An Roinn Cultúir,
Cumarsáide agus Spóirt
Department of Culture,
Communications and Sport

2026 Community Sport Facilities Fund (CSFF)

Information Guide

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Contents

1. Introduction 2
Key Dates for the 2026 CSFF Round 3
Important Notes 3
2. Who Can Apply 4
3. Grant Categories, Grant Amounts and Criteria 6
Local Grants – up to €250,000 6
Regional Grants 7
Regional Tier 1 Grants 8
Regional Tier 2 Grants 10
4. What We Fund / Don't Fund 12
5. Title Ownership Requirements 16
Legal Charges on Title 18
6. Joint Applications 19
7. Application and Formal Approval Requirements 21
Application Stage Requirements 21
Formal Approval Requirements 21
8. Overall Scoring – Factors Under Consideration 23
9. General Information 24
Appendix 1 25
The Terms and Conditions of the 2026 Community Sport Facilities Fund (CSFF) Programme 25
Appendix 2 29
Tabular comparison of key changes between 2023 and 2026 CSFF rounds 29

1. Introduction

The Department has made some changes for the 2026 round of the Community Sport Facilities Fund (CSFF) compared to the 2023 round. Applicants are strongly advised to read this Information Guide in full before applying online.

Overview

The CSFF is operated by the Department of Culture, Communications & Sport. CSFF provides grants to support:

- the development or refurbishment of sports facilities and
- the provision of sports equipment.

The objectives of the Fund are to:

- Assist in the development of high-quality, accessible facilities in appropriate locations and provide equipment to help maximise participation in sport and physical recreation.
- Prioritise the needs of disadvantaged areas and minority groups in the provision of sports facilities and equipment.
- Facilitate participation in sport by people with disabilities.
- Increase female participation in sport.
- Encourage the sharing of sports facilities.

Applications must be made using our new online grant portal - SPRAOI

If you are applying to the 2026 CSFF round, you must apply using the Department's new portal, SPRAOI (**Sports Programme Registration and Application Online Interface).**

Applications submitted by post or email will not be accepted.

To make an application a dedicated primary contact, and the related sporting club / organisation, must be registered on SPRAOI. Please access SPRAOI here - *Sports Programme Registration and Application Online Interface*.

If your sporting club / organisation had an active registration on the previous CSFF portal, OSCAR, those details have been migrated to SPRAOI. The primary contact for OSCAR-registered sporting club / organisation will have received an email invitation to complete the registration process on SPRAOI.

There will be a separate User Guide available online on how to navigate SPRAOI when making an application. You can access this when the application window opens.

Key Dates for the 2026 CSFF Round

Milestone	Date
Registration opens	28 September 2026
Applications open	19 October 2026
Application deadline	5pm on 26 February 2027
Conditional offers of funding	TBC, before end-2027

The Department reserves the right to extend the deadlines and on the same terms and conditions, subject to the Department's obligations in law.

Application Deadline

You need to apply by **5 pm on 26 February 2027.** No late or partial applications will be accepted after this deadline. We advise you to apply before this date so you can check that your application is correct and complete.

Please ensure that you click **"Submit Application"** once all sections are fully complete.

You cannot amend your application once you submit it.

You are strongly advised to begin the application process as early as possible. It may not be possible for the Department to respond to queries close to the deadline.

Once your application has been submitted, you will receive a portal notification with an application reference number confirming the application has been submitted successfully.

Important Notes

If you get a conditional offer of funding, do not interpret this as an agreed funding grant. Conditional offers do not guarantee funding. The Department will announce conditional offers of funding after the initial application assessment.

A formal funding grant offer is only confirmed at the formal approval stage, once all required documentation has been submitted to and verified by the Department.

Further information

For further information or any queries, please email CSFF2026Queries@ccs.gov.ie.

2. Who Can Apply

CSFF funding is available to:

- Voluntary, not-for-profit sports clubs,
- Community groups,
- National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs),
- Local authorities,
- Schools, Diocesan Trusts, Education and Training Boards and 3rd Level Colleges who can also apply in association with sports clubs.

Membership Requirements

Sports clubs / organisations must be open to new members from the general public. There must not be any restrictions on who may join or on who may obtain full membership. For instance, a sporting club / organisation which can only be joined by a particular class / group of people, or which restricts access to full membership to certain classes / groups people is not eligible to apply.

Sporting clubs / organisations cannot charge excessive entrance and annual membership fees as set out below:

- annual membership fees must be less than €1,500 and
- once-off entrance fees must be less than €1,500.

The term "fee" includes all mandatory charges for members.

Schools, Diocesan Trusts, Education and Training Boards and 3rd Level Colleges

These bodies may only apply jointly with a local sporting club / organisation.

Sports clubs within schools and 3rd Level Colleges are not eligible to submit an application or form part of a joint application.

Please refer to Section 6 – **Joint Applications** for further information.

Ineligible sporting clubs / organisations

The following are **not eligible** to apply:

- Sporting clubs / organisations where only a particular class or group of people may join;
- Sporting clubs / organisations where membership is restricted to members of a private club or organisation;
- For-profit sporting clubs / organisations.

Not-for-profit Status

The CSFF only funds sporting clubs / organisations where all income is used to fund the activities of the sporting club / organisation and is not paid to the owner(s). The Department may seek proof of not-for-profit status.

How many applications are permitted?

A sporting club / organisation can submit only one grant application (including where the sporting club / organisation is party to a joint application) unless the sporting club / organisation is one of the bodies listed below. The Department may amalgamate multiple applications from one sporting club / organisation or for one group of users into a single application. If multiple applications are submitted by the bodies below, each application must be for separate independent projects.

- Local authorities
- NGBs
- Diocesan Trusts
- Education and Training Boards

3. Grant Categories, Grant Amounts and Criteria

There are three categories of grants available under the 2026 CSFF:

Category	Funding Range
Local Grants	up to €250,000
Regional Tier 1 Grants	greater than €250,000 and up to €550,000
Regional Tier 2 Grants	greater than €550,000 and up to €750,000

Local Grants – up to €250,000

The maximum grant available under the Local Grant category is **€250,000**. This maximum can include a mixture of capital and equipment elements subject to the equipment limits outlined below. NGBs are not eligible to apply for Local Grants. Where an application from an NGB is received for less than €250,000, the application will be deemed invalid.

Local Grant applications may be for:

- capital works only;
- equipment only or
- capital works incorporating an equipment element.

A maximum grant rate of 95% of eligible project costs will apply to Local Grants.

Equipment-only Grants – up to €70,000

The maximum amount of funding available for equipment is **€70,000**, whether the application is for equipment only or where equipment forms part of a wider capital project. **In very exceptional cases and at the Department's discretion**, equipment-only grants for specialised equipment over €70,00 may be granted.

The maximum equipment-only grant of €70,000 can include maintenance equipment element subject to a maximum amount of **€40,000 every 5 years**. Sporting clubs / organisations will be restricted to no more than €40,000 in maintenance equipment, where such equipment has already been funded in the past five years.

For equipment-only applications, ownership of the property is not required.

Conditions applying:

- NGBs may not apply for Equipment-only Grants.
- The Department reserves the right to decline grant applications for equipment deemed excessively priced when viable, less expensive alternatives are available.
- Where equipment forms part of a capital application, the application remains subject to the relevant maximum grant threshold.
- Regional Tier 2 Grant applications are not eligible for any equipment funding.

Regional Grants

Regional Grants are intended for larger-scale capital projects with a multi-club or multi-sport character with certain exceptions which are outlined below.

Funding Rate

A maximum grant rate of **70% of eligible project costs** will apply to all Regional Tier 1 and Regional Tier 2 Grants. The sporting club / organisation must demonstrate capacity to provide the remaining 30% balance of funding.

Where the final grant allocation amount falls below the Regional Grant threshold, the application will remain categorised as a Regional Grant and the 70% maximum grant rate will continue to apply.

Title Ownership

The sporting club / organisation must either own the land on which the proposed project is to be developed or have a registered lease with Tailte Éireann with at least 10 years remaining and that is capable of supporting a charge.

No legal charge will be required where the property is owned by a local authority or another Government or State body. A legal charge will, however, be required in the case of property owned by an NGB, where it meets the threshold for the charge.

Regional Tier 1 Grants

The amount of funding sought must be greater than **€250,000** and no more than **€550,000**.

Projects that do not meet the requirements for a Regional Tier 1 Grant may instead be assessed under the Local Grant category (i.e. Grant Maximum of €250,000). In such cases the maximum grant rate applicable to Local Grants of 95% of eligible project costs will apply.

The following criteria apply to Regional Tier 1 Grants:

- This category is open to NGBs, local authorities or two or more local sporting clubs / organisations sharing the proposed facility.
- While projects must relate to a multi-use or multi-sport facility shared by two or more sporting clubs / organisations, in certain specific circumstances, one sporting club / organisation can apply. These are indicated in the examples of projects below.
- One sporting club / organisation must act as the project coordinator and all dealings with the Department will be through the designated nominated primary contact for that sporting club / organisation.
- The application should provide clear evidence that the facility will be available for use by the sporting club(s) / organisation(s) involved in the application.
- The application should demonstrate that appropriate arrangements and capacity are in place to manage the completed facility effectively and on a financially sustainable basis.

Examples of potentially eligible projects where NGBs, local authorities or two or more local sporting clubs / organisations can apply:

- Multi-use / multi-sport artificial pitches shared by two or more sports / NGBs.
- Two or more sporting clubs / organisations from the same sport sharing the facility.
- Local authority projects, including contributions towards swimming pool works or other projects in support of the National Swimming Strategy.
- Sports facilities at 3rd level institutions where the application is made jointly with an local sporting club / organisation.

Please see Section 6 on criteria for Joint Applications

Examples of potentially eligible projects where one sporting club / organisation can apply:

- Synthetic running tracks of at least 6 lanes
- NGB regional centres of excellence
- League of Ireland club facilities, including clubs participating in the new FAI National League.

Assessment of Regional Tier 1 Grant Applications

Sporting clubs / organisations must demonstrate the following in their application to be considered eligible for Regional Tier 1 Grants:

- the size and nature of the population base to be served;
- the extent to which the project serves a wide geographical area;
- the number of sports / NGBs actively participating in and supporting the project;
- evidence of effective collaboration between the participating sporting club(s) / organisation(s);
- the project's readiness and capacity for timely delivery, including the availability of matched funding and appropriate governance and operational structures and
- the extent to which the project serves areas of identified disadvantage having regard to the Pobal deprivation index.

Where these are not evident in the application form, the Department may request further evidence during the assessment period or prior to giving formal approval.

Regional Tier 1 Grants – Funding for Sport Club Premises / Infrastructure impacted by Defective Concrete Blocks

As a pilot initiative, sport clubs in Counties Donegal and Mayo with premises / infrastructure severely impacted by defective concrete blocks can apply under this heading. The maximum grant available will be set at the Regional Grant rate maximum of €550,000 and payable at 95%. The pilot initiative will employ assessment criteria similar to those used in relation to the Defective Concrete Blocks Grant Scheme operated by the Housing Agency.

It is envisaged that up to 5 clubs could be supported under this pilot initiative. Specific rules and procedures for this pilot scheme will be published before end-2026, providing impacted clubs with sufficient time to make an application before the 26 February 2027 deadline.

Regional Tier 2 Grants

The 2026 CSFF also introduces on a pilot basis a new **Regional Tier 2 Grant** category. There is a recognised need for accelerated development of sports code-sharing facilities, with either a local authority or NGB as the project development lead, and for more all-weather field sport facilities to provide certainty of games and training opportunities.

Regional Tier 2 Grant funding is only available to:

- Local authorities
- NGBs

Applications must be for capital projects seeking more than **€550,000** and up to a maximum of **€750,000**.

Regional Tier 2 Grant funding is for **capital works only**. Equipment is not eligible under this category.

Applications that do not meet the Tier 2 Regional Grant eligibility requirements will not be considered. Sporting clubs / organisations should ensure that their project fully satisfies the eligibility requirements. Projects that do not meet the requirements for a Tier 2 Regional Grant will be deemed invalid and **will not** be recategorised for consideration under any other grant category.

Criteria for Regional Tier 2 Grants

For Regional Tier 2 Grant applications, the following applies:

- Applications must be submitted and led by an NGB or by a local authority.
- The lead NGB or local authority must act as the project coordinator and, following completion, as facility manager.
- There will be a particular focus on the development of full-sized multisport artificial pitches, for shared use by a minimum of two NGBs.
- Other multisport facilities may also be eligible where they are multi-functional, involve two or more NGBs, and serve users across a wide geographical area.
- Applicants must demonstrate their commitment and capacity to manage the facility effectively once capital works are completed.
- All administrative engagement with the Department must be undertaken by the applicant NGB / local authority and must not be delegated to a third party.
- No project receiving funding under Regional Tier 2 is eligible for any other funding under CSFF 2026.

Assessment of Regional Tier 2 Grant Applications

Applications may be prioritised having regard to factors including:

- the size and nature of the population base to be served;
- the extent to which the project serves a wide geographical area;
- whether planning permission is already in place;
- the number of sports / NGBs actively participating in and supporting the project;
- evidence of effective collaboration between the participating organisations;
- the project's readiness and capacity for timely delivery, including the availability of matched funding and appropriate governance and operational structures and
- the extent to which the project serves areas of identified disadvantage having regard to the Pobal deprivation index.

Where these are not evident in the application form, the Department may request further evidence during the assessment period or prior to giving formal approval.

Where NGBs jointly submit more than one Regional Tier 2 Grant project, they may be required to rank these projects in order of priority. Local authorities may similarly be required to prioritise their applications.

4. What We Fund / Don't Fund

Funding will only be provided for projects that are sporting in nature. To help determine if a project is sporting, we use the Council of Europe definition of sport:

"All forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aims at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being and at forming social relationships."

It is not possible to provide a definitive list of all projects and equipment types that will be eligible for funding under the 2026 CSFF round. The following lists are intended to assist applicants.

Capital – We Do Fund

Artificial Playing Surface Development	Athletics Track
Ball-Stop Netting (fixed)	Basketball Court
Bicycle Shelter	Boat Racks (fixed)
Boathouse	CCTV / Security Alarm
Climbing Wall	Clubhouse
Cycling Track	Disability Access Modifications
Disability Dressing Room Modifications	Drainage
Dressing Rooms / Showers / Toilets	Dugouts (fixed)
Electrical Repairs	First Aid / Treatment / Physiotherapy Room
Generator	Goalposts (fixed)
Gymnasium (indoor)	Gymnasium (outdoor)
Handball / Hurling / Practice Wall	Handball Court
Heating / Boiler subject to compliance with Article 17(15) of the recast EPBD	LED Floodlighting (fixed)
Irrigation System	Motor Racing Track
Multi-Purpose Fitness Room	Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)
Natural Playing Surface Development	Padel Court (fixed)
Pontoon / Jetty (fixed)	Roof Works / Repairs
Scoreboard (fixed)	Security Fencing
Security Roller Door	Skateboard Park
Spectator Stands (Fixed & Demountable)	Sports Dome
Sports Equipment (outdoor / fixed)	Sports Hall
Squash Court	Stadium Redevelopment
Storage Container / Shed / Stable (>25m^2)	Swimming Pool
Tennis Court	Walking / Jogging Track
Water Recycle System / Well	Window Replacement

Fixed and Demountable modular spectator stands are eligible for Capital Grants for the 2026 round, subject to a maximum total of **€40,000** for such stands.

Equipment – We Do Fund

Ball-Stop Netting (portable)	Boat
Boat Racks (portable)	Defibrillator
Dugouts (portable)	First Aid / Safety Equipment
Goalposts (portable)	LED Floodlighting (portable)
Maintenance Equipment / Mower (limit €40,000 every 5 years)	Pontoon / Jetty (portable)
Pop-Up Court	Pop-Up Pool
Portable Toilet	Scoreboard (portable)
Sports Equipment – Non-Personal	Storage Container / Shed / Stable (<25m^2)
Timing Equipment	Trailer
Volleyball Nets (portable)	

We Don't Fund

- Non-LED floodlighting (including replacement bulbs)
- Non-LED interior lighting (including replacement bulbs)
- Campsites
- Passenger vehicles: cars, 4x4s, vans, minibuses
- Car parks, footpaths, roads or landscaping / gardens
- Children's playgrounds
- Certain preliminary costs relating to costs incurred prior to breaking ground on a capital project
- Professional fees, including legal, accountancy, consultancy, design, feasibility studies, and certification
- Insurance
- Advertising, marketing, and promotional materials
- IT and telecommunications equipment, including laptops, tablets, smartphones, plasma screens, and associated software applications
- Office / administration equipment and systems
- Club-branded merchandise / leisurewear
- Hire / rental of equipment, premises or facilities
- Bars, kitchens, sleeping accommodation, offices, function rooms, or other parts of a project that have little or no sporting content
- Projects, or elements of projects, where work has already commenced
- Routine maintenance, including resurfacing of artificial pitches funded by the SCEP in the last 10 years
- Applications from schools, Diocesan Trusts, Education and Training Boards and 3rd Level Colleges that are not made jointly with at least one local sporting club / organisation
- Hunting, guns, rifles, pistols

- High-tech specialised equipment
- Luxury equipment or facilities such as spa facilities or pleasure craft
- Repayment of loans
- Purchase or lease of land or buildings

Projects Where Works Have Commenced

An application for a project where works have already commenced before a conditional offer of funding is made will be deemed invalid.

There is no prohibition on applying for funding for the same project funded under previous rounds, provided work has **not** already commenced before the conditional offer of funding is made.

Where a sporting club / organisation applies for funding for a project, and the current amount applied for, includes a previous allocation towards the same project, the Department will reduce the amount applied by the previous allocation amount.

Each sporting project that is funded by the CSFF must be a completed standalone project that can be fully usable by the public. The CSFF does not fund partially completed projects. Applications cannot rely on future funding rounds to become operational; it must deliver a complete, usable project on its own under each round.

For-Profit sporting clubs / organisations

Grant funding is not available to any sporting club / organisation where grant-funded assets, facilities, equipment, or improvements would be owned, managed by, transferred to, or provide a material benefit to a sporting club / organisation that is not eligible to apply because of its for-profit status or the level of fees charged.

Energy Efficient Grants

While energy-efficient projects improve sporting clubs / organisations financial and environmental sustainability, funding for such projects is also available under the **SEAI Community Grant** for retrofitting energy efficiency projects like:

- Solar panels
- Heating controls
- Integration of renewable energy sources

Any project where funding is available through the SEAI will not be eligible for funding under CSFF. However, **LED floodlighting** will be funded under CSFF 2026.

To be successful for energy-efficient grants, the sporting club / organisation must supply the Department, at formal approval stage, proof that the SEAI will not fund the project. Any such projects must be for the sole use of the sporting club / organisation and not for commercial purposes.

Energy efficiency installations for new build projects will continue to be eligible under CSFF, as the SEAI does not fund energy installations for new builds.

5. Title Ownership Requirements

In previous CSFF rounds, in some cases, to qualify for CSFF funding, a lease was required to be registered with Tailte Éireann.

Tailte Éireann requirements for registering leases require that the lease must have at least 21 years remaining at the time of registration.

This effectively meant that, in CSFF cases where a lease was required to be registered with Tailte Éireann, a 21-year lease had to exist even though CSFF rules only required a lease with a minimum of 15 years remaining. This Tailte Éireann requirement prevented many sporting clubs / organisations from applying, due to difficulties in securing such long leases. To overcome this, the changes outlined below have been made for the 2026 CSFF round.

Key Changes for the 2026 Round

- You don't need proof of title at application stage, but you will need it at formal approval stage.
- The minimum number of years required to be remaining on a lease has been reduced from 15 years to 10 years.
- Sporting clubs / organisations without a lease registered with Tailte Éireann can now apply for funding at a reduced level and with strict conditions as set out below.
- Different grant amounts are available depending on the title ownership type held by the sporting club / organisation as outlined in the table in the next page.

Where the sporting club / organisation does not own the land and requires a lease, a registered lease with Tailte Éireann remains the optimal position, and sporting clubs / organisations should secure such a registered lease if possible.

Capital Applications

Sporting clubs / organisations applying for Regional Grants must either own the land or have a lease registered with Tailte Éireann with at least 10 years remaining. Unregistered leases will not be acceptable for Regional Grants.

The funding available for the different ownership types for Local Grants is outlined in the table below.

Title Status	Maximum Grant
Sporting club / organisation owns the land or has a registered lease with Tailte Éireann with 10 or more years remaining	**€250,000**
Sporting club / organisation has a lease with 10 or more years remaining, but the lease is not registered with Tailte Éireann. *Please see below on conditions for unregistered leases.*	**€175,000**
Sporting club / organisation has a lease with 5 or more years and less than 10 years remaining (regardless of whether it is registered with Tailte Éireann)	**€100,000** per round
Sporting club / organisation: • has a lease with less than 5 years remaining (regardless of whether it is registered with Tailte Éireann), or • has no lease	**€70,000** in equipment only. **Not eligible for capital grants.**

IMPORTANT

Conditional offers of funding are made on the basis that the sporting club / organisation owns the site or has the lease registered with Tailte Éireann. Conditional offers of funding may be reduced or withdrawn when the evidence of title is provided at formal approval stage, in accordance with the table above.

Therefore, conditional offers of funding made and announced following the initial assessment of applications are not guaranteed funding.

Conditions for unregistered leases for 10 or more years remaining

- All parties involved in breaching conditions pertaining to unregistered leases will be excluded from future CSFF funding rounds, and any grants awarded must be fully repaid to the Department.
- All unregistered leases must be signed by a solicitor who should clearly understand their professional responsibilities in this regard.
- If, at formal approval stage, the lease is not registered with Tailte Éireann, the maximum that the sporting club / organisation will be eligible for is €175,000.

Legal Charges on Title

If your sporting club / organisation received significant capital funding in the previous rounds, you may be required to enter into a Deed of Covenant and Charge as a guarantee that the facility will stay in sporting use for a period of 10 years.

If the depreciated balance of grant funding received is in excess of **€650,000**, a legal charge will need to be created on the sporting club's / organisation's folios.

Where the landlord is a State Authority or a school, no legal charge will need to be created.

6. Joint Applications

A joint application can be made by:

- two or more local sporting clubs / organisations sharing the proposed facility for Regional Grants or
- schools with approval from their patron or
- Diocesan Trusts, Education and Training Boards and 3rd Level Colleges jointly with a local sporting club / organisation.

The following criteria apply to all joint applications

- The lead sporting club / organisation must be the one that holds the title of the property of the proposed facility.
- The lead sporting club / organisation must act as the project coordinator and all dealings with the Department will be through the designated nominated primary contact for that sporting club / organisation.
- The joint applicant must be a local sporting club / organisation with a genuine requirement for, and active use of the proposed facility.
- There must be a legitimate collaboration between the parties. The local sporting club / organisation must not be included solely to satisfy eligibility or funding requirements.
- Both sporting clubs / organisations involved in the joint application must be registered on SPRAOI.
- The name and tax registration number of the sporting club / organisation associated with the application must be provided in the relevant section of the application.
- A sporting club / organisation can only be associated with one joint application and cannot submit a separate application under their own name.
- If at any stage, either party withdraws from the arrangement, the Department may withdraw and seek the refund of the grant. Any disputes between the parties must be resolved independently, and the Department will not get involved.

Sharing agreement

A sharing agreement must be in place between the parties in a joint application, which must be submitted to the Department before formal approval of the conditional offer of funding can be granted. This sharing agreement must:

- be for a minimum period of 10 years;
- show that the sporting facilities are available to each party for a minimum of 20 hours a week throughout the year and
- outline that the lead applicant can only charge the local sporting club / organisation reasonable fees for use of the facilities.

Additional criteria applying to joint applications between schools and clubs

The following additional criteria apply to joint applications between Schools, Diocesan Trusts, Education and Training Boards, and 3rd Level Colleges (the lead applicant) with a local sporting club / organisation:

- The application can be submitted by the School, Diocesan Trust, Education and Training Board or 3rd Level College.
- If the school makes the application, it must inform its Patron of its intention to make an application.
- In the case where private or fee-paying schools are willing to share their facilities with a local sporting club / organisation, the application must come from the local sporting club / organisation and not the school.
- Sports clubs within schools and 3rd Level Colleges are not entitled to apply for funding even when joined to another sporting club / organisation.
- No legal charges will be required on the lead applicant's property.

The Department of Education and Youth will review all applications for schools, whether owned by the Minister for Education or by a School Patron, to satisfy the Department regarding any future use conditions applying to the site.

7. Application and Formal Approval Requirements

This Information Guide provides information on the application process. Further information on the formal approval process will be provided separately in due course.

Application Stage Requirements

At application stage, a professionally prepared quotation or pre-tender estimate for each element of the project including equipment is required.

This quotation/estimate should include the date and amount.

The following are acceptable as quotations:

1. An estimate prepared by your technical supervisor (typically an engineer, quantity surveyor or architect).
2. A quotation from a contractor or supplier.
3. Extract from a catalogue or website showing prices (for equipment only).

Only elements of projects for which quotations have been provided will be considered for funding.

During the assessment of the application, the Department may seek clarification on certain aspects of the application.

During the application process, all sporting clubs / organisations will be required to agree to the terms and conditions outlined at Appendix 1.

Formal Approval Requirements

Certain documents are not required to be uploaded at application stage but will be required for formal approval of the grant. Therefore, conditional offers of funding made and announced following the initial assessment of applications must not be interpreted as guaranteed funding.

Documents required at formal approval stage will include:

- Three comparable quotations for each element of the proposed project or equipment sought.
- Evidence of title.
- Evidence of final grant of planning permission or confirmation that planning is not required.

- Sharing agreement (if applicable).
- Grant Agreement /Declaration Form.
- For energy-efficient grants, proof that the SEAI will not fund the project.

Any legal formalities must be complete before a conditional offer of funding can be formally approved.

No grant-funded works or purchases should be made prior to receiving formal approval from the Department.

The Department reserves the right to revoke or reduce the conditional offer of funding where the sporting club / organisation fails to meet the criteria of the grant category applied for.

Starting works on projects

Sporting clubs / organisations must not proceed with works, enter into contractual commitments, place orders, or incur any expenditure until ALL required documentation has been submitted to the Department, and the Department has provided formal written approval to proceed with the works.

Any works started, commitments entered into, or expenditure incurred before formal approval is issued will be undertaken entirely at the sporting club's / organisation's own risk. Such projects may subsequently be deemed ineligible for grant funding.

Conditional offers of funding announced are not guaranteed funding. Final funding is only confirmed at the Formal Approval stage once all required documentation is submitted and verified.

The final **10% of capital grant allocations of over €50,000** will be withheld until the sporting club / organisation provides the following:

- a certificate of completion,
- proof that a beneficiary sign acknowledging the grant from the Department has been erected and
- proof, by way of a letter from the relevant Local Sports Partnership, that the sporting club is in compliance with a "Sport For All" ethos and diversity / inclusion policies.

8. Overall Scoring – Factors Under Consideration

The final scoring system and allocation methodology will be subject to Ministerial approval. In making allocations, the aim will be for a good spread of funding between different areas and a wide range of sports and target areas and sports that have been under-invested in over the years.

In terms of how projects are assessed, the factors below are likely to be considered:

1. **Level of socio-economic disadvantage in the area or in the area served**

A bespoke Radial Deprivation Model has been developed by Pobal as a method for providing a representative assessment of disadvantage for CSFF applications. This model captures the wider community that may use a facility as well as the location of the proposed project. This provides a structured and transparent method for representing deprivation at a facility level rather than a single-point location ensuring that the sporting club / organisation receives the most beneficial score.

2. **Level of total CSFF funding received by sporting clubs / organisations in the past 10 years**

Preference will be given to sporting clubs / organisations that have not received significant grants under Fund in the last 10 years.

3. **Level of outstanding CSFF funding not drawn down by the sporting club / organisation**

Priority will be given to sporting clubs / organisations that have progressed projects. Sporting clubs / organisations that have not drawn down grants allocated prior to the 2023 round may receive reduced scoring.

4. **Other criteria**

Priority may also be given to the following:

- Projects and Equipment to facilitate people with disabilities
- Applications that support objectives under the National Swimming Strategy
- Sports that have been under-invested in over the years
- Sporting equipment in support of marginalised communities, e.g. for use in homeless accommodation, emergency shelters, men's/ women's sheds etc.

For Regional Tier 2 Grant Projects, in addition to the Department's scoring criteria, where NGBs jointly submit more than one Regional Tier 2 Grant project, NGBs may be required to rank these projects in order of priority. Local authorities may also have to rank their applications.

9. General Information

All sporting clubs / organisations should be aware that:

- The Public Sector Climate Action Mandate 2025 includes commitments that are specifically required for construction projects:
- use low-carbon construction methods and low-carbon cement material as far as practicable;
- adhere to best-practice guidelines for the preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for construction and demolition projects.

The Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment has launched a Sustainable Sports Programme to help sports National Governing Bodies (NGBs) adopt environmentally sustainable actions across their organisations. The programme includes a toolkit for clubs, and the provision of training to NGBs, so that they can empower their clubs to act at grassroots level in the areas of biodiversity, water, energy and travel.

More information on the Sustainable Sports Programme can be found on: https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/5bc0b574/1._Sustainable_Club_Programme_Resource_Hub_Document

Article 17(15) of the recast EPBD states that from 1 January 2025, Member States shall not provide any financial incentives for the installation of stand-alone boilers powered by fossil fuels, other than those already approved under European Union funds.

EU regulations apply to the sale of certain synthetic polymer microparticles that are often used for granular infill on synthetic sports surfaces.

Non-Compliance with CSFF Terms and Conditions

The Department treats the submission of false or misleading information very seriously. Any sporting club / organisation that does not comply with the terms and conditions of the Community Sport Facilities Fund may be:

i. subject to inspection;
ii. subject to having its grant withdrawn;
iii. required to repay all or part of a grant; and/or
iv. barred from making applications for a period of time.

All serious breaches of the terms and conditions, as outlined in this document at Appendix 1, will be reported to **An Garda Síochána**.

Appendix 1

The Terms and Conditions of the 2026 Community Sport Facilities Fund (CSFF) Programme

The Terms and Conditions of the 2026 Community Sport Facilities Fund (CSFF) are outlined in this Guide. The Department reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions without notice.

All sporting clubs / organisations must adhere to the terms and conditions set out below when submitting an application.

1. Information Guide

- I/we certify that I/we have read this **2026 Community Sport Facilities Fund (CSFF) Information Guide** and any application made complies fully with all the terms and conditions. I/we understand that decisions on applications and allocations are final.
- I/we agree that any grant allocated on foot of this application may be withdrawn if the sporting club / organisation does not make sufficient progress to draw down the grant as set out in any letter of allocation.
- This information guide supersedes and replaces any and all previous documentation, communications and correspondence between the Department and sporting clubs / organisations, and sporting clubs / organisations should place no reliance on such previous documentation and correspondence for the 2026 programme. While every effort has been made to provide comprehensive and accurate information in this Information Guide, the Department does not accept any liability or provide any express or implied warranty in respect of any such information
- I/we certify that all information in this application and all information in any supporting documents is truthful and accurate and that I/we accept that if any information is found to be false or misleading that the Department may withdraw grants, require repayment of all or part of a grant and/or bar applications from this sporting club / organisation for a period of time. I am also aware that the Department may inform An Garda Síochána.

2. Accessible to people with disabilities

- All projects must be accessible to people with disabilities and capital projects must conform to the 7 principles of universal design https://universaldesign.ie

- All gym equipment funded must be accessible to people with disabilities https://activedisability.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Accessible-Fitness-Equipment-Factsheet.pdf

3. Equal Status Act

I/we acknowledge the sporting club / organisation's obligations under the Equal Status Acts. I/we agree that from the date of the grant, I/we will not deny anybody access to any facility or part of a facility for which we receive a grant on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief, or membership of the Traveller or Roma community without just, reasonable and proper cause. I/We note that the Department employs site inspections as a verification tool and should I/We fail to follow through on my/our stated undertaking, the Department may withdraw grants, require repayment of all or part of a grant and/or bar applications from this sporting club / organisation for a period of time. I/we agree that from the date of the grant, I/we agree that the sporting club / organisation will remain open for new members for a period of 5 years for equipment grants and for a period of 10 years for capital grants.

4. Conflicts of interest

Applicants must declare themselves as having no outside interest which may unfairly advantage the sporting club / organisation for which they are operating as point of contact or are offering administrative support. For example, a solicitor who is a trustee is not able to offer legal advice from a place of impartiality and should therefore not act as the sporting club's / organisation's legal representative.

Trustees must declare themselves to be free of any conflicts of interest and judgments as part of the grant approval process.

The Department will assess your application on the assumption there is no conflict of interest in place. Sporting clubs / organisations must note that formal approval of any conditional offer of funding will not issue unless a declaration of no conflict of interest is received. This declaration will form part of the Declaration and Grant Agreement documents associated with each grant.

5. Registerable Interest

Any Registrable Interest involving any applicant and the Department, members of the Government, members of the Oireachtas, or employees and officers of the Department and their relatives must be fully disclosed in the application or, in the event of this information only coming to the notice of the applicant or Subcontractor after the submission of an application, must be communicated to the Department immediately upon such information becoming known to the applicant.

The terms "Registrable Interest" and "Relative" shall be interpreted as per Section 2 of the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001, copies of which are available at www.irishstatutebook.ie. The Department will, at its discretion, decide on the appropriate course of action, which may in

appropriate circumstances include eliminating the sporting club / organisation from the CSFF or terminating any grant application entered into by the sporting club / organisation.

6. Disclaimer

The Department shall not be liable to the sporting club / organisation or any other party for any loss, damage or costs of any nature resulting directly or indirectly from the application or its subject matter or our rejection of the application for any reason.

The Department, its servants or its agents shall not at any time in any circumstances be held responsible or liable for any matter connected with developing, planning, financing, building, operating, managing and/or administering individual projects or any matter connected with the part payment by the Department of invoices submitted by sporting clubs / organisations.

7. Children's First Act

I/we acknowledge the sporting club's / organisation's obligations under the Children First Act 2015 https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-guidance-and-legislation/

8. Freedom of Information

Any member of the public can seek access to records held by Government Departments under the Freedom of Information Acts.

Under the Freedom of Information Acts, the Department may release details contained in applications and supporting documents, on request, to third parties. If there is information contained in your application which is sensitive, please contact the Department separately to identify it and explain why it should not be disclosed. If the Department is asked for sensitive information, the Department may consult with you, before making a decision. However, if you do not identify any information as sensitive and provide supporting reasons, the Department may disclose it without any consultation with you.

9. GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") came into effect on 25th May 2018. Any personal data collected by the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport in relation to this application under the Community Sport Facilities Fund (CSFF) will be used solely for the purposes for which it has been collected.

The processing of this data, including communicating with the designated primary contact, will be conducted under Article 6(e) of the GDPR (processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller).

Personal data will be held by the Sports Capital Unit of the Department and will be maintained safely and securely in accordance with the provisions of Data Protection legislation and the Department's Data Protection Policy. (https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-culture-communications-and-sport/organisation-information/data-protection/). Personal data collected for these purposes will not be retained in a form that permits identification of individuals for any longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is being processed."

Appendix 2

Tabular comparison of key changes between 2023 and 2026 CSFF rounds

Change	Previous Rounds	2026 Round
Maximum grant for Locals	In 2023 CSFF, max was €200,000	Max now €250,000
Maximum grant for regionals	In 2023 CSFF, max was €500,000	Max now €550,000
Regional Tier 2 (new)	N/A	Max is €750,000 restricted to LAs and NGBs
Premises rebuild in case of defective blocks	CSFF did not typically cover demolish and rebuild.	Club buildings that require remediation / restoration due to defective concrete blocks can apply for regional max of €550,000
Spectator Stands	N / A	Max of €40,000 (targeting modular stands but can apply to fixed too)
Maintenance equipment	€40,000 was allowed for maintenance machinery under each round.	Capped at max of €40,000 in any 5-year period.
Equipment for NGBs	NGBs could apply for equipment-only grants	NGBs cannot apply.
Funding rate for regional grants	Max funding rate for clubs and NGBs was 95% and was 70% for LAs	All regional projects and LAs subject to 70% max funding rate.
Clearer criteria for regional Tier 1 grant	Criteria not very clear on what constitutes a regional grant.	Tightened criteria and examples of qualifying projects.
Requirement for clubs to have own funding	Applicants had to supply documentary proof of own	Requirement has been dropped.

	funding capacity at application stage.	
Retention rate	5% of grant amount, for cap projects over €25,000, held back until proof of acknowledging signage and project-signoff supplied.	Retention raised to 10%, for cap projects over €50,000 and also includes requirement to show proof of engagement with Local Sport Partnership "Sport for all" programme.
Legal charge threshold.	Where a club exceeded a depreciated value of €400,000 in CSFF grants, a legal charge was executed on the property.	Threshold increased to €650,000 (so as not to greatly increase number of legal charges)
Time remaining on lease	Clubs needed to own the land or have a min. 15 years remaining on a registered lease (Tailte Éireann) to qualify for a capital grant.	Minimum required remaining lease term reduced to 10 years.
Unregistered leases	Unregistered leases not accepted. Max. of €70,000 for capital projects over 5 years, with landlord permission.	Unregistered lease with at least 10 years can qualify for €175,000 capital. Over 5 and less than 10-year lease can apply for €100,000 capital.
Energy efficient grants	2023 round supported a wide range of energy efficiency projects.	Will fund energy efficiency projects for new builds (which SEAI does not) or other measures that applicant can show SEAI will not fund.
School applications: Who applies	The owner of the school land had to make the application (e.g. the diocese or school patron).	School / club can apply directly once it has proof of Patron's permission to

		proceed with the proposed project.
School applications: Charge on land	Where the depreciated value of grants exceeded €400,000, a Deed of Charge was executed on the school's folio.	No charge to be placed on school property.
School applications: Length of sharing agreement	School had to demonstrate sharing agreement with local club for at least 20 hours/week for a term of 15 years	Required term of sharing agreement is reduced to 10 years.
School applications: Fees for joint applicant	No reference to what fees could be charged	Any fees must be set out in sharing agreement and must be reasonable.
School applications: Sharing agreement template	Schools and clubs required to draw up legal sharing agreement via solicitor.	The Department now provides sharing agreement advice, with directions to consult solicitor in drawing up agreement.
Proof of Title Ownership	Required at Application stage	Required at Formal Approval stage