

# Environment and Nature Fund: Circular Economy FAQs

Please read through the following FAQs regarding the Circular Economy Fund. If your question is cannot be found here, please read through the criteria for each strand or email the Grants Team at [info@foundation.ie](mailto:info@foundation.ie)

## What types of organisations can apply to the fund?

Non-profit organisations (registered charities as well as community / voluntary groups) working to achieve the objectives of the grant round with an annual income of less than €500,000 can apply to the grant round. Your organisation must have up to date and sufficient governing documents, and annual accounts.

## What types of organisations are not eligible to apply to this fund?

Ineligible organisations include:

- Organisations with an annual income of more than €500,000
- Sports clubs
- Statutory bodies
- For-profit companies
- Animal welfare organisations
- Organisations outside the Republic of Ireland
- Individual people who are not part of a constituted organisation

## My organisation is not eligible, can I still receive funding?

Organisations that do not fit the criteria above are not eligible to apply for funding.

## How much funding can my organisation apply for?

Organisations can apply for grants of up to €2,500. This will include €1,100 to engage with expert consultants for the development of a Community Circular Economy Action Plan as well as seed funding to support the implementation of some recommendations as well as community engagement.

The project budget can be larger than the amount applied for. However, The Community Foundation for Ireland can only award the amounts listed above toward the project. This funding must be restricted to the project that has been applied for and must be spent within 12 months.

## **Will the entire funding be awarded at once?**

No. Out of the total, €1,500 will be awarded as a first instalment to successful organisations to get started on the consultation and for any community engagement or any other expenses that might arise.

Once an organisation has their Action Plan ready, they can access the remaining €1,000 by submitting a budget for getting starting on the implementation of recommendations.

## **What will be needed to access the second instalment of the funding?**

Organisations will need to submit their new Action Plan as well as a budget that indicates how they will spend the remaining funds on the implementation of recommendations.

## **My organisation is a local group, which is part of a national network, can I apply?**

Yes, local groups are eligible to apply.

## **Can I submit an application without completing the Circular Economy training course?**

No, organisations need at least 2 people to have finished the training course to be eligible for application.

The training videos will give a good sense of what can be achieved and give examples of what is happening already in communities across the country. Each video is about 20 minutes long and the entire course would take about 1.5 hours to complete. Course completion codes will be allotted at the end to anyone who finishes the course.

## **Can people from our organisation complete the training together?**

No, the training needs to be completed by people individually. It includes videos and questions and those who answer the questions correctly will get a course completion code. These individual codes will need to be mentioned in the grant application form.

## **My organisation is based in Northern Ireland, can I apply to the Circular Economy Fund?**

Community Foundation Ireland's Circular Economy Fund is only available to organisations based in the Republic of Ireland. Our partner organisation, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI) may have funding opportunities you could be eligible for. Find out more here: <https://communityfoundationni.org/>

## Can funding go towards staff costs?

We have estimated that this project would require a total of 3 working days in staff time over a period of six months.

From the initial instalment of €1,500, €1,100 is earmarked for organisations to access the consultation. The remaining €400 is available for organisations to fund any staff or community engagement expenses that might arise.

The second instalment of €1,000 will be available for organisations to get started on the implementation of recommendations that emerge.

If your organisation needs more support on staff costs and expenses, you can reach out to your expert consultant or Community Foundation Ireland.

## What types of proposals are not eligible for funding?

Ineligible projects include:

- Ongoing core costs such as insurance, rent, bills etc.
- Any projects not focussed on the development of a Community Circular Economy Action Plan
- Religious or political activities
- Projects that have already happened or any activities that will happen before the grants are awarded
- Projects taking place outside of the Republic of Ireland

## How long should the project last?

Projects should last no more than 12 months from the date of payment. Projects that are self-sustaining can continue beyond this, however all funding must be spent within 12 months.

If your project is facing delays, please reach out to Community Foundation Ireland to discuss it and review your timeline.

## Some projects are being prioritised in this grant round, is it worth applying even if my project isn't a priority?

We have indicated in the criteria that particular types of projects will be prioritised. We hope to fund both priority and non-priority projects, so please submit your application if you meet the criteria and aim of the grant round.

Priority areas are not essential for applications and will only be looked at in case the funding is oversubscribed.

## If my organisation has already, or is currently in receipt of a grant from Community Foundation Ireland, can I still apply?

Yes.

## Will this funding be available next year?

Yes, Community Foundation Ireland hopes to make funding available to community groups to work on circular economy initiatives annually.

Similar to our Biodiversity funding, we hope to award continuing funding to groups for implementing their Action Plans as well as funding to new groups for developing their Action Plans.

## Does my organisation need a bank account?

Yes. Community Foundation Ireland can only pay out grants to organisations with a dedicated bank account and not to individual accounts.

## Can funds be paid into a credit union account?

Yes. You must include the BIC and IBAN for the credit union account in the application.

## Can I send in my proposal via email or post?

All proposals must be submitted through our online application form, we cannot accept applications in other formats. The link to the application form can be found in the criteria document.

## When is the grant round deadline?

The deadline is 4pm on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023. No applications will be accepted after this time. We highly recommend that you submit your application well before this deadline in case of any unexpected issues.

## When will we find out the outcome?

The outcome of your application should be announced in September 2023. We expect successful organisations to start work in October 2023.

## What documents should I submit with my application?

When submitting the application, all organisations will be **required** to upload digital copies of the following governance documents:

- The Constitution or Memorandum and Articles of Association.
  - This must show the mission statement or main objects of the organisation, how any donations will be used, and the winding up clause.
  - This document must be signed.

- A bank or credit union account statement header.
  - This statement header must clearly show the Account Name, BIC and IBAN.
  - Please blank out any transactions, as this is purely to verify the account to pay the grant into.
- Your organisation's most recent annual accounts.
  - Annual accounts should include unabridged financial statements for the year, or where relevant, a monthly profit and loss for the year.
  - Organisations with an annual income of more than €100,000 must provide audited annual accounts.
  - Accounts should be from the most recent year end and must be signed.
- A current list of your organisation's board/committee members and the date they were appointed.

It is imperative that we receive all of these documents. If you do not submit the correct governance documents, your application will not be considered for funding.

## **I am not able to submit one or more of my governance documents, what can I do?**

We cannot accept applications without all the correct governance documents. If you are having trouble submitting the documents while applying, email us at [info@foundation.ie](mailto:info@foundation.ie) with your application number before the deadline, and we may be able to help you upload them from our side. Please be mindful that if you are submitting last minute and are not able to submit your documents, we may not be able to help you before the round closes.

## **How will my organisation report on our project's progress?**

All grantees will be required to submit a report at 6-month intervals during the project. An Interim Report will be due March 2024 and an Outcome Report will be due September 2024. Community Foundation Ireland will be in touch with online report templates shortly before these dates.