

LIMERICK REGENERATION
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INTERVENTION FUND 2024
COMMUNITY CENTRE CALL
APPLICATION GUIDELINES



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

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1. Application Process & Key Dates

Limerick City and County Council is pleased to invite applications for funding towards the operation and sustainability of Community Centres in disadvantaged areas of Limerick City under the Economic and Social Intervention Fund 2024.

Please note that the Economic & Social Intervention Fund Grant process is specifically linked to The Limerick Regeneration Programme and funding is currently only available for 2024. The maximum amount that may be applied for is €90,000.

Applicants should read these Guidelines carefully.

You should start preparing your application as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to compile the information and supporting documentation you need.

Any queries in relation to the application process 2024 and / or requests for information or support in preparing your applications should be directed to:

Email: ESIF@limerick.ie; Telephone: 061-557560

1.1 Submission deadline & method of submission

The deadline for submission of applications is **Friday the 29th March 2024 @ 4.00 p.m.**

All applicants must complete the official online Application Form.

Late applications will not be accepted

1.2 The Application

An Application must consist of: (1) the completed Application Form and (2) all supporting documentation.

1.2.1 Application Form:

The online application form at mypoint.limerick.ie is the only valid application form accepted in the ESIF 2023 competition. The online form consists of the following sections:

1. Start
2. Declarations
3. About your organisation
4. About the Community Centre
5. Checklist & uploads and signature – You will need to upload relevant documentation before you can submit
6. Preview – You must click Submit in order for us to receive your application
7. Complete

We strongly advise saving your work as you go along.

1.2.2 Supporting Documentation / Checklist:

Applications that are missing any of the required supporting documentation as outlined in the checklist below will be deemed invalid and will not be considered for funding in 2024.

Please upload the relevant documents below in order for your application to be deemed valid. Upload each document type as a single pdf:

- Copy of applicant's 3 months' most recent **bank statements**
- Your organisation's **Safeguarding Statement** under the Children First Act 2015 for organisations that have ticked yes for working with children or vulnerable adults in section 1
- **Three quotations** each for all applications that include capital and equipment costs, professional fees (except audit fees), and promotion and publicity costs
- Staff costs related to the running of the community centre are eligible for funding but only a maximum of 50% of the total cost per employee subject to a maximum of two employees. If you are applying for staff costs: **A job description must be included** for all posts to be supported by the ESIF. Please note that ESIF is a temporary fund and is not a long-term funding source for employment purposes.

Required Documents

- Copy of applicant's **insurance certificates**
- **Health & safety statement**
- Copy of minutes of **last 3 Board Meetings / or Management Committee meeting** including extract from minutes showing that this grant application has been approved by the Board **OR** a **letter signed by CEO / Manager / Chairperson** stating that funding is being sought from ESIF
- If your organisation is registered as a Limited Liability Company: **Memorandum or Articles of Association**

Should your application be successful, you will be required to submit the following before you can draw down your funds:

- Copy of applicant's most recent **audited or certified accounts** (must have been completed within the last two years: 2022 or 2023)
- **Tax Clearance Access Number**
- If you are applying for staff costs, you will also be required to submit:
 - A copy of the **contract of employment**

1.3 Screening for eligibility & assessment of applications

When your application is received by Limerick City and County Council by the submission deadline, it will be screened to check that it is: **(i) fully completed and (ii) all supporting documentation is provided.**

Applications that are not fully compliant based on the screening (i.e., not complete or supporting documentation missing) will be deemed "invalid". Late applications and Invalid applications will not be considered for funding in 2024. These applications cannot appeal.

All compliant applications will be forwarded to relevant Sub Committee of the Local Strategic Advisory & Monitoring Group (LSAMG). The relevant subcommittee for this application is:

- Community

The subcommittees will review and evaluate all applications **within six weeks** of the closing date for applications. Applications will be reviewed for eligibility, evaluated and scored based on the selection criteria set out below.

The subcommittees will recommend applications suitable for funding and the amount of grant to be awarded. Decisions made by the subcommittees will be reviewed by an Independent Verification Panel before being forwarded to the Limerick Regeneration Local Strategic Advisory Monitoring Group (LSAMG) for endorsement. All grants endorsed by the LSAMG are sent to the Department of Housing Heritage and Local Government for final approval.

Applications that are not recommended for funding by the LSAMG will be deemed “Unsuccessful”. The Department will also receive a list of those applications deemed “Unsuccessful” in the selection process.

Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision from the selection process – i.e., grant “Approved” or “Unsuccessful”. Successful applicants will be required to sign and return a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Limerick City and County Council within **two weeks** of the approval date. The Service Level Agreement will specify the amount of the grant awarded, the purpose of the grant and terms and conditions associated with it.

Feedback can be provided to those applications that were not successful. There is an appeal process in place for **valid, completed** applications that were “Unsuccessful”. An Independent Appeals Panel will reconvene to consider all appeals. Decisions on appeal are final.

2. The ESIF: Description & Requirements for Applications

The Economic and Social Intervention Fund (ESIF) is a critical instrument to help address disadvantage in Limerick City.

2.1 Overview of the LRFIP

The ESIF is incorporated into the Limerick Regeneration Programme administered by Limerick City and County Council. The overall vision of the Limerick Regeneration Programme is to create *“safe and sustainable communities of opportunity where people of all ages enjoy a good quality of life, a decent home and a sense of pride about their place”*.

The objectives of the Limerick Regeneration Programme are in the [Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan](#)¹ LRFIP

2.2 Background to 2024 Fund changes and the Community Centre call

In previous years a call for applications under the Economic and Social Intervention Fund was a single call for funding under five themes as follows:

1. Education
2. Health, Well-being and Ageing Well
3. Employment
4. Families and Youth at Risk
5. Community

For 2024 the fund will transition away from this single call model towards a targeted approach covering the themes above but involving multiple calls throughout the year with the possibility of more than one call per theme subject to requirements. It will also enable a more flexible approach where innovative projects or gaps in service provision can be identified on a rolling basis and brought forward for implementation through a separate call or a targeted service level agreement with a public body.

This approach will focus on a number of objectives including:

- Supporting existing infrastructure, for example schools and community centres
- Supporting engagement with the community
- Supporting primary, secondary and third level attainment and progression through school based activities
- Supporting education in community-based settings
- Supporting household transition to sustainable housing tenure including home ownership
- Supporting youth infrastructure
- Supporting sporting, community and cultural activities that enhance overall well-being
- Supporting residents towards employment or training
- Supporting capital infrastructure that enables employment in the relevant areas

¹ https://www.limerick.ie/sites/default/files/media/documents/2017-05/limerick_regeneration_framework_implementation_plan_small_version.compressed.pdf

- Enabling the commissioning of innovative projects or specified services from time to time as determined by the Local Strategic Advisory Monitoring Group and its sub committees
- Ensuring that sustainability is a key consideration in any project and working with statutory partners on the possibility of joint commissioning as a method of delivery

Every effort will be made during the development, initiation, assessment and approval process to ensure coordination of project and service delivery amongst state and public bodies. Duplication of services will be avoided so that service delivery and resident engagement takes place in a coordinated manner in as far as possible.

The end outcomes of the Fund being sought, in summary are

- a broad range of services for the community generally and specifically in community centres
- increased levels of employment within disadvantaged areas and in particular Regeneration areas
- activation of economic investment and mixed tenure housing within Regeneration areas
- improved levels of attainment and achievement at primary, secondary and third level of education within disadvantaged areas and in particular Regeneration areas
- improved levels of health and well-being in Regeneration areas

The first call for 2024 will be Community for funding towards Community Centres only. This will be a competitive call with one allocation per geographical area of urban disadvantage in the City. It will focus on supporting the existing community infrastructure to enable a broad range of services in that area and enabling community leadership and engagement in that area. It is open to Community Centres to partner with other organisations in relation to service provision around engagement for example.

2.3 Who can apply?

Only Community Centres that serve Very and Extremely Disadvantaged areas of Limerick City as defined under the POBAL deprivation index can apply under the Community Centre call. Organisations that in previous years received funding under the Community theme may be eligible to apply in separate Calls that will be published in the coming months.

Community Centres applying for funding must demonstrate a connection/impact to residents of or to the communities of the Limerick Regeneration areas. In the case of applications involving two or more organisations a lead organisation must be specified and that lead organisation must be a community centre and established as a legal entity. If successful, the lead organisation will sign the Service Level Agreement with Limerick City and County Council and will be the recipient of the grant. It must be tax compliant.

The lead organisation will be responsible for oversight and management of the funds awarded, accountable for project implementation and responsible for submission of all progress reports and supporting documentation (receipts, invoices, quotations, tender documents) and monitoring information.

In partnership-based applications, the lead organisation must demonstrate agreement of the other partners to participate in the project. This will require a letter / agreement or memorandum of understanding stating the organisations' agreement to participate in the project, approved and signed by the Chair / Secretary of the Board of Directors, or supervisory or management committee.

In the case of partnership-based applications, the governance and financial controls in relation to the grant / project must be clearly outlined in the application form. This should explain the composition of the decision-making structure, the process (e.g., meeting schedule), the management structure and arrangements for the delivery of actions.

2.4 Award criteria & eligible costs of the Community Centre Call

All applications must clearly demonstrate the following:

1. Strategic alignment with the objectives of the Limerick Regeneration Programme as set out in the LRFIP.
2. That the Centre acts as a leader and advocate for its immediate community and that it actively engages with and supports the community.
3. Engagement with statutory agencies and other stakeholders to improve its Centre as a focus for the immediate community and the services/opportunities it offers for that community.
4. A building that is a hub for service delivery to its immediate community and that community actively uses the building.
5. The range of services that it provides, how it engages with and supports its immediate community, states how it meets needs and has the capacity to deliver actions that work (e.g., previous experience / track record of success) and the potential for greater expansion or delivery of innovative responses. This should include current number of services and days/hours of opening including potential for evening and weekend service provision if not already active at those times.
6. Focus on achieving positive outcomes for the target regeneration areas or groups.
7. Capacity to design, plan and implement a service / project.
8. Capacity for project management, governance, financial management and monitoring progress and results being achieved
9. Sustainability of the Centre. This includes capacity to complement other government programmes, attract other public or private funding and / or generate own income and add value to existing government initiatives and programmes

The following chart shows the weighting of the assessment criteria that will be used in the evaluation of applications:

Criteria	Marking
Quality and Range of the Community Centre Services provided: Evidence that it meets the requirements as set out in 2.4	40
Evidence of Leadership and Engagement with the Community	40
Sustainability & Governance (e.g., match funding, joint commissioning -especially by public agencies)	20
Total	100

2.5 Eligible Costs

Eligible costs can include: staff costs related to the running of the community centre, operating costs, equipment, feasibility studies, professional services related to project planning such as design, feasibility testing and business plan development. Training, equipment, programme delivery costs including room hire, security, insurance, rubbish removal, fire protection, printing costs, small capital costs such as equipment and maintenance costs. Major capital projects are ineligible under this call.

All costs must be directly related to the actions / project described in the application form.

All costs must be verifiable with evidence of payments provided when submitting progress reports detailing expenditure. Expenditure must be verified with copies of receipts, bank statements, staff payment records, procurement processes, invoices, copies of attendance sheets and expenses claims, etc. See the cost breakdown and verification section below for more details on how to verify each type of expense.

Limerick City and County Council reserves the right to conduct an independent audit of all expenditures of an approved project.

Funding must be spent and all completed paperwork must be returned by March 2025. After September 2025, all unspent grant aid will be de-committed. Funding paid in advance and not spent must be refunded to Limerick City and County Council.

Requests for any carryover of funding from year-to-year must be submitted in writing to Limerick City and County Council with an explanation as to why monies remain unspent. The organisation (grantee) will be informed in writing by Limerick City and County Council as to whether carryover of funding is agreed.

2.5.1 Cost Breakdown and Verification

Use the table on the online application to detail the cost breakdown of the project. **Please note that in the event the granted amount is less than the amount applied for, the grant must be spent across the categories proportional to the initial application.** If your organisation requires a breakdown other than that applied for, written approval must be received from LCCC Regeneration Directorate in order to draw down the funds.

Staff Costs

A maximum of 50% per employee is eligible subject to two employees overall. Applicants must specify where the remainder of the costs will be sourced.

At the time of application, please submit a job description for each post applied for.

In order to draw down funds, employee names and contracts will be required.

Pay slips and bank statements will need to be provided in order to receive the second installment of the grant.

Operating Costs

Includes services and materials not associated with a specific project, but necessary for the overall running of the organisation. Where an application is for core funding, eligible expenses include:

- Utilities (such as gas, electricity, etc.)
- Insurance
- Security
- Ongoing buildings maintenance, pest control and cleaning
- Fire protection services
- Rubbish removal
- Printing and printers

Receipts and bank statements will need to be provided for all of the above in order to receive the second installment of the grant.

Room Hire

Does NOT include charges for use of organisation's own premises.

Bank statements will need to be provided for as proof of payment in order to receive the second installment of the grant.

Professional Services

For services provided including e.g., legal fees, audit fees, business planning consultants.

Applications for work by external consultants will require the submission of three quotes, with the exception of audit fees.

Bank statements will need to be provided as proof of payment in order to receive the second installment of the grant.

Capital Investment and Equipment

Tools and other items needed for the running of the Community Centre. Eligible costs include capital investment & equipment, for instance:

- Electronics (e.g., phones, laptops, computers, cameras)
- Kitchen and other appliances
- Furniture
- Tools, garden / environmental equipment (e.g., pickers, lawnmowers)
- Clothing / uniforms

Three quotes must be provided for all capital investment at the time of application in order for the application to be deemed valid.

Receipts and bank statements will need to be provided as proof of payment in order to receive the second installment of the grant.

2.6 Ineligible Costs

An indicative list of ineligible costs is as follows:

- i. Travel and Subsistence payments
- ii. Retrospective costs – i.e., prior to 2024
- iii. Costs for staff, activities, equipment that are already paid for in full by statutory and public funding
- iv. Staff costs in the organisation unrelated to the objectives of the funding
- v. Costs associated with preparing the application
- vi. Costs of room / venue hire of one's own premises
- vii. Capital costs for buildings refurbishment
- viii. Costs related to private or unfunded pensions
- ix. Costs of gifts, donations and alcohol
- x. Activities of a party-political nature
- xi. Redundancy costs
- xii. VAT costs (where VAT can be reclaimed from Revenue), fines / financial penalties, costs of legal disputes, pre-existing financial deficits
- xiii. Funds to build up reserves of the organisation.

Where the applicant is unsure as to whether costs can be covered by the grant, they should contact Limerick City and County Council, ESIF staff at the email address above.

3. Preparing the Application

You must complete all sections and questions on the application form. Please be as concise as possible. Be sure to save your application as you go along so that your entries are not lost.

Ensure all actions and costs presented fit the eligibility criteria; that you include a statement / brief description of needs and that you state how your project will impact on regeneration communities / specific groups targeted in the social regeneration.

Clearly describe what the application will do, stating what it sets out to achieve and the activities to be completed.

Specify how you will measure the outputs to be achieved – e.g., you will record the number of people taking up a specific service or programme such as an after-schools' service or a counselling service, attendance at local community events, number of users from regeneration areas of community / sports / recreation facilities; number and / or area covered by local area clean-up schemes, etc.

Specify how you will measure the outcomes to be achieved. These are the benefits expected to happen for the target communities / population as a result of the funding. You should specify a small number of the key outcomes that are relevant to your Community Centre project(s) application. This level of planning will help in monitoring your own progress in relation to objectives set and in the completion of the ESIF Monitoring Form (which you will be required to submit to LCCC in the year after you have received the funding).

In the Community Centre costs, ensure that you present funding expected to come from other sources and name those sources. Clearly state if such funding from other sources has been secured. Limerick City and County Council reserves the right to verify amount of funding to be provided by other partners.

Your Board or decision-making structure must approve your application prior to submission. This should be evidenced in an extract from your Board / Management Committee minutes submitted as one of the supporting documents with your application.

Prior to submission, go through the checklist of Supporting Documentation to ensure that all required documentation is submitted with the completed application form.

4. Post Assessment & Post Approvals of Applications

The assessment process including right of appeal has been outline above in section 1.3

4.1 Service Level Agreement & conditions associated with the grant

If your application is approved, in whole or in part, you will be informed of the decision. The applicant organisation (the grantee) will be required to sign and return the Service Level Agreement to Limerick City and County Council.

Successful applicants must do the following:

- i. Acknowledge the funding from the Economic and Social Intervention Fund, Limerick City and County Council in all public documents associated with the approved project
- ii. Comply with public procurement guidelines and be able to demonstrate this (e.g., quotations sought, service tendered etc.)
- iii. Comply with good practice in recruitment and employment contracts – e.g., staff positions advertised, job description, remuneration specified, skills and competency criteria, recruitment properly executed, employment contracts in place)
- iv. Complete the final report and monitoring form required by Limerick City and County Council to verify implementation and expenditure and submit this with supporting documentation (e.g., invoices, receipts, and payroll data).

4.2 Payments to successful applicants

Payments will be made in two instalments and at the discretion of Limerick City and County Council (e.g., for larger-scale projects) in three instalments. The total amount of schedule for payment will be specified in the Service Level Agreement (SLA).

The first payment is subject to previous years' grants being finalised, the submission of a signed SLA, the submission of vouched expenditure (i.e. monies must be spent **before** any portion of the grant may be drawn down) and any further required documentation.

The second instalment will be paid once the full amount of the grant has been spent down. In order to draw down the second instalment, all financial returns must be submitted along with the final report and monitoring form.