



Ards and
North Down
Borough Council



Ards and North Down **SPORTS FORUM**

2026-2027

Seeding

Guidance Notes

2026-2027 Seeding Guidance Notes

Aim of Grant

The aim of the seeding grant is to support the development of newly established sports clubs and/or new sections of existing sports clubs.

Funding

Grants up to a maximum of £1000 will be available for newly established sports clubs and/or new sections of existing sports clubs. It can be used for the purchase of sports equipment and/or towards the cost of facility hire. Please note applications can include a maximum of £200 out of the £1,000 towards promotional items. Examples of seeding grants:

- New sports club established within the Borough for a minimum period of three months and a maximum of one year
- New Women's Section
- Disability Section
- New Youth Squad

Please note: New club or new section excludes a new team within an existing section, for example, 3rd ladies' team.

Funding Allocation

Ards and North Down Sports Forum have allocated **£2,000**; the programme will remain open until the programme budget is fully exhausted. Should the programme be oversubscribed, a reduction in funding percentage will be applied to pending applications at that time.

Application Process and Timeline

Seeding grants are open all year round from 1st April 2026- 23 February 2027. Applications are assessed monthly by the Ards and North Down Sports Forum.

Submission Deadline (12 noon)	Assessment Date
28 April 2026	5 May 2026
26 May 2026	2 June 2026
30 June 2026	7 July 2026
28 July 2026	4 August 2026
25 August 2026	1 September 2026
30 September 2026	7 October 2026
27 October 2026	3 November 2026
24 November 2026	1 December 2026
29 December 2026	5 January 2027
28 January 2027	4 February 2027
23 February 2027	2 March 2027

All completed applications must be submitted by 12 noon prior to submission deadlines above along with essential documents. Submit completed applications to email: sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

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General Guidelines for Applicants

Applications will be considered in line with the guidance outlined below:

- All applications must be completed in full, signed and submitted with all mandatory supporting information. Incomplete applications will not be considered, and **only typed forms** will be accepted.
- Retrospective funding will not be considered.
- Please note that successful Clubs may be requested by the Council to acknowledge the Forum support in hosting their event.
- Successful applicants will receive an emailed 'Letter of Offer' (LoO). The letter of Offer sets out the following information:
 - What the funding is for
 - What we need from you to reimburse costs
 - Deadlines by when documents are required
 - Attached to the LoO are several forms which need to be returned: 1) grant claim form and 2) payee form

Guidelines for Returning Documents

1. Agree any changes to the project applied for and its funding arrangements with the Sports Forum before implementation
2. Return the completed grant claim form, bank form and evidence of cost incurred
3. For 'Proof of Payment', submit all original receipts and bank statements for each cost associated with your application
4. For auditing purposes, bank statements must show clearly account name, payment date and details as well as recipient. (Note: cash payment receipts cannot be accepted)
5. Only costs which correspond with the application and Letter of Offer will be reimbursed

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements.

- The club must be based within the Borough of Ards and North Down.
- The club must be affiliated to the Ards and North Down Sports Forum for a minimum period of three months, before an application can be made for financial support.
- New clubs must have been established for a minimum period of three months and a maximum of one year.
- The club must have a constitution and/or set of rules, signed and dated.
- The club must have a club bank or building society account.
- Clubs who have junior sections must provide a safeguarding policy.
- New sports who are currently going through the Sport NI or Sport Ireland National Governing Body recognition process will be required to provide evidence of registration.

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Eligible Costs

Grants up to a maximum of £1000 will be available for newly established sports clubs and/or new sections of existing sports clubs. Grant funding can be used for:

- the purchase of sports equipment, First Aid kits, training kits, club training (i.e. committee training, safeguarding, First Aid, diversity & equality)
- cost of facility hire, if not using own venue
- a maximum of £200 out of the £1,000 can be for promotional items.

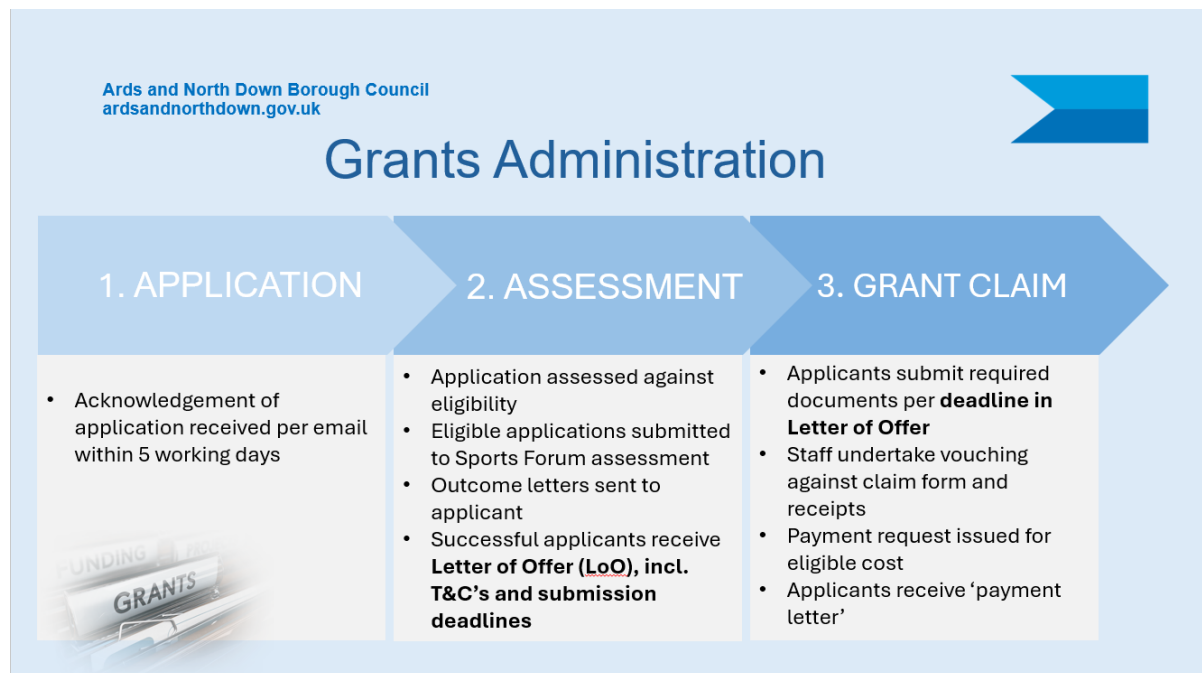
What we will NOT fund

- Applications which do NOT meet the eligibility criteria outlined above
- Costs incurred outside of the specified award period (period start: date LoO is issued – ends with submission deadlines for return of receipts)
- Organisations not legally established in the UK (what does Sports Forum affiliation require)
- Clubs or projects for sports not listed by Sport Northern Ireland / Sport Ireland
- Projects, events, activities not compliant with the Council's aims and objectives
- Events, projects or activities which conflict with any Council run project, event or activity.
- Activities promoting religious or political beliefs.
- Sports or projects which are discriminating (not open to all sections of community)
- Personal equipment and clothing such as team kits and Items which only benefit individuals (e.g. prizes; scholarships; bursaries; water bottles)
- Insurance for public liability or personal injury
- Access NI registration fees
- Affiliation, entry fees to competitions or membership fees
- Computer, software packages or websites (unless High Performance Analysis Equipment)
- Defibrillators
- Publications, marketing
- Office equipment, furniture, maintenance equipment and maintenance costs.
- Organisation's own facility hire – groups cannot be paid for use of own venue
- VAT that can be recovered from HM Revenue and Customs
- Medical personal costs, e.g. physio, sports therapist, etc.
- Non-inclusive fitness initiative (IFI) gym equipment e.g. treadmills, rowers, bikes, etc.

The list above is not exhaustive. The Council reserves the right to fund/not fund any project which is deemed suitable/unsuitable for the Ards and North Down Sports Forum grant scheme.

Grant Administration Process

Following submission of applications, the following process will be completed:



Incomplete applications, and applications received without the accompanying mandatory supporting documentation, will be deemed ineligible and not proceed for assessment.

Application forms

Seeding grant guidance notes and applications are available at:

[Grants and Funding | AND Leisure \(leisureardsandnorthdown.com\)](#) or by emailing sportsdevelopment@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk

For queries contact the Sports Development Team

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