

**Department of Foreign Affairs– Reconciliation Fund**  
**Strategic Partnerships (multi-annual) Grant Scheme 2021**

**Below is a series of FAQs, grouped by topic, to assist applicants to the Reconciliation Fund’s Strategic Partnerships funding scheme. The topics covered are:**

- Strategic Partnerships multi-annual funding stream
- Registering online and making an online application
- General issues

***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION (FAQS) – Strategic Partnerships Scheme***

**Question 1: Is the Reconciliation Fund planning to announce a call for applications for multi-annual funding?**

**Answer:** Yes, applications to our Strategic Partnerships (multi-annual) funding scheme will open on 24 May 2021. This round will be open for applications for three weeks, closing on Friday 11 June.

Organisations that have previously been awarded a grant from the Reconciliation Fund in the period since 1 January 2018 will be eligible to apply.

Under this funding stream, around 15-30 organisations will be eligible to become a Strategic Partner of the Reconciliation Fund, with a commitment to funding over a 3-year period, allowing them to develop a more strategic long term approach to planning their work.

Full details about the operation of the scheme and eligibility criteria are available under the Strategic Partnerships tab on our webpage at [Reconciliation Fund - Department of Foreign Affairs \(dfa.ie\)](http://Reconciliation Fund - Department of Foreign Affairs (dfa.ie))

**Question 2: Do I use the Reconciliation Fund’s online system to make the application?**

**Answer:** Yes, you can apply using the standard application on the online system. However, when entering your project title, you should use the format ***Strategic Partnership Application***: followed by the name of the project.

You will also be required to submit certain documentation that you would not necessarily have to provide for a standard 12 month application – see question 11 below.

**Question 3: What is the expected timeline for rollout of the Strategic Partnerships grant scheme?**

**Answer:** After the round closes on 11 June 2021, applications will be screened against the criteria for the Strategic Partnerships scheme, and depending on the volume of applications, an initial shortlisting of applications may take place.

We would aim to communicate the outcome of any shortlisting process to applicants in advance of the opening of the general funding round (for 12 month projects) planned for the autumn of 2021.

It is envisaged that final decisions on applications will be made and communicated before the end of 2021.

The initial grant payments to successful Strategic Partnership applicants are likely to be made in the period from December 2021 to summer 2022. In deciding exactly when those initial payments are to be made, we will take into account the status of any existing Reconciliation Fund grants that have not been spent in full and for which the organisation still has projects to complete.

**Question 4: Can I submit more than one application under the Strategic Partnerships scheme?**

**Answer:** No, you can only submit one application.

**Question 5: Can I submit an application if I submitted an application under the Spring 2021 funding round, or am yet to complete a programme funded through a Reconciliation Fund grant?**

**Answer:** Yes, you can submit an application even if you applied under the Spring 2021 funding round or have an ongoing project that we are funding.

**Question 6: Do you award grants only for Project funding, or can I also apply for core funding and/or capital funding?**

**Answer:** Funding under the Strategic Partnerships scheme is available to cover both direct project activities as well as core operational costs, such as salaries and overheads.

Grants under the Strategic Partnerships scheme are not envisaged to finance large-scale capital expenditure. However, a modest contribution to capital costs may be considered where these costs are attributable to the delivery of a wider multi-year programme (e.g. for the development of a shared space in which cross community and/or cross border peacebuilding and reconciliation work will take place under a developed plan/strategy).

**Question 7: When can I expect to hear if my application has been successful?**

**Answer:** After the round closes on 11 June, 2021, applications will be screened against the criteria for the Strategic Partnerships scheme, and depending on the volume of applications, an initial shortlisting of applications may take place.

We aim to communicate the outcome of any shortlisting process to applicants in advance of the opening of the general funding round (for 12 month projects) planned for the autumn of 2021.

It is envisaged that final decisions on applications will be made and communicated before the end of 2021.

**Question 8: If I would normally apply for funding under the Autumn 2021 funding round, can I still apply?**

**Answer:** Yes, you can. However, if you have a live Strategic Partnerships application with us at that stage, we would advise consulting with the Reconciliation Fund team in advance of submitting an application to the Autumn 2021 funding round.

**Question 9: If I am successful in securing funding under the Strategic Partnerships programme, does this preclude me from applying for other funding from the Reconciliation Fund during the lifetime of my grant?**

**Answer:** No, it does not preclude you from applying to us for other funding, but, any award made under the Strategic Partnerships process would of course be taken into account in assessing a subsequent project application, as would be the case for any “ongoing” grant when an organisation submits a new application.

**Question 10: How will Strategic Partnerships differ from the types of grants I have received previously from the Reconciliation Fund?**

**Answer:** Unlike our standard grants for 12-month projects, the award of a Strategic Partnership will be a commitment to funding over a 3-year period, subject to satisfactory reporting at the end of each year on programme work and expenditure.

**Question 11: Will I need to submit extra material in support of a Strategic Partnership application compared to previous funding applications?**

**Answer:** Yes, you will need to submit the following, which includes certain documents not necessarily required under a standard 12-month funding application:

- Any current strategic plan and/or financial strategy produced by the applicant organisation.
- Applicant organisation's most recent annual accounts/financial statements.
- Tax Clearance Certificate for the organisation from the Irish Revenue Commissioners.
- Copies of any financial or programme audits conducted in the last three years.
- A risk assessment register, setting out identified risks to the successful delivery of the proposed programme and planned mitigations (organisations can use the following template but can also use their own register).
- A budget document providing a detailed breakdown of the costs of the 3-year programme, to supplement the summary budget information to be entered onscreen in the Project Budget tab of the online system.
- Letters of support from any organisations with whom you will be partnering in the delivery of elements of the programme.

**IMPORTANT** - Please note that when you reach the “Attachments” tab on the online application system, you will not be automatically prompted to upload **all** of the above documents (only some will be specifically mentioned). You therefore need to ensure that you upload all of those listed above in order to submit a “complete” application.

**Question 12: Will there be further opportunities to apply for Strategic Partnership funding, if I am unsuccessful in applying under this call for applications?**

**Answer:** It is envisaged that there will be a further call for Strategic Partnership applications during the lifetime of our new 2021-24 Reconciliation Fund Strategy.

**Question 13: Given the uncertainty around future COVID-19 regulations, does my application need to include contingency planning for possible unknown future restrictions?**

**Answer:** Yes, for now it is important, when applying for a new grant, that organisations clearly and explicitly incorporate the impact of potential Covid-19 restrictions into their applications, in respect of any project activities that would take place in 2022 i.e. in the first year of a 3-year Strategic Partnership programme.

***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION (FAQS) - registering online and making an online application***

**Question 14:** I registered online as a contact for my organisation in 2019 (when the previous version of the online system was first launched). Do I need to re-register?

**Answer:** No, if you have already registered for an account on the Grant Application Portal, you do not need to register again. You can simply select “Sign In”, login to your account and begin a grant application.

**Question 15:** I am trying to register as a contact person for an organisation which has already been registered on the Grant Portal by one of my colleagues, but I am getting an error message.

**Answer:** The error message advises you to get in touch with us via the “Contact Us” tab. We can then arrange to set you up as an additional or replacement contact on your organisation’s existing account.

**Question 16:** I have forgotten my password since I was last on the online system.

**Answer:** If you have an existing account but have forgotten your password, click on “Sign In” and then “Forgot Your Password”. You will be asked to enter the email address you have registered on your account, and then click “Send”. You will then be sent an email with a link to change your password.

**Question 17:** I have entered the wrong password three times and am now locked out.

**Answer:** The system will unlock you after 24 hours and if you have remembered your password by that stage, you can enter it. Alternatively, rather than wait 24 hours, you can click on the “Forgot Your Password” option. You will be asked to enter the email address you used to register your account, and then click “Send”. You will then be sent an email with a link to allow you to change your password.

**Question 18:** I have tried on several occasions to use the “Forgot Your Password” option, but I am still receiving an error message and haven’t been able to reset my password. What should I do?

**Answer:** If the “Forgot Your Password” option hasn’t worked, it’s likely that you are not entering the correct email address i.e. the one you used when you first registered on the system. If after trying alternative email address(es), you still can’t reset your password, use the “Contact Us” Tab at the top of the screen to get in touch with the Reconciliation Fund team and seek advice.

**Question 19: Will the system prompt me ahead of a time out?**

**Answer:** No, there is no prompt. For security reasons, you will be automatically logged out of your account after 20 minutes of inactivity on the grant system. *However, please bear in mind that your own internet browser may be configured to log you out of a website after a period of inactivity shorter than 20 minutes.*

**Question 20: Can I save my application mid page?**

**Answer:** You can save your application as a draft at any stage, by selecting “Save and Next” at the bottom of the page. The information you enter in each Tab will only be saved to the draft if:

1. You have entered information in all of the mandatory fields, and,
2. You have clicked on the “Save and Next” button at the bottom.

**IMPORTANT:** Please do not use the “Back” button on your own web browser when completing an application as this may cause you to lose data that you haven’t yet saved.

**Question 21: I have completed all the fields on a tab/page, but I receive an error message when I select “Save and Next”.**

**Answer:** It is possible that one or more of your entries slightly exceed the word/character limit for that field. Please click on the section mentioned in the error message. It will be described either using the name of the field or by the word/character limit which applies to it, but in either case, it is a link and clicking on it will bring you directly to the field in question. If there are more than one section listed, you can click on each one in turn.

**Question 22: Some of the organisation or personal contact information that I provided at registration has changed and I cannot edit it to make the necessary updates.**

**Answer:** The small amount of organisation and personal contact information which you provided at registration (for example your name or contact details) cannot be edited directly by you after registration, but if you contact us using the “Contact Us” tab on the online application portal we can update the information as required.

**Question 23: Can I print a copy of my application after I select submit?**

**Answer:** Once you submit your application using the “Submit” button, you will receive a copy of your completed application (in *word* format) by email for your own records. You can then save or print this document as required.

**Question 24: What questions do I need to answer about my organisation and project on the application form?**

**Answer:** A full list of questions asked on the application can be found starting from page 22 on the User Guide

### ***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION (FAQS) - General***

**Question 25: Is it essential that I submit externally audited accounts when reporting on any previously awarded grant that is over €12,500?**

**Answer:** Externally audited accounts are required in these circumstances. If, for some reason, your organisation cannot provide them, please contact the Reconciliation Fund team for advice.

**Question 26: If reports and/or annual financial accounts are outstanding for previously awarded Reconciliation Fund grants, does this hinder the assessment of a new application?**

**Answer:** Yes, if reports and/or accounts are outstanding, we cannot proceed with assessing the new grant application. The submission date for a report (with relevant annual accounts) is 12 months from the date of payment of the grant by D/FAT or the completion date of the project – whichever is the earlier date. By “outstanding”, we mean that this submission date has passed and the documentation has not been provided.

**Question 27: If I receive a grant letter of offer from the Reconciliation Fund for signature, what do I need to return?**

**Answer:** Please return the letter of acceptance, including the signature page, signed by the Treasurer and Chairperson. It is important that **all** pages of the letter of acceptance are included together in **one** attached document, to make clear what terms the signatories are agreeing to.

If we ask you to scan and return the signed letter of acceptance by email, you should cc both the Chairperson and Treasurer on that email.

### **Contact Us**

Any queries/requests in relation to the Reconciliation Fund may be submitted by email through the link at the bottom of this page or by calling the Department of Foreign Affairs' switchboard on 00353 (1) 4082000 and asking for Reconciliation section in the IUKA Division.

***Reconciliation Fund Team***  
***Department of Foreign Affairs***  
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