Collaborating for Impact Fund
Grant Round Criteria

About Community Foundation Ireland

Community Foundation Ireland and its donors are on a shared mission of equality for all in thriving communities. Together with 5,000 voluntary, community and charitable partners we are a philanthropic hub for Ireland which is a source of knowledge, expertise and information to ensure effective and strategic giving.

Our ambition is to deepen impact and influence, increase philanthropic participation while strengthening equality and sustainability. We do so through three areas of focus: People, Place and Planet.

We understand that philanthropy's power lies not only in funding but in shaping the systems that determine opportunity, equality and sustainability. Deepening this leadership role, the Foundation works in partnership with donors, government, civil society, business and our peer trusts and foundations to create the enabling environment needed for a mature and confident philanthropic sector.

About the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht was established in 2017. The Department supports the development of sustainable, inclusive and resilient communities throughout Ireland, including in rural, urban, island and Gaeltacht areas, embracing their unique cultural, linguistic and environmental features. This is achieved through a range of policy initiatives, funding schemes and interventions intended to improve the economic and social development of rural and urban communities, including in Gaeltacht regions and on our offshore islands.

About the National Philanthropy Policy 2024 – 2028

Ireland's first National Philanthropy Policy 2024–2028, launched in December 2023, sets out a framework to support and strengthen philanthropy in Ireland. The purpose of the Policy is to deepen understanding and knowledge, create an enabling environment and accelerate engagement with philanthropy in Ireland for social good.
This Policy is a recognition by Government of the value of philanthropy and a statement of intent to collaborate and support the development of philanthropy to maximise its potential for public good.
Read more about the policy and find out about its implementation on the gov.ie dedicated webpage: National Philanthropy Policy.

About the Collaborating in Practice Framework

The Collaborating in Practice Framework is designed to strengthen public-philanthropic collaboration in Ireland. Developed to deliver on Action 17 of the National Philanthropy Policy 2024-2028, which commits to "*Agree frameworks for public/private engagement on philanthropic initiatives*", the Framework contributes to the Policy's wider objective of promoting understanding and collaboration between philanthropy and government to develop innovative solutions to key social issues.

The **Collaborating for Impact Fund** is being administered by Community Foundation Ireland on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht. It was designed as a pathway to roll out and test the Collaborating in Practice Framework commissioned by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht as part of the implementation of the National Philanthropy Policy. It is intended to help Government, philanthropy, local authorities, intermediary bodies, and community and civil society organisations work together more effectively where collaboration can add value.

Across Ireland, organisations already work together every day to address issues that no organisation can solve alone. The Framework builds on that experience. It focuses on the conditions that help collaboration work well, the points that need attention as partnerships develop, and the practical choices that can make collaborative work stronger and more sustainable.

The Collaborating for Impact Fund has been designed as a pathway to roll out and test the Collaborating in Practice Framework and use the learnings and reflections to refine it further. The Collaborating for Impact Series, which includes the Framework is available to view or download here.

The Collaborating for Impact Fund is funded under the Dormant Accounts Fund.

About the Collaborating for Impact Fund

The purpose of the Fund is to deliver meaningful outcomes through the participating organisations and generate learning about how Government, philanthropy and civil society can collaborate more effectively. The Collaborating for Impact Fund is a pilot initiative through which the Collaborating in Practice Framework and its companion tools will be applied, tested and refined.

The pilot will seek to achieve two connected outcomes:

1. Benefits for the communities and groups supported through the projects, and
2. Practical learning that strengthens how Government, philanthropy and civil society collaborate in the future.

The Collaborating for Impact Fund aims to:

- Support organisations at different stages of collaboration-readiness to develop sustainable public-philanthropic partnerships that strengthen their long-term impact and resilience.
- Build the capacity of community and voluntary organisations to engage effectively with public authorities, government departments, local authorities and philanthropic funders.
- Test and refine the Collaborating in Practice Framework and the accompanying toolkit through practical implementation and ongoing evaluation.

- Invest in organisational capacity building by allowing sufficient time and space to develop meaningful public-philanthropic partnerships through these grants.
- Support work aligned with active policy priorities, with partnerships developed through the Fund helping to advance those objectives.

Eligible Organisations

Only eligible organisations will be funded in this grant round. This includes:

- Organisations that have been operating as a CLG or a Registered Charity for a minimum of 5 years.
- Organisations with a minimum annual income of €200,000 in the previous financial year.
- As per the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2005, applicants will be required to adhere to the following purposes for their proposed projects:
    - the personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged;
    - the educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged; or
    - persons with a disability (within the meaning of the Equal Status Act 2000)
- Organisations that have a confirmed pledge / commitment to raise match funding equal to the amount requested from a philanthropic source.
    - Organisations applying to Strand A must provide a written commitment of support as part of their full application.
    - Organisations applying to Strand B will have to commit to securing match funding within the first 12 months.
- Organisations based in the Republic of Ireland
- Organisations with up-to-date and the required governance documents, annual accounts and the relevant safeguarding policies as set out in the final section of this document.
- Organisations with local branches across the country should coordinate their application through their Head Office.

<u>Only one application per organisation will be accepted.</u>

Available Funding

All grants through this Fund will be awarded over two years and will be paid in two instalments.

Strand A– Collaborating in Practice Framework Testing
Under this strand, grants between €200,000 and €300,000 across two years will be available to organisations that have established relationships with philanthropy, government, and/or public bodies.

In Year 1, successful organisations will receive up to half of the amount applied for, in line with the agreed budget. Year 2 funding will be paid on receipt of a satisfactory progress report demonstrating that the agreed outcomes have been achieved, as set out in the grant agreement.

The funding would be used to:

- Test the application of the Collaborating in Practice Framework,
- Demonstrate how the Framework can support the design, governance, delivery and review of collaborative initiatives, and
- Improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups through cross-sector collaboration.

Applicants to this strand must have:

- Matched funding from a philanthropic source equal to the amount requested.
- A confirmed government and/or public body partner.
- Agreement among all three partners on the proposed project deliverables and a shared commitment to applying and testing the Collaborating in Practice Framework.

At Stage 1 of the application process, applicants need to confirm an understanding of these requirements. At Stage 2 of the application process, applicants will need to provide written commitments from the relevant parties endorsed by the CEO or a Board representative in order to be considered.

Strand B - Pathways to Partnership

Under this strand, grants between €100,000 and €150,000 across two years will be available for organisations that have limited or no experience of engaging with philanthropy, government, and/or public bodies.

In Year 1, successful organisations will receive up to a maximum of €100,000 for capacity building activities and partnership development, in line with their application and agreed budget. Receiving the remaining amount in Year 2 requires satisfactory reporting as per the grant agreement, including evidence of secured matched funding and achievement of the other agreed outcomes.

Securing matched funding equal to the Year 2 amount is a condition of receiving Year 2 funding.

The funding can be used to:

- Build capacity within community and civil society organisations to build relationships with philanthropy and government and/or public bodies,
- Test the application of the Framework particularly at the relationship building stage
- Demonstrate how the Framework can support the design, governance, delivery and review of collaborative initiatives,
- Improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups through cross-sector collaboration.

Successful grantees under this strand will have a maximum of 12 months to establish the three-party partnership. Applicants are not required to have a partnership established at the application stage but may already have either a philanthropic partner or a government and/or public body partner.

Applications must demonstrate a clear plan to build capacity within the organisation and establish the three-party partnership. Within the first 12 months, funding can be used for capacity building activities, outreach, partnership exploration and stakeholder engagement. Organisations should use the Collaborating in Practice Framework and its accompanying tools to establish the required public-philanthropic partnership.

By the end of the 12 months, successful grantees will need to provide written confirmation endorsed by the CEO or a Board representative of:

- Matched philanthropic funding equal to the amount requested to deliver the project activities in Year 2.
- A confirmed government and/or public body partner.
- An updated project plan, including activities, budget, timeline, and impact measures, agreed by all three partners.

Once the partnership is established, Year 2 funding should support agreed project activities as well as application and testing of the Collaborating in Practice Framework.

Grantees may be ready to claim Year 2 payments earlier, subject to satisfactory reporting and fulfilment of the requirements set out in the grant agreement. Securing matched funding is a condition of receiving Year 2 funding.

If a grantee secures less match funding than originally planned, the Year 2 payment may be reduced to the value of the confirmed philanthropic match funding, subject to approval of an updated project plan and budget.

Timeline for the Grant Round

This grant round will be delivered through a **two-stage application process.** All organisations must complete Stage 1 to be considered for funding.

Only organisations invited to Stage 2 will be eligible to submit a full application.

Stage 1 - Initial Application
Applicants submit a short application to assess eligibility and suitability for the programme.
All applications received through this stage will be assessed by the Community Foundation Ireland team and only organisations who are successful at this stage will be invited to submit a Stage 2 full application.

Stage 2 - Full Application
Successful applications from Stage 1 will be invited to complete and submit a detailed application for assessment and final funding decisions.

Final decision making for all applications lies with DRCDG and may include consideration of overall geographic and thematic spread of the fund as well as taking into account funding awarded to the entity from other similar funding schemes to ensure no double funding.

Timeline for this Grant Round

Activity	**Date**
Information Webinar	Tuesday 24th November 2026
Opening Date for Stage 1 applications:	Tuesday 24th November 2026
Closing Date for Stage 1 applications:	Friday 22nd January 2027
Assessment of Stage 1 applications:	25th January to 18th February 2027
Invites Issued for Stage 2:	19th February 2027
Opening Date for Stage 2 applications:	Monday 22nd February 2027
Closing Date for Stage 2 applications:	Friday 19th March 2027
Assessment and Due Diligence:	March to May 2027
Grants will be awarded:	May 2027
Work should begin:	June 2027

Information Webinar

Community Foundation Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht hosted a webinar on the 24th of November 2026 to support organisations in their application. This covers information relevant to both the strands including the criteria, the application form and how to align with the Collaborating for Impact Fund's priorities. The webinar is recorded and can be watched here – link here

We recommend that all applicants watch this webinar to find out more about the criteria and how to apply.

Proposal Eligibility

Eligible applications:	Ineligible applications include:

• Must meet the objectives of the grant round and the particular strand, as highlighted above in the criteria.
• As per the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2005, applicants will be required to adhere to the following purposes for their proposed projects:
  ○ the development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged;
  ○ the educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged; or
  ○ persons with a disability
• Must reflect a focus on both project work as well as partnership building work.
• Must have strong alignment to active government policy priorities and the proposed partnerships should work towards achieving the associated
	• Applications that do not meet the criteria of the grant round specified above.
	• Capital and building related work.
	• Projects that have already happened or any activities that will happen before the grants are awarded.
	• Applications seeking funding for activities or costs that are already supported through another government funding programme.
	• Projects taking place outside of the Republic of Ireland.

policy objectives. Must have strong impact on the communities benefitting from the programme. May be a current programme that will be developed or upscaled with the funding or a new programme. • Must have grant activities starting no earlier than June 2027 and run for 18 - 24 months. ○ For Strand B, grant activities within the first 12 months include capacity building and partnership establishment using the Framework. Project activities must begin after the Year 2 payment has been secured.	

Ineligible costs include:

- Core costs exceeding 10% of the total amount requested. For this round, costs related to hiring spaces within the grantee's own facilities e.g., meeting room(s), photocopier are not considered core costs.
- Salaries of roles not related to the Collaborating for Impact Fund
- The purchase of furniture, equipment and vehicles, except where such purchases are necessary for achieving the objective of the operation, or the purchase of such items is the most economic option, or where part of the economic life of the furniture, equipment and vehicles falls outside the period of the operation being co-financed and also costs under €2,500
- Purchase of land or buildings
- Retrospective costs i.e., expenditure which has taken place prior to approval date of the project

- Costs for which more appropriate funding opportunities already exist. The Collaborating for Impact DAF Fund is not a substitute for other public funding which is currently available
- VAT costs (where the VAT costs can be reclaimed from Revenue)
- Bank charges such as interest costs, fines, financial penalties, and legal dispute costs
- Routine repairs and maintenance of buildings
- Costs for staff, actions, equipment, and programmes already supported by statutory and public funding
- Legal fees/professional fees that are not directly attributable to the delivery of the project
- Sponsorship and charitable donations
- Grants or funding: to individuals and other organisations
- Depreciation: of fixed assets; all costs must be paid out to a third party
- Redundancy costs
- Debt and debt service charges
- Vouchers e.g., gift vouchers.

Additional Information

- Applications can be for new or existing work as long as it aligns with at least one of the purposes set out in the Dormant Accounts Fund legislation.
- Proposals to this Fund can include a proportion of staff salaries that are relevant to the work, both project as well as partnership building work.
- Capacity building activities can include training courses, strategy development, skills development among staff, consultation work, engaging a consultant for this work etc.
- There will be one lead applicant for this application who must be eligible, but this organisation may collaborate with others who are not eligible or who may also put in their own application.

Ineligible Organisations

Ineligible organisations include:

- Organisations that do not regularly work on the purposes set under the Dormant Accounts (Amendment) Act 2005.
- Organisations with an annual income of less than €200,000.
- Organisations based outside the Republic of Ireland.
- Universities or state bodies.
- Profit-making companies.
- Proposals from individuals.
- Political Parties

How to apply

All applications to the Collaborating for Impact Fund should be made through our online application form on our Grants Portal. Please ensure you complete the correct application form based on the Strand you have chosen.

Access the application form by logging into the Grants Portal.

Resources and help in accessing the Grants Portal can be found here.

Governance Documents

When submitting the application, all organisations will be required to complete their organisation's profile on our Grants Portal. When you log into the Grants Portal, you will see if you need to complete your organisation's profile. As part of this, you will be required to upload digital copies of the following governance documents:

- **Your 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.
- **Certificate of Incorporation**
  - If your organisation is constituted as a company.

- **Tax Clearance Certificate**
    - This is available to all relevant organisations via your account on revenue.ie
- **A current list of your organisation's Board / Committee members and the dates they were appointed.**
    - Copies of photo IDs from two of the Board / Committee members should also be submitted, as well as a proof of address from one of these members.
- **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.
    - If your organisation has a credit union account, you must supply an IBAN for your specific account. We are unable to accept applications without a unique account IBAN.
- **Your organisation's most recent, and previous year's signed annual accounts**
    - All applicants must declare their organisation's annual income on the application form, and this will be verified in your most recent annual accounts.
    - Accounts should be from the two most recent financial years and must be signed.
    - Organisations must provide unabridged and audited annual accounts.

If you do not submit the correct governance documents, your application will not be considered for funding.