

Guidance Notes

Department for Communities

2021/2022 Small Capital Grants

1. Overview

Co-operation Ireland has been appointed by the Department for Communities (DfC) as the Intermediary Funding Body for the 2021/22 Small Capital Grants Programme for Northern Ireland. The purpose of this fund is to promote Partnership and Collaboration within the voluntary and Community sector.

2. Who can apply?

1.	Applications must include a minimum of 2 organisations. Those applying must nominate a lead partner to whom the whole of the grant will be paid. The Lead Partner should complete the application form.
2.	The amount of grant available will be dependent on the number of partners within the application: 2 partner groups = can apply for up to £1,500 3 - 4 partner groups = can apply for up to £3,500 5+ partner groups = can apply for up to maximum £5,000
3.	To be eligible for grant assistance (grants between £1,500 – £5,000), applicants must be constituted voluntary or community sector organisations located in Northern Ireland, with an annual unrestricted income of less than £100,000 per year. ("Unrestricted" income relates to funds that the non-profit organisation may use for any purpose. "Restricted" income relates to funds whose use is restricted by a particular purpose and must be used in a specified period e.g. grant offer from a Funding Body)
4.	Applicant groups need to have been established for at least 1 year and submit annual accounts with application form
5.	Applicants must deliver the project, pay supplier(s) and submit a grant claim by 31 st March 2022.

3. What types of items can be funded

1.	Partners can apply for a wide range of capital items, such as office equipment, furniture, sports goods, kitchen fittings and minor capital works to improve premises. Please note that clothing and consumables e.g. ink, paper, etc. are ineligible
2.	Please note that applications for capital works e.g. works involving construction activities, will only be accepted from either the owner or leaseholder of the property concerned.

The Lead Partner must supply the following:

1	A completed online application form.
2	Partnership Agreements, completed and signed by each partner organisation.
3	A signed copy of the Lead Partners Constitution
4	A copy of the most recent Bank Statement for the Lead Partner
5	A copy of the Lead Partners most recent audited accounts or financial statement
6	A minimum of 2 quotations from 2 different suppliers for the items requested in application (N.B. Quotations must be from suppliers who normally supply these items)
7	For projects involving work to your building/land, a copy of your lease or proof of ownership
8	If applicable, a copy of the Planning Permission / Building Control approval letter

5. What cannot be funded

1	Individuals, Sole traders and / or Commercial trading companies
2	Companies that exist to distribute a profit
3	Statutory Authorities or organisations governed by Statutory Authorities
4	Schools or other educational establishments
5	Appeals or charities set up to support statutory bodies
6	Organisations with an annual unrestricted income greater than £100,000
7	Items for which the partners have received funding from the Small Capital Grant Programme in the past 3 years
8	Costs already incurred – an application cannot be made for capital items that have already been ordered or received before the date of issue of a Letter of Offer
9	Second-hand equipment (unless prior approval is received from Co-operation Ireland).

6. Management of Applications

1	The closing date for receipt of applications is 12 noon Friday 25 th June 2021. Applications will be assessed once they are received and it is recommended that applications are submitted as soon as the necessary documents are available.
2	Applications will be competitively assessed against the criteria noted in Section 7.
3	We intend to issue Contracts for Funding in August 2021 and all expenditure must be incurred by 31 st March 2022;
4	In the event of over-subscription, the Department for Communities reserves the right to re-profile the amounts of grant awarded. Applicants may be placed on a reserve list in case further funding becomes available.
5	If successful, grant is paid retrospectively upon receipt of a completed claim form and supporting documentation as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant payment request form (appended to Contract for Funding) - Transaction schedule (appended to Contract for Funding) - Invoices - Quotations - Bank statement to verify payment to suppliers - Supplier invoices must be to one of the partners named on the application (or to their representatives). Invoices to organisations other than the partner groups will be ineligible for grant aid
7	Requests for advance payment of 50% grant will be considered based on the reasonableness of each individual request. Advance requests must be submitted using a Payment Request Form and include a bank statement which evidences the needs for an advance payment.

7. Programme Objectives

Applicants must ensure that their application meets **ALL** of the programme objectives:

- **Objective 1 – Range and quality of services**
- **Objective 2 – Partnership and collaboration**
- **Objective 3 – Enhanced good relations**
- **Objective 4 – Enhanced capacity to deliver services:**

Outcome benefits have been established for each objective and applications will be competitively scored against these outcome benefits - applicants should therefore detail how their project meets each individual outcome benefit.

Objective 1 – Range and quality of services:

Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will help improve the range and quality of services for the local community. The anticipated outcome benefits of this objective are:

- Improved range of services on offer to the local community;
- Improved quality of services on offer to the local community
- Improved accessibility to services.

Objective 2 – Partnership and collaboration:

Applicants must detail how their organisation works in partnership and collaborates with other groups. A Partnership/Consortium Agreement form is attached to the application form and this must be completed and signed by each organisation and returned with the application form.

The anticipated outcome benefits of this objective are:

- Increased connectivity within the local Community and Voluntary sector; and
- Improved understanding of the local services available within a given locality.

Objective 3 – Enhanced good relations:

Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will tackle obstacles to good relations within and/or between local communities. The anticipated outcome benefits of this objective are:

- Increased collaborative working between groups from different community backgrounds; and
- Improved effective cross community and cross cultural partnerships designed to adopt a pragmatic approach to shared evidenced need.

Objective 4 – Enhanced capacity to deliver services:

Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will lead to enhanced capacity to deliver services in their local community. The anticipated outcome benefits of this objective are:

- Improved opportunities to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of voluntary organisations in delivering local services; and
- Increased capacity within organisations to access public funding.

N.B. If the programme is over-subscribed, Co-operation Ireland reserves the right to adopt additional assessment criteria.

How do organisations apply to the Small Capital Grants Programme?

Due to the restrictions caused by Covid-19, the 2021/22 Small Capital Grants Programme will be managed using an online application process.

Applications to the fund must be made using the following link:

<https://cooperationireland.org/projects/small-capital-grants-programme/>

Once an application has been submitted, the contact person will receive two e-mails, which will enable access a secure, password protected web-folder. These e-mails acknowledge that the application has been received and provides guidance on how to upload information to the web-folder. All the documents that are required to support the application must be uploaded to this web-folder within 72 hours of submitting the application.

Applications received after the deadline of 12 noon on Friday 25th June 2021 will not be accepted.

If you have any enquiries about the programme or are unable to submit an online application please email smallcapitalgrants@cooperationireland.org or if you have any technical issues please telephone 028 90321462