

## **OVERVIEW OF THE EMIGRANT SUPPORT PROGRAMME**

**Applicants for funding from the 2010 Emigrant Support Programme are requested to read the following before completing and submitting an application form**

### **Introduction**

Strengthening connections with Irish communities abroad and promoting links with Irish people and people of Irish ancestry worldwide is a priority objective of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Central to achieving this objective is the Emigrant Support Programme (ESP), which is administered by the Irish Abroad Unit of the Department in Dublin and by our Embassies and Consulates abroad. The ESP provides financial support to organisations engaged in the delivery of front line advisory services and community care to Irish emigrants, particularly to the more vulnerable and marginalised members of our community abroad, including the elderly.

The ESP has also expanded in recent years to support appropriate capital, heritage, sporting, cultural and community networking projects which help foster a more vibrant sense of community and of Irish identity. The positive contribution made by vibrant Irish communities and a strong sense of identity throughout the generations abroad benefits more than just those communities. Participants from all corners of the world at the inaugural Global Irish Economic Forum which took place at Farmleigh in Dublin on 18-20 September 2009 emphasised the benefit of the work of energetic Irish communities and networks abroad in promoting Ireland as a destination for tourism and international investment. The Report of the Forum also highlighted the importance of supporting Irish business networks, and in particular the need to deepen our engagement with young people.

### **Key objectives of the programme include:**

- addressing the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable Irish emigrants
- supporting equitable access for Irish emigrants and community organisations to statutory and voluntary services;
- supporting the professional development of the Irish abroad voluntary sector and encouraging best practice and capacity building;
- promoting the development of responses from the voluntary sector which reflect the diverse needs of the emigrant Irish community;
- promoting and monitoring effective outcomes for emigrant Irish service users;
- promoting the sharing of information and resources for the better delivery of services to the emigrant Irish;
- supporting Irish community based capital, heritage, sporting, cultural and community networking projects which foster a more vibrant sense of community and of Irish identity;
- commissioning or supporting research on the needs of emigrant Irish communities;
- develop greater links and strategic cooperation between Ireland and the global Irish.

**The Irish Government is particularly interested in supporting projects in the following areas:**

- front-line advice, counselling and support services;
- elderly Irish emigrants;
- homeless Irish emigrants;
- Irish people affected by physical or mental illness, or with substance misuse problems or HIV/AIDS;
- the Irish Traveller community;
- access to training, employment or housing for Irish emigrants;
- heritage and community activities that promote Ireland's identity and maintain vibrant Irish communities abroad;
- research projects that add to the existing knowledge about Irish emigrant communities;
- develop greater links and strategic cooperation between Ireland and the global Irish.

**Criteria for grant aid:**

Applicant organizations should be established as registered charities, charitable bodies or voluntary/not for profit organizations and:

- be engaged in the delivery of services to Irish emigrants;
- operate on a viable basis with proper records and accounts;
- meet statutory obligations relating to staffing, premises and services provided;
- have an appropriate development plan;
- have an equal opportunities policy in place;
- have an effective monitoring system in place;
- access the statutory services to which clients are entitled;
- access alternative sources of funding, both statutory and/or charitable;
- develop partnerships with other bodies providing similar services;
- be responsible to a management committee;
- ensure appropriate skills and/or qualifications for all staff;
- implement appropriate training and development strategies for staff;
- encourage the participation of volunteers in the organisation;
- develop effective advocacy for service users;
- involve service users and facilitate their input to the organisation;
- ensure that it is servicing a significant number of Irish people;
- ensure that the project will not result in unnecessary duplication of services;

**Other points to note:**

All funding decisions are based on the information submitted in the official application form, which must be submitted online. No hard copy application forms will be accepted.

The standard terms and conditions which apply to all grant recipients are incorporated into the online grant application process. Additional conditions may be attached to a grant to a particular organisation and these will be detailed in the Letter of Offer to a successful applicant.

It is recognised that it may not be possible to immediately begin a project which has been approved for funding. However, it is expected that the project will have commenced within six months of receipt of the grant. Irish Government accounting practices require the money to be used for the approved purpose within the same funding year.

On the welfare front, while grant aid may primarily be given to Irish community welfare agencies providing front line advice services, some support may also be given to non-Irish welfare agencies providing a valuable service to significant numbers of Irish clients and to second-line support services.

Irish Government funding is intended to facilitate access to mainstream funding, rather than be the sole source of funding.

Grant aid not used in accordance with the terms and conditions specified by the Irish Government must be repaid in full.

The following activities are among those **not** eligible for funding:

- personal study and travel abroad;
- repayment of deficits or loans;
- any kind of party political activities;

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