



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

Sport Ireland Digital Catalyst Fund 2024

FUNDING GUIDELINES

Introduction to the Grant Scheme

The **Digital Catalyst Fund** is a grant scheme that supports digital transformation endeavours for the Irish sports sector. Sport Ireland will provide support to recognised National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) and other Sport Ireland Funded Bodies based on the conditions and criteria outlined in this document.

Sport Ireland are seeking applications from LSPs, NGBs, and SI-funded bodies with a clear project proposal for digital transformations within their organisation. Digital transformation may include small to medium scale digital projects that improve the administration and management of sport, aid data collection, analytics and storage, enhance the experience and/or performance of members, participants, athletes, volunteers or spectators, support education and training functions, or develop communication and live streaming of sport opportunities. LSPs, NGBs, and SI-funded bodies can apply for funding from Sport Ireland to undertake a digital transformation project in partnership with technology companies and other service providers. Projects that involve two or more sport bodies coming together will also be welcomed.

The scheme can be connected to Sport Ireland's [Digital for Sport Initiative](#) which operates with the Skillnet Innovation Exchange. Digital Catalyst Fund applicants may wish to engage with the Digital for Sport initiative ahead of submitting an application. The Digital for Sport initiative supports sport bodies to identify and articulate a digital challenge they are experiencing. Sport Bodies are then invited to present this challenge to a large network of technology solution providers in Ireland. Within two to three weeks a number of solution providers will respond with written proposals outlining a fully costed technological solution. This written proposal can be used for budgeting purposes. Further, the proposal from the preferred supplier can be included with the Digital Catalyst Fund application, to strengthen the submission.

Sport Bodies may also wish to register and avail of services from the [Factory Exchange](#). This is an EU funded programme that involves a range of consultancy partners, who can provide sporting organisations with free digital transformation consultation and support services, including digital maturity assessment, digital road maps, data analytics, and adoption of AI technologies.

Applicant bodies are encouraged to engage with technology partners, specialised consultants, and in some cases other sport bodies to develop project applications. All applications to the grant scheme 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.
- Applications will be considered for the value of €5,000 to €15,000 (Only current funding will be applicable under the scheme).
- Applicant bodies are required to match fund the project to at least 50% of the total project costs.

- Funding expenditure must be completed within 12 months of receipt of funds.
- 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 both accepted.

Eligibility Criteria

This fund is open to NGBs/LSPs/Sport Ireland Funded Bodies to develop and deliver digital transformation in their organisation.

Project Update Requirements

Funded projects will be required to provide updates to Sport Ireland over the duration of the project.

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

Application Form

An application form has been developed to aid with the Digital Catalyst Fund submissions. The funding application is divided into 5 sections. Each section is explained below. Please note this is a competitive bid process and will be evaluated against the criteria set.

1 About Your Organisation and Application Lead

In this section of the application, 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 Project Details

Please ensure submissions are written in a clear manner to be easily understood by our multi-disciplinary reviewers.

2.1. Project title

Please provide a title for the project.

2.2. Project description

Please provide a summary description of your Digital Catalyst Fund proposal. This summary should aim to inform a lay audience (non-experts) about your project. Please note that this text may be published on Sport Ireland's website to serve as a summary if the project is funded.

2.3. Objectives and Rationale

Please use this section to justify the rationale and explain the importance of this project to your organisation. Please complete the following sub-sections:

2.3.1. Outline the problem the digital catalyst fund will address.

2.3.2. Outline the expected outcomes from the digital catalyst fund.

2.4. Project Implementation Plan

Please provide a schedule of deliverables/milestones and associated dates for completion of the proposal.

2.5. Risks and Mitigations

Please provide a schedule of risks that might endanger reaching these deliverables and mitigation measures to be taken.

2.6. GDPR & Ethics

Please provide a statement detailing the careful consideration you have given to any GDPR and ethical implications of the proposal. Please specify measures planned for mitigating data storage and protection considerations and measures for mitigating any ethical concerns.

2.7. Funding Legacy and Long-term Impact

Please outline your plans to maximise the impact of this Digital Catalyst Fund project.

3 Funding

3.1. Amount requested: Applications will be considered for a value between €5,000 and €15,000 (Current funding cycle).

3.2. Match Funding Requirement: Applicant bodies are required to match fund the project to at least 50% of the total project costs. Benefit in kind does not qualify as matched funding for this grant scheme.

3.3. Detailed Expenditure

Please provide a detailed 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.

4 Delivery Partners

4.1. to 4.3. Partnership

The project may be developed as a partnership project involved other sport bodies, a technology partner, or enterprise partner. Projects demonstrating appropriate partnerships will be scored higher on assessment.

4.4. Letter of Agreement/Quotation Document

Please attach a letter of agreement or quotation document from your project partner to support your application.

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 currently as well as email confirmation of signature. If you have queries on this, please reach out to innovation@sportireland.ie

6 Additional Details

Timescales

Event	Date
Funding scheme launched/open for submits live	2 October 2024
Scheme submit close	11 November 2024
Schemes awarded funding notified	Dec 2024
Funded projects' initiation meeting with Sport Ireland	Jan 2025
Funded schemes Project Updates	June & Nov 2025
Funding scheme concludes Final Report due	Feb 2026
Funded schemes conference/project presentation event	TBC

Terms and Conditions

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

Acknowledgement

In the promotion and dissemination of the outcomes resulted from this scheme, Sport Ireland requests the dual-language Sport Ireland logo to be included on all materials and for Sport Ireland 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 project description
- Clarity of digital transformation project objectives and rationale
- Quality of project implementation plan
- Risks and mitigations
- GDPR & ethics
- Funding legacy and long-term impact
- Matched funding appropriate to the project scope
- Quality of delivery partner(s) support