



Criteria and Guidelines for Club Development Grant Scheme 2026

Objectives of the scheme

Offaly Sports Partnership aims to achieve sustained increases in participation levels in physical activity, sport and active living in County Offaly. This club development grant scheme is designed to: -

- i. assist the start up of new clubs (e.g. affiliation, insurance, year 1 operations, etc.)
- ii. increase or retain the participation of women and girls in sport
- iii. increase the participation of underrepresented groups in sport
- iv. support interventions that aim to increase or sustain club membership

What we will not fund:

- ongoing running costs of the club / sporting organisation that are outside of the schemes covered by this programme
- capital equipment costs, except where small pieces of equipment are required for the programme / intervention due for delivery

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply for this funding, clubs / sporting organisations should: -

- be based in Offaly
- be primarily concerned with the promotion of a sport(s) or physical activity.
Please note, preference will be given to clubs who are affiliates of or be in the process of affiliating to a National Governing Body of Sport recognised by Sport Ireland
- be run by a democratically elected committee of its members
- operate on a not for profit basis
- be open for public membership; and non-discriminatory in accepting new members
- have appropriate insurance in place to allow for the delivery of all their activities
- adhere to best practice guidelines in the area of children in sport (if working with children). Best practice guidelines include: -
 - having a child safeguarding statement in situ
 - having a club welfare officer and designated liaison person in situ
 - Garda vetting of coaches / volunteers that work with underage teams and individuals
 - ensuring that coaches and volunteers who work with underage individuals / teams have undergone Safeguarding 1 (child protection) training

Who is ineligible to apply?

- individuals
- national / regional / county governing structures
- statutory agencies
- for profit groups / commercial organisations / private facility owners

Level of grants

- The total fund available under the 2026 scheme is €15,000; with €5,000 allocated per Municipal District area
- The maximum level of grant assistance per successful application will be €750; however, from past experience, the average award will likely be in the region of €500

Please note, based on the volume of applications, it may not be possible to fund every organisation. Prioritisation of applications is indicated at the assessment process below

Assessment process

- after the closing date of **Friday, 20th March 2026.**, Offaly Sports Partnership will prioritise eligible applications received
- all eligible applications shall be assessed by a committee on the information supplied in the application form; and any supporting documentation enclosed
- the assessment committee may choose to obtain clarifications on individual applications
- it may not be possible to provide support to every applicant, nor to provide the maximum level of grant aid. The assessment committee will assign weightings to applications based on the following criteria: -

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| Is the applicant an affiliate of a National Governing Body of Sport, recognised by Sport Ireland | 50 |
| Is the application from a new club established in the last 12 months and affiliated to a National Governing Body of Sport, recognised by Sport Ireland; or a club being formed that will affiliate to a National Governing Body of Sport, recognised by Sport Ireland in the coming three months | 50 |
| The extent to which the project will positively impact on the participation of women and girls in sport | 30 |
| The extent to which the project will facilitate the participation of underrepresented groups in sport | 30 |
| The extent to which the application will contribute to increased participation in sport and / or retain current levels of participation | 30 |
| The amount of funding received from Offaly Sports Partnership in the last five years | 10 |
| Total | 200 |

Following the assessment process, recommendations for funding will be submitted to the management committee of Offaly Sports Partnership for review and approval

Application

The application will consist of the following sections: -

1. club / sporting organisation details
2. a detailed funding request breakdown
3. declaration

Applications should be completed in full and **online only by Friday, 20th March 2026.** Late applications will not be accepted

If your club / sporting organisation is having difficulties completing the form online, please contact sports@offalycoco.ie to discuss same

Correspondence, Draw Down of Funding and Reporting

- All applicant club / sporting organisations will be informed of the decision of the Sports Partnership.
- All successful applicants will be required to be set up on Offaly County Council's financial system to enable payment of the grant. The following documentation will be required for set up: -
 - a tax or charity number; and the associated tax clearance access number to allow Offaly County Council to confirm the tax status of the successful applicant. The tax or charity number should be in the name of the club / sporting organisation and not in the name of an individual associated with the club / sporting organisation
(note – the club / organisation does not need a tax / charity number and the associated tax clearance access number to apply for this scheme, but you will need the club's tax details should your application be successful)
 - a bank or credit union account in the club / sporting organisation's name
- Successful applicants will receive the full 100% draw down; and will be asked to submit a brief report on their funded project, including how funding was spent

Please note, all reports on spend must be submitted to Offaly Sports Partnership by email to clubdevelopmentgrants@offalycoco.ie by **Friday, 29th January 2027**.

Compliance with reporting on how funding was spent must be adhered to if and when requested, in order to be eligible for future grant aid from Offaly Sports Partnership and / or Offaly County Council (note - if your club / organisation receives funding from Offaly Sports Partnership and you do not provide proof of expenditure on funding received; this will be notified within Offaly County Council and your club / organisation may be ineligible for future support from Council managed grant schemes)

Publicity & Acknowledgement of Support

Successful applicants should note that they must comply with any reasonable request regarding publicity from Offaly Sports Partnership. Furthermore, it is a condition of the grant scheme that any promotion / publicity related to the activity approved for funding should positively acknowledge the support received from Offaly Sports Partnership and Sport Ireland.

Further information

For further information on the scheme, please contact clubdevelopmentgrants@offalycoco.ie

