



Community Support Schemes 2026

Closing Date: 23rd January 2026 @ 4pm

Galway County Council recognises that local communities are one of our greatest resources, and in recognition of this has developed the Community Support Schemes to provide financial support to Community and Voluntary Groups and Organisations for a diverse range of events and projects. This year, we have added 2 further Support Schemes to promote environmental development projects and sports participation and development, and we hope you will find them of benefit.

Purpose:

The purpose of the support schemes is to encourage and promote community and voluntary groups to take an active part in the development of their communities, and to improve all aspects of their surrounding areas by funding projects and events which are of benefit to the wider community.

How much is funded?

Funding will be awarded under the Community Support Schemes subject to the applicant meeting the minimum match funding proportion – the maximum grant which will be awarded under any Support Scheme will generally not exceed €3,000, unless specified in the scheme criteria. Groups must hold a Bank or Credit Union Account in their legal name. As the funding represents a contribution towards the overall cost of projects/events, groups must submit their up-to-date statement showing sufficient funds are on hand to finance the balance. To fully assess the financial viability of projects/events, applicants must also fully declare any additional Council, agency or governmental funding or grant-aid associated with their activities.

Who can apply?

Any community and voluntary group and non-profit making organisation who is registered as either a Voluntary Non-Profit Making Organisation or Charity by the Revenue Commissioners and carry out community initiatives which are of public benefit to the wider community (Schools can apply under Heritage and Irish Language Promotion Activities categories). Applicants must be located and/or have a significant proportion of their activities within the administrative area of Galway County Council - applicants whose activity is across the city and county must clearly demonstrate the proportion / percentage of activity in both. Organisations must have no outstanding debt owing to the Council.

Individual persons or individual businesses are not eligible to apply for funding. Organisations that receive substantial core funding from other Government Departments are generally not eligible to apply unless their core funding does not cover the project/activity and it is contributing towards the delivery of Council objectives, e.g., Green School activities contributing to Tidy Towns activities, extra-curricular activities of Schools promoting the Irish language.

Is it important to be a member of the PPN?

Priority will be given to members of the PPN, therefore, please ensure your Group is registered at <https://www.galwaycountypn.ie/registration-form/>

What types of proposals are considered?

The proposals which can be funded are separated into 5 Support Schemes which are aimed at promoting sustainable economic, community, cultural, environmental and sports development - please go to the online form for each Scheme to check the specific eligibility criteria. To ensure that

the limited financial resources available are used to the maximum benefit of the community at large, the following general conditions apply to all proposals:

- c) Projects/Events must be of benefit to the wider community by promoting wellbeing and quality of life for all citizens, or by making the area more attractive to residents, visitors & tourists.
- c) Purchase of equipment is eligible only if it is required in relation to the project/event being proposed in the application.
- c) Routine operational costs such as wages/utilities/insurance cannot be funded.

Quotations:

All applicants must submit a minimum of 1 quotation for each expenditure item up to €3,000 for which grant funding is sought (e-mailed or written quotes, excerpt from catalogue). The Council encourages applicants to '**SHOP LOCAL**' where possible as collectively, this can make a big difference to the local economy.

How to apply:

The award process will be as follows:

- All applications must be made online enclosing all compulsory supporting documentation.
- Applicants may make a maximum of 1 application per Support Scheme.
- All applications must be received on or before the closing date – no exceptions will be made.
- All applications must comply with the eligibility requirements - ineligible applicants will be notified.

How will my application be assessed?

Applications for financial assistance usually exceed the funds available, therefore, all applications fulfilling the conditions may not be successful or may be for a lesser amount. It is important therefore that the process of evaluation is rigorous, to ensure that the best projects, taking all factors into account, emerge and receive support. Applications will be assessed by senior staff across all disciplines who will collectively agree recommendations based on budgetary constraints, quality and priority of applications. A list of recommended applications will be referred for approval at the earliest available Council meeting, and notifications to applicants will issue immediately afterwards.

How will I know if my group has been successful?

Successful applications will receive a Letter of Offer (Form A) which forms the contract between the Council and applicant, and this must be signed and returned within 14 days from the date of offer, otherwise, the Council reserves the right to re-assign the grant aid.

What conditions apply to carrying out our project/works/event?

Applicants must comply with the Terms and Conditions relating to the Community Support Scheme which are set out at the end of this document.

How do I draw down the grant?

Funding is allocated on an annual basis and cannot be carried forward. You must carry out the project or proposal and submit your drawdown application within 30 days of the event, or in the case of projects/works, no later than 31st October (unless agreement to defer grant has been approved for exceptional circumstances). Your drawdown application must include the following:

- e) Completed Project Completion Report (Form B)
- e) Official Invoices on the headed paper of the supplier detailing the expenditure items and excerpt from your Bank Statement showing cleared payments.

- e) Photographs of events held, OR, before and after photos of improvements to amenities/facilities
By submitting photos, the applicant is giving permission to the Council to use the image(s) for promotional purposes, and confirming they have the permission of the photographer and any people who appear in the photo.
- e) Proof of acknowledgement of Galway County Council funding for the event/works.
- e) E-Tax Clearance Certificate is required for applicants who have received grant-aid of €10,000 or over in a calendar year.

Freedom of Information:

The Freedom of Information Act applies to all records held by Galway County Council.

Data Protection:

It is the responsibility of each Group/Organisation to ensure they comply with the General Data Protection Regulations. By submitting their application, applicants agree to the processing and disclosure of the applicant's information by Galway County Council, and to other third parties if required, for Fund administration, reporting, evaluation and audit purposes; and successful applicants further consent to the disclosure of this information (e.g. name of successful applicant, amount of award, event details, etc.) by these parties in connection with the marketing or promotion of the Grant Scheme. Galway County Council agrees to employ appropriate measures to keep applicants' data safe and secure; to prevent its unauthorized or accidental disclosure, access or alteration; and to ensure that personal data will be processed only in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Data Protection legislation.

Corporate Governance:

Grantees will be required to comply with the highest standard of transparency and accountability as documented in Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 - Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds <http://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/per/2014/13.pdf>
The overall principle is that there should be transparency and accountability in the management of public funds, in line with economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The circular outlines, for example, that grant recipients should not dispose of publicly funded assets without prior approval.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SCHEME

A. Arts Act Grants (no match funding requirement)

The aim of this category is to provide financial assistance to voluntary arts groups/organisations to carry out an arts activity or project within their community. Funding will be prioritised for activities/projects which best meet the objectives of the Arts Act 2003 by:

- a) stimulating public interest in the arts
- b) promoting knowledge, experience, and practice of the arts, or
- c) improving standards in the arts throughout the county.

Who can apply and how much will be funded?

Community & Voluntary Arts Groups/Organisations. A maximum grant of €2,500 will apply. Applicants should note that funding is provided as a contribution towards costs, rather than covering the full costs of a programme/event.

What can be funded?

The “arts” means any creative or interpretative expression (whether traditional or contemporary) in whatever form, and includes:

- Literature: community-writing groups and workshops with input by full-time or part-time writers; readings by full-time or part-time writers. Special projects, e.g., publications, undertaken by community writing groups.
- Visual Arts: classes and workshops in the visual arts with input by professional artists / art teachers. Special projects, e.g., exhibitions, undertaken by community art groups.
- Music: music education projects (but not individual tuition fees), classical and choral recitals; writing, recording, and performing of new popular music and musical theatre material.
- Traditional Music and Dance: classes and activities designed to pass on the tradition; performance by new and established traditional musicians; workshops and classes in traditional dance.
- Drama: theatre in education; drama workshops; writing and performing of new work.
- Film & Electronic Media: showing of non-mainstream films; activities designed to widen participation in film, video, and electronic media.
- Community Arts: activities such as mural painting, community drama, community participation events, etc.

Funding will **not** be provided for capital works, equipment, insurance/operational or running costs, or events which are funded under separate funding sources, e.g., Culture Night.