



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

2024 Sport Ireland Evaluation Grant Scheme

FUNDING GUIDELINES



1 Introduction

Sport Ireland (through the Dormant Accounts Fund) will provide support to recognised National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) and other Sport Ireland Funded Bodies on the basis of the conditions and criteria outlined in this document. The **Evaluation Grant Scheme** is a grant scheme that supports evaluation endeavours for the Irish sports sector.

Sport Ireland are seeking applications for formative, process or outcome evaluations for programmes that meet the Dormant Accounts criteria i.e., must be able to demonstrate how the proposed evaluation relates to the personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged, the educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged, persons with a disability (within the meaning of the Equal Status Act 2000).

All Evaluation Scheme projects are offered through a competitive bid process and will be evaluated against the criteria set in the application form and guidelines document.

- **NGBs/LSPs/Funded Bodies seeking funding will be required to submit an application form.**
- **Only one application per NGB/LSP/Funded Body will be accepted. NGBs, LSPs and Funded Bodies can partner together. Each funded body can lead on one application form per grant scheme; however they are free to partner on as many applications as they wish (i.e., each funded body can lead on a maximum of one EGS application and one RGS application)**
- **Applications will be considered up to a maximum of €18,000 (Only current funding will be applicable under the scheme).**
- **Funding expenditure must be completed by the end of August 2025.**
- **NGBs/LSPs/Funded Bodies are required to submit a signed copy of the Information & Declaration Form. Electronic versions of the handwritten signatures and email confirmation of signature are accepted.**
- **Please submit completed applications by 5pm Monday, 8th April 2024 to evaluation@sportireland.ie**

If you have any questions throughout the application process, please refer to this guidelines document or contact evaluation@sportireland.ie for further information.

1.1 About the Scheme

LSPs, NGBs, and funded bodies can apply for funding from Sport Ireland to undertake evaluations in partnership with the third-level sector and/or evaluation consultants in Ireland. The introduction of a

Sport Ireland Evaluation grant scheme provides the sector with the resources and support needed to undertake local evaluations relevant to their own context.

The evaluation grant scheme aims to provide a platform for LSPs, NGBs, and funded bodies to build meaningful relationships with the third level sector and/or evaluation consultants whilst building their understanding and capability on how to evaluate. The scheme is linked to two Sport Ireland Research Strategy actions:

1. Evaluate the return on investment in sport and physical activity, what works, for whom and under what conditions, identifying and communicating the critical success factors of effective approaches to sports development.
2. Provide evaluation training resources, templates, and workshops for sports bodies to encourage the use of consistent validated methods in the evaluation of projects and programmes.

The evaluation grant scheme will support applications for formative, process, and outcome evaluations:

- **Formative Evaluations** support programme development. They are completed before a programme is launched and include identifying the need for a programme, understanding best or emerging practice using available information, consulting with target populations and using these steps to develop a programme plan. Formative evaluation is often delivered in the form of community/target group needs or readiness analysis, literature reviews, stakeholder engagement workshops and establishment of baseline measures. The development of logic models and theories of change can also be part of a formative evaluation. Formative evaluation can be used as a mechanism to carry out preparatory work ahead of future Sport Ireland grant applications. This is especially useful for Dormant Account funding streams such as the Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Funds, Community Sport and Physical Activity Hubs, Volunteer Supports Initiative, and Innovation for Social Inclusion projects.
- **Process Evaluations** monitor programme implementation. They are carried out during programme delivery and monitor how programmes are implemented in real world practice and how implementation might differ across different environments. Process evaluations are most effective when a clear programme implementation plan is documented. It can include measures of *recruitment* (how people were recruited to the programme, how they heard about it), *reach* (how many people engaged with the programme), *participant characteristics* (what kinds of people engaged with the programme), *attendance* (how frequently did they attend), *engagement* (how engaged were participants during the programme), *delivery* (was the programme delivered as intended, times, duration, frequency, location, ratios, resources etc.), *satisfaction* (how satisfied participants were with the programme), *usage* (to what extent the programme participants use the programme resources) and *context* (what environmental, economic and social factors influence the programme). Process evaluations can be used to understand the practicalities of programme implementation and participant engagement; what activities took place, in what context, by whom and with what level of effort. Good process evaluation can help explain the success or failure of programmes in achieving their intended outcomes.

- **Outcome Evaluations** determine whether a programme has achieved the desired short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes. An outcome evaluation is frequently, although not always, carried out concurrently with a process evaluation. The outcome evaluation aims to collect appropriate evidence to determine if the programme or initiative “worked” or “didn’t work”. The development of *logic models* and *theories of change* can help in the selection of measures which might contribute useful evidence of programme ‘effectiveness’. There are multiple methodologies which can be used in outcome evaluation from pre/post intervention measures to full randomised control trials and everything in between.

Funded bodies are encouraged to engage with third level institutions or specialised evaluation consultants to develop appropriate evaluation methodologies for their projects. Funding a one of its kind applied partnership evaluation grant will help bridge the gap between research, policy and practice.

1.2 Mid-Year Review Requirements

You are required to submit a Mid-Year Review report to summarise the project’s progress to date. Failure to submit a satisfactory Mid-Year Review report may impact your ability to access funding in the future. Funded projects will be provided with a Mid-Year Review report template to provide updates. Mid-Year Review report will cover project progression, budget expenditure, next steps and evaluation findings. The completion date for the Mid-Year Review report is Jan 27th, 2025.

2 Evaluation Grant Scheme

An application form has been developed to aid with the organisation submissions. Deadline for submission is 5pm Monday, 8th April 2024.

The funding application is divided into 5 sections. Each section will be further explained below.

Please note this is a competitive bid process and will be evaluated against the criteria set.

2.1- About Your Organisation and Application Lead

Eligibility

This fund is open to NGBs/LSPs/Funded Bodies to develop and deliver an evaluation on sport and physical activity initiatives and projects that meet the Dormant Accounts criteria commencing in June 2024 with completion by the end of August 2025. This grant scheme will run until the end of August 2025 and will not fund long-term research projects or PhDs.

In this section, please list contact details of the lead applicant from your organisation. Please note the email provided in this section will be used as the main contact point for all application outcomes.

2.2- Evaluation Project Details

Within this section there are 9 areas to be addressed. This section of the submission will be used to better understand the evaluation being proposed, methodology, project time frames, promotion of evaluation findings and ethics. Please ensure submissions are written in a clear manner to be easily understood by our multi-disciplinary reviewers.

A. Evaluation Area

Please indicate which evaluation area best represents your proposed application. If your proposed evaluation area is not listed, include this under the 'Other' category.

B. Lay Abstract

Please provide a maximum of 300 words explaining your evaluation. This should be written in a manner to inform a non-expert audience. If your project is chosen for funding, this abstract will be used to give others an insight about your evaluation project.

C. Aims, Objectives and Evaluation Questions

Provide a maximum of 300 words explaining what the evaluation plans to understand and what evaluation questions are being asked.

D. Dormant Accounts Criteria

Please demonstrate how the proposed evaluation relates to the personal and social development of persons who are economically or socially disadvantaged, the educational development of persons who are educationally disadvantaged, persons with a disability (within the meaning of the Equal Status Act 2000). For example: an evaluation of a Dormant Accounts funded initiative.

E. Evaluation Design and Methodologies

Please provide a maximum of 300 words to explain the proposed evaluation design and methodologies. Sufficient detail needs to be provided to ensure an understanding of the evaluation topic and how best to answer the evaluation questions.

F. Milestones/Deliverables

Provide a maximum of 300 words describing the schedule of the project milestones and deliverables for the completion of the proposed evaluation.

G. Risks

Provide a maximum of 300 words describing any risks that may endanger reaching these deliverables and potential ways to manage the risks.

H. Dissemination

In a maximum of 300 words please outline plans for sharing the project learnings. This includes activities such as publications, conference attendance and presentations, reports and outreach activities. Please note the dissemination activities can go beyond the funding window.

I. Ethics

Please provide a maximum of 300 words detailing consideration to the ethics relevant to your proposed evaluation and how you plan to address these.

2.3 - Funding

Applications will be considered up to a maximum of €18,000 (Current funding). Project expenditure must be complete by the end of August 2025.

Project Income Funding

If you are receiving other income or matched funding from other sources please include the amount and who is providing the funding. Please note matched funding is not a requirement to apply for the funding scheme.

Project Expenditure

Please provide an extensive breakdown of project expenditure. If receiving funding from additional sources this should be included within the overall budget. Please note only Current expenditure can be funded as part of the scheme.

2.4 – Evaluation Project Partners

Partnership

The evaluation project will need to be delivered in partnership with a third level university/IT/higher educational institution or a private evaluation consultant.

Projects demonstrating appropriate partnerships will be scored higher on assessment.

Letter of Agreement/Intent

If available, please attach a letter of agreement or intent from your evaluation partner as part of your application submission. Please note this is an optional requirement for application submission.

2.5 – Signed Declaration

All applications are required to attach a signed copy of the Information & Declaration Form, as part of their application submission. Electronic versions of the handwritten signatures are accepted at this time as well as email confirmation of signature. If you have queries on this, please reach out to evaluation@sportireland.ie

3 Additional Details

Timescales

All projects must be completed by the end of August 2025. Below is an indicative timescale of the fund.

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Funding scheme launched/open for submits live	February 2024
Scheme submit close	8 th April 2024 (5pm)
Schemes awarded funding notified	Final week of May 2024
Funded projects' initiation meeting with Sport Ireland	June 2024
Funded schemes Mid-Year Review report	27 th January 2025
Funding scheme concludes & Final Report due	August 2025
Funded schemes conference/project presentation event	September 2025 (TBC)

Terms and Conditions

The funding guidelines are to be read in conjunction with Sport Ireland 2024 Terms and Conditions of Grant Investment.

Acknowledgement

In the promotion and dissemination of the evaluation findings funded by this scheme, Sport Ireland requests the dual language Sport Ireland logo and Dormant Account logo be included on all materials and for Sport Ireland and Dormant Accounts to be acknowledged as the funders/co-funders in presentations, publications and related materials.

Scoring Criteria

Scoring to be applied to applications based on:

- Quality of abstract
- Clarity of evaluation aims objectives and questions
- Alignment to Dormant Accounts Criteria
- Evaluation methodology
- Clarity and feasibility of deliverables and timelines
- Risk assessment
- Ethics and GDPR
- Dissemination plans
- Match funding appropriate to the project scope
- Identified partner