

Community & Voluntary Groups Financial Assistance Scheme 2026

Guidelines

1. Purpose of the Scheme

This pilot scheme provides **retrospective financial assistance** to volunteer-run community and voluntary groups operating within Galway City. The purpose is to help cover essential running costs already incurred during 2026, supporting the viability of small groups that promote inclusion, wellbeing, and community resilience.

2. Key Dates (2026 Cycle)

- Scheme advertised: **May 2026**
- Online information webinar: **19 May 2026**
- Application window: **Tuesday 2 June – Monday 29 June 2026 (12pm)**
- Eligible expenditure period: **1 January 2026 – 31 October 2026**
- Notification of outcomes: **Late July 2026**
- Payments processed: **From August 2026**
- Final date to draw down funding: **31 October 2026**

3. Who Can Apply

Eligible Applicants

Groups must:

- Be a **not-for-profit** community or voluntary organisation
- Be **entirely volunteer-run** (no paid staff)
- Operate within the **Galway City Council administrative area**
- Hold a **bank account in the group's name**

Not Eligible

- Individuals
- Private or commercial organisations
- Groups that employ staff
- Businesses or business associations

- For-profit organisations or social enterprises
- Groups operating outside the Galway City Council area

4. Eligible Costs

The scheme supports **essential running costs** required to keep volunteer groups operational.

Eligible costs (retrospective only):

- **Utilities:** electricity, heating, refuse
- **Operating costs:** existing rental/lease payments, insurance bills

Only costs **already paid** between **1 January 2026 and 31 October 2026** are eligible.

Important Conditions

- This pilot scheme reimburses **rent, insurance, and utility bills only**.
- Maximum reimbursement: **€500 per eligible group**
- Proof of payment is required (receipts, bank statements, online confirmations).
- Costs must be incurred before payment can be issued by Galway City Council.
- Receipts and proof of payment will be accepted up to **31 October 2026**.

5. Ineligible Costs

The following cannot be funded:

- Employment or pay costs
- Tutor or facilitator fees
- Purchase of equipment
- Legal or project management fees
- Feasibility studies
- Capital costs
- Private or commercial operations
- Costs funded by another scheme (no double funding)
- Costs incurred outside the eligible period

6. Funding Level and Nature of Support

- **Maximum assistance available:** €500 per eligible volunteer group
- **Total scheme budget:** €20,000
- **Retrospective payments only** (after verification of receipts and proof of payment)
- **No match funding required**

Meeting eligibility criteria does not guarantee funding. Offers may be lower than the amount sought if the scheme is oversubscribed.

7. Targeting Approach & Prioritisation

Applications will be assessed by the Galway City Council Community Department, with a focus on supporting groups experiencing the greatest financial pressure and community need.

Priority will be given to groups that:

- Operate in disadvantaged areas
- Support vulnerable, isolated, or marginalised communities
- Are at risk of reducing activity due to rising costs
- Have minimal reserves or limited fundraising capacity
- Cannot easily attract sponsorship or external funding
- Do not generate revenue through membership fees, rental income etc

Applications will be assessed solely on the information submitted. Additional supporting documentation is encouraged.

Funding recommendations will be presented to the **Galway City LCDC** for approval.

8. Compliance and Governance Requirements

Tax

- Groups are **not required** to be tax-registered.
- If tax-registered, groups must be tax compliant and provide:
 - **Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN)**
 - **Tax Reference Number**

Acknowledgement of Funding

Groups must acknowledge Galway City Council support in:

- Social media posts
- Reports
- Newsletters
- Other public communications

9. Evidence Required (Retrospective Payments)

For each cost claimed, applicants must submit:

1. **Itemised invoice/bill** dated between 1 January – 31 October 2026, in the group's name
2. **Proof of payment** (bank statement entry, receipt, online confirmation), in the group's name
3. **Brief justification** explaining how the cost supports the group's operations and community service continuity

4. **Declaration of need**, confirming the group could not meet these costs without assistance or that the grant prevents service reduction/closure
5. **VAT**: Only the VAT included in the original application will be paid; no later VAT adjustments will be accepted

10. Application Process

(Tuesday 2 June – Monday 29 June 2026, 12pm)

Step 1 — Read the Guidelines

Confirm your group is eligible and your costs fall within the eligible period and categories.

Step 2 — Prepare Documentation

- Gather bills/invoices and proof of payment (January–October 2026)
- Prepare tax clearance details (if applicable)

Step 3 — Complete the Online Application

Apply at: <https://submit.link/4ST>

Upload **utility bills, insurance bills, rent receipts, and proof of payment** (bank statements, online transactions, receipts).

Step 4 — Submit by the Deadline

Deadline: **12pm, Monday 29 June 2026**

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

False or misleading information may result in withdrawal, repayment, or exclusion from future schemes.

Step 5 — Notification

Applicants will be notified of outcomes in **late July 2026**.

Please do not contact the Community Department before notification.

Step 6 — Payment

Once all required documentation is submitted and verified, payments will be processed from **August 2026**.

Ensure your group's financial details (bank account, treasurer contact, etc.) are up to date with the Council's Accounts Payable Team. A supplier set up form ([Supplier Set Up Form](#)) may need to be completed.

All funding must be drawn down by **31 October 2026**. After this date, unclaimed funding will be withdrawn.

11. Fairness, Oversubscription & Reassignment

- Demand may exceed available funding; awards may be lower than requested.
- Submitting an application does not guarantee funding.
- Groups with greater capacity to attract sponsorship or external funding may receive lower priority.

Small volunteer-led groups often have limited:

- Fundraising capacity
- Sponsorship opportunities
- Reserves or savings

This will be considered during assessment.

12. Contact Information

For queries or assistance, contact your Urban & Community Development Officer:

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