

Community, Sport & Cultural Grants Scheme

Purpose of Scheme

The Community, Sport & Cultural Grants Scheme established by the North Tipperary Local Authorities provides financial assistance **for the development of sporting, recreational, environmental and cultural facilities** in the county. The scheme is intended to assist community based clubs and voluntary organisations as well as providing an extra resource to the Local Authorities to assist in the provision by them of facilities that might not be otherwise funded.

As well as seeking to increase the facilities available in the county, the scheme is also designed to encourage those providing facilities to **endeavor to ensure equal access by all** and to examine ways in which barriers to use might be removed. It is also designed to ensure that **environmental improvement** is encouraged as an element of all developments assisted through the scheme.

The scheme has also been designed to recognize **the more limited resources available to some communities and voluntary groups** and to give additional assistance where it is clear that an area or organisation has a low level of facilities and cannot improve matters without special assistance.

Finally, the scheme is designed to assist those projects that are receiving funding elsewhere or where no other source of funding is available. Applicants will, therefore be **expected to have sought funding from other available sources** before being assisted by the scheme.

Structure of Scheme

Funding will be allocated at a **variable rate** based on a set of evaluation criteria that address the purposes of the Community, Sport & Cultural Grants Scheme. In essence the variable rate is designed to give a higher level of grant assistance to communities and organizations that are most in need and that have least capacity to improve their situation. Rates of support will vary from 10% to 90%. If projects do not meet a number of critical requirements, however, they may be deemed ineligible for assistance in the form submitted.

Eligible projects will be prioritised on the basis of a range of criteria that address the purposes of the scheme. An eligible project that is too low on the priority list to be funded in any funding round will be given priority in later funding rounds until it receives a funding allocation.

Funding of Scheme

The scheme is funded through the Community Development Levy. This Levy is a contribution required to be paid by a condition attached to all planning permissions granted since 1st January 2001 and which must be paid to the relevant planning authority. Funding will be allocated to eligible projects within the electoral area or a Town Council area in which it is collected.

Administration of Scheme

The Community, Sport & Cultural Grants Scheme is administered by the Community & Enterprise Department of North Tipperary County Council on behalf of:

- North Tipperary County Council
- Nenagh Town Council
- Thurles Town Council
- Templemore Town Council

Eligibility

- Those applying for assistance must be properly structured clubs, voluntary organisations or groups, registered with their governing bodies where appropriate
- Those applying for assistance must have approved constitutions or rules which are acceptable to the North Tipperary Local Authorities
- Those applying for assistance must hold Annual General Meetings, be open to new members and keep proper financial records

Examples of Projects Eligible for Funding

- Specific facilities required by an organization addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups
- Parks
- Amenity areas
- Footpaths and walking areas
- Lighting
- Halls and meeting rooms
- Arts projects
- Playgrounds
- Sport facilities

Ineligibility

- Assistance will not be available to fund maintenance or day to day running expenses
- Mobile assets will not be considered for financial assistance
- Expenditure in respect of an approved project will only be allowed for grant aid with effect from the date on which the grant application was received by the Community & Enterprise Department of North Tipperary County Council

Types & Levels of Assistance

Technical Assistance

This fund permits community based clubs or voluntary organisations to apply for financial assistance towards the cost of preparing a development plan or feasibility study.

Up to 90% of the cost of preparing a development plan/feasibility study up to a maximum of **€7,000** is available

Capital Assistance

Assistance under this fund is available to new projects or refurbishment of existing facilities. Funding will be allocated at a **variable rate** based on the criteria outlined below. The variable rate is designed to give a higher level of grant assistance to communities and organizations that are most in need and that have least capacity to improve their situation. Rates of support may vary from 10% to 90% of total eligible cost of a project less grants from other sources up to a maximum of **€100,000 (under review)**.

To be eligible for assistance a project must cost a minimum of **€7,000**.

Project Criteria

General

1. Assistance will be provided for substantial new projects or refurbishment of existing facilities
2. **Works/expenditure in respect of an approved project will only be allowed for grant aid with effect from the date on which the grant application was received by the Community & Enterprise Department of North Tipperary County Council**
3. In appropriate circumstances and with the approval of the elected members, funds may be used by the North Tipperary Local Authorities to provide necessary and important facilities for public recreation, amenity or leisure purposes
4. Applications for financial assistance will be considered as determined necessary by the North Tipperary Local Authorities

Technical Assistance

1. Technical assistance must be claimed and drawn down within 6 months from the date of approval
2. On completion of the study/plan a report must be submitted to the relevant Local Authority
3. Approval of financial assistance towards the cost of a development plan/feasibility study is not an indication of a commitment to provide capital assistance

Capital Assistance

1. Capital assistance must be claimed and drawn down within 12 months from the date of approval
2. Funding of equipment will only be considered in conjunction with infrastructural improvements
3. Provision of public facilities/amenities e.g. environmental improvements to villages and towns, lighting, footpaths and open spaces will be funded on the

basis of established need and subject to the design and method of provision being approved by the relevant department of the local authority

Criteria of assessment

When applications for assistance are being considered, the Local Authorities will take account of the following, amongst others –

- The needs of an organisation or community having regard to the existing provision in the general area
- The extent to which environmental improvement is included in the project
- The extent to which the project caters for the needs of the less advantaged
- The extent of general community access to the facility that will be provided
- Whether a similar facility is already in existence in the general area
- The other sources of funding sought
- The capacity of the applicant to organise the project and ensure its ongoing viability
- The social and economic viability of the project
- The extent to which it promotes gender equality
- The extent of partnership and joint action involved
- The extent to which the proposal caters for persons with a disability

In designing a project and seeking funding from the scheme, applicants should keep these criteria in mind as they will influence the priority given to a project as well as the funding level allocated to it.

General Conditions

- Any beneficiary receiving assistance under this scheme will be required to enter into a legal agreement conferring the right on the relevant local authority at its absolute discretion to seek a refund on the grant paid, in whole or in part, where the facility is disposed of at any time or if the beneficiary ceases its activities
- The relevant Local Authority reserves the right to seek submissions of the minutes of any Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting or the audited Financial Accounts of any beneficiary funded under this Scheme
- Where the beneficiary claims wages as part of the expenditure, these wages are subject to income tax and should be returned to the Revenue Commissioners by the beneficiary
- Receipt of assistance under this Scheme must be appropriately recognised by the erection of a permanent sign in a manner and location to be approved by North Tipperary County Council
- Applications for funding must be submitted on the appropriate application form and all relevant and necessary information and supporting documentation must be included. Incomplete applications not supported by the required documentation will not be considered
- Appropriate evidence of financial need and proposals for matching resources must be produced and efforts to source alternative funding must be outlined.
- The payment of a grant will be subject to the beneficiary providing up to date details of a C2/Tax Clearance Certificate
- Facilities aided under this Scheme shall comply fully with all statutory and/or licensing requirements. In particular they shall comply with the provisions of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts and the Building Regulations
- Payments in respect of technical and capital financial assistance will be made, in full or in part, on the basis of original invoices of expenditure vouched as paid in such a manner as may be required by North Tipperary County Council
- The beneficiary must meet Public Procurement provisions as laid down by the relevant Local Authority
- The beneficiary shall agree to be responsible for any loss, damage or injury to persons or property arising out of the provision or use of the facility and shall effect and produce evidence of appropriate Employers Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance to limits specified by the relevant Local Authority. All grant-aided assets shall, where appropriate, be kept insured at all times against loss or damage by fire, storm or flooding. All compensation paid under such insurance shall be used to restore the property so damaged or lost and any shortfall shall be made good by the beneficiary.
- The beneficiary must produce appropriate satisfactory evidence of clear and valid title to the lands or buildings to be funded under the Scheme. Where title is leasehold the interest must be for a minimum of 10 years and such matters will be taken into consideration by the relevant Local Authority in deciding the amount of grant to be paid
- All or any portion of a grant which has been unpaid may be withheld by the relevant Local Authority or any portion of a grant paid may be recovered where any of the terms or conditions of this Scheme are not being complied with or where there is a material change in the proposals for which the application was made
- Grant-aided facilities shall not be alienated, assigned, sold or otherwise disposed of without the consent of the relevant Local Authority
- Grant allocations may be reviewed or revoked at any time by the relevant Local Authority if progress on the development or refurbishment of the facility is not satisfactory
- A formal Legal Agreement will be signed between the beneficiary and the relevant Local Authority to reflect the terms and conditions of this Scheme prior to payment of a grant or any part thereof
- The conditions of this Scheme may be amended by North Tipperary Local Authorities, as it deems appropriate