An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

Supporting Parents

Supporting Parents, Parent Peer Support Fund 2026/27

Guidelines & Terms & Conditions

Guidelines

Goal 2 of Supporting Parents: A National Model of Parenting Support Services is to promote greater access to parenting support services.

Peer support helps parents, and those in a parenting role, feel more confident in their parenting role. Research suggests parents, and those in a parenting role, are more comfortable seeking support from their peers and that parent peer support projects promote healthy parenting skills, an increased sense of empowerment, and a feeling of belonging. All attributes that positively impact and shape the lives of the children and young people to whom parents provide care.

The Parent Peer Support Fund:

The Supporting Parents, Parent Peer Support Fund 2026/27 supports statutory, community and voluntary organisations leading or co-ordinating peer support projects for parents and those in a parenting role. The activities funded should focus on best practice in the areas of parent peer support. We encourage applications from organisations already providing peer supports for parents and those wishing to launch new projects.

Two tiers of funding will be made available under the 2026/27 Parent Peer Support Fund.

1. **Tier 1** will provide grants of **€2,500** to successful applicants who either currently operate, or wish to establish **a new** parent peer support project.

2. **Tier 2** will provide grants of **€5,000** to successful applicants who wish to **scale up** an existing parent peer support project, that has been proven to have a positive impact for parents.

Organisations seeking funding, should only submit an application for funding under **either Tier 1 or Tier 2**. Applications for both tiers of funding from the same organisation will not be accepted.

Aims of the Fund:

- To provide easier access to peer supports for parents, or those in a parenting role
- To raise awareness of and create more parent peer support activities within statutory, community and voluntary sector settings
- Further development of resources in partnership with parents, rather than delivered to parents
- Encourage parent peer support activities in communities which have not previously had access to such a resource

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Funding Availability:

- Funding of €2,500 or €5,000 per applicant is available on a once-off basis only. On-going funding will not be available.

Definition of Parent

The National Model defines a parent as any person in a parenting role, which is any person with primary or major responsibility for the care of a child under the age of 18 years. The term parent is applied in the most inclusive manner possible and includes biological parents, adoptive parents, foster carers, step-parents, kinship carers, and guardians.

Eligible Applicants:

The fund is open to practitioners and service providers working in the community, voluntary and statutory sectors, who work with parents, or those in a parenting role, to facilitate the development and support of parent peer support activities.

Eligible Costs:	**Ineligible Costs:**
• Advertising /promotional costs specific to the activity • Parent peer to peer networking and knowledge sharing events • Knowledge sharing tools or resource development • Training workshops and seminars • Parent peer coaching and mentoring programmes • Facilitator fees • Venue hire and catering • Administration costs – not to exceed 15% of overall funding awarded	• Capital costs • Equipment purchase & rental • Costs already specifically covered by other funding including those who received funding under the Parent and Toddler Group Grants Initiative • Travel costs

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Application Process

- The 2026/27 Parent Peer Support Fund is open for applications from **Monday 28 September until Monday 2 November 2026.**
- Grant applications must be received by the deadline of Monday 2 November 2026, by email only to peipolicyunit@dcde.gov.ie. The email must be sent from, or cc, the person who completed the application, if different from the person submitting the application.
- Funding will be made available to successful applicants in early 2027.
- **All funding must be expended by 31 December of the year funding is awarded**. Funding that has not been fully spent by this date must be returned to DCDE.

Selection and Assessment process

- The assessment criteria will be as follows:
    - Overall strength of project proposal by reference to planned activities.
    - Degree to which the planned outcomes meet the goals of Supporting Parents, A National Model of Parenting Support Services.
    - Value for money.

After the Selection & Assessment Processes

- All applicants will be notified in writing of the decision of the assessment panel. We ask all applicants who do not receive an acknowledgement to contact us directly at peipolicyunit@dcde.gov.ie
- The assessment panel's decision is final.
- If approved, an appropriate small grant contract will be agreed, after which the funding will be released in early 2027
- Applicants who have been successful must agree to the Terms and Conditions of the DCDE contract (see below).
- Delivery of payments to successful applicants will be administered by Pobal on behalf of the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality (DCDE).
- Successful applicants will be informed about the next steps re receiving the grant payment from Pobal.
- All awards are based on funding availability.
- Canvassing will disqualify.

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Terms & Conditions

The following core criteria will apply:

- Grantees must agree to include the DCDE and the Supporting Parents logos on any material relating to the delivery of activities under this funding. (Logos will be circulated by email to those grantees who have been awarded funding.)
- Applicants must be based in the Republic of Ireland, and the funding must make its impact in the Republic of Ireland.
- Applicants applying for funding under tier 1 (€2,500) may **not** also apply for funding under tier 2 (€5,000).
- The Parent Peer Support Fund can only accept one application per province in respect of applying organisations who operate multiple branches within the Republic of Ireland.

Compliance:

- Grantees must comply with the Statement of Principles for Grantees of *Circular 13/2014, Management of and Accountability for Grants from Exchequer Funds* and procedures relevant to the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality (DCDE)

Award Acceptance

Acceptance of the award is subject to these Terms and Conditions, which, in conjunction with the email of notification to successful applicants, will form the basis for the contract with the grantee. The award is held subject to these Terms and Conditions. If any of these are breached by a grantee, the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality (DCDE) may suspend or terminate the award and/or may require reimbursement of such payments as have already been made to the grantee.

All funding must be expended by 31 December of the year funding is awarded. Funding that has not been fully spent by this date must be returned to the DCDE. Awards may not be held or continued at an organisation, other, than the applicant organisation(s) specified in the application form, except with the prior agreement of the DCDE. Funding will only be provided for the proposal as presented in the application form.

Cessation of Award

The DCDE recognises that, for personal or professional reasons, a grantee under this Fund may wish to terminate the project. This should not be done without prior consultation with the DCDE (peipolicyunit@dcde.gov.ie) as it may involve reimbursement by the grantee organisation to the Department of some or all funding made available up to the date of termination. Awards may not be deferred or transferred. It is the responsibility of the applicant/grantee to inform the DCDE in writing of any change of address, telephone, or e-mail.

Grant Monitoring

At any time throughout the year, grantees may be required to provide updates on their project to the DCDE.

All awards may be subject to an external research audit and financial audit.

The DCDE reserves the right to terminate awards where necessary and without prejudice.

A survey requesting feedback from successful applicants of the fund and its implementation, will be circulated at the end of the grant cycle. DCDE may also request quotes and images from successful applicants to include in communications about the fund.

Those who display best-practice parent peer activities may be invited to speak at the Supporting Parents Cross-Government Parenting Support Network, or other fora to share learning and highlight best practice.

Acknowledgements

It is imperative that support from the DCDE, through the Supporting Parents, Parent Peer Support Fund is acknowledged in all communications regarding the activities of the fund. The DCDE and Supporting Parents logos and branding must be used on all material.

Intellectual Property/Knowledge Transfer

The DCDE does not make any claim to intellectual property arising from the Award.

Award

Funding Applicants must also have legal status i.e. a legal identity separate from the individuals who make up the membership of the organisation applying for funding.

All costs must be clearly explained and justified on the Application and must be directly related to the delivery of the activities as outlined in the Application.

The Supporting Parents, Parent Peer Support Fund is intended as one off funding. No financial commitments will be made to projects beyond 31 December 2027.