



Biodiversity Fund 2026

Developing a Community Biodiversity Action Plan

About Community Foundation Ireland

Community Foundation Ireland and its donors are on a mission to mobilise strategic philanthropy to advance equality, strengthen communities and protect our nature and environment.

We do so with over 5,000 voluntary, community and charitable partners who share our values of integrity, collaboration, courage as well as excellence and impact.

We use our skills and knowledge developed over 25 years to help donors turn aspirations into effective investments working with individuals, families, corporates, other trusts and foundations and Government to translate giving in the moment to giving that is strategic, sustainable and impactful.

Our mission is supported by three interwoven strategic priorities of; People (securing a fairer future), Place (strengthening communities) and Planet (protecting climate and nature).

About the Biodiversity Fund

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.

Some good examples of CBAPs are: [Lusk](#), [Griston Bog in Ballylanders](#), and [Dunlewey](#).

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.



- **€10,000** 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

- **Please do not apply for general biodiversity projects as they will not be assessed.**
- 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 [Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, or Natural Heritage Areas](#).
- Contacting and collaborating with other community groups in your area may strengthen an application. This includes state/semi-state bodies such as the NPWS.
- 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.
- **We strongly recommend contacting your local Biodiversity Officer before making an application. Applications which show engagement with Biodiversity Officers will be prioritised.**

Grant Round Timeline

Action	Date
Opening date for applications:	24 th August 2026
Closing date for applications:	4pm, 2 nd October 2026
All applicants informed of decision:	January 2027
Surveys should be carried out:	January 2027 – Spring 2028



Progress Report due:	August 2027
Second Progress Report due:	March 2028
CBAP complete and Outcome Report due:	July 2028

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.

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...
• 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. • 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

This is a very competitive grant round each year so the following applications may be prioritised:

- Applications that show engagement with the local Biodiversity Officer.
- Applications that include 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. There may be delays due to the nature of the work, or is a geographic feature requires the assistance of 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 2027 and Spring 2028, with final CBAPs to be submitted to Community Foundation Ireland by June 2028. Data collected by the ecologist must be submitted 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 short Progress Reports in August 2027 and March 2028.
- Submit an Outcome Report along with a copy of their CBAP by July 2028.
- 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

Community Foundation Ireland operate under a ‘trust-based philanthropy’ model, meaning grants from the Biodiversity Fund are awarded **upfront and in full**. Therefore, we must make sure potential grantees pass our due diligence requirements.

Applicants will need to complete their ‘organisation profile’ on our grants portal to ensure they meet our governance standards. Organisations who have received funding from the Foundation before may have already completed their organisation profile.

The documents you will be required to upload to your Organisation Profile are:

- **Mission Statement OR Constitution OR Memorandum and Articles of Association.**
 - This must show the mission statement or main objects of your 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. It must be dated within the last 6 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**
 - This is a statement of your organisation’s income & expenses for one full year. We require this as Biodiversity Fund grants are provided upfront and we need to see evidence that you keep a good record of your finances.
 - 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** accounts.

How to Apply

The Fund is open for applications on **24th August** and will close at **4pm, Friday 2nd October**. Please do not leave your application to the final day in case of any unexpected issues.

All applications must be made through our [dedicated grants portal](#). We will not accept any other type of application.

[The Grants Portal can be found here.](#)



- Organisations who have received funding from the Foundation in the past will already be registered and may have log in details. New organisations can register by clicking 'Register Here'.
- If you have logged into the portal before but do not remember your password, please click 'forgot password'. If you do not receive an automatic email from the grants portal, please contact info@foundation.ie
- If you need any help logging into the portal please contact us and we will make it a priority to get you set up.

We also have 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.

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