

# RURAL BASIC SERVICES COMMUNITY SCHEME



Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

## Summary

This Scheme will support capital investments which will provide access to basic services or improvements in social infrastructure. It includes activities to reduce isolation and/or poverty, so as to improve the welfare and access to basic services of those living in rural areas, and which are an integral part of and in line with the Council Community Plan and emerging priorities.

Projects must relate to the main theme of **Innovative Service Delivery**, such as the creation of **Community Hubs**, where capital infrastructure is put in place to allow for a number of services to be delivered to the community. **Infrastructure** projects will be limited to small-scale capital developments, up to £150,000.

Applicants must submit a robust **project plan**, have full **planning permission** and evidence of the **required match funding** being in place at the time of application. Applicants must also submit **robust procurement documentation** for the items for which they seek funding at time of applying.

Examples of eligible projects (list is not exhaustive):

- Developing facilities to provide access to absent, or otherwise difficult to access, basic services for the local rural community.
- Developing the capital infrastructure for community enterprises to enable them to provide basic services for rural communities, where there is a clear demonstrable need e.g. childcare, eldercare, and health where part of a larger community hub.
- Capital-build to allow for demonstration or pilot projects to enhance the existing service provision.
- Recreational, cultural and leisure activities which address negative trends in local economic and social development. Any projects relating to sport must fit with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's (DCAL's) Investment Strategy for Sport.
- Feasibility studies, as stand-alone projects, to determine the potential viability of translating a basic service delivery idea into a sustainable project that would be eligible to receive grant-aid under the scheme.
- Bespoke training, as defined as any training not currently provided

You must attend a pre-application workshop before you can apply.

## Type of Support

Support will be provided through grant-aid.

Advance payments may be available for **Community, Voluntary and Social Economy Enterprise** projects which would not otherwise be able to access the capital to commence the implementation of their project.

# What type of Projects are Eligible for Funding?

## Eligible Costs - Can be supported (list is not exhaustive):

- The construction, acquisition, including through leasing, or improvement of immovable property. Any sport or leisure-related project, including community halls, must comply with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) Strategy for Sport and will be subject to a design review by Sport NI before progressing to Assessment Stage.
- The purchase of new machinery and equipment, which is an integral part of the finished project, up to the market value of the asset.
- General costs linked to the expenditure such as architects, engineers and consultation fees, fees relating to advice on environmental and economic sustainability, the acquisition of patent rights and licenses, up to a total maximum of 10% of the eligible project grant amount.
- Intangible investments such as acquisition or development of computer software and acquisitions of patents, licenses, copyrights and trademarks.

## Ineligible Costs - Cannot be supported (list is not exhaustive):

- Costs connected with a leasing contract, e.g. Lessor's margin, interest refinancing costs, overheads and insurance charges or deemed to be running costs.
- Investments which are considered by the LAG to have an unacceptable negative effect on the environment, or which fail to meet environmental regulations.
- The purchase of land, including through leasing, and of property as part of a project.
- Replacement investments i.e. like-for-like and maintenance costs for existing buildings, plant or equipment.
- Investments in new build self-catering accommodation, hotel accommodation, guest houses or hostels or additional bed space in existing ones.
- Lease-purchase/hire purchase of new machinery and equipment.

## Ineligible Costs Continued- Cannot be supported (list is not exhaustive):

- Purchase and installation of renewable energy technologies.
- The purchase of cars, vans, motorcycles, bicycles and any other form of personal transport (for whatever purpose).
- The purchase of vehicles for transportation, such as lorries, buses, vans, minibuses or any other kind of vehicle used to transport or move goods or people.
- Tractors and agricultural machinery.
- Expenditure incurred, work commenced or goods purchased before the start date of the Letter of Offer, or after the Letter of Offer end date.
- Payments for gifts and donations or personal entertainments, including alcohol.
- Training i.e. any training that is currently provided by a statutory body such as Colleges, Invest Northern Ireland, Local Enterprise Agencies etc.
- Reprinting of marketing materials.
- No aspect of an activity being funded should be party political in intention, use or presentation, or likely to be perceived as discriminatory on grounds of religion, colour, race, gender or disability.
- Statutory fines and penalties, criminal fines and damages.
- Legal expenses in respect of litigation.
- Any cost associated with meeting a legislative or statutory requirement for the business.
- Reclaimable VAT.
- Feasibility studies for renewable energy.
- Projects which are not an integral part of the Local Authority Community Plan and not financially supported by the Local Authority.

# Amounts and Support Rates

Minimum Grant £5,000 up to Maximum Grant of £150,000, at 75% level of support available to Local Authorities and Community Groups.

## Payments

All grant payments will be made retrospectively via the claiming process, and advances will be available.

Activity	Min. Grant	Max. Grant	Level of Support
Capital Grant	£5,000	£150,000 *	75% Council, Community, Third Sector
Technical Support and Bespoke Training	£500	£5,000	75% Council, Community, Third Sector

\* This is the maximum grant level per project, including technical support.

### Eligibility Conditions

Actions must be non-profit taking, led by organisations operating within the Community and Voluntary / Third sector or Public sector. Proposals must be coherent with, and relate directly to, the Local Council Community Plan (consult with Council to ensure this).

Applicants failing to achieve Letter of Offer Targets and Outputs in previous applications to Priority 6 may be debarred from applying until achieved.

Any project involving capital works will have to agree the appropriate Legal Charge/Debenture in favour of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

### Eligible Beneficiaries

- Community Voluntary Sector, including Social Economy Enterprises engaged in non-profit taking activity.
- Local Council.
- Strategic Public Body e.g. Health Authority.
- Local Council / Private Partnership, where the Local Council is the grant recipient.
- Local Council / Community Voluntary Sector Partnership, where the Local Council is the grant recipient.

Please note that this information may be subject to change as the Programme progresses.