



An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir,
Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán
Department of Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media



Sligo Town Night Time Economy Enrichment & Diversification Grant 2026 Call Out

Opening Date: Thursday 5th March 2026

Closing Date: Friday 27th March 2026 5pm

Return completed applications to:

edel@sligobid.ie

Applications sent after the closing date or time cannot be accepted.

Queries to Edel Doran, Sligo Town Night Time Economy Advisor, Sligo BID

Email: edel@sligobid.ie



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Sligo BID is seeking proposals from local businesses, community groups, event organisers, collaborators and individuals to develop projects that will support the growth and diversity of the night time economy in Sligo Town.

This fund will support applicants who wish to try new and exciting concepts after 6pm between Sunday and Thursday that can support the enhancement, enrichment and diversification of our night time economy. The total grant funding amount is €10K.

Overview:

What is the Night Time Economy?

The Night Time Economy refers to the diverse social, cultural and economic activity occurring during specified evening and night time hours between 6pm and 6am. It balances the needs of the inter related communities that co-exist to bring it to life and create a special sense of shared place.

Sligo Town has been selected as one of nine pilot towns and cities that has prepared an action plan setting out a range of interventions to support the coordinated development of our night time economy.

The purpose of this funding scheme is to encourage collaboration and facilitate a greater variety of offerings and experiences at night for residents, workers, and visitors.

Features of the scheme:

- A minimum grant of €500 and a maximum grant of €1,000 will be available to successful applicants. This is a competitive funding call with a limited budget. It will not be possible to offer funding to all applicants and it may also not be possible to offer the full amount requested to any individual applicant.
- **Events must take place between must take place between the dates of 15th April and 1st October 2026.**
- The proposed event/initiative must take place between the dates of 1st April and 1st October 2026.
- Events which can be funded include but not limited to, late evening or night tours, live music, live DJ, dancing (performative or participatory!), exhibitions, poetry readings, comedy shows (Stand up, sketch or improvisation), theatre,



live podcasts, storytelling, classes, workshops, wellbeing initiatives, light shows, night runs and historical themed events

- Events or initiatives can be a one-off event or a series of events but they must focus on supporting the medium to long term sustainability and diversification of the night time economy in the town.
- Working with new partners is encouraged to attract new audiences and inspire new uses of existing spaces in the community for late night artists and cultural communities.
- Applications for amounts greater than €1,000 will only be considered if a multi partner application is proposed that demonstrates a unique and collaborative approach that wishes to roll out a prolonged and/or more ambitious programme of events. These will be assessed on a case by case basis in the context of available funding; additional funding is not guaranteed and the above principles apply.
- Grant payments will be made on the basis of paid invoices and receipts submitted and only for the proposed expenditure submitted on the original application form. Cash payments to suppliers are not permitted.
- All successful Grantees are also required to carry out a participant/ visitor survey. This data will help Sligo BID to evaluate the success of the pilot and will assist in gaining valuable insights into who is attending the late night events, the number of attendees and their overall experience of the events/initiative. This data will be shared with Sligo County Council.
- All successful Grantees will be required to share photos from their event/s and fill out an evaluation questionnaire in relation to this scheme when drawing down funds. This will allow Sligo BID to evaluate the effectiveness of the funding and also to gain learnings from the pilot. This data will be shared with Sligo County Council.
- Programmes must be advertised locally through various channels to ensure maximum visibility. Sligo BID and Sligo County Council and the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport support must be acknowledged in public advertising. Logos will be provided to successful applicants.
- Applicants must have a bank account and tax cert and must be registered/will be registered (upon successful application) with the Sligo County Council accounts system.
- All applicants must have a line item in the budget for marketings/advertising/promotion of their event



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- All successful applicants must list their events on the Sligo Tonight website. www.sligotonight.com. It is free to set up an account.
- Previous applicants are welcome to apply again but it cannot be for the same events previously piloted and supported through last year's grant call out.

Timeline of the scheme:

The Call opens 5th March and closes on the 27th March at 5pm. Successful applicants will be notified within four weeks of the closing date. All invoices to be submitted within two weeks of the event completion.

Who can apply?

- A business, community, sporting, tourism, cultural or heritage organisation
- An individual artist, band, producer, or promoter.
- **Collaborative Groups**
- **Licensed premises** - pubs, restaurants and wine bars, nightclubs and other suitable licensed premises that operate in the Evening and Night-Time Economy, who want to trial an event or series of events/cultural activities during off peak times from Sunday to Thursday from 6pm onwards.
- **Unlicensed premises** – cafés, including cafés that may have their premises in a retail outlet, dry bars, local galleries and visitor attractions and other suitable non-licensed premises, who want to trial an event or series of events/cultural activities during off peak times from Sunday to Thursday from 6pm onwards. Get in touch via edel@sligobid.ie if you want to check if you are applicable!
- **Festival promoters** who wish to incorporate a distinct evening or night time offering to their programme. Note the application must be specific to an event and not for the overall festival.

Eligible Funding:



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- Venue hire (in instances where the applicant doesn't have the use or ownership of their own venue)
- Artist's, performers, guides fees/costs etc. (artists/performers must be paid)
- Security Costs
- Event insurance
- Set up/staging costs
- AV Costs and equipment hire
- Photography, Marketing and Advertising Costs
- Costs related to carrying out a visitor survey
- Subsidised entrance fee or ticket fee for the event or initiative (if the activity is of a commercial nature)

Ineligible funding:

- Cost incurred before the awarding of the grant
- Capital or construction costs
- Purchase of equipment/materials
- Purchase of musical instruments
- Local authority rates
- Staff costs or additional staffing costs for later openings
- Accommodation
- Legal and accountancy fees
- Annual insurance costs (with the exception of per event insurance)
- Food and beverages

Amount of Grant Available

The scheme will provide up to 90% of funding for the event(s) or initiative. The minimum grant award is €500 and the maximum grant award is €1,000.



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will the decision on funding be made?

Grant applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

Project Merit 15%

How the proposal addresses the intended objectives of the funding scheme.

Applicants should demonstrate how their proposed projects will support the growth and diversification of the night time economy. The applicant should indicate how the proposed project will address a compelling need, opportunity or demand in the local night time economy.

Potential Impact 15%

Applicants should also indicate the potential economic benefits of their proposed project, for example – impact on business turnover, the number of new customers/visitors created.

Originality/Innovation 20%

The event can't be used to supplement funding for a pre-existing event, class, workshop etc. The proposal should be for a new, original, innovative idea, which must be clearly communicated.

Viability 20%

The Night Time Economy pilot for the town will end, so unfortunately the pilot isn't in a position to offer consistent and sustained funding to night time economy projects in Sligo Town.

The applicant should outline the longer term potential for their event/project or initiative. Is there the potential for an event to become self sustaining with some initial support? For example, the costs for Event 1 are covered by grant funding. The box office from Event 1 is used towards the costs of Event 2.

Sustainability & Accessibility Focus 15%

The applicant should indicate how support for their project will contribute to Sligo Town's vision for a diverse, sustainable and accessible night life.

Potential resources to consider:

<https://groundprotection.ie/terratrak-plus/how-to-make-public-events-more-accessible/>



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<https://supports.failteireland.ie/accessible-and-inclusive-tourism/>

<https://www.failteireland.ie/Product-development/Festival-and-events.aspx>

Experience & Feasibility 15%

The applicant should indicate their experience and capacity to undertake the project and the extent to which the proposed budgets and project plans are cost effective and realistic for the delivery of the intended project outcomes.

First time event organisers are very much welcomed and encouraged to submit but related experience, relevant team member's experience or mentorship should be indicated.

Funding Conditions:

1. Grant payments will be made on the basis of paid invoices and receipts submitted along with proof of payment and only for the proposed expenditure submitted on the original application form and subsequently approved in the letter of offer. Cash payments to suppliers are not permitted.
2. Only one application for this Scheme per individual/venue/business will be considered and the event must take place in Sligo Town.
3. Grant funding should not be used as top-up or substitute funding for existing events. Groups & Organisations already in receipt of funding from Sligo BID, Sligo County Council or other funding agencies will need to declare this and demonstrate that the activity proposed under this scheme is separate and distinct. Proposals that include activities that have already started or are completed outside of the timeframes specified are not eligible for funding.
4. Please note your project or event cannot commence until you have been notified as to whether you are successful. This should be factored into the timeline for your event(s). Sligo BID will not retrospectively fund and take no responsibility for proposed projects that have not been awarded funding by due process.
5. All applicants must provide a minimum of 10% funding towards their project / undertaking.
6. The grant award must be drawn down no later than two weeks after the event has completed. The funding will only be paid to the applicant body (not a sub-contractor(s) of the applicant)
7. Where a grant is allocated for a specific event / project Sligo BID and Sligo County Council will not be responsible for the insurance of that event / project.



organisers must ensure that adequate insurance is in place prior to the commencement of any event / project.

8. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all permissions, approvals, licences or consents needed for your project are secured.
9. If your application is successful, evidence of appropriate public liability must be provided. Organisers will also be asked to indemnify Sligo BID and Sligo County Council on their public liability insurance.
10. If applicants intend to work with children and young people, evidence will be requested if successful of having an up to date child protection policy or the child protection policy of your partner organisation.
11. If the event or project is altered, postponed or cancelled – in whole or in part – the Sligo Town Night Time Economy Advisor, Edel Doran, must be contacted in order to discuss the matter.
12. Sligo BID, Sligo County Council and the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport must be acknowledged on all publicity, press and marketing material, websites and social media outlets produced in connection with the undertaking or event. Logos will be sent to all successful applicants.
13. Copies of all such material produced must be sent to the Night Time Economy Advisor in advance of the event and included as part of the Evaluation Report.
14. Selection of projects/events will be made through the appointment of an independent assessment panel and scored on the criteria outlined in the guidance note.
15. The grant scheme will take account of the spread of events activity, and may prioritise events meeting needs that are not already being served, e.g. taking place on days/months/locations where relatively little events activity currently occurs over those that are already served or providing for a specific demographic/audience group for which there are relatively few events currently occurring.

Note full terms and conditions will accompany a letter of offer to successful applicants.

Feedback:

As the independent panel members are all voluntary and the number of applicants for this scheme is unknown, full feedback will not be available to every applicant.

Appeals:



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appeal may be made by an applicant to edel@sligobid.ie if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their application. An appeal must be made within 5 working days of the date of the decision letter/email. The appeal will be reviewed independently and on completion of the review, a decision will issue to the applicant.

Payment Conditions:

Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Offer along with an acceptance slip. This will form the contract between Sligo BID and the organiser/lead applicant and will detail all conditions and requirements which will include all health and safety requirements by you if appropriate, guidance on GDPR imagery that identifies a person in your images and correct consent forms returned. Full details of all conditions will be emailed to successful applicants.

In order to receive payment, the successful applicant must provide the following:

- A completed Sligo County Council “supplier set up form” with tax registration certification and copy of your bank statement header- unless you can confirm already being a supplier with Sligo County Council.
- Evidence that project/initiative/event has taken place (e.g. photographic evidence, MAX 5, high quality jpeg images must be supplied, copies of press features and evidence that on ALL publicity material about your project acknowledge Sligo BID, Sligo County Council and Department of Culture, Communications and Sport with the logos clearly visible, appear and are acknowledged on all print materials, interviews, films produced and social media postings – (Logos will be supplied to you if successful).
- Receipts for ALL PAYMENTS applicable to the funding approved in the letter of offer. Cash payments to suppliers are not permitted.
- Payment will be made by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) only.
- Failure to return the required report and related receipts or to return within the timeline of your letter of offer will forfeit the grant.