Biodiversity Fund 2025
Developing a Community Biodiversity Action Plan

About Community Foundation Ireland

Community Foundation Ireland and its partners believe in equality for all in thriving communities. We work with individuals, families, corporates and other trusts and foundations, as well as Government, to translate giving in the moment to giving that is strategic, sustainable and impactful. We use our skills and knowledge developed over 25 years to help donors turn aspirations into effective investments.

The Foundation works with partners to achieve solutions for both long-standing and emerging challenges. The work is built upon four pillars: Empowering Generations, Sustainable Futures, Inclusive Communities and Accelerating Change.

Through our many partnerships we are working towards an Ireland where barriers are broken down and communities are empowered to thrive. Working with you, other non-profits and donors we are committed to making this vision a reality.

About the Biodiversity Fund

With the support of the Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage, this fund has been devised to enhance biodiversity in communities throughout the country by combining the expertise of qualified ecologists with the skills, experience, and enthusiasm of local community groups.

We are inviting community groups to apply for a grant to engage an ecologist and develop a Community Biodiversity Action Plan (CBAP) for their local area. A CBAP is a classification of an area's local habitats, an assessment of their condition, an ecological mapping of the area, and a list of actions and recommendations that can be done to enhance local biodiversity.

For more information on CBAPs, please visit the Actions for Biodiversity website hosted by the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

Please use this website to find out if there is a CBAP for your area already.

Criteria

Three levels of funding can be applied for:

- **€6,000** for community groups to work with an ecologist to classify their local habitats, assess their condition and extent, map them, and define a suite of actions to enhance biodiversity.

- **€8,000** for community groups who carry out the above work in collaboration with one or two private land managers/owners to classify habitats at landscape scale with a focus on field boundaries (hedgerows, treelines and stone walls), assess

their condition and extent, map them and define a suite of actions to enhance biodiversity.

- **€11,000** for community groups who carry out the above work in collaboration with three or more private land managers/owners to classify habitats at landscape scale with a focus on field boundaries (hedgerows, treelines and stone walls), assess their condition and extent, map them and define a suite of actions to enhance biodiversity.

You must have received permission from all landowners before you apply.

Successful groups will be sent an updated Resource Pack which includes a directory of ecologists and the region they operate in.

- Groups may work with an ecologist whose name does not appear in the Resource Pack, provided they are suitably qualified and agree to the criteria. Community Foundation Ireland must be notified in advance if this is the case.

Ecologists have agreed to a daily rate for their work of €550 exclusive of VAT, travel and subsistence.

Tips on Applying

- We strongly recommend contacting your local Biodiversity Officer before making an application.
- Attaching a map of your targeted area greatly helps our assessors make an informed decision.
- Be as descriptive as possible about your targeted area – particularly if it is near any Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, or Natural Heritage Areas.
- Contacting and collaborating with other environmental groups, community groups, or Tidy Towns organisations in your area is a great way to strengthen an application.
- Please include community outreach in your budgets. This can include educational events, school talks, public walks, etc. It is a good idea to save 10% of your budget for these events which can be done with your ecologist.

Grant Round Timeline

Action	Date
Opening date for applications:	8th September 2025
Closing date for applications:	4pm, 17th October 2025
All applicants informed of decision:	December 2025
Studies should be carried out:	January 2026 – Spring 2027
Progress Report due:	August 2026

Second Progress Report due:	February 2027
CBAP complete and Outcome Report due:	June 2027

The timeline for project completion can vary depending on how quickly you hire an ecologist and the complexity of your area. Some CBAPs may be completed within 6 months, however we allow up to 18 months due to the nature of the work.

Eligibility

Eligible organisations…	Eligible projects…
• Must be not-for-profit. Charities, non-profit sports clubs, community & voluntary groups, etc. are all eligible. • Have up to date and sufficient governing documents, accounts, and a dedicated bank account. • Must be based in the Republic of Ireland.	• Must be to carry out a Community Biodiversity Action Plan (CBAP). • Must be done with a qualified Ecologist. • Must liaise with Landowners / Farmers / Local Authorities. • Will include clear, detailed, realistic costs and timescales.

Ineligible organisations include…	Ineligible projects include…
• Organisations with an application in progress with the Charities Regulator • Statutory bodies • For-profit companies • Organisations outside the Republic of Ireland • Individual people who are not part of an organisation	• Ongoing core costs such as insurance, rent, bills etc. • General biodiversity projects. • Projects that have already happened or any activities that will happen before the grants are awarded. • Projects that do not have permission from all landowners involved. • Projects taking place outside of the Republic of Ireland

Priorities for this Strand

Each year this is a very competitive grant round so the following proposals may be prioritised:

- Proposals that show engagement with the local Biodiversity Officer.

- Proposals that focus on engaging the wider community and demonstrate an intention and capacity to work closely with local landowners, managers, and **particularly farmers**.

- Proposals which consider biodiversity within towns and villages themselves, alongside their green areas, rivers, farms, and parks. This includes streets, laneways, and buildings where protection and enhancement of biodiversity is often neglected.

- Proposals which include a map of their area. This map can be a screenshot from Google Maps, or any other document/picture which shows the area being targeted.

- To ensure the Fund is as impactful as possible, other factors including geographic spread will be taken into consideration. We aim to support as much of the country as possible and may elevate organisations from counties that do not have many proposals.

Outcomes

- Please work closely with your ecologist and follow their suggestions. Due to the nature of the work, there may be delays, or a geographical feature another specialist. This can limit the size of the planned area but will be more beneficial to local biodiversity.

- It is expected that studies will be carried out by qualified ecologists between January 2026 and Spring 2027, with final CBAPs to be submitted to Community Foundation Ireland by June 2027 and ensuring the ecologist has submitted their data to the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

Reporting requirements

Successful applicants will be expected to:

- Acknowledge the support of Community Foundation Ireland and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage on any materials associated with the grant.
- Submit a short Progress Report in August 2026.
- Submit a second Progress Report in February 2027.
- Submit an Outcome Report along with a copy of their CBAP in June 2027.
- Ensure that data collected from the ecological study is submitted to the National Biodiversity Data Centre upon completion.

Progress and Outcome Reports will be submitted via our Grants Portal and you will be notified in advance of their due date.

Documentation we need to make grants

Applicants will need to complete their 'organisation profile' on our grants portal to ensure they meet our governance standards. Please complete your organisation profile before you submit your application.

- **Mission Statement OR Constitution OR Memorandum and Articles of Association.**
  - This must show the mission statement or main objects of the organisation, and how any donations will be used. It must also include information on what happens to remaining funds should your organisation be wound-up.
  - This document must be **signed**.

- **A bank account statement**
  - The header must clearly show the Account name, number, BIC and IBAN.
  - This must be dated within the last six months.

- **List of Committee members / Board members**
  - All applicants will be asked to submit all members of their committee/board, and their length of time served.

- **The organisation's latest signed annual accounts or financial statement**
  - Annual accounts should include unabridged financial statements for the last year, or where relevant, a monthly profit and loss for the year.
  - Organisations with an annual income of less than €100,000 should provide a **signed** record of your accounts for one full year.
  - Organisations with an annual income of more than €100,000 must provide **signed** audited annual accounts.

How to Apply

The Fund is open for applications on **8th September** and will close at **4pm, Friday 17th October.**

Please note all applications must be made through our Grants Portal. We will not accept any other type of application.

The Grants Portal can be found here.
- Groups who have received funding from us in the past will already be registered and may already have log in details. New groups can register by clicking 'Register Here'.
- If you have logged into the Grants Portal before but do not remember your password, please click 'forgot password'.
- If you need any help logging into the portal please contact us and we will make

it a priority to get you set up.

Please read our general guidance around accessing and submitting applications here.

You can also access the Application Help Guide on our website which contains a step-by-step guide to submitting applications, including the list of questions contained in the application.

Should you have any further questions, or need assistance accessing the portal, please contact our Grants Team at info@foundation.ie.