



THE
IRELAND
FUNDS



HEART OF THE COMMUNITY FUND

2026 | Arts and Culture

Application Guidelines

Apply Online | 14 September- 2 October 2026

irelandfunds.org

What is Heart of the Community Fund?

Heart of the Community Fund is The Ireland Funds' flagship grant programme, providing flexible funding to non-profit organisations addressing local needs and strengthening communities across the island of Ireland.

Heart of the Community Fund | Arts and Culture

For this grant round, we will accept applications from organisations on the island of Ireland working in two areas: (i) Arts and Culture Organisations, and (ii) Community organisations with art-based programmes.

- **Arts and Culture Organisations:** This funding strand is intended for organisations that work in the promotion, preservation, and development of all art forms. Organisations applying under this stream may apply for core funding to support their ongoing activities and operations.
- **Community organisations with art-based programmes:** This funding strand is intended for organisations seeking grants for a community-based arts project. Applicants must provide details of how the funding will be used, and all expenditure must relate directly to the programme or project for which funding is requested.

Your organisation must be working within these areas to apply for funding.

Funding levels

Heart of the Community Fund | Arts and Culture will award grants of between £/€5,000 and £/€25,000 to nonprofit organisations.

At least \$500,000 will be distributed through this grant round.

Application period

Applications will be accepted online from organisations working in the arts and culture sector and community organisations with arts based programmes between **Monday, 14 September until 5pm on Friday, 2 October**. ***Late applications will not be accepted.***

All applications must be submitted through our online portal. Guidance on how to use this portal can be found on our website. Due to an expected high volume of applications, all inquiries will be dealt with through email. Please contact us at grantsinfo@irelandfunds.org if you have any outstanding questions that have not been addressed through the information provided.

Criteria

- **For ROI:** Organisations must be a registered charity or an excluded body for example a social enterprise. For further details please visit the [Charities Regulator website](#).
- **For NI:** Organisations must be a CIC, or a registered charity or have applied to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. For further details, please visit [The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland](#).

- The work you are seeking funding for must take place on the Island of Ireland.
- Please note, multiple applications from the same (registered) organisation for different areas of work or different geographic areas will not be accepted.
- If your organisation/project provides services to children or young people under the age of 18, you must have suitable safe-guarding policies and procedures in place.
- Due diligence is critical for The Ireland Funds. To be eligible, organisations must be a registered charity/ CIC or an excluded body and must have;
 - Governing Document (i.e. Memorandum & Articles of Association; Trust Deed; Constitution).
 - Financial Statements (Audited or Unaudited Accounts are equally accepted).

Ineligible activities

Heart of the Community Fund will NOT provide support for the following activities:

- Grants to individuals
- Medical expenses
- Animal welfare activities
- Commemorative structures
- Advancement of religion/faith or religious beliefs
- Political activities and promotion of individual political candidates

How to apply:

Applications for Heart of the Community Fund will be accepted through our online portal only. The link to the portal will be made available via the website irelandfunds.org/impact/heart-of-the-community/ during the open application dates.

Practical application advice

How will this work?

The application form includes questions that will help us understand what your organisation does, why you do it, who you do it for, and how you monitor your effectiveness. It also includes questions about your budget for the year and how much your current shortfall is, as well as a section where you can provide some examples of what this funding could be used for.

The Ireland Funds Grants Team will assess your application and, if your application is successful, will determine the most suitable amount to offer your organisation within the range available.

When you receive the grant offer, you will then be asked to specify the designation for the funding.

Please note that funds must be expended within 12 months from grant paid date.

During application

- Keep answers concise, compelling, and coherent. Do not exceed the word count.
- Tell us about your mission, activities and communities in clear, plain English and avoid using too much jargon.
- Complete all questions on the application form accurately.
- Submit all required documents as per the guidance notes, e.g., governing documents.
- Once submitted, all applications are final. Please ensure you review and are happy with your application before submitting it.

After application

- Keep a record of your application. The online portal will allow you to download a completed PDF copy of your full application just before you submit it. We would also urge you to keep a record of the email address and password you used as you will be able to return to view the submitted application at a later day.
- Once the application has been received, confirmation will be sent to the email address provided on your form.
- Please note that acknowledgement emails may land in your spam or junk folder. Ensure you have marked grantsinfo@irelandfunds.org as a 'safe sender' so you don't miss anything.

All applications must be submitted through our online portal. Due to an expected high volume of applications and remote working all enquiries will be dealt with through email. Please contact us at grantsinfo@irelandfunds.org if you have any outstanding questions that have not been addressed through the information provided.