Cork City Council

Creative Communities Grant Scheme 2027

Guidance Notes

SUMMARY

Item	Details
Closing Date	2pm on Tuesday, 9th February 2027
Funding Levels	Level 1: €1,500 - €3,000 Level 2: Up to €6,000
Notification Timeline	Decisions announced in early March 2027; projects delivered by early November 2027

For queries, contact:

Louise Tangney
Creative Communities Engagement Officer
Cork City Arts Office

louise_tangney@corkcity.ie
021 492 4768 / 086 1917404

Introduction

Welcome to the Cork City Council Creative Communities Grant Scheme, funded by Creative Ireland — a government-backed culture and wellbeing programme which aims to inspire and transform people, places, and communities through creativity. The grants we offer aim to support exciting and creative proposals that extend the impact of the national Creative Ireland Programme in Cork City, striving to enable creativity in every community.

This scheme assists community groups in collaborating with artists and creatives. We focus on projects that celebrate creative expression and integrate it into community life. We encourage ambitious and innovative projects which grow the capacity of individuals and communities and use culture and creativity to create positive social impacts.

Funded projects must address at least two of the five strategic priorities of the Cork City Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027. These are:

1. To tell our own story
2. To enrich our sense of place
3. To support creative industry, ambition and risk-taking
4. To promote well-being through creative engagement
5. To be climate active

Each of these five priorities is outlined on page 10 of the strategy document linked above and at www.corkcity.ie/creative-ireland.

The deadline for project proposals is **2pm on Tuesday, 9th February 2027**. Funding decisions will be announced in early March for delivery by early November 2027.

Funding Criteria

Funding is available at two levels to support projects of different scales and ambitions. To ensure a high standard and the effective allocation of resources, most successful applications will be funded at Level 1. In 2027, a maximum of two projects will be awarded Level 2 funding.

Level 1: €1,500 - €3,000

Ideal for small, focused projects that experiment with new ideas or offer creative engagement on a smaller scale.

Criteria

- Projects with short timelines engaging a defined community group or targeting a specific participant base.
- Immediate, impactful activities designed to spark creativity and engagement in the community and likely to create modest but clear benefits for community cohesion.
- Realistic budgets with a focus on community participation. No match funding required.
- Flexible use of funds for creative workshops, community events, or pilot initiatives testing innovative ideas with low financial risk.

Level 2: Up to €6,000

Designed for more complex projects with significant scope, scalability, or longer-term ambitions.

Criteria:

- Projects with strong potential for broader participant engagement and significant and lasting impact in the community.
- Involvement of multiple artists or creative professionals, with roles clearly defined.
- Proposals must include a detailed plan for sustainability and ongoing community benefits, such as continued use of project outputs.
- Collaboration with multiple partners is encouraged.
- While not mandatory, match funding or in-kind contributions will be considered as evidence of sustainability.

Projects that are funded under this scheme include, but are not limited to, those that fall into any of the categories below:

Circus	Film	Literature
Creative Writing	Music (all genres)	Dance (all types)
Street Arts & Spectacle	Theatre	Traditional Arts
Visual Arts	Cultural Heritage	Multi-disciplinary Arts
Architecture	Podcasting	Murals
Augmented and Virtual Reality	Fashion	Comedy
Design (all kinds)	Digital Games	Creative Digital Technology
Animation	Cooking	Graffiti

Applicants are encouraged to consider whether their project is better suited to Level 1 funding before applying for Level 2. Applicants seeking Level 2 funding will be asked to outline what could be achieved as an initial phase with Level 1 funding and how additional funding would enable the project to be scaled or expanded. Cork City Council reserves the right not to make any Level 2 awards where applications are not deemed to demonstrate sufficient quality, ambition, feasibility, or alignment with the objectives of the scheme.

Assessment

Funding requests will be assessed based on how well the following have been considered:

1. Creative Merit: Appropriate creative practitioners/organisations engaged to realise the objectives in a way that facilitates inclusive and diverse community engagement.
2. Strategic Merit: The proposal meets the strategic priorities of Cork City Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027.
3. Feasibility: The timeline and budget[1] (including any relevant information on 'in-kind' resources) are realistic for the proposed activities.
4. Legacy: Creativity, innovation, and ambition are embedded in the proposal in a way that will cause lasting, positive impact for the context engaged.

See marking rubric in Appendix A for more detail on how proposals are assessed.

[1] **Fair Payment of Artists:** In line with the Arts Council Policy on Paying the Artist, all project budgets should clearly demonstrate fair payment for artists and creative facilitators.

Eligibility

Community groups of all kinds in Cork City are encouraged to apply. Eligible groups include, but are not limited to, health and social care settings, youth clubs, prisons, community centres, neighbourhoods, schools, hobby or interest-based groups, cultural or social communities, and environmental groups. We particularly encourage applications for projects that incorporate or promote the Irish language.

Important Notes on Eligibility:

- **The target community, Lead Applicant, and funded activities must all be located in Cork City Council's administrative area.** You can check your Eircode at corkcityco.maps.arcgis.com if you are unsure.
- All funded activities must be FREE for participants and must take place in 2027.
- Groups formed around a shared creative practice **only** are not eligible. Projects must involve a broader community connection beyond the art form itself.
- Applicants proposing murals must supply details of the chosen wall and photographs to help the assessment panel evaluate feasibility.
- School-based projects must go beyond the regular curriculum. Activities limited to art students and/or led solely by the school's art teacher are not eligible. Proposals should involve the wider school community and include collaboration with an external creative practitioner.
- This scheme is designed to support new creative initiatives, not ongoing or routine programmes. Applications for activities that are part of an organisation's existing programme, or intended to replace funding from other sources, will not be considered.
- National organisations, including charities, are not considered community groups for the purposes of this scheme. They may apply only as the creative partner for a new project designed specifically for a named community and supported by a letter from that community. Ongoing programmes of national organisations are not eligible.
- Funding decisions will consider a fair spread across local electoral areas and diverse target communities.
- Where the proposed project has match funding from another Cork City Council funding scheme, the application must demonstrate the added value of Creative Ireland funding.

We encourage collaboration between community groups based in the same area, as working together can strengthen the reach and impact of creative projects. Such partnerships will be viewed positively during the grant assessment process.

Projects that are not eligible for funding through this scheme include:

- Activities focused solely on sport or fitness
- For-profit initiatives
- Charitable fundraising events
- Projects where the primary beneficiary is a private entity
- Projects aimed at the general public rather than a specific named community
- Any proposal that does not meet the stated criteria
- Activities that are already funded by Creative Ireland through Cork City Council

In addition, financial support cannot be claimed for spend on building, venue or workspace improvements, purchase of equipment, alcoholic beverages, fines, penalty payments, legal costs, accountancy/audit fees, financial consultancy fees or the cost of items for re-sale.

How to Apply

The **Cork City Council Creative Communities Grant Scheme Application Form** should be completed online at corkcity.submit.com. If you do not already have a Submit account with Cork City Council, you will need to register for one. A draft of your application can be saved so you do not have to complete it in one sitting.

Applications can be made by a representative of a specific community, or by a creative practitioner/organisation. The applicant must have an address in Cork City. Where an application is submitted by a creative practitioner/organisation, the target community group must be clearly identified and a letter of support for the proposal from that community must be provided to confirm their interest in participating in the project.

Completed applications must:

- be submitted to Cork City Council by 2pm on Tuesday, 9th February 2027
- specify a named community as the target of the proposed project
- clearly identify at least one creative practitioner or creative organisation that will work with the group using creative processes, in support of the delivery of the Cork City Creative Ireland Strategy 2023-2027
- enclose the creative practitioner/organisation's CV, biography, and information on prior experience of similar projects, including up to five samples of previous work.

Conditions of Funding

Funding is conditional on commitment to the following:

- fair payment of artists/creative practitioners
- management of Garda Vetting of personnel, if applicable
- observation of a Child Safeguarding Policy, if applicable
- provision of written consent[2] for use of media featuring project participants such as audio recordings, video, photographs etc
- insurance of activities at appropriate levels
- provision of evidence of tax compliance (Tax Clearance Certificate)
- health & safety assurances in place for all funded activities
- acknowledgement of the support of Cork City Council and Creative Ireland in all informational and publicity material relating to the project

The use of AI-generated images, artwork, or other visual content is not permitted in any aspect of a project supported through the Creative Communities Grant Scheme, including project development, delivery, documentation, evaluation, and promotion. As a condition of funding, all visual materials must be the work of identifiable human creators. Non-compliance with this requirement may be deemed a breach of grant conditions and may result in the withdrawal or forfeiture of all or part of the grant award.

[2] The **Media Consent Form** provided by Cork City Council at time of funding offer must be used. Alternative consent forms are not sufficient to meet the requirements of Creative Ireland and Cork City Council.

Drawdown of Funds

Successful grant applicants will be notified in writing by early March 2027. Grant funds should be drawn down in two tranches.

Tranche 1 – 75% of grant total: To be drawn down upon acceptance of the grant offer, subject to the submission of an invoice and any other required documentation as requested by Cork City Council. Failure to draw down Tranche 1 within 28 days of receipt of the grant offer may result in the grant offer being withdrawn at the discretion of Cork City Council.

Tranche 2 – 25% of grant total: To be drawn down following completion of the funded activities and receipt of a completed Form B (Project Report), an Income & Expenditure Report, a second invoice for the balance of the grant, high-resolution photographs of funded activities, signed media consent forms, and any other documentation requested by Cork City Council. Payment of Tranche 2 is subject to the satisfactory submission and approval of all required documentation.

Please note: Form B must be submitted in editable format (e.g. Word or editable PDF).

If you have any questions about the Creative Communities Grant Scheme, or if you need help with your application, please contact louise_tangney@corkcity.ie.

Scan the QR code
to complete your grant
application, or visit
https://submit.link/5jS

For more information about Creative Ireland in Cork City go to www.corkcity.ie/creative-ireland.