

2021 Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme



Meath Partnership, on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development and Fáilte Ireland, is currently accepting Expressions of Interest for Measure 1 of the **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme** for small scale repair / development / promotion and marketing for existing projects with grants of up to €20,000 available.

Eligible activities include small scale projects that are in line with the objectives and focus of the Scheme. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Land-Based	Water-Based	Air-Based
Walking	Canoeing/ Kayaking/SUP	Paragliding
Hillwalking/Hiking	Rowing	Hang-gliding
Leisure Cycling	Open Water Swimming	
Mountain Biking	Surfing	
Horse Riding	Coasteering	
Trail/Off-road Running	Wind surfing/Kite Surfing	
Orienteering	Sailing	
Bouldering, Scrambling, Rock Climbing, Mountaineering	Diving	
	Angling/Fishing	

If you are interested in submitting an Expression of Interest for assistance through the Scheme you are encouraged to contact our helpdesk number on **046-9280790** or email info@meathpartnership.ie for advice and guidance.

The closing date for receipt of EOI's is 5pm, Wednesday 26th May 2021.



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1. Introduction

The Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) contributes to the strategic objective of strengthened rural economies and communities as set out in the Project Ireland 2040 strategy. The objective of the Scheme is to provide funding for the development of new outdoor recreational infrastructure and for the necessary repair, enhancement or promotion of existing outdoor recreational infrastructure in countryside areas across Ireland.

2. 2021 Scheme

The focus of the scheme will be to support outdoor recreational infrastructure in countryside areas across Ireland. The 2021 scheme will, in particular, support recreational infrastructure that not only provides an outlet for the communities in which they are situated but that also delivers added value from a tourism perspective, positioning rural areas to respond to the post-COVID-19 economic environment.

A total national fund of €14 million is available to successful projects approved under the 2021 scheme. It should be noted that the number of projects approved for funding will be limited by the amount of funding available in each measure.

The scheme supports the provision of outdoor infrastructure that is, in the main, freely available to the public. The type of projects typically funded by the Scheme include trails, walkways, cycleways, greenways, blueways and mountain access routes. This is not a definitive list and other innovative projects that provide outdoor infrastructure are encouraged, including those that result in improved access to recreational facilities for older people and those with disabilities. Given the potential impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the Irish economy and the tourism sector in particular, projects that can display a specific tourism or other sectoral impact that may aid economic recovery are encouraged.

Projects should, in the main, be located in the countryside (i.e. not within the environs of towns or villages). Funding is available separately for walkways, cycleways and other outdoor infrastructure located in towns and villages under the Town & Village Renewal Scheme.

The Department may exclude applications that do not include all relevant documentation at the time of submission. All necessary information/documentation required by the scheme should be supplied at the time of application as the Department may not be in a position to follow up regarding missing documentation or other queries.

3. Categories of Projects

Under the 2021 scheme, applications will be accepted under three measures:

- Measure 1 – Small Scale Repair/Development/Promotion and Marketing – up to €20,000)
- Measure 2 – Medium Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Trail/Amenity Development – Up to €200,000.00
- Measure 3 – Large Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Strategic Trail/Amenity Development – Up to €500,000.00



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Please note that Expressions of Interest for funding under Measures 2 and 3 of the ORIS scheme may only be submitted to the relevant Local Authority or State Agency and should not be submitted to Meath Partnership under this call.

4. Measure 1: Small Scale Maintenance/Promotion and Marketing

Please contact Meath Partnership for further information: Units J&K, Kells Business Park, Cavan Road, Kells, Co. Meath Phone: 046-9280790 Email: info@meathpartnership.ie. Closing date 5pm, Wednesday 26th May 2021.

Projects to include grant aid amounts of up to €20,000.

- **Eligible Activities:** Small scale projects that are in line with the objectives and focus of the Scheme. This includes, but is not limited to, the upkeep, repair and development of trails, walkways, cycleways, greenways, blueways recreational facilities at bogs, rivers, lakes and beaches, natural play areas that form part of a larger outdoor recreation project and the promotion and marketing of such infrastructure. Projects should, where possible, indicate how they are inclusive of people with disabilities and older adults.
- **Eligible Applicants:** Local Development Companies (LDCs) in cooperation with Local Authorities, local communities and/or other local stakeholder organisations.
- **Maximum Number of Projects:** A maximum of 3 projects may be submitted per LDC, either as individual applications, or as part of one overall application.
- **Expected Project Completion Date:** All projects must be finished and drawdown of funding completed by 30th of November 2022.

5. Measure 2: Medium Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Trail/Amenity Development

Projects to include grant aid amounts of up to €200,000.

- **Eligible Activity:** Medium scale projects that are in line with the objectives and focus of the Scheme. This includes, but is not limited to, extensions/upgrades to already established trails, walkways, cycleways, greenways, blueways or other recreational facilities at bogs, rivers, lakes or beaches. Projects can also include works for the enhancement, repair or promotion of such infrastructure, or for improved access to recreational infrastructure or the development of new trails, walkways, cycleways, local greenways, blueways or other recreational facilities. Projects should, where possible, indicate how they are inclusive of people with disabilities and older adults.
- **Eligible Applicants:** Local Authorities.
- **Maximum Number of Projects:** A maximum of 3 proposals may be submitted by each Local Authority.
- **Expected Project Completion Date:** All projects must be finished and drawdown of funding completed by 31st of July 2023.



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6. Measure 3: Large Scale Repair/Upgrade and New Strategic Trail/Amenity Development

Projects to include grant aid amounts of up to €500,000.

- **Eligible Activity:** Strategic large scale projects that are in line with the objectives and focus of the Scheme. This could include projects such as the development of new larger-scale recreational infrastructure, or resources to complete larger scale/longer term developments, as well as significant repair and maintenance on already established trails, walkways, cycleways, greenways, blueways or recreational amenities at bogs, rivers, lakes and beaches. Projects should, where possible, indicate how they are inclusive of people with disabilities and older adults.
- **Eligible Applicants:** Local Authorities and State Agencies
- **Max Number of Projects:** Local Authorities and State Agencies will be confined to 1 application each under this Measure.
- **Expected Project Completion Date:** All projects must be finished and drawdown of funding completed before 31st July 2023.

7. Eligible Applicants and Closing Dates

Measure 1: All Expression of Interest for this measures must be submitted to Meath Partnership, Units J&K, Kells Business Park, Cavan Road, Kells, Co. Meath or by email to info@meathpartnership.ie by **5 pm on Wednesday 26th May 2021**.

Measures 2 & 3: All Expressions of Interest for these measures must be submitted to Meath County Council, Community Department, Meath County Council, Buvinda House, Dublin Road, Navan, Co. Meath, C15 Y291 or by email to communitygrants@meathcoco.ie by **5pm on Monday, 30th July 2021**.

8. Assessment Criteria

Selection of projects under the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme for 2021 will be by means of a competitive process. Final project selection will be made by the Department of Rural and Community Development, in consultation with Fáilte Ireland as appropriate, on the basis of proposals submitted by the eligible applicants. Fáilte Ireland will also review all applications to assess their tourism benefit.

In assessing applications, a number of factors will be considered by the Department, including the information supplied in the Application Overview and Application Form; the range, mix, quality and impact of proposed projects; previous funding provided; any prioritisation of projects indicated by the applicants; and other relevant considerations.

The provision of funding will be dependent on works having not commenced prior to Department approval of the project.

9. Funding Arrangements

Applicants should note that the number of projects approved for funding will be limited by the amount of funding available in each category.



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The Department will fund up to 90% of approved project costs. The remaining 10% match funding must be contributed by the successful applicant and/or the community group and/or philanthropic contributions.

Match funding for projects undertaken must be evidenced in the Expression of Interest form, with a clear commitment from the organisation providing the match funding and setting out in what form the contribution is being made, i.e. cash and/or manual labour etc.

Of the 10% to be funded from other sources, a minimum of 5% of approved project costs must be funded through cash contribution by the group, the Local Authority or another body. Evidence relating to the origin of cash contribution must be provided to the Department as part of the application process. Labour or other verifiable and apportionable costs can be counted towards match funding, but should not exceed 5% of the overall cost.

The Department may decommit funding allocated to projects under the Scheme where the works are not carried out within the time specified and where the express agreement of the Department to extend the funding arrangement has not been agreed in advance.



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