

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme
2000-2006



General Guidelines

for funding under the National Development Plan:
Childcare Measure of the Social Inclusion Sub-Programme
of the Regional Operational Programme.

This information should be read in advance of making an application for funding by:

- All Community Based/Not-for-Profit groups who are applying for a Capital and/or Staffing grant(s).
- All Self-employed Childcare Providers who are applying for a Capital grant.



General Background

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has responsibility for a Childcare Programme under the National Development Plan.

The main objectives of this Programme are:

- To improve the quality of childcare in Ireland.
- To increase the number of childcare facilities and childcare places.
- To introduce a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of childcare services.

The Department has introduced the 'Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (2000-2006)' to fund the development of Childcare in Ireland while seeking to ensure that existing childcare services are not displaced by the introduction of new initiatives in the childcare area.

These guidelines refer to the three following schemes only.

Types of Funding include:

Capital: To establish, renovate and/or upgrade childcare facilities for Community based/Not-for-profit groups.

Staffing: To support staffing costs for community based childcare facilities.

Capital: To build, renovate or upgrade childcare facilities for Self-Employed childcare providers catering for not more than 20 children at any one time.

Other Funding under the Programme

- **National Voluntary Childcare Organisations:** Developmental support for the National Voluntary Childcare Organisations.
- **Local Networks:** To support the development of local childcare network initiatives.
- **Innovative Projects:** To support innovative projects in the childcare area.
- **Training:** To encourage and promote local childcare training models that assist in the enhancement of quality childcare provision.

Information will be circulated separately for these categories by the Equal Opportunities Childcare Section, Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform, Mespil Rd, Dublin 4.

Tel: Lo-call 1890 20 90 30 Fax: 01 667 0366 E-mail: Childcare_Mail@justice.ie

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has established a National Co-ordinating Childcare Committee and during 2000, a County Childcare Committee will be formalised in each County. The key aim of these structures is to assist in the co-ordination of childcare, both nationally and locally, and to assist in the prioritisation of funding.

Timeframe for Applications

Initially the application process will be 'rolling' or 'open ended' whereby there will be no closing date for receipt of applications (for at least the first two years.) Therefore, **applicants should take their time to prepare their project proposal and only apply when they are ready to do so.** It is anticipated that applications will be processed in quarterly cycles (e.g. applications received in the first two weeks of one quarter are likely to be processed by the early part of the following quarter – subject to the volume of applications).

The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform is working with Area Development Management Ltd (ADM) to deliver the Programme.



ADM is an independent company designated by the Irish Government & the European Commission to support integrated local economic and social development.



Guidelines for Applicants

These guidelines are to be used for **Capital** and **Staffing** funding applications only.

Funding Type	Who May Apply?
Capital Grants Community/Not-for-Profit	Community based/not-for profit individual group/organisation Or Community based/not-for profit consortium of private & community.
Staffing Grants Community/Not-for-Profit	Community based/not-for profit individual group/organisation Or Community based/not-for profit consortium of private & community.
Capital Grants Self Employed Childcare Providers	Self employed childcare provider catering for not more than 20 children at any one time.

These GENERAL guidelines apply to ALL THREE categories outlined above. Additional information on each category can be found attached to the individual application forms.

1 General Aims and Objectives

Proposals/projects should:

- 1.1 Increase the number of childcare facilities and places.
- 1.2 Enhance the quality of childcare provision in the locality.
- 1.3 Allow parents to avail of educational, training or employment opportunities.
- 1.4 Ensure the developments of childcare facilities are co-ordinated at local level where appropriate.

2 General Eligibility

Projects must:

- 2.1 Be directly related to the development and provision of childcare facilities.
- 2.2 Demonstrate that the project is sustainable and that there are sufficient resources to meet the running and maintenance costs of the project for a reasonable period after completion.
- 2.3 Demonstrate that the necessary management personnel, infrastructure and training are in place to ensure the effective operation of the facility.

3 How will Applications be assessed?

- 3.1 The assessment of applications will be based on material supplied by the applicant in the original application or any additional material requested.
- 3.2 The assessment process will favour those applications which best meet the general and additional guidelines and the focus of the grant scheme under which the application is made.
- 3.3 No single factor will determine the outcome of any application.
- 3.4 Projects that rate highly against the criteria will also be assessed in terms of a balanced spread to include;
 - (a) grants to the different categories (Capital – Community and Private, Staffing etc.)
 - (b) A Geographical balance.
- 3.5 The following assessment criteria have been developed to help appraise all applications for funding.

The 5 assessment criteria are listed below with a small number of examples under each criteria.

The socio economic and demographic profile of the area

For example:

- the location of the childcare services in terms of demographics; e.g. population projections, age groups, labour market projections etc.
- the extent to which the project will increase the number of affordable childcare places in disadvantaged areas.

The quality of the proposal

For example:

- the focus of the childcare service with respect to the development of children and their needs.
- the level of staff training & qualifications.
- the extent to which the project caters for children with special requirements.
- the extent to which the project caters for children of ethnic diversity.
- the extent to which the project will increase the number of childcare places available in the locality.
- the extent to which funding will create new opportunities for men and women to avail of training, education and employment opportunities.

The capacity of the group to implement the project

For example:

- the previous experience and background in childcare.
- the management structures appropriate to the nature of the project.
- the financial controls and systems appropriate to the project.
- the ability of the group/individual to comply with the terms of funding.

The Level of Integration/Co-ordination

For example:

- the level of potential overlap and duplication of childcare services in the area.
- the level of consultation undertaken prior to submitting the application.
- the level of integration/linkage of the childcare service with other compatible actions or programmes established in the locality.

The Costings/Value for Money

For example:

- the financial sustainability of the project i.e. in addition to funding, will the applicant have sufficient funds to maintain the facility and meet other overheads.
- the overall cost of the project with regard to the number of additional childcare places being created.

4 How will list of successful applicants be arrived at?

- 4.1 A process has been put in place which will involve the assessment of each individual application by ADM Ltd. and an appraisal committee. This process may involve project appraisal visits/meetings.
- 4.2 On completion of the assessment procedure, recommendations on projects and grants to be allocated will be made to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform for final decision.
- 4.3 Following the Minister's decision and the notification of that decision to the applicant, ADM Ltd. will deal with all aspects of delivery of the grant. This will include the offer of a contract, financial transfers and monitoring of performance and expenditure, training and support.

5 What about monitoring, reporting and supporting of successful applicants?

- 5.1 It is a condition of funding that the group agrees to have its project monitored by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, ADM Ltd. or by its agents and to allow access to its premises and records as necessary for that purpose.
- 5.2 Projects may be subject to visits by ADM Ltd., the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform, their officers and agents, EU representatives, and/or the Regional Operational Programme Administration Unit, either during construction, implementation or on completion. Monitoring of the projects will be carried out both in financial and progress terms.
- 5.3 Projects must report to ADM Ltd. on financial expenditure and performance related targets on a regular basis. Once expenditure is incurred, successful applicants will be required to provide information on the impact of the funding, for example:
 - the increase in the number of childcare places and improvements to facilities which resulted from the funding.
 - the number of parents enabled to avail of educational, training or employment opportunities.
 - the increase in space at the facility.
 - the type of childcare development programme used.
 - the increase in the number of staff employed.
- 5.4 Support and training to beneficiaries will be based on needs assessment.
- 5.5 All grants will be subject to a legal contractual agreement with ADM Ltd.

6 Does the 'Freedom of Information Act' Apply?

- 6.1 The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform wishes to remind applicants that the information supplied in any application form may be made available on request, subject to the Department's obligations under law, including the Freedom of Information Act, which came into force on 21 April, 1998.
- 6.2 You are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by you in applying for funding under this measure should not be disclosed because of sensitivity. If this is the case, you should, when providing the information, identify same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. The Department will consult with you about sensitive information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received.

7 Are there any other important guidance notes?

- 7.1 These guidelines are for funding under the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme 2000-2006 only and may be subject to change from time to time for future funding, including variations to comply with Government or EU requests.
- 7.2 Applicants are advised that any misleading statements or information (whether deliberate or accidental) given at any stage during the application process, could render the application invalid.
- 7.3 All grant-assisted projects must display an acknowledgement sign that they are being assisted by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and European Structural Funds. Further information concerning requirements on publicity will be contained in the contract.

Abbreviations & Glossary of Terms

ADM Ltd. Area Development Management Ltd. is an independent company designated by the Government and the EU to support integrated local economic and social programmes on behalf of the EU and Irish Government. ADM's mission is to support integrated local economic and social development through managing Programmes targeted at countering disadvantage and exclusion, and promoting reconciliation and equality.

Beneficiary This is the individual/group in receipt of the Grant.

Business Permission Non-EEA (European Economic Area) nationals require business permission before they can become established in business in this State. Business Permission is the permission of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform expressed in writing to allow a particular person or group of persons to engage and become established in business in the State for a particular period of time. For further information on the requirements, contact Immigration Division at the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

C.E. FÁS operate the Community Employment Scheme. FÁS fund sponsors to provide a work and training programme for persons who qualify for participation in the scheme. Eligible applicants are usually over 21, unemployed and in receipt of a qualifying social welfare payment of at least one year.

Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations, 1996 These Regulations expand the provisions of Part VII of the Child Care Act, 1991 and prescribe the minimum standards which must be in place to comply with the Act.

Childcare The term as used by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform incorporates day care facilities and services for pre-school children and school going children out of school hours. It includes services offering care, education and socialisation opportunities for children to the benefit of children, parents, employers and the wider community. Thus services such as Naíonraí, daycare services, crèches, playgroups, childminding and after-school groups are included, but schools (primary, secondary and special) and residential centres for children are excluded.

Consumables These include goods that have only one use, for example, stationery (letter heads, business cards), food, milk products, toiletries, and cleaning products.

Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform provides funding for the development of Childcare under a range of initiatives from a social inclusion and equal opportunities perspective. The Programme was developed in 1998 following the evaluation of the Pilot Childcare Initiative. The Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme is Measure 1 of the Social Inclusion Sub-Programme of the Regional Operational Programmes under the National Development Plan.

Two regions have been designated in Ireland for Structural Fund Purposes. The 2 regions are:

- The Border Midland and Western (BMW) region which has retained Objective 1 status for structural funds for the full period to 2006.
 - The Southern and Eastern (S&E) region, which will qualify for a 6-year phasing out regime for Objective 1, Structural Funds up to the end of 2005.
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Ethnic diversity This term is inclusive of members of ethnic minority groups and travellers.

Full Day Care Structured daycare for more than 3.5 hours.

J.I. Jobs Initiative is a scheme to provide Community Employment to people over 35, for periods of 1 to 3 years.

National Childcare Census The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform availed of EU funding to develop a National Childcare Census and Database. The project will provide data on child population and the range, extent and location of group based childcare services on a county by county basis.

Qualified Staff Suitably trained and/or experienced staff members.

Quality Childcare Childcare provision meeting all requirements and standards as set down by Part VII of the Child Care Act, 1991. 'Quality' is value based and seen as an evolutionary process. It evolves rather than remains static. Children are given the opportunity to emotionally and educationally develop within a quality based setting.

Social inclusion A process to ensure disadvantaged communities are consulted and included in measures to target poverty and disadvantage. Countering disadvantage is achieved through the development of strategies that provide access, participation and inclusion of marginalised groups.

Special requirements This term is inclusive of children with disabilities, allergies and medical conditions (e.g., diabetes).

State & Non-State Funding Non-State funding emanates from private donations, fundraising, fees from parents, etc. State funding originates from the State, EU Programmes, Health Boards, Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform etc.

Transparent recruitment Recruitment by open competition, i.e., advertising in National and local newspapers, job agencies for up coming positions. All procedures should be documented and agreed upon at a Committee or Managerial level.

Work Permit Employers may be required to obtain a work permit in respect of employment on non-EU nationals. For further information on the requirements, contact Work Permit Section at the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.
