rural energy community would show support, as would a simply email from the municipality stating that they back the activities.
Would you be comfortable in cooperating in English for the provision of the technical assistance?		Please note that this is for our information only, and there is not a language prerequisite for the provision of technical assistance.
	If not, please indicate the language(s) you are comfortable in cooperating.	Be sure to only choose those languages you are truly comfortable in communicating about topics related to the rural energy community.
Part 3 –Technical assistance		
Why does the rural energy community require external technical support? Please specify for which activity / project technical assistance is needed		Explain why the rural energy community needs technical support by describing its challenges, bottlenecks, etc. This question will be used to determine the need for technical assistance for the rural energy community



Question		Guidance
How do you expect the requested assistance to support the rural energy community?		Explain how the requested technical assistance would support the rural energy community and its further development. This question will be used to determine how the technical assistance would help develop the rural energy community further.
What type(s) of assistance would the rural energy community want to receive?		Note that a rural energy community <u>can</u> apply for multiple types of technical assistance; there is no need to submit multiple application focusing on different types of activities. Carefully consider what type and number of technical assistance activities the rural energy community would need; this will be considered to determine the reasonability of the application.
	Main categories of technical assistance support	Pick the overarching category(ies) in which the rural energy community would like to receive support
	Types of support	Pick the overarching type(s) in which the rural energy community would like to receive support
	Specific support activities	Pick the specific support activity(ies) for which the rural energy community would like to receive support.
Are you committing to dedicate the necessary time and resources to work in collaboration with the provided experts?		It is important that the rural energy community Representative and various other members dedicate the necessary time to collaborate and engage with the expert(s).
Part 4 – Other information		
Please provide any other relevant information you may find relevant for the application.		This field is not mandatory; It is an opportunity to provide information that could strengthen the application. Note that there is the possibility to upload a document.
In case this application is considered more suitable for the support offered by the Energy Community Repository, I hereby consent to having our application transferred to the Energy Community Repository		It could occur that your application for technical support and all the information included in the application will be exchanged among the two projects based on eligibility criteria. For instance, when it is determined that an applying energy community is not considered to be a rural energy community and your application falls outside the remits of this project, it could be transferred to the other project for assessment.
I hereby declare that the details presented above in this application form are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I understand that any wilful dishonesty may render for refusal of this application.		If it becomes clear that incorrect information is given on purpose which interferes with the eligibility or assessment of the application, it could be a reason to outright reject the application.

