



**Government  
of Ireland**  
International  
Development  
Programme

# **In-Country Micro Projects Scheme (ICMPS)**

## **2024 Guidance Note**

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## 1. Irish Aid Support for Civil Society

Irish Aid's support to civil society is informed by the [Sustainable Development goals \(SDGs\)](#). Support to [Ireland's Civil Society partners](#) is shown here. The objectives of this support is as follows

1. An enabling environment for civil society to organise and engage with government and its own broader constituencies;
2. The role of civil society in (i) promoting participation and good governance, (ii) ensuring pro-poor service delivery and pro-poor growth, and (iii) building a constituency for development, human rights and social justice.

## 2. Purpose and Objectives of ICMPS

The In-Country Micro Projects Scheme (ICMPS) provides delegated sanction to participating Missions to directly support *local non-governmental organisations* to carry out small-scale development projects. The scheme operates in developing countries where Ireland has diplomatic accreditation, but where there is no bilateral Irish Aid programme.

ICMPS supports projects that address the root causes of poverty and injustice in a way that is strategic and cost effective, enhance local capacity and ownership, have a focus on reaching the furthest behind first and are consistent with [A Better World – Ireland's Policy for International Development](#).

The scheme supports interventions that contribute to one or more of the following:

1. Strengthening the voice of local communities to influence policy decisions that impact upon them and implementation at local and national levels.
2. The prevention of hunger, and the improvement of livelihood security.
3. Improved access to essential services, such as education, health care and programmes of HIV prevention, care and support.
4. Improved access and control of resources for marginalised communities.
5. The promotion and realisation of human rights.
6. The promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality, including initiatives to tackle gender based violence and women trafficking.
7. The promotion of environmental sustainability and in particular, initiatives that combat climate change:

In applying for an ICMPS grant, applicants should state what they are trying to do and how they intend to do it. Each applicant should explain how its intervention will make a particular contribution to **at least one** of the above objectives. However, it is not necessary that an intervention contribute to all objectives.

### 3. Eligibility Criteria

**Organisational Status:** Applicants must be *an indigenous, locally managed, not for profit organisations that are independent of the state and are formed voluntarily by members of society to address the root causes of poverty and injustice in their respective communities*<sup>1</sup>:

- a) *Locally Registered NGO*; registered as a trust or society with relevant authority to receive funds from a foreign source.
- b) *Community Based Organisation*; registered as a trust or society with relevant authority to receive funds from a foreign source.
- c) *Non Profit Company or Corporate Foundation*; with relevant authority to receive funds from a foreign source.
- d) *Faith Based Organisations* involved in development work and registered as a religious trust or charitable trust or society with relevant authority to receive funds from a foreign source. Where developmental and religious work is convergent (e.g. schools/training run by faith based organisations) enforcement of non-discrimination policies should be documented in the application.
- e) *Co-operative*
- f) *Farmer Association*
- g) *Trade Union*

**Focus of Work:** The areas of intervention by the applicant organisation must meet the OECD DAC definition of Official Development Assistance and take place in a country classified as eligible for assistance. See [www.oecd.org/dac/stats/methodology](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/methodology) for details.

**Record of Compliance:** Applicants, previously in receipt of ICMPS funds, must have a record of compliance in terms of the administration of such funds. Applicants which have a record of non-compliance with the terms of previous ICMPS contracts may not be considered for funding.

**Funding Status:** Applications cannot be accepted from an organisation which is currently in receipt of an ICMPS grant i.e. if the applicant is already receiving payments for a project under an existing contract.

**Exclusions from funding:** The following activities will **NOT** be eligible for funding support under the ICMPS:

- Interventions that are primarily welfare support(s) and that are clearly not sustainable without external support
- International Travel
- Individual or family support
- Major infrastructural schemes for e.g. dams, roads, hospitals (but is not limited to this list).
- Educational scholarships including study or research fellowships
- Projects that involve evangelisation for the proselytising of religious beliefs
- Retrospective Expenditure (i.e. cost incurred prior to the date of submission of the application)
- Emergency projects that are in response to natural or human disasters
- Marketing, fundraising and entertainment
- Programmes, projects or activities that involve the promotion or sending of volunteers to orphanages, institutional or residential care facilities for children and/or vulnerable adults.

<sup>1</sup>Organisations should provide details of the appropriate registration numbers in the ICMPS Application Form.

## 4. Application Process

### 4.1 Concept Note

If your organisation has a project that you think might fit our funding criteria, please submit a concept note to **beijing@dfa.ie** by **7 May 2024**. Include 'ICMPS Concept Note' in the subject line. The note should be 2-3 pages (including a budget) and outline how the organisation will promote at least one of the above objectives. Please briefly outline a theory of change, proposed outputs, implementation plan, budget and measurable outcomes.

When sending the concept note, senders should provide a documentary proof that they are an **authorised representative** of the organisation submitting the note.

If the Embassy decides to engage further on the proposal in the concept note, we will invite your organisation to submit an application form.

### 4.2 Application Form

Applicants must complete the *ICMPS Application Form*. Additional relevant supporting documents in the form of Annexes can also be submitted with the application form inclusive of photographs, site maps, Memoranda of Understanding with other organisations, etc.

Application forms should be in 12-point font and presented in electronic format, where possible. One original hard copy, signed by the legal representative of the organisation must be sent to the relevant Mission or Consulate. Applications must be submitted in English and contain Euro equivalents of the local currency amount sought.

**Note:** Not all of the questions asked or the information sought in the form will apply to every proposal and where the information sought is not applicable, in this case applicants should enter "N/A" (non-applicable).

### 4.3 Size and Duration of Grant

Grants approved under the scheme are for a duration of one year only.

Grants for multi-annual projects will be provided on a phased basis, with one disbursement per year, subject to satisfactory receipt of an annual narrative report, clear evidence of progress and subject to the availability of funds.

**The maximum grant available will be €10,000.**

ICMPS grants will only cover a maximum of **70%** of the total cost of a project: i.e. no more than 70% of the total project costs can be requested and a minimum of **30%** of the total project costs must be covered by the applicant organisation.

## 4.4 Contract

Successful organisations must enter into a contract with the Mission. In the case of multi-year grants, contracts will be issued on an annual basis. Subsequent contract(s) will only be signed following the satisfactory submission and appraisal of the project report.

## 4.5 Receipt of Funds

A signed confirmation of receipt of funds on headed paper must be submitted by the organisation to the Mission within ten days of receiving the funds.

Recipients of funding under the ICMPS are entrusted with Irish public funds, to be spent strictly for the purposes presented in the funding proposal and as per the terms of the contract. Failure to comply with this obligation will render the recipient liable to reimburse the full amount of the grant.

Organisations should be aware of the requirements of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform circular (13/2014) relating to the [Management of and Accountability of Grants](#).

Four principles apply to organisations which are in receipt of grant funding from any Irish Government Department: 1. Clarity, 2. Governance, 3. Value for Money, and 4. Fairness.

# 5. Reporting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit

## 5.1 Annual Narrative & Financial Report

Organisations in receipt of grants are responsible for their own project implementation and for monitoring the project throughout the course of the funding.

Organisations in receipt of a **one-year grant** must submit a Final Narrative and Financial Report no later than one month after the end of the contract period.

Organisations in receipt of a **multi-year grant** must submit an Annual Narrative and Financial Report for each year of the project. These should be submitted no later than one month after the end of each project year and a Final Narrative and Financial Report no later than one month after the end of the contract period – i.e. from the date the contract was signed and according to the implementation schedule.

Narrative Reports should be in English where possible, 12-point font and presented in electronic format, where possible. They should also be presented in hard copy to the Mission.

The Annual and Final Reports should be accompanied by the following;

1. A financial statement jointly signed by the head of the organisation and a chartered accountant concerning the complete utilisation of the grant: accompanied with the original or copies of signed receipts/vouchers for expenditure relevant to the Irish Aid funds provided.<sup>2</sup>
2. A brief narrative account of how the local contribution/other donor contributions were realised.

<sup>2</sup> If receipts/vouchers cannot be provided, the reasons for this must be explained in the end of year report.

3. The most recent Annual Report of the organisation, if produced by the organisation.
4. Photos of furniture or equipment purchased or buildings constructed under the project if relevant
5. Copies of relevant training attendance lists, if it is a training intensive project.
6. A Certificate of Assurance, certifying, if appropriate, that public money granted was used in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

The Mission may revert to organisations to seek clarification on the narrative or financial reports and to request further documents as required. Organisations are required to cooperate fully with such clarifications requests as necessary.

Organisations in receipt to ICMPS funds are required to acknowledge the funding in a clear manner in annual reports, websites and on other relevant publications or products.

## 5.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit

Applicants must make clear in the application form the organisation's internal monitoring and evaluation activities during the course of the project.

During the implementation process, organisations should consult the Mission when context changes or newly identified risks indicate the necessity of changing one or more elements of the project such as changes to project activities or budget, **before they are undertaken**.

All recipients of ICMPS grants are also required to:

- Cooperate fully with any or external evaluations/audits which may be commissioned by The Mission.
- Respond in a timely manner to ad-hoc requests, from the Department for information or updates regarding project progress, should they arise. However, it is expected that such requests will be in exceptional circumstances and that most information will be sought from the annual reports
- Immediately communicate any suspicions of fraudulent activities and keep the Mission/Mission informed of any ongoing investigations and outcomes.

## 5.3 Fraud

The Department takes the issue of fraud very seriously. Organisations in receipt of Irish Aid funding are responsible for minimising the incidence of fraud, having adequate systems that identify possible incidences, investigating and identifying the possible loss and managing the follow up action. Non-reporting of fraud or failure to immediately report fraud, will be considered a major compliance issue.

Fraud shall be deemed to have been perpetrated where:

- A fraudulent act is wilfully or knowingly perpetrated; and
- Such act has the characteristics of fraud including, but not limited to, misappropriation, deception, bribery, forgery, extortion, corruption, theft, conspiracy, embezzlement, false representation, alteration of negotiable instruments such as cheques, falsification of accounting records or financial reports, or concealment of material facts and collusion; and
- The Department suffers, or could realistically believe that it might suffer, an actual loss including, but not limited, to a financial loss.

Recipient organisations should inform the Mission immediately in writing and provide updates on developments.

The initial report from the organisation should describe:

- Details of the (alleged) fraud
- An estimate of the total funds and where applicable, the Department concerned
- The proposed follow-up actions, including plans for a forensic audit if this is deemed appropriate.

Recipient organisations should then inform the Mission be informed when the fraud is fully investigated and a final report should be submitted to the Mission on the incident. The organisation will be informed when Irish Aid deems the case closed and is satisfied on the accountability of the Irish Aid grant overall.

## 6. Freedom of Information

Documents, including application forms and annexes, any report submitted to the Department, any other written communication with the Department and any information that the Department may generate automatically become records of the Department of Foreign Affairs and as such, are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014.