



Galway City Creative Communities 2027: Open Call for Strategic Partners Fund

Guidelines

The 2027 Creative Communities Open Call for Strategic Partners is a funding initiative of Creative Ireland, facilitated by Galway City Council and governed by the Department of Culture, Communications, and Sport. The fund aims to partner with community groups, creative practitioners, or organisations, with a focus on community or creative expression.

The partners will deliver projects that align with the strategic goals of Creative Ireland as outlined in the Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027. It is the vision of the Creative Ireland programme that creativity must be at the very heart of public policy and that participation in cultural and creative activity effectively promotes the wellbeing of the individual, the community and the nation at large. This fund seeks to develop projects which can become mainstream activities achieving the above.

Under this programme, creativity is understood in a broad sense as both a set of innate abilities and learned skills, and the capacity of individuals and organisations to transcend accepted ideas and norms. By drawing on imagination, they create new ideas that bring additional value to human activity.

The ideal projects will reach underserved communities and have capacity to become a sustainably funded project beyond its time receiving Creative Ireland support.

Fund Overview:

- **Who can apply?** Community groups, organisations, and creative practitioners delivering activity in Galway City.
- **What is funded?** Community based creative projects that align with our 2027 strategic priorities and have the potential to exist beyond this funding stream. See the [Creative Ireland website](#) for examples of what has been funded in the past.
- **How much can I apply for?** In general, projects receive between €1,000 – €5,000. However, funding is based on the volume and nature of projects received. We have funded larger scale projects, and smaller initiatives. All applications are assessed by an impartial panel.
- **Key Dates**
 - *Applications open:* 9am 22 October 2026
 - *Information sessions:* 17-19 November 2026
 - *Application Deadline:* 12 Midday 21 January 2027
 - *Funding award date:* 11 March 2027
 - *Reporting deadline:* 23 September 2027
 - *How to apply:* [Online via the Submit portal](#)

Assessment Criteria

All applications will be assessed and awarded scores under the following criteria:

- **Ability to fulfil the strategic pillars outlined in the [Creativity and Culture 2023-2027 strategy](#) - 25%**

Further detail is in the above linked strategy, but in short the pillars are:

- Creative Youth (*N.B., if your project has a large Creative Youth Focus, your funding may be subject to your ability to participate at the Festival of Cruinniú na nÓg on the 12th of June*).

- Creative Communities
- Creative Industries
- Creative Health and Wellbeing
- Creative Climate Action and Sustainability

Your project can aim to fulfil multiple pillars, but you will be asked to select one primary pillar.

- **Quality and impact of the proposal – 25%**

Projects with a clear vision and a plan for how the project will have lasting impact, either on the lives of individuals or communities, or by becoming a feature of the cultural and community landscape of Galway City will score well here.

- **Feasibility and Financial management – 25%**

Here, the assessment team are looking for projects with clear and achievable budgets, and detailed timelines.

Regarding timelines, note that funding will be confirmed in March, and the bulk of projects should be completed by September. There is scope to complete projects later in the year, but there is limited capacity to accept projects of this nature.

- **Track record, merit of the collaboration – 25%**

In this section, scores will be attributed based on the track record of the lead applicant to deliver projects of similar scale and scope, and the level of community engagement that the project outlines.

All applications will be assessed by a three-person team drawn from members of the Galway City Creativity and Culture team. Team members will declare any conflicts of interests prior to beginning assessment and will be recused from relevant applications.

Eligible applications will first be assessed and scored based on individual merit. Following this, the Assessment Panel will meet to develop a balanced portfolio

across the five strategic priorities, different geographic areas of the city, and a mix of key demographics identified in the relevant strategies. This means that even a highly-scoring application may be scaled back or declined if it duplicates existing projects or falls outside priority areas.

Feedback on decisions will be available for 4 weeks following notification of the decision.

Eligibility Criteria

- *Who*: Community groups, organisations, and creative practitioners, either based in Galway City, or with the proposed activity taking place in Galway City.
- *Where*: We particularly welcome applications from groups working in underserved areas of the city, and from organisations reaching diverse or hard-to-reach communities.
- *When*: All late applications will be deemed ineligible.
- *What*: The following project costs are not eligible for this funding stream:
 - Top-up or substitute funding for existing events and initiatives (unless in respect of a new aspect or element).
 - Charity fundraisers.
 - For-profit projects and activities.
 - Purchase of capital equipment (e.g., permanent computers, cameras, instruments for long-term use).
 - Activities taking place outside of Galway City.

General Conditions of funding

- Funding must only be used for the purposes specified in your application.
- The funded aspect of the project must be complete within the timeframe set out in this document.
- Organisers must ensure that appropriate insurance and permissions are in place before any activity takes place. Galway City Council will not be

responsible for insurance or other permissions (eg, use of space, murals, etc) unless explicitly agreed.

- Payment Method: All partners will be paid via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Please ensure your banking details are correct. Note that setting up on the system can cause unavoidable delays, and this should be factored into your project timeline.
- Canvassing of any kind will disqualify the applicant.
- Funding is limited and the process is competitive; not all applicants will be successful, and applicants may be awarded less than the requested amount.
- Galway City Council reserves the right to add to, reduce, or withhold support. The decision of Galway City Council on support is final.
- If successful, Galway City Council will share details of the project with Creative Ireland and its partners.
- All strategic funding partners will be required to provide a Final Report upon completion of their project. This report must include:
 - Completed Form B, detailing public and media response, and tabulating all expenses incurred. N.B: all expenses must be in accordance with the details in your application form, unless explicitly agreed
 - Proof of payments for all expenses, correlating to the expenses recorded in the Form B. Proof of payments can be in the following format:
 - Receipts
 - Invoices matched with bank statements
 - For scenarios where the funding is paying the lead applicant for their time (eg, project amnagement costs, or artist fees where the artist is the lead applicant), an invoice will be accepted by itself as evidence of expenditure.
 - Photos of your event, along with photo consent forms where relevant (ie, if you can see a face in the image, photo consent is required).
 - Evidence of Public Acknowledgement of funding received from Galway City Council and Creative Ireland. This can be in the format of social media posts, press releases, flyers, posters etc.

Ensure that as you build your proposal, you factor in reporting time.

Frequently Asked Questions

- *Can I apply if I have received funding before?* Yes. Previous recipients are welcome, but we prioritise new projects and innovation over repeat funding for the same activity.
- *Can my budget include a contingency fund?* Yes, a small contingency (up to 5% of your total budget) is acceptable, but it must be justified.
- *What if my project is delayed?* You must notify the Creative Communities Engagement Officer immediately. Extensions are only granted in exceptional circumstances.
- *Do I need to have a partnership to apply?* No, partnerships are not mandatory, but they are strongly encouraged and will score higher under the collaboration criterion.

Application Checklist

Before submitting, please ensure you have:

- Read the full guidelines and Galway City Council's Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027.
- Identified which Strategic Priority your project addresses.
- Prepared a detailed budget with income and expenditure, and a detailed timeline.
- Secured any required Letters of Support (if applying with partners).
- Confirmed your project is ready to start upon award (venue, artists, timeline).
- Saved a copy of your application for your records.

Enquiries

For all enquiries, please email: creativeireland@galwaycity.ie

Please ensure you allow sufficient time for a response to your query before the deadline.