



Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council

Tipperary Festivals & Events Grant Scheme 2026

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Closing Date for applications: 12 noon, Thursday, 5th February 2026

Tipperary Festivals & Events Grant Scheme Introduction

Tipperary County Council invites applications from organisers planning Festivals and Festive Events to take place in County Tipperary in 2026.

Festivals and festive events are central to the fabric of life in County Tipperary. They entertain, celebrate our communities, enhance our villages and towns, and stimulate local economic activity while serving as an expression of identity and place. They provide cultural, recreation and leisure opportunities for citizens, help build strong and resilient communities, deliver economic and social benefits, and provide employment opportunities. They foster creativity and innovation, encourage social wellbeing and connectedness, facilitate community participation and celebrate cultural identity.

Tipperary's festivals represent arts, culture, heritage and sport, showcasing the county, its people and its attractions. The large number and wide variety of festivals and festive events taking place across the county and throughout the year has cemented Tipperary's place on the map as a dynamic and vibrant visitor destination.

Tipperary County Council aims to promote and support local festivals and festive events that are not solely commercially focused throughout the County, to support and assist those events that have an artistic, community, heritage, sporting or tourism focus and which contribute significantly to quality of life.

The Tipperary Festivals Strategy defines Festivals and Festive Events as follows:

FESTIVAL

A collection of events occurring within a defined timeframe that celebrate a single or general theme, are promoted as one within this theme and which animate our towns and villages.

FESTIVE EVENT

A community, celebratory, or commemorative event (or curated series of events) that animates our towns and villages and is open to the general public. An example of a festive event is a St Patrick's Day Parade, a cultural celebration, a community day or community sports festival.

Tipperary Festivals & Events Grant Scheme 2026

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Funding Categories

Funding is available under three categories: Community, Municipal and Premier. Applicants may apply under one category only.

Festivals which emerge after the closing date for this scheme

Emerging festivals (which emerge after the closing date) may only apply for Community or Municipal Band 1 funding. Further information on emerging festivals/events is provided on page 13.

Community Festivals and Festive Events

Funding level up to €2,500

A Community festival or festive event is centred around a local community. It may be an annual or once-off event. It is generally short in duration, a one- or two-day local event and is most likely to be organised by volunteers. These events are important to the social fabric of the locality and county, animate our towns and villages and generate civic and community pride.

Municipal Festivals and Festive Events

A Municipal festival or festive event is staged for local people but is also significant and attractive to the wider community bordering the host community. Municipal events generate civic pride and add to the vibrancy of an area, as well as contributing to the social fabric of the county. While these events may often be aimed at local residents, they encourage visitors to an area to stay longer, add to a culturally rich location and are often specialised in their programming.

A Municipal festival or event is generally held over two or more days. However, large-scale events held over one or more days and attracting audiences of over 1,000 people are also considered to be Municipal level events.

There are three bands in the Municipal category:

Municipal Band 1

Funding level up to €7,500

Local festivals or festive events held over two or more days*.

Municipal Band 2

Funding level €7,500 to €10,000

Larger scale events with a good track record, with a strategic plan in place, held over two or more days* and attracting a wider audience.

Municipal Band 3

Funding level €10,000 to €15,000

These are events with a strong track record of high quality programming, with a strategic plan in place, held over two or more days* and/or which attract significant audiences in excess of 1,000 people

* Large scale events held over one or more days and attracting audiences of over 1,000 people may apply under any of the Municipal band levels.

Premier Festivals

Funding level up to €30,000

A Premier festival is usually held over at least **three** days and attracts a large local, regional and national audience and participation. Often specialised events with high elements of originality, Premier festivals are of a significant scale and ambition, delivering a large number of high-quality events, adding colour and vibrancy to the locale and surrounding areas and contributing strongly to the local economy. They are usually professionally or semi- professionally run and have a positive regional and, sometimes, national profile, regularly achieving widespread media coverage.

General guidelines relating to all applications for all categories

Budgetary context

- Applicants should note that this is a highly competitive scheme and that there are always more applications for funding than it is possible to support.
- The maximum level of funding is not guaranteed, as funding is dependent upon the number of applications received and on available budgets.
- Some events may not be funded, given budgetary constraints.
- Tipperary County Council reserves the right not to support festivals that may have received funding in the past, or to support previously-funded festivals to a level lower than may have been previously awarded.

Application requirements

- Applicants must submit a completed application form on or before the published closing date. Further information of how to apply is provided on page 16.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- Applications that do not include all required supporting material will not be accepted. Requirements for supporting material are outlined on page 6 of this document.
- Festivals or festive events may only apply under one category (Community, Municipal or Premier).
- All Festivals and events must take place in County Tipperary between 1st January and 31st December 2026.
- Specific sectoral criteria (arts, community, heritage, sport or tourism) apply to all categories. Applicants must tick the relevant box on the application form and should refer to Sectoral Criteria Section (pages 14, 15).
- Applicant organisations must be not-for-profit entities.
- Applicants seeking a significant increase in funding over that provided previously will be required to provide a strong rationale and justification for the increase sought.
- Applicants in all categories must demonstrate that they will actively seek to engage as wide a public participation as possible in their activities and must state how their proposed festival or event will stimulate the local economy, animate our towns and villages and/or enhance the social and cultural wellbeing of the community.
- All applicants must be registered with the Public Participation Network (PPN) www.ppntipperary.org
- Applicants must ensure that they comply with current public health guidelines.
- Festivals or events catering to audiences in excess of 5,000 people must apply for planning permission under Section 230 of the Planning and Development Regulations (2001). In these cases, organisers must attend a pre-planning meeting with the local authority before the event can be advertised or tickets can be offered for sale. Further details are provided at <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/19977-event-licence/#>
- Applicants are responsible for ensuring that adequate **insurance** and **health and safety** measures are in place in advance of the commencement of any events. Tipperary County Council will not be responsible for health and safety measures or insurance for any festival or event.
- Applicants must ensure that appropriate safeguarding measures are in place for events involving children or vulnerable adults.
- Applicants are asked to provide information on actions and policies that demonstrate their commitment to taking steps to protect the environment and to achieve a sustainable, low-carbon,

resource-efficient economy. These may include, for example, efforts to reduce paper use and/ or the need for printing, reducing car use, reducing single use plastics, etc.

- Any profits arising out of a festival or event must be reinvested to support relevant activities organised by the festival/event in question.

Assessment procedures

- The Assessment panel may move an application to another category or within a category if it is deemed to be more suitable to that strand.
- The Assessment panel may refer an application to an alternative scheme if the application is deemed to be more suitable for a different funding scheme.
- The Assessment Panel may offer an applicant organisation less funding than has been applied for.

Emerging festivals

- A festival or festive event may only apply to the Emerging category in its first year of operation.
- An application under the Emerging category will only be accepted, on an exceptional and agreed basis, where the event emerges after the Festivals and Events scheme deadline for that year. Potential applicants must contact artsoffice@tipperarycoco.ie for details of how to apply in these circumstances. See page 13 for further details on emerging festivals or events.

What you may **not** apply for

- Capital expenditure and infrastructural projects – i.e. money to allow an organisation to acquire, refurbish or maintain fixed assets, such as land, buildings and/or equipment.
- Spends on alcoholic beverages, food or refreshments
- Spends on gifts, prize funds, prizes, awards, medals, certificates, etc.
- Spends on fines, legal costs or penalty payments.
- Spends on events that have no wider community impact, but are limited to a small pool of members, for example a celebration event at a club or an event confined to members.
- Festivals or events whose purpose is to raise funds for other causes or charities are not eligible to apply.

What supporting documents/information must be provided with all applications?

- All applicants must submit a current **Bank Statement** which clearly shows the name of the applicant organisation or group.
- All applicants must provide an **income and expenditure statement** for their most recent festival or event, signed by two committee/board members.
- **Confirmation of not-for-profit status** (e.g. Articles of Association, Committee Rules, etc.) must be provided at time of application.
- Applicants intending to work with or provide programmes for children or young people must provide an up to date **Child Protection Policy** as a supporting document. Please visit <https://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/> -for more information on Children First.
- Applicants must provide confirmation of **Public Participation Network (PPN)** registration.
- Applicants under Municipal Bands 2 and 3 and Premier Festivals must provide a copy of their current strategic plan. Guidance on strategic planning is provided on page 17.

Additional supporting materials for Premier Festivals

- Premier Festivals must submit a three-year financial plan, three strategic plan and a three-year marketing plan with their applications.

How likely are applicants to receive funding?

- Applicants should note that this is a highly competitive scheme and that there are always more applications for funding than it is possible to support.
- Applications should be realistic and proportionate. If a festival or event is seeking a significant increase in funding over what was provided in the previous year, a strong rationale for the increase must be provided and a sound case made for it in the application.
- Applications from organisations demonstrating the need for financial support will be prioritised over those applications from organisations with significant financial reserves, in cases where other grant criteria are met and where limited funding is available.

Outcome of assessments

The outcome of assessments will be issued from the Municipal District Office and all further correspondence should be directed through the Municipal District.

What happens if your application is successful?

- All successful applicants must return a completed **Acceptance Form** to the relevant Municipal District Office as outlined in their **Grant Offer** letter.
- Details of all festivals and events must be uploaded to www.whatsonintipp.ie on notification of successful application.
- Successful applicants must acknowledge the assistance of Tipperary County Council in any promotional material relating to the festival or event.
- In the event that your application is successful and you subsequently need to make a significant change to some or all of your proposal, you must contact the relevant Municipal District in advance to discuss this.
- Verification of Tax Clearance status will be required for all grants of €10,000 or more within any 12-month period.
- Guidelines on drawdown requirements for each of the festival categories are issued with funding offer letters.

A note on Public Health Guidance

Proposals should be based on the best public health advice and guidance available at the time you are making your application. Information on Public Health Guidance will be available on the HSE and Government websites as appropriate.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Tipperary County Council is committed to offering **equality of access, opportunity and outcomes** to all potential applicants regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, civil or family status, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community, or socio-economic background. In this funding scheme Tipperary County Council particularly welcomes applications that are representative of the diversity of Irish society, including but not limited to any of the characteristics outlined above, and/or initiatives that deliver equitable opportunities or outcomes for those involved.

Paying the artist

Tipperary County Council is committed to ensuring that the national policy regarding Paying the Artist is adhered to by the Council and by those funded and supported by the Council to engage artists to work. The national policy is available from the Arts Council website

[Weblink to paying the artist policy](#)

Category 1: Community Festival or Festive Event

- This is an annual application for funding
- The maximum amount which can be applied for under this strand is **€2,500**
- New festivals or events may apply under this category
- Festivals and Events must take place in County Tipperary in the calendar year 2026

A Community festival or festive event is centred around a local community. It may be an annual or once-off event. It is generally short in duration, a one- or two-day local event and is most likely to be organised by volunteers. These events are important to the social fabric of the locality and county, animate our towns and villages and generate civic and community pride.

Funding Criteria – Total marks available: 100

Applications will be assessed on how successfully they address the following criteria:

Extent to which the proposed festival or event actively engages the local community	30 marks
Extent to which the festival/event demonstrates organisational capacity and track record	25 marks
Quality of proposed programme for the festival or event	25 marks
Quality and relevance of information supplied in the application proposal	20 marks

Who assesses the application?

- Applications will be assessed by the Executive of the relevant Municipal District and recommendations will be brought to Municipal District members for a decision.

Category 2: Municipal Festival or Festive Event

- This is an annual application for funding
- The maximum amount which can be applied for under each band is outlined below
- New festivals or events may apply under Municipal Band 1 only, unless they are a large-scale event catering to more than 1,000 people.
- Festivals and events in this category must generate a minimum of 10% of their income either through earned income/box office or sponsorship/fundraising
- Festivals and Events must take place in County Tipperary in the calendar year 2026

A Municipal festival or festive event is staged for local people but is also significant and attractive to the wider community bordering the host community. Municipal events generate civic pride and add to the vibrancy of an area, as well as contributing to the social fabric of the county. While these events may often be aimed at local residents, they encourage visitors to an area to stay longer, add to a culturally rich location and are often specialised in their programming.

A Municipal festival or event is generally held over two or more days. *Large scale events held over one or more days and attracting audiences of over 1,000 may apply under any of the Municipal band levels.

The Municipal category is divided into three bands:

Category	Description	Funding level
Band 1	Local festivals or events held over two or more days*	Up to €7,500
Band 2	Larger scale events with a good track record, with a strategic plan in place, held over two or more days* and attracting a wider audience, and which demonstrate quality or specialised programming	Up to €10,000
Band 3	These are events with a strong track record of high quality, specialised programming, with a strategic plan in place, held over two or more days* and/or which attract significant audiences in excess of 1,000 people	Up to €15,000

Funding Criteria - Total marks available

Municipal Festival Band 1	100 marks
Municipal Festival Bands 2 and 3	120 marks

Applications will be assessed on how successfully they address the following criteria

Programme - Quality and ambition of the proposed programme for the festival or event and the extent to which the proposal meets sectoral criteria (see pages 14, 15).	25 marks
Capacity - Extent to which the festival or event organisers can demonstrate organisational capacity and a track record of festival or event management	20 marks
Extent to which the festival or event actively engages with a range of audiences and the local community	20 marks
Quality of the application in terms of budgeting and feasibility	15 marks
Collaborations - The extent to which the festival or event collaborates with other organisations/partners/networks to share skills and resources and maximise the local and visitor potential of the festival or event	10 marks
Quality of the application in terms of its plan for marketing and promotion	10 marks
Total	100 marks

Municipal Festival Bands 2 and 3 - additional funding criterion

Quality of Strategic Plan - identifying clear goals and methods for achieving them, realistic allocation of resources and any timescales involved	20 marks
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Who assesses the application?

Applications will be assessed by a central Assessment Panel made up of Local Authority specialists and recommendations are brought to Municipal District members for decision.

Category 3: Premier Festivals

- This is an application for funding for a three-year period. The same amount will be allocated each year over three years
- The maximum amount which can be applied for under this strand is **€30,000** per year
- Three-year financial plans, strategic plans and marketing plans are required with all applications
- Festivals in this category must generate a minimum of 20% of the funding for the activity either through locally-generated earned income such as ticket sales, or through sponsorship or fundraising
- Applications to this strand will only be accepted from festivals that have already taken place a minimum of three times

A Premier festival is usually held over **at least three** days and attracts a large local, regional and national audience and participation. Often specialised events with high elements of originality, Premier festivals are of a significant scale and ambition, delivering a large number of high-quality events, adding colour and vibrancy to the locale and surrounding areas and contributing strongly to the local economy. They are usually professionally or semi- professionally run and have a positive regional and, sometimes, national profile, regularly achieving widespread media coverage.

Funding Criteria - Total marks available: **120 marks**

Priority will be given to applications that demonstrate the following:

Quality of the festival's programming , its strategic vision, originality and ambition for the festival or event, demonstrated capacity to attract local, national and, potentially, international audiences and the extent to which the proposal meets sectoral criteria (see pages 14, 15)	30 marks
Extent to which the proposed festival or event strategically develops and engages with audiences and the local context	20 marks
Extent to which the festival or event organisers demonstrate organisational capacity, a track record of festival or event management and strong governance	20 marks
Quality of the application in terms of budgeting, financial feasibility, income generation and financial planning	20 marks
Collaborations: the extent to which the festival or event collaborates with other organisations, partners and networks locally, nationally and internationally to share skills and resources and maximise the local and visitor potential of the festival/event	15 marks
Quality of three-year marketing plan	15 marks

Who assesses the application?

Applications will be assessed by a central Assessment Panel made up of Local Authority specialists. Panel recommendations are brought to Municipal District members for decision.

Emerging Festivals or Festive Events

Emerging festivals or festive events may apply under the Community or Municipal Band 1 categories only.

Organisers of such events must contact artsoffice@tipperarycoco.ie to seek further information in advance of applying.

Funding available:

Up to €2,500 if applying under the **Community** Category

Up to €7,500 if applying under **Municipal Band 1** Category

A new festival catering to more than 1000 people may apply under Municipal Bands 2 or 3

The purpose of this category is to enable a festival or festive event that emerges after the Festivals and Events scheme deadline for that year to seek support on an exceptional (or one-off) basis. Tipperary County Council recognises the importance of supporting these events as they have the potential to promote and encourage innovation and creativity, and may have the potential to scale up over time.

Emerging Festivals or Festive Events must show that they are new or emerging, must demonstrate that they link in with the objectives of Tipperary County Council Festivals Strategy.

A festival or event may only apply to this category in its first year of operation.

Sectoral Criteria/Priorities

The Assessment Panels will prioritise applications which meet the following criteria specific to the relevant sector.

Arts Criteria/Priorities

- Artform development - where the festival or event clearly supports the development of individual artforms or art practices
- Professional programming: groups intending to engage artists must work with professional artists. Relevant artists' CVs or biographies must be included with the application
- Festivals can demonstrate that remuneration of artists is fair and appropriate (see note on Paying the Artist, page 8)
- Festivals offer opportunities for access to and engagement with the arts
- Festivals prioritise Audience Development for the arts
- The extent to which the festival or event contributes to arts development as outlined in the Tipperary Arts Strategy

Community Criteria/Priorities

- The extent to which the proposed festival or event maximises community and citizen engagement
- The extent to which the proposed festival or event is inclusive of all members of the community
- The extent to which the proposed festival or event targets key disadvantaged groups i.e. disadvantaged Young People (aged 15 – 24), disadvantaged women, lone parents, low income workers or households, new communities, people with disabilities, migrants, Travellers, Roma, the unemployed or those disengaged from the labour market

Heritage Criteria/Priorities

- How the festival or event meets the objectives of the Tipperary Heritage Plan
- Opportunities for access to and engagement with the Built, Cultural, Natural or Intangible Heritage within the County
- Opportunities for access to and engagement with traditional skills and practices
- Note: If festivals or events take place in a recorded monument (RMP) site or Natura 2000 sites i.e. SAC/SPA sites the specific consents or a licence may be needed, please consult the Heritage Officer

Sports Criteria/Priorities

- How the festival or event supports the objectives of the Tipperary Sports Partnership (TSP) Strategic Plan.
- How the festival or event clearly supports participation opportunities in Sport and Physical Activity
- How the festival or event demonstrates inclusiveness
- How the festival or event targets at least one of the key target groups as set out by TSP
- How the festival or event is supported by relevant National Governing Body of Sport (if applicable)
- Appropriate safe guarding measures are in place for events with children or vulnerable adults.

Tourism Criteria/Priorities

- How the festival or event supports the objectives of the Tipperary Strategic Tourism Plan
- How the proposed festival or event organisers plan to work with local accommodation providers, the Chamber of Commerce or Town Teams (where they are in place) to promote the festival or event and seek to build special offers to encourage visitors to stay longer in the area
- Proposed bed nights generated by the festival or event – how many people use accommodation in the area, and for how many nights, because they are visiting your festival or event
- How the proposed festival or event plans to align with Fáilte Ireland's destination brand for the area, i.e. Ireland's Ancient East or Ireland's Hidden Heartlands where appropriate (this may not be possible for every festival or event) and plans to utilise relevant marketing platforms

How to apply

By Post: Applications should be clearly marked TIPPERARY FESTIVALS & EVENTS GRANT SCHEME 2026 and addressed to:

Teresa Hogan,
Arts Office
Tipperary County Council
Civic Offices
Nenagh
Co. Tipperary
E45 AO99

By hand: Applications should be clearly marked TIPPERARY FESTIVALS & EVENTS GRANT SCHEME 2026 and delivered to any of Tipperary County Council's Customer Service Desks as follows:

- Carrick-on-Suir Municipal District Offices, New Street, Carrick on Suir
- Clonmel Civic Offices, Emmet Street, Clonmel
- Nenagh Civic Offices, Limerick Road, Nenagh
- Thurles Municipal District Offices, Castle Avenue, Thurles
- Tipperary-Cahir-Cashel Municipal District Offices, Rosanna Road, Tipperary Town

By email: Applications should be clearly marked TIPPERARY FESTIVALS & EVENTS GRANT SCHEME 2026 and emailed to festivals@tipperarycoco.ie

Closing Date for applications: 12 noon, Thursday 5th February, 2026

Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted

Strategic Planning guidance

Your strategic plan can be a simple word document outlining plans for the development of the festival over the coming years. Strategic planning is the process your festival uses to identify clear goals and objectives, and methods for achieving them, realistic allocation of resources and any timescales involved

Key elements of a strategic plan include:

Vision statement

Your vision is a short summary highlighting what your festival/event will look like in the future. It should outline what you want the festival/event to be or to achieve.

Mission Statement

Your mission statement defines the purpose of the festival/event and should outline what your festival/event does, who it is for, and what makes your festival/event distinctive.

Goals / objectives

Your strategic plan should include a section outlining your short-term and long-term goals and objectives as they relate to your vision for the festival/event.

Actions

Your actions will relate to your goals and objectives and should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (i.e. you have deadlines for your actions).

KPIs

Key performance indicators (KPIs) outline the goals, objectives and actions you are seeking and how you will measure your success in achieving them. They tell you what you want to achieve and by when.