**Guidance Notes**

**Department for Communities**

**2019/20 Small Capital Grants**

**1. Overview**

Co-operation Ireland has been appointed by the Department for Communities (DfC) as the Intermediary Funding Body for the 2019/20 Small Capital Grants Programme for Northern Ireland. The purpose of this fund is to promote Partnership and Collaboration within the voluntary and Community sector.

**2. Who can apply?**

Applications must include a minimum of 2 organisations. Those applying must nominate a lead partner to whom the whole of the grant will be paid. The Lead Partner should complete the application form. The amount of grant available to apply for will be dependent on the number of partners within the application:

* 2 partner groups = can apply for £1,500
* 3 - 4 partner groups = can apply for up to £3,500
* 5+ partner groups = can apply for up to maximum £5,000

**To be eligible for grant assistance (grants between £1,500 – £5,000), applicants must be constituted voluntary or community sector organisations located in Northern Ireland, with an annual unrestricted income of less than £100,000 per year.**

("**Unrestricted**" income relates to funds that the non-profit organisation may use for any purpose. “Restricted” income relates to funds whose use is restricted by a particular purpose and must be used in a specified period e.g. grant offer from a Funding Body)

Applicants must deliver the project, pay supplier(s) and submit a grant claim **by 31st March 2020.**

**3.What types of items can be funded**

Partners can apply for a wide range of capital items, such as office equipment, furniture, sports goods, kitchen fittings and minor capital works to improve premises.

Please note that applications for capital works e.g. works involving construction activities, will only be accepted from either the owner or leaseholder of the property concerned.

**4. What information is needed**

The following documents must be included with your application:

* A copy of your Constitution;
* A copy of your group’s most recent Bank Statement;
* A copy of your most recent audited accounts or income/expenditure report;
* Partnership Agreement (signed by each partner organisation);
* At least two quotations from at least 2 different suppliers for every item that you wish to purchase;
* for projects involving work to your building/land, a copy of your lease or proof of ownership;
* if applicable, a copy of the Planning Permission / Building Control approval letter.

**5. What cannot be funded**

* Individuals, Sole traders and / or Commercial trading companies;
* Companies that exist to distribute a profit;
* Statutory Authorities or organisations governed by Statutory Authorities;
* Appeals or charities set up to support statutory bodies;
* Organisations with an annual unrestricted income of less than £100,000
* Costs already incurred – an application cannot be made for capital items that have already been ordered or received before the award of a Letter of Offer;
* Second-hand equipment.

**6. Programme Objectives**

When completing your application form please ensure that your project meets **ALL** of the following programme objectives. Applications will be scored against how well applicants meet these outcomes so **as much detail as possible should be provided.**

**Objective 1 – Range and quality of services:**

Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will help improve the range and quality of services for the local community. The anticipated outcome benefits of this objective are:

* Improved services on offer to the local community; and
* Improved accessibility to services.

**Objective 2 – Partnership and collaboration:**

Applicants must detail how their organisation works in partnership and collaborates with other groups. A Partnership/Consortium Agreement form is attached to the application form

and this must be completed and signed by each organisation and returned with the application form. The anticipated outcome benefits of this objective are:

* Increased connectivity within the local Community and Voluntary sector; and
* Improved understanding of the local services available within a given locality.

**Objective 3 – Enhanced good relations:**

Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will tackle obstacles to good relations within and/or between local communities. The anticipated outcome benefits of this objective are:

* Increased collaborative working between groups from different community backgrounds; and
* Improved effective cross community and cross cultural partnerships designed to adopt a pragmatic approach to shared evidenced need.

**Objective 4 – Enhanced capacity to deliver services:**

Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will lead to enhanced capacity to deliver services in their local community. The anticipated outcome benefits of this objective are:

* Improved opportunities to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of voluntary organisations in delivering local services; and
* Increased capacity within organisations to access public funding.

We look forward to receiving your application and to working with you to deliver support for the voluntary and community sector across Northern Ireland.

**Completed applications and supporting documents must be sent to:**

[**smallcapitalgrants@cooperationireland.org**](mailto:smallcapitalgrants@cooperationireland.org)

Please submit application and all supporting documentation in one of the following formats:

**PDF or Microsoft Word**

**Alternatively, these documents can be posted to:**

Grants Team, Co-operation Ireland

Unit 5N, Weavers Court Business Park

Linfield Road

Belfast

BT12 5GH

**Completed applications must be received by 5.00pm on Wednesday 9th October 2019**

**Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted**

Please note: In *the event of over-subscription, the Department for Communities reserves the right to re-profile the amounts of grant awarded. Applicants may be placed on a reserve list in case further funding becomes available.*

We intend to issue Letters of Offer in December 2019 and all expenditure must be incurred by 31st March 2020.

Grant is paid retrospectively upon receipt of a completed claim form and supporting documentation.

Requests for advance payment of grant will be considered based on the reasonableness of each individual request.