



**Mid & East  
Antrim**  
Borough Council



# Community Festivals Fund

2024/25 Guidance Notes



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## 1. The Purpose of the Fund

A key priority of the scheme is to enable the population to enhance their quality of life through participation/engagement in culture, arts and leisure activities.

The scheme supports statutory and public policy obligations to deliver Section 75 requirements and to promote equality of opportunity and tackle poverty and social exclusion.

The Community Festivals Fund (CFF) was established in recognition of the positive contribution that festivals can make to communities and to the local economy.

The Community Festivals Fund is open to applications for festivals taking place before **31 March 2025**.

The scheme will operate on a rolling basis from Monday 8 April 2024 to 31 January 2025 or before this date if the budget has been fully allocated.

The indicative dates for funding are shown below:

Applications open	Applications close	Proposed activity end	Final Claims/Paperwork to be submitted by
8 April 2024	31 January 2025	31 March 2025	30 April 2025

## 2. Objective of the Fund

The objectives of the Community Festivals Fund are as follows:

- a) to support the community and voluntary sector in promoting equality and target poverty and social exclusion;
- b) to enable communities to celebrate and encourage cultural expression;
- c) to enhance community relations\*;
- d) to enable partnership working between the community and voluntary sector and local Councils
- e) to improve the capacity of community festivals by providing support and training in addition to funding towards the cost of events.

*\* Community relations in this context should be understood to refer to all equality groups (as defined by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act) living in our communities.*

## 3. Definition of a Festival

A community festival is defined as a series of events (or a single event with several elements) with a common theme and delivered within a defined time period. It is developed from within a community and should celebrate and positively promote what the community represents.

Community festivals are about participation, involvement, and the creation of a sense of identity and are important in contributing to the social well being of a community.

They must be initiated and led by, or in partnership with a community organisation. The community must play a strong part in the development and delivery of the festival and have ownership of it.

For the purposes of the Community Festival Fund the following will apply;

- all Festivals must be culture based, where culture is defined as ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or social grouping;
- all festivals must demonstrate their commitment to promoting social cohesion, social inclusion, equality of opportunity and good community relations; and
- in this context, 'community' includes communities of interest as well as geography and identity.

#### **4. Equality of Opportunity & Good Relations**

While administering this Scheme, Mid & East Antrim Borough Council will ensure the promotion of equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without;
- persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition due regard will be given to the promotion of good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

#### **5. General Principles Applying to the CFF**

The following general principles will apply to Mid & East Antrim Borough Council's administration of the fund.

- This is a competitive scheme and applications will be determined on the basis of merit.
- Applications to this scheme will be open to all festivals that can meet the core criteria of the scheme irrespective of whether they are established or emerging events.
- Festivals will continue to be able to apply to other sources of public support which will add value to the festival.
- Festivals should contribute to the promotion of a positive image of Northern Ireland and organisers must take steps to avert anti-social behaviour.
- Organisations in receipt of public funding must comply with all statutory obligations regarding the delivery of and access to their events.
- Festival organisations will make every effort to increase capacity within the community through e.g. skills training and volunteering.
- Festival organisations will be expected to make efforts to maximise income through ticket sales and sponsorship. They should develop a plan to improve their sustainability and reduce reliance on public funding.
- It is a prime responsibility of Government to ensure the proper and efficient use of and the accountability of public monies. To this end, festivals will be required to provide relevant supporting information when applying for funding.
- Festival organisations will be required to demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of their festival and that public funding is put to good use and shows a positive and measurable impact on the local community or economy.

#### **6. Exclusions**

The Community Festivals Fund will not normally provide funding for the following activities:

- festivals taking place outside of the Mid & East Antrim Borough Council area;
- festivals of a commercial nature, organised to make a profit;
- trade or professional conferences/conventions;
- festivals that are primarily fundraising events, are heavily branded with charity branding or deploy potential sources of income from a festival to a charity;
- awards ceremonies or industry events;
- residential courses and associated events;
- festivals that are social events for an organisation; and
- primarily tourism focused events where the organisation cannot demonstrate significant community involvement.

## 7. Who is Eligible for Grant Aid?

To qualify for grant aid under this Scheme applicants **must** meet the following criteria:

- Groups must be properly constituted with an elected committee (appropriate details are requested in the Application Form).
- Groups must be based in the Mid & East Antrim Borough Council area.

## 8. Criteria and Scoring

In order to deliver the Fund's aims and principles festival organisers will need to demonstrate how their event addresses the following issues:

### Core

- i. promotes equality;
- ii. targets poverty and/or social exclusion;
- iii. has strong community participation;
- iv. provides opportunities for people to improve skills or receive training;
- v. improves community relations;
- vi. contributes to building a strong sense of community; and
- vii. demonstrates value for money.

### Desirable

- i. attracts visitors to the area.
- ii. provides opportunities for development - this includes capacity-building, links with other organisations and diversity of activities.
- iii. takes steps to address rural isolation issues where applicable.
- iv. encourages a 'sense of place' through connecting the community with, and effectively using, public places and the local built environment, particularly infrequently used or abandoned spaces.

**Each of the core criteria will be scored out of 5 with weighting being applied to the promotion of equality and the targeting of poverty and/or social exclusion. Applications must achieve a total score of at least 50% at assessment of the core criteria.**

**In the event of the scheme being over-subscribed, Council may be required to score the desirable criteria out of 5 also to ensure that it stays within the allocated budget. Where possible, applicants should incorporate the elements identified under the desirable criteria into their festival and provide details within the application. In this instance, only applications scoring higher than 50% overall will be awarded funding.**

## 9. Payment of Grant

Payment of grant will be made after the project or activity has taken place and upon completion of the Project Report and Claim Form and the submission of original invoices, receipts and bank statements.

In the instance where issues with cash flow may prove detrimental to the project or activity taking place, consideration may be given to releasing 50% of the awarded funding in advance. This will be done on a case by case scenario and the applicant will be required to demonstrate that there is a need for this advance payment. No further payments will be made until completion of the project and satisfactory vouching has taken place.

Please consult the Grants Officers if you require any additional information.

## 10. Amount Available

<b>Single Day Festivals</b> 100% funding up to £1,500	<i>Festivals must last <u>more than 3 hours</u> and must consist of <u>more than one element</u>. e.g. BBQ, children's entertainment, music etc.</i>
<b>Multi-day Festivals</b> 100% funding up to £2,000	<i>Festival activities must take place over two or more consecutive days and have a common theme. Each day must contain activities lasting <u>more than 3 hours per day</u>.</i>

## 11. Specific Conditions

- The amount of funding available will be subject to the level of match funding confirmed by DCAL. Letters of Offer may be withheld until DCAL's match funding has been confirmed.
- Successful applicants of the Grants Support Scheme will not be permitted to apply for additional funding under this scheme for that particular project. However, these groups may apply for funding for a different activity that qualifies in one of the listed categories of this scheme.
- Groups in receipt of funding from other sections of Council are ineligible to apply for additional funding for that project under this scheme. However, these groups may apply for funding for a different activity that qualifies in one of the listed categories of this scheme.
- **N.B.** It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all statutory licences and permits are in place prior to an event taking place. Typical licences required for a community event include Entertainments, Street Trading etc. For information on licences and fees, please visit [www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/business/licencing](http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/business/licencing)
- Full terms and conditions are available on the Council website by going to [www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/community/grants](http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/community/grants)

## 12. Guidelines for Procurement of Goods and Services

The following procurement procedures must be adhered to when purchasing any individual good or service relating to the project or event. Applicants are required to upload the necessary written quotations as outlined below to the application form. Failure to do so will result in the application not moving to the next stage of evaluation and may be deemed ineligible for funding.

### Quotations:

Estimated value of individual item of expenditure (exc. VAT)	Number of Quotations Required
£0 - £2,999.99	Minimum of 1 telephone / email quotation
£3,000 - £7,999.99	Minimum of 3 written / email quotations

## 13. How to Apply

Applications are made online by going to [www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/community/grants](http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/community/grants)

Further Information on the grant process is available by contacting the Grants Office at:

- 028 2563 3342
- [grants@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:grants@midandeastantrim.gov.uk)

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