



Waterways Ireland

# COMMUNITY HERITAGE & BIODIVERSITY GRANT SCHEME 2024

*Application Guidance*

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## INTRODUCTION

During the development and the implementation of the Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan, there was a strong desire, by community groups, NGOs and individuals, for Waterways Ireland to support projects aimed at supporting awareness, protection and promotion of our waterways heritage and biodiversity. As we are about to commence consultation on our next Heritage & Biodiversity Plan 2030, we are committed to the ongoing €20,000 annual fund.

## AIMS OF THE COMMUNITY HERITAGE & BIODIVERSITY GRANT SCHEME

The aim of this scheme is to support projects that compliment or fulfil the delivery of the Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan. A copy of the first Heritage Plan can be downloaded at [www.waterwaysireland.org](http://www.waterwaysireland.org). The new Plan will commence public consultation in 2024 but the overarching commitment to built, natural and cultural heritage remains.

This scheme is intended to enable communities and heritage non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to continue their work in this area or to start new initiatives.

## PROJECT TIMEFRAME

**Only projects that can be completed before 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 can be considered under this scheme.** We appreciate that this is a tight timeframe and we would urge you to ensure that your project can meet this timeframe before making an application.

## WHO CAN APPLY?

The scheme is open to individuals, community groups and organisations along the inland waterways within Waterways Ireland's remit:

- The Lower Bann
- The Grand Canal
- The Royal Canal
- The Barrow Navigation
- The Shannon
- The Shannon Erne
- The Erne
- The Ulster Canal (Upper Lough Erne to Clones)

**Only one grant per individual/organisation is permitted.**

## FUNDING AVAILABLE

Waterways Ireland has allocated €20,000 to this scheme in 2024 to undertake projects that will compliment or fulfil the delivery of the Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan.

Grants up to €1,500 / £1,350 are available.

Volunteer participation is a legitimate contribution. You are encouraged to put a value on the work contributed to the project by members of your organisation, by your project team or by other volunteers. Guideline costings are outlined below for this and other donated services.

Unskilled labour:	€80/£60 per day
Skilled Labour:	€150/£115 per day
Professional Labour:	€300/£230 per day

## HOW TO APPLY

We would request that you apply by email to [heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org](mailto:heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org) for our grant scheme, though hard copies are also acceptable.

## ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

### Gathering Heritage Data

The objective of this scheme is to provide assistance for data collection and research relating to inland waterways' heritage.

Here are some examples of possible projects:

- Conservation report of a heritage object / boat
- Wildlife or Heritage field survey to inform trail development
- Assessing the conservation needs of a particular area, item or collection.
- Feasibility reports

### Heritage Management

The objective of this scheme is to support projects that apply good heritage practice in managing sites, collections, objects, etc.

Here are some examples of possible projects:

- Conservation planning and habitat (or wildlife site) management
- Conservation of heritage collection and objects, including documents
- Works to ensure the survival of a heritage building or structure, under a management plan that applies good practice in building conservation
- Control of invasive species
- Management works to restore important habitats
- Carrying out the work recommended in an earlier conservation report or wildlife management plan

- Archival boxing for vulnerable documents

### Raising awareness of Heritage

The objective of this scheme is to support fresh approaches and initiatives that link heritage to communities, promoting active engagement with heritage and its appreciation by the public.

Here are some examples of possible projects:

- Conference or exhibition on heritage of an area
- Heritage week activities
- Seminar on traditional skills
- Heritage event using art, drama, or new media

## NON-ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Waterways Ireland's heritage grant scheme will not formally fund activities involving:

- Projects that solely benefit an individual,
- Teaching/staffing in schools,
- Travel and transport costs except in exceptional circumstances,
- Equipment, unless directly associated with the project,
- Ongoing running costs, administration, insurance, etc.

## ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Criteria for assessment will include:

- The extent to which it compliments or fulfils an action of the Waterways Ireland Heritage Plan,
- The extent to which proposed activities benefits local heritage and will benefit intended target group or area,
- The use of innovative or imaginative approaches,
- The capacity of applicants to carry out the proposed project.

Staff of the Environment and Heritage Section of Waterways Ireland will meet with eligible groups to discuss their applications if necessary.

Successful grant recipients may receive a part upfront payment (up to 50%) but this will be assessed on a case by case needs assessment i.e. where projects can be successfully initiated without grant aid, the full amount will be payable upon successful completion of the project.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Depending on the nature of your project, applications must include supporting documents. Failure to provide the required supporting documents will impact negatively on your application.

### Quotations

You must provide copies of quotations, estimates or other evidence to support the figures and costs you provided in the budget table of the application.

### Approvals, permissions, licences and consents (if applicable)

You must provide copies of all relevant approvals, permissions, licences or consents, including landowner's permission if needed for your project.

### Current and Clear Photographs of land / building / object (if applicable)

You must include clear and current photographs of the building, place or object.

### Maps (if applicable)

You must include an appropriate map indicating location, access point and any designation extent relevant will help Waterways Ireland to capture all aspects of a sites/projects heritage value (built, natural & cultural) as often sites/projects have multiple heritage associations, so, a wildlife habitat may include a ringfort, for example, or a historic building will be a roost for protected bats. To reflect the complex nature of these associations Waterways Ireland want all applications to reflect on these possible issues and to ensure no significant negative impacts will accrue and indeed they can often enhance a site's importance.

### Letters of support (if applicable)

Where the involvement or help of another party is critical to the success of your project, you must provide a document confirming their agreement to participate and outlining the extent of their participation.

## OFFERS OF FUNDING

We will contact all applicants in writing to advise of the outcome of applications.

Successful applicants will receive a **Letter of Offer** and a **Grant Agreement**, and if required, a form to allow Waterways Ireland to set them up on their payment system.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified and feedback offered as to why their application did not receive grant aid. They will also be informed of the appeal process.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF GRANT SCHEME

- All funded activities must be located along the inland waterways within Waterways Ireland's remit (within the island of Ireland).
- Applicants must fully complete and submit the Community Heritage & Biodiversity Grant Scheme Application Form by email to [heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org](mailto:heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org) before January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

- The successful applicant must fully complete and return the **Signed Grant Agreement** with Waterways Ireland which will constitute a contract with Waterways Ireland.
- **Explicit recognition** must be given to Waterways Ireland in any promotional material associated with the Project. All publications (e.g. leaflets, books, websites, digital content) and physical installations (plaques, signage, etc.) must first be submitted in draft format to ensure Waterways Ireland is sufficiently credited via inclusion of its logo and text. A copy of documentation depicting recognition must be submitted with the final report.
- An **interim report** shall be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024 which shall give a progress report on the project to date. If an interim report is not received Waterways Ireland may consider that the project is not progressing and funds will be subject to a defined clawback process.
- On completion of the project, recipients must provide a **full project report** on or before 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 unless this is not possible due to the nature of the project. An extension to this deadline must first be agreed by a member of the Waterways Ireland's Environment and Heritage Section. Up receipt and satisfactory assessment of this completion report the remaining grant aid will be furnished.
- Grant applications received from Northern Ireland will be cross referenced against the NI Government Funding Database to inform decision making and successful applicants added to this register.
- Any applicant assisted under the Scheme must indemnify Waterways Ireland against any claim, if applicable.
- Applicants may choose to combine this scheme with other sources of grant aid. No double funding from Waterways Ireland will be allowed i.e. under the Waterways Ireland Sponsorship Programme.
- Assistance is provided on an application by application basis. Applicants may apply for and receive assistance each year. Receipt of a grant in one year does not automatically guarantee grant-aid during the following year.

## APPEAL PROCESS

### Submitting an appeal

Following feedback on your application, you may appeal a funding decision by writing to the Head of Civil Engineering Design of Waterways Ireland within 10 working days from the date of the letter of notification.

The letter of appeal must state:

- The grounds on which you believe your application was not properly dealt with or assessed,
- Specific reasons or evidence you may have to support your appeal.

Send your appeal to [heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org](mailto:heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org) with **Heritage & Biodiversity Grant Scheme - Appeal Process** in the Subject Bar.

## Appeal Review process

Within 5 working days of receiving an appeal request, the appeal will be considered by the Head of Civil Engineering Design. Their decision will be binding and will not be subject to any further appeals. The conclusions and recommendations will be communicated to the applicant within five working days of the decision. Where any delay is anticipated, we will inform the applicant in writing of the extended timescale.

**Note:** A decision in favour of the applicant does not automatically provide for awarding of funding or additional funding to replace or supplement the original decision that has been appealed. The possibility of securing funds subsequent to an appeal will be dependent on Waterways Ireland's own financial position.

Waterways Ireland is committed to providing open, accountable and accessible systems and procedures in all areas of its works. We welcome suggestions for improvements to this Scheme at [heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org](mailto:heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org).

## REPORTING AND FUNDING

If your application is successful, the applicant group will be responsible for all costs related to the project. The applicant is responsible for submission of:

- An interim report shall be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024 which shall give a progress report on the project to date. If an interim report is not received Waterways Ireland may consider that the project is not progressing and funds will be subject to a defined clawback process.
- On completion of the project, recipients must provide a full project report on or before 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 unless this is not possible due to the nature of the project. An extension to this deadline must first be agreed by a member of the Waterways Ireland's Environment and Heritage Section. Up receipt and satisfactory assessment of this completion report the remaining grant aid will be furnished.

## HOW WE PAY THE GRANT

Monies will be paid through EFT to bank accounts.

For the successful grant recipients where a part upfront payment was agreed, this first payment will be made after receipt of the signed grant agreement.

The final payment will be processed after we have assessed the project work and found it to be satisfactory. That decision will be based on:

- your detailed final report
- copies of all invoices / payments relating to the project
- proof of delivery (photos, etc.)

Under Department of Finance rules, we are obliged to seek **proof of payment** from grantees before releasing grant monies. Successful applicants will be advised of any changes in requirements.



## REMEMBER...

We must receive your application along with supporting documents by email at [heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org](mailto:heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org) by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024. We wish you the best with your application.

### **Waterways Ireland**

Environment & Heritage Section  
Dock Road,  
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For more information or assistance, please contact **Martina McCarthy** (Heritage Officer):

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**Email:** [heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org](mailto:heritageplan@waterwaysireland.org)