

Emigrant Support Programme (ESP) - FAQ:

How Can My Organisation Apply For ESP Funding?

Applications must be made through the online system on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website. It is not possible to accept hard copy or emailed applications.

The online system allows for applications to be made under the following headings:

- Capital -** *The construction, refurbishment or purchase of, capital assets benefitting Irish communities.*
- Heritage -** *The promotion of Irish heritage and identity overseas.*
- Welfare (Elderly) -** *Projects that are specifically targeted at the older members of the community.*
- Welfare (Other) -** *Projects involving the provision of front-line welfare services including advisory, counselling, information and outreach services.*
- Networks -** *Projects to support, Irish business networks overseas*

What Types Of Organisations Do You Fund?

Organisations receiving Emigrant Support Funding should be registered charities, charitable bodies or voluntary/not-for-profit organisations which provide services or organise activities for Irish communities abroad.

What Type Of Projects Will ESP Fund?

As a general guideline, the following will be considered for funding under each heading:

Capital: The construction, refurbishment or purchase of, capital assets which will benefit Irish communities abroad.

Please note, capital funding allocated in each year will depend on the overall availability of funds and the priority of the projects submitted. As set out in the online application form, applications for capital funding must include a minimum of three quotations for the proposed body of work. Additionally, these applications should in the main be accompanied by a project plan and budget overview clearly demonstrating that a significant portion of the cost of the project has been secured from sources other than the ESP.

Capital funding is subject to additional conditions including the possible reimbursement of funding if an asset is sold within a designated timeframe.

Please note that websites/software projects are considered capital projects.

Heritage: Projects that promote Irish heritage and identity overseas.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Irish arts, music and cultural programmes and festivals (venue hire, publicity and infrastructure costs)
- Projects that promote a greater sense of Irish identity
- Cultural and heritage outreach projects to schools and community groups, in particular projects which engage first and subsequent generations Irish.
- Educational projects that promote Irish culture, heritage and identity

Welfare (Elderly): Projects which are specifically targeted at the older members of the community.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Projects that will facilitate access to statutory and voluntary services in their country of residence for vulnerable Irish emigrants
- Projects that provide frontline welfare services including advisory, counselling, mental health support, advocacy, information and outreach services.
- Projects that will improve the welfare and wellbeing of the more vulnerable members of our community, including older people, the Irish Traveller community and those with complex needs are a particular priority.
- Projects that will reduce the social isolation of older Irish people. ESP may provide funding towards the costs of regular lunch clubs for older Irish people (e.g. venue hire, food costs and possible contributions to transport costs for less able members). Applications for funding of the transport costs for occasional social outings will also be considered. In these instances, funding is restricted to 50% of the transport costs for a maximum of 2 outings annually.

Welfare (Other): Projects involving the provision of front-line welfare services including advisory, counselling, information and outreach services.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Projects that will help new Irish emigrants to integrate into their new community
- Support for Irish communities in crisis situations in areas geographically removed from the nearest Embassy or Consulate
- Research on the needs of the Irish emigrant community

Networks: Projects that support, develop and foster Irish business, professional, community, arts and alumni networks overseas.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Venue hire and publicity costs for networking events
- Targeted Diaspora initiatives including those which have arisen in the context of the Global Irish Economic Forum and which clearly demonstrate the enhancement of links between Irish communities and Ireland to the benefit of both.
- Projects which the IAU and/or the local DFAT mission considers to have a positive impact on the community it seeks to serve or the reputation of Ireland in the region.
- The Global Irish Economic Forum and activities related to it

What Will The Emigrant Support Programme NOT FUND?

The following items are generally ineligible for funding:

- Personal study or travel abroad.
- Repayments of loans or deficits.
- Party political activities.
- Commercially driven events or enterprises.
- Artists', performers' or speakers' fees, including travel and accommodation – professional or otherwise.
- The purchase of portable electronic consumables
- Admission fees or food costs for outings.
- Christmas parties/events.
- Costs of attending Embassy or Consulate events
- Purchase of prizes for raffles
- Membership fees for other ESP-funded organisations.

Is There A Deadline For Applications?

The Emigrant Support Programme application process opens annually in January. Applications are considered and assessed and recommendations are made to Ministers with a view to decisions being taken in the early summer of each year.

Can ESP Be The Sole Funder Of An Organisation?

No. It is expected that Emigrant Support Programme funded organisations will have a diversity of funding sources to ensure the sustainability of the organisation.

It is not expected that Emigrant Support Programme funding would be granted to any activity or project that has been granted funds from another division of, or funding source within, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

What Capital Funding Is Available?

Capital funding allocated in each year will depend on the overall availability of funds and the priority of the projects submitted. As set out in the online application form, applications for capital funding must include a minimum of three quotations for the proposed body of work. Additionally, these applications should in the main be accompanied by a project plan and budget overview clearly demonstrating that a significant portion of the cost of the project has been secured from sources other than the ESP.

Capital funding is subject to additional conditions including the possible reimbursement of funding if an asset is sold within a designated timeframe.

Please note that websites/software projects are considered capital projects.

Can Salary Costs Be Paid?

The Emigrant Support Programme will consider applications for contributions towards salaries and other recurring expenditure only in the context of a clearly defined project whose outcomes meet ESP's objectives.

Can Funds Be Re-Allocated Within The Same Organisation?

Emigrant Support Programme funding may only be spent on the supported project in the year of its allocation, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the programme.

Under no circumstances may funds be redirected to other activities without the prior written agreement of the Irish Abroad Unit in consultation with the relevant Embassy or Consulate. Failure to comply with this condition of funding may result in the awarded monies requiring to be returned.

Please note that websites/software projects are considered capital projects.

If Our Application Is Successful, When Must We Spend The ESP Funding?

The exact dates in which ESP funding must be spent will be outlined in the Letter of Offer associated with a successful application.

How Will ESP Expenditure Be Monitored And Evaluated?

The Emigrant Support Programme monitors its policies and procedures to continuously improve how it disburses and monitors the use of public funds.

This quality control is vitally important to ensuring the best possible value for money and the long-term sustainability of the programme. Audits and evaluations have informed and guided the programme since its inception.

Audits may be undertaken by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade or through the services of independent auditors, to examine and make recommendations on how ESP funds were utilised and the value-for-money it represents, the partner organisations' targeting of beneficiaries or services, the partner organisation's governance structures, the appropriateness of the partner's activities and possible ways in which their programming might be improved.

Regular assessments on the targeting of partners' services and their use of ESP funds in the context of the evolving needs of the Irish abroad is necessary to ensure that the Emigrant Support Programme will continue to remain effective and fit for purpose. To increase efficiencies and impact, partner organisations in close geographical proximity may be encouraged to share information and or/services.

Where an organisation has used ESP funds inappropriately, has failed to use funds for the purposes for which they were granted or fails to satisfactorily report on how funds were utilised, the Department will take follow-up action, up to and including the refund of the identified amount of funds.

What Terms And Conditions Apply To Funding?

Applicants must agree to abide by the Emigrant Support Programme's detailed terms and conditions, before funds can be released. Terms and conditions which apply to grant recipients are incorporated into the letter of offer associated with each grant. The terms are also available on the online application system. Additional conditions may be attached to a specific grant for an organisation and these will be detailed in the Letter of Offer to a successful applicant. All terms and conditions must be strictly adhered to.

What Reports Must ESP Recipients Provide?

Funded organisations will be asked to provide narrative and financial reports outlining progress since the award of the grant and detailing how the grant has contributed to the achievement of some, or all, of the Emigrant Support Programme's key objectives.

Narrative and financial reports must be completed using the templates provided by the Department and within the specified timescales. The Organisation will not be eligible for further Emigrant Support Programme funding until satisfactory reports have been submitted.

What Are The Requirements For Financial Reporting?

For organisations granted below €100,000, the organisation's accounts should be certified by an independent, practising accountant.

For organisations granted over €100,000, the audited financial statements of the organisation should be provided.

In compliance with Circular 13/2014 of the Irish Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the audited financial statements or accounts submitted must:

- (i) show the Emigrant Support Programme grant as a separate entry, under the heading "**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Emigrant Support Programme**"
- (ii) show the amount (as per your Letter of Offer) and term (period) of the total grant (i.e. **1 July 2016 – 30 June 2017** unless a different period is specified)
- (iii) show the amount of the Emigrant Support Programme grant accounted for in the current financial statements, if that amount is less than the entire amount of the ESP grant indicate whether and how the use of the grant is restricted (i.e. is it for a particular project, or for the delivery of a particular service).

In addition, in line with the requirements set out in the abovementioned Circular, organisations are required to provide details of the number of employees whose total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) fall within each band of €10,000 from €60,000 upwards and an overall figure for total employer pension contributions. This requirement applies even if salaries are not being funded under the Emigrant Support Programme.

Will The Information I Provide As Part Of My ESP Application Be Provided To Third Parties?

Any personal information volunteered to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as part of the grant application process will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality, in accordance with the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. The information provided will be used for evaluation purposes and to facilitate the administration of the Emigrant Support Programme. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, as data controller, will store the information provided securely, fully respect its confidentiality, and the data will not be disclosed outside of the Department, without express permission.

The grant applicant is responsible for ensuring that all data submitted as part of the application process is accurate and up to date. Under the terms of the Data Protection Acts, the applicant organisation has a right of access to personal data held by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; if the personal data retained by the Department is outdated or inaccurate, and has the right to rectify this data. The submission of an application form will be treated as confirmation that the Department may use the information supplied for the aforementioned purposes.

In this regard it should also be noted that the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade is a designated body under the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

Can I apply for ESP funding for my local GAA team?

The local promotion of Gaelic games outside of Ireland is provided for under an agreement between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the GAA HQ. Emigrant Support Programme funds are provided for games development worldwide to the GAA through this partnership agreement.

Clubs who may have projects not covered under games development but relevant to the ESP objectives are also advised to contact GAA HQ in the first instance.