

Community Recognition Fund 2023

Scheme Outline



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



A. Introduction and Background

The Community Recognition Fund 2023 ('the Fund') aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities in recognition of the contribution being made by communities across the country in welcoming and hosting significant numbers of arrivals from Ukraine and other countries.

The funding is specifically targeted at projects that are located in communities, towns and villages that are hosting the Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection and/or International Protection Applicants ('new arrivals') including towns identified for the rapid build homes programme. The Fund aims to support the development of facilities that will be used in the future by all members of the community. It is separate in its objectives and scope to any other public funding streams which aim to support the development of public service needs arising from the significant number of arrivals from Ukraine.

€50 million is available under the Fund, and this is allocated between each local authority based on the number of new arrivals located there. €30m of the Fund will be available in 2023 and €20m in 2024. A minimum spend of 60% must be incurred by the local authorities in 2023 with the remaining 40% in 2024.

B. Grant Allocations and Rates

The Fund is allocated between each local authority based on the number of new arrivals located there, taking into account both the level of new arrivals and the relative level of new arrivals vis a vis overall population in a local authority area. The amount of funding allocated to each local authority under the Fund is set out in Appendix 1.

Given the nature and objectives of the Fund, the local authority will have discretion to avail of 100% of the costs of the project from the fund. Local authorities should clearly set out in their funding proposal the rate of aid that they wish to avail of.

This funding should not be used as a co-funding source for other Government Departments' schemes.

C. Engagement with Communities

It is **essential** that the funding proposal submitted by each local authority is developed based on direct engagement with impacted communities and in consultation with the Municipal Districts, Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the local Community Response Fora. Proposals should also be consistent with Local Economic and Community Plans.

The proposal must also demonstrate that the funding is targeted at and specifically invested in those communities, villages and towns where the **highest level** of new arrivals are located and where there is a **clear need for investment** identified.

Proposals which do not display adequate levels of community engagement and appropriate targeting of support will not be approved.

D. Eligible Projects

Projects to be funded will be capital in nature, deliver tangible benefits for the communities in which they are located, and be capable of being delivered over the course of 2023 and 2024. A minimum spend of 60% of the allocation must be incurred in 2023. Eligible projects will receive funding for capital costs, but not for any ongoing operational or running costs.

Local authorities have scope to invest the funding based on their own distinct local needs as identified through a “bottom-up” approach based the community engagement referenced above.

However, the type of projects eligible for funding are:

- development, enhancement or refurbishment of community or cultural facilities including play areas, walkways, parks, community/sensory gardens including communication boards, allotments, and recreational areas;
- development, enhancement or refurbishment of local club and sports facilities including facilities such as community swimming pools, changing rooms, toilets, digital aids such as score / information boards etc.;
- enhancement to school/parish facilities which are open to use by all of the community after school hours;
- purchase of equipment for local clubs, festivals, community events and organisations e.g. music, arts or sports equipment;
- transport infrastructure such as the purchase of community vehicles, bus shelters and attendant information boards; and
- purchase and refurbishment of buildings and/or the purchase of land for the development of community facilities such as play areas/ MUGAs or town parks/ community gardens, recreational areas etc. for community use where a clear need is identified.

It is intended that this list offers considerable flexibility for local authorities to develop proposals that reflect the needs of their own communities and that it will deliver real benefits to those communities. However, in the course of developing their proposals, it is open to local authorities to discuss with the Department potential funding proposals outside scope of the above list.

Projects can be delivered directly by the local authority. However, in the interest of ensuring direct community engagement, it is also open to local authorities to deliver these projects via community organisations, in a similar manner to the management of the ORIS and CLÁR programmes. This provision does not apply to the purchase of land and buildings as set out in the final action point above in Section D.

E. Application process

Each local authority will submit a funding proposal to the Department for approval (see Appendix 2 for the form to be completed as the funding proposal). This proposal will, inter alia, outline the projects to be delivered, the indicative cost for each project broken down by the constituent elements, confirmation that the projects are to be located in the towns, villages and communities most impacted by new arrivals, and the community engagement undertaken.

Projects situated in areas that do not have high levels of new arrivals will not be deemed eligible. Local authorities should be particularly mindful of this following approval, and in cases where elements of approved proposals may require an amendment. All amendments must be agreed with the Department and evidence of the above will be required.

The Department will examine each proposal and will revert to local authorities with any queries. No works should commence in advance of formal funding approval from the Department. All approved funding proposals will be the subject of a funding agreement between the local authority and the Department.

Funding proposals can be submitted to the Department as soon as they are ready but no later than **15th March 2023**. To expedite the process the Department will assess and approve the funding on a rolling basis as proposals are received.

F. Administration and Technical Support

Funding of 5% up to max. of €100,000 of the total allocation per local authority is allowable for local authority administration and technical costs. Professional fees relating to engaging **external** expertise to deliver the projects are not included in this allocation. Rather, such costs should be claimed as part of the project delivery claim.

This 5% is contingent on the delivery and completion of projects outlined in the approved funding proposal and in line with all terms and conditions associated with the Fund.

G. Claim process

While the costs provided in the funding proposal will be indicative in nature, funding will be drawn down from the Department based on actual costs incurred and appropriate documentation must be retained in this regard.

In order to draw down funding, local authorities will submit an interim (2023) and final (2024) claim. All claims will be accompanied by Agresso printouts corresponding to the funding being drawn down.

The interim claim will be accompanied by a report outlining what elements of each project have been completed to date and highlighting the elements to be completed.

A project delivery report will accompany the final claim and will include photographic evidence to demonstrate the delivery of the completed project as approved under the funding proposal, as amended. The final payment will be contingent on confirmation of project completion.

Interim claims for expenditure incurred in 2023 (minimum 60%) should be submitted on or before **6th October 2023**. Final claims should be submitted on or before **1st November 2024**.

Should circumstances change over the course of the project delivery and some of the key project elements are no longer deliverable, the local authority should notify the Department and seek written approval of any amendments.

Purchase of Buildings or Lands

For the purchase of buildings or lands, funding can be drawn down by the local authority once evidence can be provided that the building has gone ‘sale agreed’ and that full funds have been transferred from the local authority for the purchase. If the sale agreed subsequently does not progress to full closure, all monies must be returned to the Department. To draw down funds, local authorities will need to have:

- i. An independent assessors’ report confirming the value of the building
- ii. Building Inspection Report/ Building Survey
- iii. Proof that the sale has been legally agreed
- iv. Proof of transfer of the monies from the local authority

Where a project is delivered via a community organisation the local authority must incur the expenditure i.e. issue payment to the community organisation before it can claim the funding from the Department.

H. Timeline for Delivery

The key days for the funding proposal and delivery of the funding are:

Deadline for applications	Up to the 15 th March 2023 but accepted on a rolling basis
Approval by DRCD	On a rolling basis as proposals are received
2023 interim claim (minimum 60%)	6 th October 2023
Project completion (all elements)	18 th October 2024
Final claim and report	1 st November 2024

I. Procurement

National Procurement Guidelines and DPER [Circular 13/2014](#) must be adhered to in respect of each project funded under the funding proposal, and confirmation of this will form part the Department’s control regime for the Fund.

J. Existing Schemes

The funding should not be used to fund or co-fund existing financial commitments from any Government Scheme already approved for delivery by the local authority. However, funding can be used to deliver projects that are complementary to existing projects or a different phase of an existing project. In the context of these types of projects it is important that appropriate documentation is provided at claim stage to clearly delineate each discrete project showing clear lines of funding/payment etc.

K. Publicity

Local authorities will acknowledge the support of the Department and reference ‘*Our Rural Future*’ in all public announcements, scheme documentation and advertising, as appropriate, relating to projects supported under the Fund. Appropriate signage should be erected at the project location and a template is set out in Appendix 3.

In addition, the Department may seek to use the details of the works funded in each local authority in the broader promotion of its policies.

The approved project proposals and details of the specific approved projects will be formally announced and published by the Department.

L. Documentation to be Retained

Each local authority must retain sufficient documentation to demonstrate the delivery of completed projects as set out in the funding proposal. This will include retention of the approved funding proposal and any subsequent approved amendments, documentation to demonstrate compliance with [Circular 13/2014](#), National Procurement Guidelines, and evidence of any payments made in respect of completed approved projects.

Full and accurate documentation to support all expenditure should be maintained by the local authority and must be accessible by Department for audit purposes at all times, for a period of six years from the date of completion of the projects.

Local authorities will provide any reports and information relating to approved projects as may reasonably be requested by the Department from time to time.

M. Funding Conditions

Non-Compliance with the conditions as outlined herein or in the funding agreement or non-compliance with any additional stipulations agreed during contract negotiations may result in the requirement to refund part or all of the funding awarded by the Department.

All expenditure under the Fund is also subject to the terms of the [Public Spending Code and Circular 13/2014](#).

All appropriate financial, public procurement and accounting rules and regulations must be complied with, and each local authority will fully account for the funding received in a timely manner.

All the requirements set out in this document must be adhered to in order to qualify for the drawdown on funding.

A separate funding agreement will issue following approval of the project proposal.

N. Monitoring of Funding

The Department may carry out appropriate pre or post-payment checks of project payment claims to verify compliance with funding conditions, project delivery and the reality of expenditure where appropriate.

The checks will include an examination of the file maintained in respect of approved projects together with any other relevant documentation identified during the course of the on-the-spot check.

The local authority will make books and accounts available to the Comptroller and Auditor General as required.

O. Queries

Any queries regarding the Fund should be sent to crf@dracd.gov.ie

Appendix 1 – Funding Allocations

Local Authority	Allocation
Carlow County Council	€937,967
Cavan County Council	€1,191,206
Clare County Council	€2,925,549
Cork City Council	€1,163,515
Cork County Council	€2,307,035
Donegal County Council	€3,114,395
Dublin City Council	€2,392,127
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	€707,864
Fingal County Council	€1,813,912
Galway City Council	€1,911,918
Galway County Council	€1,333,290
Kerry County Council	€4,403,073
Kildare County Council	€807,328
Kilkenny County Council	€948,063
Laois County Council	€1,014,607
Leitrim County Council	€2,204,319
Limerick City And County Council	€1,389,505
Longford County Council	€653,453
Louth County Council	€1,515,727
Mayo County Council	€2,354,126
Meath County Council	€1,231,685
Monaghan County Council	€881,203
Offaly County Council	€669,691
Roscommon County Council	€689,057
Sligo County Council	€1,424,596

South Dublin County Council	€2,754,305
Tipperary County Council	€997,861
Waterford City And County Council	€1,421,869
Westmeath County Council	€1,649,996
Wexford County Council	€1,509,870
Wicklow County Council	€1,680,887
	€50,000,000

Appendix 2 – Funding Proposal



An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development

Ár dTodhchaí
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Community Recognition Fund 2023 Funding Proposal Form

Local Authority		
Contact / liaison for entire funding proposal		
Address		
Email		
Telephone No.		
Details of the requirement for funding Outline in order of priority the towns, villages and communities which have the highest level of new arrivals and the gaps in community facilities/infrastructure		
Village/Town Name	No. of new arrivals	Requirement for funding Detail any gaps in community facilities/infrastructure
Outline the steps taken to ensure that the projects proposed have been identified in consultation with relevant communities and in particular in consultation with the local Community Response Fora and the LCDC:		

Project Details						
Village/Town Name & Coordinates (ITM format)	Project Elements The projects proposed must relate to the villages/towns referenced above	Total Costs	Rate of Aid (RoA) Up to a max. of 100%	Detail position re. the required consents/permissions/ownership Appropriate assessment, planning, land ownership etc. if not in place please specify and specify the est. timeline	Detail Community Engagement	Estimated Completion Date 60% must be claimed in 2023
	1.	€				
	2.					
Coord:	3.					
	1.	€				
	2.					
Coord:	3.					
	1.	€				
	2.					
Coord:	3.					
	1.	€				
	2.					
Coord:	3.					
Total Project Costs:		€				
Local Authority Costs (Max. 5%):		€				
Overall Amount Sought (taking in to consideration the RoA):		€				

Outline of how the suite of proposed projects will deliver tangible benefits to these communities:	
Has any element of this proposal previously been approved under a Government Departments' scheme: Is so please outline	

Use of Data

The information on this form will be used by the Department of Rural and Community Development for the purposes of processing the application. Further information may be sought by the Department to clarify aspects of the project proposal. The form may be shared with other Government Departments for assessment purposes. The Department may draw on broader, more specialist expertise where required, and such information as considered necessary to complete an assessment of your proposal may be shared with those experts.

The Applicant and the Department are subject to the data protection and privacy laws of Ireland and the EU, in particular the Data Protection Act 2018 and Regulation (EU) 2016/679, known as the EU General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR"). Any personal information which you provide as part of the application process will be obtained and processed in compliance with Data Protection legislation.

The Department retains the right to disclose for the purposes of a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 or otherwise, in connection with the funded project(s) –

- i. any information supplied by the Applicant to the Department, and
- ii. any relevant data gathered by the Department in administering grant aid to the project, except where the information is considered to be personal or commercially sensitive.

Declaration by Lead Applicant

This declaration must be signed by an officer authorised at a senior level within the lead applicant organisation i.e. at least Director of Services level in a Local Authority, Director in a State Body.

I confirm that I have read and understood this document and declare that the particulars supplied in this funding proposal are true and correct and that –

- The costings are accurate and reasonable.
- All necessary permissions are in place e.g. planning consent etc.
- All relevant ecological survey work (if applicable) has been undertaken or will be undertaken e.g. Appropriate Assessment screen.
- There is evidence of ownership (if applicable) or the consent of the landowner.
- The project will comply with Public Procurement Guidelines.
- The project conforms to the LECP and other local or regional plans.
- No funding has been allocated for the same works from any other sources.

Proof of the above is not required at the time of application but must be available to the Department or its agents on request.

I acknowledge the information regarding the use of data set out above and give consent to the Department of Rural and Community Development for the sharing of all information, personal or otherwise, contained in this funding proposal and any attachments accompanying it, in accordance with the uses of the data and information provided above.

Local Authority_____

Signature _____

Name in Block Capitals_____

Position_____

Date_____

Appendix 3: Signage Template

“[Insert name of project]”

Officially opened on [insert date]

by

Heather Humphreys TD
Minister for Rural and Community Development

This project has been funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Community Recognition Fund.

Our Rural Future 2021 - 2025



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[Other funder logo if required]