



INVESTING IN SPORT: EMPLOYMENT

A Sports Council for Northern Ireland investment programme designed to create, develop and manage employment opportunities to enhance the development of sport in Northern Ireland.

Information and Guidance Booklet

**The Sports Council for Northern Ireland
Investing in Sport: Employment**

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Programme Objectives	3
3. Eligibility	4
4. Levels of Funding	8
5. The Application & Assessment Process	9
6. Award Conditions	13
7. Payment	13
8. Monitoring and Evaluation	13
9. Notes	14
10. Further Information	15

Please read this Investing in Sport - Information and Guidance booklet before completing any application form.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Sports Council for Northern Ireland (SCNI) believes that by investing in people who are involved in sport, real progress can be made in developing sport in communities and communities through sport.

2. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Sport relies heavily on volunteers and this is evidenced by the fact that more people volunteer in sport than in any other sector in Northern Ireland. As a result of increased Government funding for the period April 2003 until March 2006, the Sports Council for Northern Ireland wishes to increase its investment in volunteer focused sporting structures in Northern Ireland. To that end, through the “Investing in Sport Employment programme” the Council aims to:

- increase the number of paid staff within the voluntary sector;
- enable voluntary organisations to develop their knowledge and skills in the management of staff, therefore ensuring a more professional approach to their work; and
- encourage statutory organisations with a clearly defined role in the development of sport to employ, or work in partnership to support the employment of, specialist sports development staff to support volunteers.

The anticipated outcomes of this investment will be:

- increased autonomy, within defined parameters, of employing organisations and their partners, through strategic/business planning, income generation programmes, re-structuring, adoption of professional management systems, etc;

- the development of sports people through the training and skilling of the workforce involved in sport at all levels;
- improved local delivery of sport for young people, in particular marginalized young people;
- clear pathways for performance development enabling performers and coaches to progress at and through all levels of sporting achievement;
- new school-community sporting opportunities involving partnerships between primary, post primary, higher, further education, local authorities and voluntary organisations.

The Department of Culture Arts and Leisure has demonstrated its commitment to sport by increasing the Sports Council's budget. Through this programme, the Sports Council wishes to work with voluntary and statutory organisations who are committed to maximising the impact of this investment.

3. ELIGIBILITY

Only applications that are eligible under the terms and conditions of the programme will be processed. Please read this section carefully to make sure your organisation meets the eligibility rules.

Individual sports clubs, multi - disciplinary sports clubs, individual community and voluntary groups that cannot demonstrate a range of member organisations, and for profit organisations, are not eligible to apply to this programme.

In addition, constituent members of SCNI recognised Governing Bodies are not eligible to apply i.e. Schools Associations, Coaching Associations, Individual Leagues etc

3.1 Eligible Applicants must be:

- SCNI-recognised Governing Bodies of Sport;
- statutory organisations i.e. local authorities;

- voluntary/community umbrella organisations that can demonstrate they represent the interests of a **significant** number of groups e.g. local sports advisory councils, community fora etc.

All applicants to the programme must have the following in place:

- a constitution or memorandum and articles of association, or have statutory powers;
- a strategic or development plan which clearly identifies the need for the post(s) for which the application for support is being made;
- sport must be clearly identified as a central component of your organisation's objectives;
- audited accounts;
- a child protection policy;
- an equity policy; and
- public liability insurance with an indemnity limit of at least £5m for any one incident and providing cover, where applicable, for voluntary workers, coaches and officials who assist in the activities of the organisation.

3.2 Eligibility Criteria

Applications must be for projects that involve the employment of staff on either a full-time or part-time basis (minimum hours considered eligible are 17.5 hours per week).

Applications from governing bodies and voluntary/community organisations may be made in respect of new or existing appointments. The contract of employment must last a minimum of 12 months and may be funded up to 31st March 2006 or possibly up to 36 months in total, subject to assessment and performance against agreed targets.

Applications from Statutory organisations may only be in respect of new appointments. The contract of employment must be for a minimum of 36 months and may be funded up to 31st March 2006 or possibly up to 36 months in total, subject to assessment and performance against agreed targets.

To be eligible for funding, applicants must demonstrate that there are sound management policies and procedures for employing and/or supporting staff e.g. staff handbook, induction programme, line management roles and responsibilities, work programming sessions.

In addition, applicants must demonstrate how the post for which they are making application will meet some or all of the following eligibility criteria:

- The need for the post is clearly identified in the organisation's strategic/development plan (this criteria must be met for the application to be eligible).
- The development of infrastructure and/or services that will benefit:
 - a single sport across Northern Ireland;
 - a range of sports within targeted areas or groups;
- In the case of club development officer appointments, benefits must be demonstrated to a number of clubs (can be sport specific or multi-sport), the governing body(ies) of sport involved and, the district council making the application.
- The operation of projects and/or programmes that will develop participation in sport among currently under represented groups across Northern Ireland.
- The operation of projects and/or programmes that will develop performance sport in Northern Ireland.
- The operation of projects and/or programmes that will address issues of neighbourhood renewal/regeneration such as health & well being; education & training; capacity building; community relations; crime; drug & alcohol abuse; unemployment – using sport.
- Projects and/or programmes that are time bound in terms of their financial needs, or that display the ability to self fund in future years.

- Projects and/or programmes that have sound management policies and procedures for employing and/or supporting staff e.g. staff handbook, induction programme, line management roles and responsibilities, work programming sessions.

The Sports Council is particularly keen to receive applications which will assist in developing sport through:

governing bodies - business management, equity programmes, participation, performance development, and coaching development.

statutory sector – area partnerships, club development and or new sports development officer appointments.

voluntary/community - community focused sports development officer appointments.

3.3 Eligible Costs

The following costs are eligible for funding within the maximum percentages described in Section 4:

- salary, pension contributions, employer’s liability insurance and national insurance contributions. Pension contributions require specific SCNI agreement;
- the costs of travel, subsistence in association with the delivery of the proposed programme, up to a maximum of £2,000 per year;
- administration and office costs, to a maximum of £3,000 per year;
- the costs associated with staff development e.g. training, conferences, seminars and other means of effective communication;
- the costs associated with recruitment, selection and the training of personnel responsible for the management of staff.

3.4 Ineligible Costs

The following costs are ineligible and therefore cannot be considered for an award, or as part of the partnership requirement:

- any costs not included in section 3.3 above; and
- any costs not previously agreed by the SCNI within the award.

4. LEVELS OF FUNDING

In response to the expected high demand against funds available it has been necessary to set indicative upper limits for awards.

4.1 Partnership Funding

Successful applicants to the Employment Fund will be expected to make a cash contribution to the cost of their programme.

Governing Bodies/Community/Voluntary Organisations

- Awards for the employment of **existing staff** (posts that have been established for over 12 months), will not normally exceed 50% of the eligible costs over the period of the award.
- Awards for the employment of **new staff** (posts that have yet to be established or have been established for less than 12 months), will not normally exceed 70% of eligible costs over the period of the Award.

Statutory Organisations

- Awards for the employment of **new staff** will not normally exceed 50% of the eligible costs over the period of the Award.

Club Development Officers

- Awards for the employment of new **club development officers** will not normally exceed 33% of the eligible costs over the period of the Award.

Salary will be assessed in line with comparable salary levels for comparable posts.

4.2 Minimum and Maximum Awards

The minimum award for each year of an appointment under this programme is £5,000. The maximum award for each year of an appointment is £40,000.

Organisations can submit applications for support towards a maximum of 3 posts. Each application will be assessed on its own merit.

5. THE APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

5.1 Application Procedure

Organisations that meet the eligibility criteria outlined previously should complete the application form enclosing all the information requested. Applications that are ineligible or incomplete will not be assessed. A separate application form must be submitted for each post for which support is being sought.

Applications must be received by the closing date. Late applications will not be assessed.

Applicants will receive acknowledgement of receipt of the application.

5.2 Assessment Procedure

On confirmation that all requested information has been received, the project will be assessed and presented to the Sports Development Committee.

The Committee will make a recommendation to the SCNI.

A meeting of the SCNI will take place to consider applications and make a decision.

An application to SCNI can be rejected or result in a reduced offer of award for a variety of reasons, for example:

Ineligibility: does not meet the eligibility criteria laid down within the Information and Guidance Booklet for the programme ;

Priority: does not rate highly enough against the aims and priorities of the programme and other applications as set out in the Information and Guidance Booklet, in the face of limited funds.

5.3 Assessment Criteria

Applications that are eligible will be considered on their own merits against the following assessment criteria.

(a) Management Structures and Experience – priority will be given to applicants who demonstrate that they have sound management policies and procedures for employing and supporting staff e.g. staff handbook, induction programme, line management roles and responsibilities. Applicants who can demonstrate, or have the capacity to build, management systems and, have experience in managing similar successful projects, will receive a higher priority. In terms of awards, the applicant must demonstrate:

- the ability and qualifications of the Board/Executive/Management Committee to manage employees;

- sound management systems for employees e.g. line management, reporting, appraisals, work programming, disciplinary and grievance procedures, training and development, payroll;
- sound support and administration systems e.g. information technology, office accommodation, financial and clerical support etc.

(b) Community/Sports Development Impact – a high priority will be afforded to projects that demonstrate they have the potential to deliver the greatest impact. The assessment will focus on:

- opportunities to increase participation in sport;
- opportunities for people, particularly young people and under-represented groups, to take part in a range of activities;
- opportunities for Northern Ireland performance standards to be improved;
- the existence of clear and measurable performance indicators that relate to sports development and/or societal outcomes;
- the existence of clear and measurable performance indicators that relate to the modernisation of voluntary sport in Northern Ireland;
- the number of participants and organisations likely to be impacted upon by the proposed project;
- the capacity of the applicant to deliver the proposed project;
- the inclusion of an education/training element within the programme; and

- the measures being taken by the applicant to achieve sustainability of the programme beyond SCNI funding.
- (c) **Strategic Relevance** – priority will be given to those applicants who demonstrate that their proposed project integrates with their organisation’s/sport’s/community’s/ or sector’s strategic plan, local or regional development plans, the Strategy for the Development of Sport in Northern Ireland 1997 – 2005 and the Young People in Sport Strategy 2002 – 2011, Sports Council Lottery Fund Strategic Plan 2002-2007 and SCNI’s Corporate Plan 2003-2006.
- (d) **Financial Viability** – awards will only be made to applicants who display the ability to generate the partnership funding required. Priority will be given to those applicants with a structure and financial package in place that will ensure the sustainability of the project beyond the period of SCNI funding.
- (e) **Social Inclusion** – a high priority will be given to projects that display the potential to create new opportunities for groups that are traditionally under-represented. This includes areas of high social need, women, young people, older people, ethnic minority groups and people with disabilities.
- (f) **Financial Need** – awards will only be made to applicants that display financial need.
- (g) **Timescale of the Project** – the assessment will consider the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project within the given timeframe.

5.4 Post Decision Procedure

The SCNI decision will be confirmed in writing as soon as possible. Telephone confirmation will not be given. Successful applicants will receive a formal offer setting out the terms and conditions of the award. The offer is non-negotiable and if accepted will form a contract between the SCNI and the applicant. Successful applicants will be given one month to accept the offer of

award. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing of the SCNI decision and the reason for it. All decisions regarding applications are at the sole discretion of the SCNI.

5.5 Timeline

- Closing date for applications: 4.30pm 28 March 2003
- Notification of successful applicants: 6 June 2003
- Year 1 Project reports and financial statements to be submitted: 14 May 2004

6. AWARD CONDITIONS

Successful applicants will receive a copy of the standard terms and conditions upon which an award is offered. Applicants choosing to accept an offer of award must agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the award programme.

7. PAYMENT

Award payments will normally be made by BACS payment directly into the dedicated bank account that must be established by the successful applicant.

Payment will normally be made in retrospective instalments based on claims supported by valid receipts or other original documentary evidence of services rendered or goods supplied. Claims for payment in advance of spend must be accompanied by evidence of financial need and be agreed with the SCNI. These payments will be subject to specific conditions.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Government directions require the SCNI to monitor and evaluate projects to ensure the most efficient and effective use of funds. It is necessary to assess management and sporting impact of the project and to ensure each project complies with award conditions.

A Sports Council officer will be designated as the Project Officer for the period of the award and will be involved in monitoring the project on a regular basis with the applicant. The monitoring process will be detailed in the letter of offer to successful applicants and will focus on the performance indicators detailed in the application form.

9. NOTES

- **Equality**

The SCNI will not consider, and reserves the right to reconsider, applications in respect of projects or programmes that are likely to have adverse differential impact on any person on the basis of their religious belief, political opinion, race, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or those with or without dependants. This will only be waived if the project/programme focuses on the development of a specific marginalized group e.g. women, people with disabilities.

- **Data Protection Act**

Information about applications is stored on computer. In accordance with the Data Protection Act such information is confidential. All government departments share information on projects to enable them to prevent fraudulent applications and to co-ordinate processing of complementary applications.

Any information provided on the application form may be made available to other departments/agencies for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime.

- **Suspected Fraud**

Any materially misleading statements (whether deliberate or accidental) given at any stage during the application process, could render the application invalid and the applicant liable to return any money already paid out on the project in question.

All cases of suspected fraud will be referred to the PSNI. This includes falsification of information and misinformation at application stage.

- **Appeals Procedure**

An appeal against a decision of the SCNI can only be made on the grounds that:

- the SCNI has misunderstood or misinterpreted material information contained in the applicant's application; or
- there is a substantial or material breach of the SCNI policies, procedures and criteria as set out in the Information and Guidance Booklet in regard to the applicant's application.

A full copy of the appeals procedures and a copy of the appeals form will be issued on receipt of written expressions of dissatisfaction and on formal request. Appeals must be submitted within one **month** of the date on the original letter of rejection. **Appeals received after one month cannot be considered.**

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

Should you have any questions regarding your application, or if you require additional information please contact the SCNI as follows:

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