

OPEN CALL

LIMERICK CREATIVE COMMUNITIES SMALL GRANTS SCHEME

CRITERIA AND ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES 2026

REF:CI2026

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: No later than 12noon Wednesday 14th January 2026

1. Introduction:

Limerick City and County Council Culture and Creativity team is pleased to announce an open call for Limerick based community organisations / groups and creatives, to submit applications for the **Limerick Creative Communities Small Grants Scheme 2026** (formerly Made in Limerick Grants Scheme). These grants are offered as part of Limerick's Creative Ireland Programme to deliver activities taking place in 2026.

The Creative Ireland Programme is an all-of-government initiative committed to enhancing access to, engagement with, and enjoyment of Ireland's culture and creativity. Within the broad range of available definitions, creativity is considered as a set of innate abilities and learned skills; the capacity of individuals and organisations to transcend accepted ideas and norms and by drawing on imagination to create new ideas that bring additional value to human activity.

The vision of the Creative Ireland Programme 2023 - 2027 is to mainstream creativity in the life of the nation so that individually and collectively, in our personal lives and in our institutions, we can realise our full creative potential thereby promoting individual, community and national wellbeing.

2. Key Dates:

Call Out Announcement	Week of 24 th November 2025
Closing Date for Applications	Wednesday 14 th January 2026 at 12 noon

Assessment of Applications	January 2026
Applicants informed of assessment outcome	February 2026
Initial tranche of grant transferred to successful applicants	February 2026*
Projects to be completed by	30 th September 2026**
Closing Date Submission Final Reports	Friday 2 nd October 2026
Final tranche of grant transferred	October & November 2026***

*This is contingent on grantees accepting grant offer, signing of grant agreement, confirmation of tax clearance status and adherence to all other grant terms and conditions.

** Unless explicitly stated in grant offer letter.

*** This is contingent on grantees providing final report including proof of expenditure e.g. receipts or invoices, being set up as a LCCC supplier and confirmation of tax clearance status and adherence to all other grant terms and conditions.

3. Purpose of the Grant Scheme:

Limerick Creative Communities Small Grants Scheme 2026 aims to support the implementation of the Creative Ireland Limerick Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 Strategic Priorities.

Find the full text of the Limerick Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 by clicking on this link:<https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/community-and-leisure/culture-and-arts/limerick-culture-and-creative-strategy-2023>

Find more information about the Creative Ireland Programme by clicking on this link: www.creativeireland.gov.ie

Limerick Creative Communities Small Grant Scheme 2026 is aimed at community organisations / groups and creatives, that wish to develop and deliver creative projects in the city and/or county of Limerick, which are:

- collaborative;
- community-centred;
- with a clear benefit of enabling creativity in communities;

- proposed activities will be free to participate in and where possible, free to attend;
- and the proposed activities will take place in 2026.

The community at the centre of the proposed project should be actively involved in the proposed project from development stage into delivery. Projects at all stages are eligible for this grant scheme. This means that you can apply for research and development of your project and/or delivery of the project.

Limerick Creative Communities Small Grants Scheme 2026 aims to support projects or project phases that occur during the calendar year 2026. The majority of projects, funded by this scheme, will occur between 1st February and 30th September 2026. This scheme cannot be used for retrospective funding. Thus, this scheme may not fund any activities that occur prior to the grantee receiving grant offer letter, and their returning of co-signed grant agreement to Creative Ireland Limerick. In order to facilitate end of year reporting, and budget deadlines, the majority of projects should be complete by 30th September 2026. Any projects due to complete after 30th September 2026, should include this on application along with justification for same. Limerick Creative Communities Small Grant Scheme 2026 may not be used to fund projects that are not complete by 31st December 2026.

4. Grant Scheme Strands:

Limerick Creative Communities Small Grant Scheme 2026 has five separate strands under which you may apply. These align with the five strategic priorities of the Limerick Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 and are as follows:

Strand 1: Place-Making:

Enhancing the creative landscape and cultural infrastructure of Limerick, for the benefit and enjoyment of all. Applications under this strategic priority should:

- a) Facilitate and support the development of creative spaces and/or,
- b) Celebrate Limericks heritage and cultural identity.

There is a fund of approximately €11,000 available under this strand. Please note that successful applicants may not receive full amount requested. Please also note that this is not capital funding.

Strand 2: Cultural & Creative Careers:

Nurturing, supporting and empowering artists, arts practitioners and creative workers across the arts and cultural sector, as well as within the broader creative industries.

Applications under this strategic priority should:

- a) Support Limericks artists, art practitioners and cultural workers and/or,
- b) Support creative entrepreneurship across the wider creative industries in Limerick.

There is a fund of approximately €15,000 available under this strand. Please note that successful applicants may not receive full amount requested.

Strand 3: Connections:

Connecting people and communities to each other and the world. Applications under this strategic priority should:

- a) Connect different communities across Limerick City and County by nurturing creativity and/or,
- b) Engage, inspire and connect people across all generations and/or,
- c) Connect Limerick to the World, and the World to Limerick.

There is a fund of approximately €7,000 available under this strand. Please note that successful applicants may not receive full amount requested.

Strand 4: Change-Making:

Harnessing culture and creativity to facilitate positive change within appropriate health care settings, social services and in the areas of climate action and biodiversity. Applications under this strategic priority should:

- a) Promote, facilitate and support creative change making across a diverse range of settings and/or,
- b) Contribute to climate action and biodiversity initiatives, advocacy and awareness raising.

There is a fund of approximately €7,000 available under this strand. Please note that successful applicants may not receive full amount requested.

Strand 5: Cultural & Creative Economy.

Supporting innovation, attracting investment and encouraging participation across the cultural and creative industries. Applications under this strategic priority should:

- a) Support the growth and development of Limerick's Film, Screen and Digital Technology sectors and/or,
- b) Encourage broader participation across the wider culture and creative industries.

There is an fund of approximately €15,000 available under this strand. Please note that successful applicants may not receive full amount requested.

**If you have any queries on which strand to apply under please contact
creativeireland@limerick.ie**

5. Who can apply?

This scheme is open to Limerick based creatives, artists, community organisations and groups. Please note that 'community' can refer to a community of place or interests. Community of place is a group of people that live in the same area, while a community of interest is a group of people brought together through a common interest, for example a heritage group, literary group, community drama group, artists collective, community choir, after-school club, active-retired etc. Please note that activities that take place during school hours and on school site are not eligible for this grant scheme.

6. Funding available:

The minimum amount available is €1,000 up to a maximum of €5,000. We envisage the average offers to be in the €4,000 - €4,500 range and that circa 13 projects will be supported by this scheme. See Section 4 for further details. Funding will be allocated on a competitive basis. This is in line with the assessment criteria set out on Section 12.

7. Eligibility:

An applicant may only submit one application for Limerick Creative Communities Small Grant Scheme 2026. Projects at all stages are eligible for this funding strand. This means that you can apply for research and development of your project idea and/or delivery of the project, given that:

- The project and the benefiting community are based in the Limerick City and County Council administrative area, or the applicant is based in Limerick, or operates substantially within Limerick City and County and is able to demonstrate this in their application;
- The proposed project aligns with the Limerick Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 and priority actions under each strand as set out in section 4.
- Proposed activities will take place in 2026.

If you have any queries regarding eligibility, please contact
creativeireland@limerick.ie

8. How to apply?

Applications are managed and submitted via our online portal.

The applicant is the person, or the organisation, whose name is given on the application form.

Any grant offered will only be paid into a bank account held in the name of the applicant. Please, ensure that on the application form you give your full name (if applying as an individual) or full name of your organisation (if applying as an organisation) as given on your legal documents and bank statements. All documentation provided as part of the assessment process and, if successful, as part of grant processing must be in the name of the applicant; this includes bank and tax details and any organisation/company documents.

To consider your application, we must receive your completed application form along with supporting documents by **Wednesday 14th January at 12 noon**. Applications or additional information will not be accepted after this time. We will endeavour to let you know, by email, whether your application is successful or not by end February 2026.

9. Budget and ineligible costs:

In specifying how much funding you are applying for; you need to take into account your expenditure and your income in relation to your Limerick Creative Communities Small Grant Scheme application.

- Expenditure relates to any costs you expect to have during the course of the project.
- Income relates to any source of funding that you have that is specifically earmarked for the project described in your application. For example, if an arts organisation is making a contribution towards your expenditure, you should include that as income in the application form. You should also include as income any contribution you are proposing to make from your own resources.
- The work for which the funding is sought must be carried out on a not-for-profit basis.
- Your budget must reflect Limerick City and County Council's commitment to supporting fair and equitable remuneration of artists and culture professionals in our funding programmes and schemes and in our partnerships and working relationships. This is in accordance with the Arts Council Paying the Artist Policy 2020-2023 best practice principles.
- If applicable you may include a more detailed budget breakdown in the supporting material.
- Please note the only method of payment of the grants will be by Electronic Funds Transfer. To draw down funding, successful candidates must provide bank details and a Tax Clearance Certificate or a PPS number.

Ineligible costs include:

- **Capital requests for purchase of equipment;**
- **Insurance;**
- School activities i.e. activities that take place during school hours and on school site are not eligible for this grant scheme.
- Proposals which do not have a creative objective, for example, sport, tourism, general recreation, etc.;
- Activities or costs that do not fit the purpose of the award;

- Charitable events;
- For-profit projects and activities;
- Spend on alcoholic beverages, fines, legal costs, penalty payments;
- Activities or elements of the proposed project which have been or are being grant-aided by other sources of funding, so as to avoid duplication of funding for the same activity/project.
- Retrospective applications – those relating to activities that the applicant has already completed;
- Capital requests for building improvements to workspaces and venues;
- Day to day operational or administrative costs, loans/deficits of any groups/organizations.

If you have any queries on eligible and ineligible costs, please contact

creativeireland@limerick.ie

10. Supporting information

Applicants may upload supporting information, as applicable, with their application as follows:

- Quotations, estimates or other evidence to support your costs, this can be a copy of the previous year's costs.
- Relevant approvals, permissions, licences, or consents as required.
- Letters of support from creatives, community groups, venues or any other key stakeholders.

This list is not definitive, and you may wish to include other supporting information which should be comprehensive but brief.

- The number and type of documents will depend on the nature of your project and file names must reflect content.

11. Technical requirements:

- All documents including images and files may be submitted at a maximum of 3 MB each and a maximum of 18MB in total for all docs including the application.
- Acceptable document formats are: .doc, .pdf and .jpg
- Invalid file formats may not be included in the assessment of your application.
- For video and sound files, include links to online content only, in a word document.
- Please note that LCCC IT systems are not compatible with file formats specific to Apple MAC. Please see acceptable file formats above.
- When submitting your application you will receive an automatic confirmation email to the email address you have registered your application with. We advise that if you do not receive this confirmation within a day of sending please contact Creative Limerick or Limerick Arts Office by phone on 061 556370 (line open Mon-Fri, 10am – 5pm) to ensure that your application has been received.

12. How we assess your application

This is a competitive scheme. Upon final submission of your application, you will receive an email confirmation to this effect.

Once your application is received, we will check it first to make sure it meets the criteria for eligibility and that all supporting information has been provided.

Applications that do not pass this stage will not be assessed further.

Applications that pass the initial checking stage proceed through the following stages:

- a) An external review panel to assess all eligible applications using the scoring system below.
- b) Creative Ireland Limerick Co-ordinator approval of recommended applications.

This is a competitive process. Funding will be allocated under each of the five strands, to applications that pass the first check by the assessment panel in relation to alignment with Limerick Culture and Creativity Strategy condition and which then score highest against the four Criteria listed below.

Applications that do not pass the alignment check will not be scored.

Please note that this is a stand-alone competition. There is no reference to previous applications to Creative Limerick or other LCCC schemes.

Criteria	Application Section	Marks
Alignment with Limerick Culture & Creativity Strategy and priorities identified under each Strand	All parts Ref guidelines section 4 and 7	PASS/FAIL
Quality and ambition of the proposal	Part B	25
Impact (including benefit to the community)	Part B	25
Applicant's track record and relevant experience	Part C	25
Feasibility (including budget and timeframe)	Part D	25
Total		100

13. Funding decisions:

We will endeavour to contact all applicants, by email, by end February 2026 to advise of the outcome of applications. Feedback from the panel is available on request.

Successful applicants will receive, by email, a Letter of Offer, which will outline the specific terms of the grant offer. Unsuccessful applications will receive notice of the outcome of their application by email.

If your application is successful, you must agree to terms and conditions of grant scheme (see appendix 1). Please note that all successful applicants must commit to activities relating to public engagement and project promotion.

14. Guidelines for Completing the Application:

- Read the criteria and eligibility guidelines thoroughly. By reading, and understanding the guidelines, you give yourself the best chance of being funded.

- Read all questions thoroughly before you answer them.
- Do not assume the Assessment Panel know you or your work – treat each application as if it was your first.
- Keep your answers clear, concise and to the point. Avoid repetition.
- Make sure that in the application form and in the supporting material, you clearly communicate all important information. It is a good idea to ask someone to read through your application and identify any pieces of information that need clarification.
- Remember that your application is assessed on the basis of all information supplied within a competitive context of many other applications.
- Ensure that you enclose all requested documentation.
- Have a clear and realistic idea of what you want and how much your proposal costs.

15. Project promotion and acknowledgement funding:

All organisations / persons offered funding must include appropriate acknowledgement of the 2026 support of Creative Ireland and Limerick City and County Council, as per the acknowledgment guidelines which will be provided at time of grant offer. Recipients of this funding must acknowledge Creative Ireland and Limerick City and County Council when speaking about their project and in any printed or online publicity for example social media, digital resources, radio or tv interviews, and any type of printed materials.

16. Retrospective projects:

We do not fund projects retrospectively – i.e. work that has already commenced or completed before we offer a grant.

17. Checklist:

Please, ensure that you have submitted all requested documents as part of your application.

Obligatory: Your application must include all of the supporting material listed below:

1. Completed Limerick Creative Communities Small Grant Scheme application form and signed *Declaration* at the end;
2. Supporting material from main applicants, and partners, as required.
3. Signed letter(s) of commitment from group(s)/creative practitioner(s) that you plan to partner with on the proposed project.

Optional – You may also include:

1. Detailed Project Proposal up to five A4 pages, if necessary, this may in addition include a detailed budget and timeline.
2. Up to 5 letters of support from relevant individuals and organisations.

Appendix 1: Terms and Conditions of funding

- You may only apply for one Limerick Creative Communities Small Grant Scheme award in any one calendar year.
- The work for which the funding is sought, must be carried out on a not-for-profit basis.
- Payment of a grant shall be in respect of a specific project/activity and not towards the payment of former debts.
- Applicants must be prepared to furnish further particulars or information to the Limerick City and County Council if requested.
- The recipients must follow the procedure as confirmed in writing to them regarding drawing down the grant, including provision of receipts, invoices etc. and the Acknowledgement of Funding requirements. A grant may be withheld, if the above is not adhered to.
- For grants over €1,000, drawdown of the funding will be in 2 instalments: 80% on successful application and 20% on submission of a project report and proof of expenditure (guidelines will be provided to successful applicants).
- All funding must be drawn down by **Friday, 2nd October 2026**. Failure to draw down the funding will result in the grant award not being allocated to you.
- Please note the only method of payment of the grants will be by Electronic Funds Transfer. To draw down funding, successful candidates will have to provide bank details and a Tax Clearance Certificate or a PPS number.

- Any successful applicants for whom it becomes necessary to reschedule the activity to another date within the approved timeframe, or who need to change the planned activity in any significant manner, should contact Creative Limerick immediately with this proposal. Activities that cannot be rescheduled in the approved timeframe will not be entitled to draw down funding.
- Successful applicants will be required to send to Creative Limerick any promotional materials related to the funded project. Creative Ireland and Limerick City and County Council reserve the right to publicise the project through our promotional channels. All creative rights remain with the applicant.
- Successful applicants will be required to document their project and return a project report, including proof of expenditure, upon the completion of their project. A template project report form will be provided to all successful applicants and must be returned to Creative Limerick by Friday, 2nd of October 2026, unless otherwise agreed at time of grant offer.
- Specific conditions may be attached to the funding, which will be outlined in the letter of offer.
- Please note that Limerick City and County Council is required to act in accordance with The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014 and the Statement of Principles for Grantees.
- Limerick City and County Council reserves the right to terminate grant aid if statutory or criminal negligence is involved.
- All applications must adhere to relevant Health and Safety regulations as necessary.
- If your application is successful and if your proposal involves working with children or young people under eighteen years of age or presenting work to this age group, you will be required to sign a Child Welfare and Protection Declaration prior to funding. You must ensure that your policy and procedures have been developed with reference to Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, and are consistent with the principles stated therein. Please see www.tusla.ie for more information.

- If your application is successful and if your proposal involves working with animals, you will be required to sign an Animal Welfare Declaration prior to funding.
- A list of successful applicants will be published on www.limerick.ie and all successful projects will be featured on www.creativeireland.gov.ie .

Appendix 2: Acknowledgement of Funding:

Creative Ireland, The Department of Culture, Communications and Sport, and Limerick City and County Council are proud to support and be associated with high quality work produced by creative practitioners and communities based in Limerick. Logos will be provided to successful applicants to be included on all print and online material, including websites, apps, videos, blogs, posters, brochures, invitations and advertisements associated with the project being funded. Creative Ireland, The Department of Culture, Communications and Sport, Limerick City and County Council, and Limerick Arts Office have a large following on our social media channels i.e., Facebook and Twitter. Please, forward or tag us in any posts you would like us to share on social media, remembering to include an image.

Why we want you to acknowledge our funding:

- Acknowledgement ensures awareness of how public money is spent.
- By using the logos and recognising the funding, you let people know that Creative Ireland, The Department of Culture, Communications and Sport, and Limerick City and County Council have supported your work and recognised your excellence, and that you are part of a movement that values arts and creativity, cares for its community and encourages interest, ownership and engagement in culture.
- Acknowledgement supports us by showing the breadth of artistic and cultural projects being undertaken across Limerick each year.
- Acknowledgement means that we can highlight and promote your work, further increase cultural awareness, build the sector and strengthen our case for future funding.
- By acknowledging Creative Ireland, The Department of Culture, Communications and Sport and Limerick City and County Council funding, you

are helping to improve public understanding of how we all work together to develop creative communities in Limerick.

Appendix 3: Processing of your personal data:

1. Freedom of Information

Limerick City and County Council is covered by the Freedom of Information Act 2014, which provides members of the public with the rights to access information held by public bodies to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the public interest and right to privacy. This means that details contained in applications and supporting documents may, on request, be released to third parties.

2. Data Protection Statement

Any personal information you give us will be processed, stored and managed in strict accordance with General Data Protection Regulations.

The purpose for processing your data is to process your application for a Limerick Creative Communities Small Grant Scheme 2026, in line with the criteria of this award. The information you provide will be assessed by an Assessment Panel. Your information will be retained in accordance with Limerick City and Council's General Data Protection Policy and Limerick City and County Council's implementation of the National Retention Policy. If you do not furnish the personal data requested, Limerick City and County Council will not be able to process your application.

You have the following rights, in certain circumstances and subject to applicable exemptions, in relation to your personal data:

- the right to access the personal data that we hold about you, together with other information about our processing of that personal data;
- the right to require us to rectify any inaccuracies in your personal data;
- the right to require us to erase your personal data;
- the right to request that we no longer process your personal data for particular purposes;
- the right to object to our use of your personal data or the way in which we process it.

Please note that to help protect your privacy; we take steps to verify your identity before granting access to personal data.

If you would like to exercise any of these rights, please submit a request to our Data Protection Officer outlining the specific details of the request: Email: dataprotectionofficer@limerick.ie All valid requests will be processed without undue delay and in any event within one month of receipt of the request. This period may be extended by up to two further months where necessary.

Appendix 4: Limerick City & County Council Appeals Procedure:

Applicants for funding to Limerick City and County Council Arts Office, including Creative Limerick, may appeal against a funding decision on the basis of an alleged infringement or unfair application of, or a deviation from the Council's published procedures.

This means that the applicant must show that they have reason/s to believe that their application was assessed or dealt with in a way incompatible with the standard procedures for administration and assessment outlined when the applicant applied for funding.

If an applicant wishes to appeal a funding decision, they can contact Creative Limerick for full details of the appeal process.