

Community Support Schemes 2025

Closing Date: 24th January 2025 @ 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 annual financial support for a diverse range of events and projects across 3 distinct Schemes: Economic Development, Community Development, and Cultural Development. The collective aims of these schemes are:

1. To encourage community and voluntary groups to take an active part in the development of their local community.
2. To fund projects which are of benefit to the wider community, and by doing so, improve local economic, community or cultural development.
3. To promote local economic benefits, by encouraging all grant applicants to '*Shop Local*' as collectively this can make a big difference to their local economy.
4. To promote linkages with the Public Participation Network by requiring all applicants to be members of the Galway County Public Participation Network. You can register here - <https://www.galwaycountypnn.ie/registration-form/> - or ensure you are already a member here - <https://www.galwaycountypnn.ie/members-directory/>

Requirements:

- Application Forms must be fully completed – incomplete forms or applications without required compulsory documentation will not be considered.
- Please ensure that the Group Name you enter on your online application is the legal name of your Group, i.e., same as that on your Bank Account and Supplier Set-Up Form.
- It is recommended that an e-mail account in the group's name be set up for the online grant application process (instead of personal e-mail addresses which can change over time).
- All Groups must be properly constituted and if requested, must provide evidence of a constitution, registration as a voluntary group for tax purposes, or any other additional documents/photos required to fully establish their status.
- Applicants must comply with all funding deadlines for application & drawdown stages, and if successful, cannot change their approved project without the consent of Galway County Council.

Compulsory Documentation:

- Copy of your most up-to-date Bank/Credit Union Account Statement in the official/legal name of your Group.
- Proof of Public Liability Insurance Policy with indemnification to Galway County Council (community playgrounds insured under Galway County Council should submit an A4 page confirming their coverage by their local authority insurance).
- All applicants must submit a minimum of 1 quotation for each expenditure item for which grant funding is sought – we remind you to please 'Shop Local' where possible.
- Any statutory consents required for the project proposal must be in place at application stage and proofs submitted with your application.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SCHEME

A. Tourism Events and Festivals (min. 20% match funding)

The aim of this category is to support a diverse range of tourism events and festivals in recognition of the economic benefits brought by increased activity and visitor numbers. Funding for this category is from a combination of Fáilte Ireland and Galway County Council, and all funded events/festivals will form part of a Calendar of Tourism Events/Festivals for the County. Priority will be given to events with high quality programming/content and ability to attract visitors/tourists to generate local economic activity - the capacity of the organisers and their marketing/promotion strategy, and potential for development and financial sustainability of the event will also be taken into account in the assessment process.

Who can apply and how much will be funded?

Eligible applicants are business and community groups who are delivering tourism events and festivals centred around arts, culture, food, and activity-based tourism events. A maximum grant of €3,000 will apply.

What can the funding be used for?

- Marketing - the cost of marketing activities with a local, regional, national, and international reach, e.g., advertising, branding, public relations, digital marketing.
- Programming and Production Costs – direct costs in delivering the event. Purchase of equipment and materials will be considered where it may be more sustainable to purchase rather than rent relevant equipment/materials, and consideration will also be given to supporting other greening/sustainability measures.
- Development - feasibility studies, training, consultancy costs which are geared towards raising the profile of the event nationally or internationally.

Events not covered are those which are already covered under national funding, or localised gatherings to celebrate national holidays (except where funding commitments were previously in place with Town Councils).

B. Economic Development Initiatives (min. 20% match funding)

The aim of this category is to provide financial assistance for activities/projects/works which promote local economic activity or new business opportunities for a local area. Funding will be prioritised for initiatives where there is a defined need, where there is clear collaboration at local level, and the project proposal has the capacity to attract visitors and deliver sustainable improvements for the local area.

Who can apply and how much will be funded?

Eligible applicants are community and business representative groups and a maximum grant of €3,000 will apply.

What can be funded?

This list is not exhaustive but examples of projects/works which could qualify are:

- Christmas Lighting and other Streetscape Enhancements which animate public spaces in an innovative and creative way.
- Community-led enterprise initiatives - Farmers Markets, Community Shops, etc
- Campaigns/Events to promote local enterprise – Shop Local Campaigns, other collaborative events promoting local businesses/traders, etc.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SCHEME

A. Community Amenities (min. 10% match funding)

The aim of this category is to enhance outdoor community amenities and green spaces. Funding will be prioritised for amenities which are freely available to the wider community, where there is a defined need, and accessibility and inclusivity have been considered as part of the sustainable development of the public amenity.

Who can apply and how much will be funded?

Volunteer-led Community Groups who carry out enhancements to community play and recreation areas which are freely available to the wider community. A maximum grant of €3,000 will apply (unless accessibility improvements to a community walkway are identified through a Walkability Audit conducted by the Age Friendly Programme Manager – please contact Mary McGann, Age Friendly Programme Manager at 087 1044 820 mmcgann@galwaycoco.ie to arrange prior to costing and submitting your application).

What can be funded?

Projects to improve accessibility and usage for all ages and abilities at Community Playgrounds, Public Parks, Community Walkways, Community Gardens/Allotments, and other Nature Trails or outdoor facilities available for general use in the local community.

B. Tidy Towns Activities in Public Spaces (min 10% match funding)

The aim of this category is to promote the efforts of Tidy Towns Groups to improve the visual appearance of public spaces through volunteer-led works and projects. Funding will be prioritised for defined projects, i.e., projects addressing an issue raised in the Judging Report, a locally identified problem site/building, or planting projects implementing local Landscaping/Pollinator Plans developed by an Ecologist or Landscape Architect (where these Plans are not in place, funding will be prioritised for development of same). Funding towards development of high-quality Template Maps by a local Engineer/Architect will be especially welcome in light of this being a specific issue raised by Tidy Towns Judges in Judging Reports.

Who can apply and how much will be funded?

Tidy Towns Groups who enter the National Tidy Towns Competition. A maximum grant of €3,000 will generally apply.

What can be funded?

Equipment and projects responding to issues identified in the Judging Report and contributing to the National Competition Judging Categories:

- streetscape & public places, tidiness & litter control, works at residential streets or housing estates, works at approach roads or greening of streets/lanes.
- green spaces & landscaping, nature & biodiversity, environmental sustainability.

All Tidy Towns Groups must complete the Form for “Voluntary and Community Activities on Roads, Amenity Areas and Other Areas in the charge of Galway County Council” and submit the completed Form to their Area Engineer - <https://www.galway.ie/en/services/roads/downloads/>

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.

B. Heritage Grants (no match funding requirement)

The aim of this category is to support schools, voluntary/community and heritage groups/organisations to undertake projects which will be of benefit to the community. Funding will be prioritised for activities and projects which:

- a) Gather and share knowledge of local heritage.
- b) Increase awareness, appreciation, and participation in heritage activities.
- c) Manage and protect our heritage.

Who can apply and how much will be funded?

Heritage Groups, Tidy Towns Applicants, Environmental Groups, Community Groups, Schools. A maximum grant of €1,500 will apply, although most awards will be less than €500.

What can be funded?

Examples of funding for projects/events related to natural, built, or cultural heritage include:

- Surveys and Mapping of Graveyards, Heritage Sites, Wildlife, etc. in a local area.

- Funding for Biodiversity Action Plans, Pollinator Plans, Invasive Species Action Plans, etc.
- Events / exhibitions / publications promoting the preservation and protection of local built, natural, and cultural heritage.
- Workshops and training aimed at enhancing knowledge and skills of local heritage and promoting participation in heritage activities.
- Heritage Week and Biodiversity Week activities, e.g., walks, talks, etc.
- Oral Heritage Recordings.
- Conservation of heritage collections and objects, including documents, and conservation, planning, and habitat management works to restore important wildlife habitats, etc.
- Funding for works to remove invasive species such as rhododendron from woodland.
- Funding for heritage gardens, trails, etc., and associated signage and information boards
- Equipment that is directly associated with any proposed project.

Provision or maintenance of Memorials, Plaques, Busts or Statues will **not** be considered for funding.

C. Irish Language Promotional Activities (no match funding requirement)

In the context of our European heritage, Irish is the oldest spoken literary language in Europe (20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010 – 2030). In the context of national policy, funding will be prioritised for activities and projects which:

- a) Increase the knowledge of Irish.
- b) Create opportunities for the use of Irish.
- c) Foster positive attitudes towards its use.

Who can apply and how much will be funded?

Community and Voluntary Groups/Organisations, Business Representative Groups, Chambers of Commerce, Sports Groups, Youth Groups, Schools. A maximum grant of €1,000 will apply, although the majority of awards will be less than €500.

What can be funded?

Examples of projects are:

- Funding for research on specific Irish language heritage, e.g., placenames, townlands, etc.
- Initiatives aimed at strengthening Irish as the main language of communication in the Gaeltacht.
- Community workshops / classes to promote use of Irish in communities, e.g., to encourage businesses who wish to offer a bi-lingual service to their customers, to assist voluntary organisations who wish to increase their use of Irish.
- Irish-language based activities and events held through the Irish language, e.g., community events or cultural, social, leisure and sporting activities run through the medium of Irish (the Council's Irish Language Officer must be invited to the event).
- Seachtain na Gaeilge activities and other events which celebrate our culture and heritage through the Irish language during the year.