



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk



ACCESS & INCLUSION PROGRAMME

GUIDANCE NOTES ON COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

The purpose of this guide is to help you to decide if you wish to apply for a grant under the Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme and tell you what you need to do if you wish to submit an application. Please read these Guidance Notes in conjunction with the application form for funding.

If you have any difficulty completing the application form, please contact the office shown on the front page of the application form for assistance.

Please note that information provided in the application form may be made available to other Departments, Agencies or funding bodies for the purposes of preventing or detecting fraud.

Legislative and Policy Basis for the Grant Programme

The Department for Communities under the provisions of The Social Need (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 has powers to provide funding towards the provision of social or community facilities and the refurbishment or restructuring of buildings.

Programme Objectives

The key objectives of the Department for Communities' Access and Inclusion Programme are to:

1. Improve access to arts, culture and active recreation venues across NI for people with disabilities;
2. Make arts, cultural and active recreation venues more inclusive across society; and
3. Increase participation in arts, culture and active recreation activities by people with disabilities.

Programme Criteria

To be considered for funding, each application to the programme **must** satisfy the following criteria:

- There must be a demonstrable need for the project supported by evidence of consultation with/input from individuals with disabilities or the disability sector.
- An accessibility audit must be completed for each venue applying for funding. **(Waived for 2020/21)**
- The project must have clearly defined and measurable outputs and applicants must be able to demonstrate how they will measure these outputs / results.
- The maximum project cost must not exceed £30,000.
- Each applicant must provide match funding of at least 10% of the total project cost. **(Waived for 2020/21)**
- Additionality – Public money spent on a project must be additional, which means that it has to be spent:
 - to allow something to happen that would not otherwise take place;
 - to help something happen sooner than it would otherwise happen; or
 - to improve the quality of an existing project or service.
- If the applicant is a community or voluntary group, the organisation must have an agreed constitution.
- Museums **accredited** with the NI Museums Council may submit applications to the Programme through the Museums Council who will be responsible for the assessment, scoring and ranking of projects. **In the case of a council owned museum, venue operators must seek the agreement of the relevant Council before submitting an application to NI Museums Council.** This must include confirmation of where the letter of offer should issue ie to NI Museums Council or the parent Council. Councils may still bring forward projects for museums not accredited to the NI Museums Council.
- It is wholly a matter for Councils to decide if they wish to accept applications from external organisations through an open call. Councils will, however, be responsible for the delivery of all projects they promote, whether internal or external.
- All applicants must confirm that projects will complete on or before the last day of the financial year in which the Programme is operating.
- The applicant must have a clear plan on how the project will be sustained at the end of the funding period.
- The Department must be satisfied that the applicant can demonstrate an acceptable level of control over any essential land or buildings.
- The applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have appropriate financial control arrangements, structures and procedures in place to effectively manage any funding awarded by the Department.

Ineligible projects

The Department will not normally consider funding applications if: -

- The proposed project duplicates funding already received by the group from another source or funder.
- The applicant has failed to supply any information requested by the Department or to comply with monitoring requirements **in respect of a previous grant.**
- The funding requested in the application covers costs that relate to statutory responsibilities.
- The funding is for special equipment or furniture already covered under the Access to Work Programme.
- The proposed project would involve making direct donations, granting endowments or mortgages to individuals, groups or charities.
- The funding requested in the application relates to retrospective costs (that is, funding will not be provided towards the costs of projects which started before the application was submitted to the Department). This also applies to extra costs incurred during a project where prior approval has not been given by way of a re-profile. **Groups should be mindful that submission of an application does not guarantee that funding will be made available.**
- The funding requested in the application relates to debts that were incurred before the application was submitted.
- The proposed project's purpose is to promote any religious or political viewpoint.

Conditions of Funding

The Department will expect applicants to be able to meet the following conditions if funding is awarded to the proposed project: -

- Applicants must be in a position to comply with any conditions attached to the grant that may be included in the Letter of Offer. The Department must be notified immediately if the applicant encounters any problems in complying with the conditions.
- Applicants must be in a position to deliver the project within the agreed timescales. The Department must be notified immediately of any delay or anticipated delay. Should the Department consider any delay to be unacceptable, the grant may lapse and any payments made may be recovered in whole or in part.
- Applicants must comply with the expenditure, receipting, evaluation and monitoring conditions stated in the contract for funding.
- Any person authorised by the Department for Communities including DfC's Internal Audit Unit and the Northern Ireland Audit Office shall have rights of access to asset and accounting records in respect of any assistance provided.
- Applicants should be aware that information on applications and claims for payment for Grant assistance is stored on computer in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, and that such information may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000; in addition this shall include any applicable national implementing Laws as

amended from time to time including (i) the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Law Enforcement Directive (LED) and (ii) Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 to the extent that it relates to processing of personal data and privacy; and (iii) all applicable Law about the processing of personal data and privacy;

How to apply

Applications will only be accepted on the DfC application form issued to you.

Before they are submitted to the Department, all applications must be assessed, scored and ranked in order by **NI Museums Council** using the Department's assessment sheet and scoring matrix.

NI Museums Council should submit application forms, assessment sheets and scores to DfC by e-mail. These must be received by the Department before the closing date and time.

An application must be signed to be deemed valid.

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

Part 1 Contact Details

- 1(a) Contact details of your Organisation must be provided in this section of the Application Form.

About Your Organisation

This section of the application form seeks information about the Organisation. The following points should be noted.

- 1(b) to (e) The Department may ask for evidence to confirm these statements, e.g. a copy of the memorandum and articles of association or constitution signed and dated by two registered office bearers or charity reference number.
- 1(f) Please enter the name of the larger organisation if applicable. The Department may ask to see evidence of these statements, i.e. copy of minutes of board/committee meeting at which it was agreed to submit an application for funding to DfC.
- 1(g) If your organisation is registered for VAT i.e. VAT exempt or zero-rated, please indicate this on the form.
- 1(h) Please state number of salaried staff and volunteers in your Organisation. Where you are part of a larger Organisation, details are **not** required for the larger Organisation.
- 1(i) Please indicate if your project venue is located in a rural area, i.e. in a town or area with a population of less than 5,000.

Part 2 About your Project

This section seeks information about the proposed project.

- 2(a) Please try to keep the project title short but as accurate as possible in order to avoid any confusion in the future.
- 2(b) If the project will be based at a different location from the applicant's address, please provide the address for the project.
- 2(c) When describing the project, please provide information on what the project is designed to achieve and how will it be delivered. If the project is to be delivered in partnership with another organisation, please identify that organisation and provide contact details. The project start date will be the date of the Department's Letter of Offer. Please state the expected end date of the project. All projects must complete before the end of the financial year in which the Programme is operating.
- 2(d) Please detail how this project will meet the programme objectives:
1. Improve access to arts, culture and active recreation venues across NI for people with disabilities;

2. Make arts, cultural and active recreation venues more inclusive across society; and
 3. Increase participation in arts, culture and active recreation activities by people with disabilities.
- 2(e) When describing the need for the project, please refer to any evidence that is available to demonstrate the need, including any studies, surveys or research into the subject. This can include correspondence/representations from people with disabilities or the disability sector. It is not necessary to provide a hard copy of relevant documents at this stage but details of where this information would be available e.g. an internet link should be provided. If an accessibility audit has been completed for the venue a summary of its recommendations should be provided here.
- 2(f) Please provide details of the number of people with disabilities that currently visit the venue or use the services and/or the quality of service provision. Quantitative data should be provided to demonstrate current participation levels.
- 2(g) Please describe the expected outcomes of the project, what it will achieve and the benefits for people with disabilities. This should include the anticipated increase in participation levels compared to 2(f) above.
- 2(h) If the application is not successful, would the project promoter proceed with the project either through use of own resources or alternative sources of funding? Could the project be completed in a reduced format?
- 2(i) Please discuss the exit strategy and, if there are resource implications, how the project will be sustained when DfC funding ends. Applications will only be considered from venues that are sustainable and will remain open following completion of the project.
- 2(j) If your application is for support to improve access and inclusion at an active recreation site please provide details of how it links into the local Community Planning Action Plan for your district and the Active Living – No Limits Action Plan developed by the Disability Sector: <http://www.sportni.net/sportni/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/active-living-no-limits-action-plan-2016-2021.pdf>
- 2(k) Please describe the reporting arrangements for managing the project and ensuring that objectives/benefits have been achieved. How you will measure the success of the project?

Part 3 Finance and Viability

This section of the form seeks detailed information about the costs and funding arrangements of the proposed project.

- 3(a) Please indicate the **total** estimated cost of the proposed project (**which must not exceed £30,000**). All costs should be identified and fully sourced. Please note that any grant from DfC through this programme will only cover capital costs.
- 3(b) Please provide a breakdown of the funding sources for this project including contributions from Council or own funds. If funding has not been confirmed then please provide details of the current status of the funding application.

- 3(c) Please provide a full breakdown of all the anticipated costs of the project (not just the items to be funded by DfC). Please list each item separately and continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

If your organisation is VAT registered and able to claim back the VAT on input costs, the amounts entered in the table should be **net** of VAT.

- 3(d) Project viability should be assessed to ensure that public money is not lost on projects that fail prematurely. How did you determine that the preferred option is the best option for the delivery of the project outcomes and demonstrates value for money? Issues that will be considered include:

- The total cost of the proposed project, including any professional or other fees, VAT, etc;
- Potential savings – that is, the project's costs will offset longer term costs;
- Targeted increases in participation rates and/or improved experience for people with disabilities.

- 3(e) Projects must be completed before the end of the financial year in which the Programme is operating. Please provide a timeframe for delivery of the project to completion including any steps to cover tendering/procurement processes.

Part 4 Project Management and Accountability

- 4(a) Please set out the arrangements for managing and monitoring your project. This should include:

- Who is responsible for managing the project; and
- How will the impact of this project on the disability community be measured?
- Who will be responsible for carrying out a post project evaluation and what impacts/benefits will be evaluated?

Part 5 Target Group

- 5(a) Under Section 75 Equality Legislation of the NI Act 1998, the Department, in carrying out its functions, is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and is keen to monitor the different types of impairment that projects supported by this programme will have an impact upon. Please therefore provide an indication of the type(s) of impairment that your project is aimed at.

Part 6 Supporting Evidence and Declaration

- 6(a) The Department may ask to see certain pieces of documentary evidence. You may also provide additional information or other documentation which you consider relevant in support of your application e.g. community survey document, evidence of need etc.

Declarations

The declarations should be read carefully before the application is signed and submitted to the Department.

Applicants should ensure that the documents held on the Government Funders Database are the most up to date documents.

The application form must be signed and witnessed to be deemed eligible.