

LAWPRO

Catchment Support Fund



Guidelines 2025



**This scheme is subject to the availability of funding
to the Local Authority Waters Programme in 2025**

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Introduction

The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) works on behalf of Ireland's 31 Local Authorities to protect and restore water quality in our rivers, lakes, estuaries, ground and coastal waters, through catchment science and community engagement. LAWPRO was established to fulfil requirements under the European Union Water Framework Directive and is funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. LAWPRO coordinates the efforts of local authorities and other public bodies in the implementation of the [Water Action Plan 2024: A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027](#).

A key element of LAWPRO's activity is to foster stronger local partnerships through the continued support and development of groups who can provide additional vital water quality services to their community and support the objectives of the Water Action Plan.

One of the ways we do this is by administering the LAWPRO Catchment Support Fund (CSF).

Objective of the Fund

The LAWPRO CSF aims to build the capacity of non-governmental organisations working in the area of water quality in Ireland by providing funding towards their core costs. This funding provides support to:

- develop and strengthen the skills, processes, and resources that catchment organisations need to survive, adapt, and thrive.
- water quality focused organisations who play a key role in the protection and restoration of water bodies and help in achieving the objectives of national policy and plans.

Who can apply?

The scheme is open to not-for-profit non-governmental organisations based in the Republic of Ireland who have a clear focus on protecting or restoring water quality. Cross border partnerships between organisations from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland can be considered where the lead partner is based in the Republic of Ireland.

Who can't apply?

Private companies, individuals, public bodies or organisations controlled either directly or indirectly by any state or other body are not eligible to apply for funding under this scheme.

Organisations who receive operational funding from Government Departments (e.g. Tidy Towns Groups, Group Water Schemes, etc.) are not eligible where grant aid funding is available for eligible costs from other funding sources. Groups that receive membership fees may not be eligible for all elements of stream 1 funding i.e., insurance, audited accounts, etc.

Potential applicants can check eligibility by contacting their local LAWPRO Community Water Officer.

Funding Available

The LAWPRO CSF is divided into two streams: Stream 1 and Stream 2. Organisations can apply for Stream 1 or Stream 2 or both streams together. Please ensure that you satisfy the eligibility criteria listed below before making your application by contacting a member of the LAWPRO team. The funding available under this call is limited. While the assessment will be undertaken in line with the criteria set out below, eligibility does not guarantee a funding allocation.

Stream 1 funding

In 2024, the grant range offer under Stream 1 was €500 to €4,975. Only organisations that fit the following criteria are eligible to apply for Stream 1 funding. Applications that fail to meet the criteria set out below will not progress for further assessment.

A. Governance structure

Applicant Organisations must have an established constitution and bank account in the name of the organisation must have a clear objective to protect and improve water quality in the catchment area of the organisation.

B. Purpose of the Organisation

The purpose must relate to one or more of the objectives as set out in the Water Action Plan.

C. Interaction with LAWPRO

Must demonstrate ongoing engagement with LAWPRO.

D. Priority Areas

Groups operating in Blue Dot Catchments (high status objective areas), LAWPRO Priority Areas for Action, Areas for Action led by others e.g. National Federation of Group Water Schemes, and Catchment Community Fora/Catchment Management Work Plan Pilot Catchments¹ will be given priority.

The following costs are *eligible* under Stream 1:

- Statutory and/or legal responsibilities
- Training and other capacity building costs
- Auditing/accounting fees
- Insurance associated with catchment management
- Website annual support cost
- Organisation promotional materials
- Group development activities (e.g., Development of group plan/strategy; group management; governance assistance).

Note: Project related activities and equipment are not eligible for funding under Stream 1 (e.g. events, surveys, citizen science projects, invasive species removal, cameras, etc.). Contact a member of LAWPRO staff for other funding opportunities.

¹ Galway Bay South East, Mal Bay, Newry Fane Glyde and Dee, Boyne and Slaney.

Stream 2 funding

Our fund allocation for 2025 is not yet confirmed. As a guide, in 2024, the range of grants offered under Stream 2 ranged from €3,154 to €46,000. (NB: this was over an 8-month period). Costs must be incurred during 2025.

Only Organisations that fit the following criteria are eligible to apply for Stream 2 funding. Applications that fail to meet the criteria set out below will not progress for further assessment:

- A. **Company Type:** Your not-for-profit organisation must be established as a Company limited by guarantee (CLG) and must not be controlled either directly or indirectly by any state or other body if applying for Stream 2 funding.
- B. **Constitution requirements:** The constitution of the organisation must prohibit the payment of remuneration to the directors.
- C. **Interaction with LAWPRO:** Organisations that have a track record of interacting with LAWPRO community and/or science teams. Engagement with LAWPRO during the application development stage and during delivery is mandatory.
- D. **Proven Delivery:** Organisations that have proven delivery in the area of water quality improvement projects including projects funded under the Community Water Development Fund (CWDF):
 - (i) Delivery of at least 1 successful project under the CWDF and/or
 - (ii) Ongoing engagement with LAWPRO.
- E. **Demonstrated catchment relevance:** The organisation must carry out work that has application at a catchment scale or, its work is being used to inform policies at a catchment scale.
- F. **Organisational work plan:** The organisation must be undertaking innovative actions that provide clear outcomes that assist in the delivery of the Water Action Plan and any other relevant national plans, regional, county and local plans.
- G. **Purpose of the Organisation:** The purpose must relate to one or more of the objectives as set out in the Water Action Plan.
- H. **Priority Areas:** Groups operating in Blue Dot Catchments (high status objective areas), LAWPRO Priority Areas for Action, Areas for Action led by others e.g. National Federation of Group Water Schemes, and Catchment Community For a/Catchment Management Work Plan Pilot Catchments² will be given priority.

The following costs are *eligible* under Stream 2:

- Funding towards your organisation's core costs. Core costs include staff salaries, rent, rates.
- Costs to help your organisation be more resilient in the future, for example, adapting

² Galway Bay South East, Mal Bay, Newry Fane Glyde and Dee, Boyne and Slaney.

business plans, corporate governance improvements, risk management reviews and piloting new ways of working.

- Training and skills development costs.
- Costs associated with the hiring of new or contract staff to help deliver the organisations Work Programme. A clear job description for the post must be provided with your application.

National Living Wage: LAWPRO supports organisations in receipt of LAWPRO funding paying employees the real living wage.

Note: Funding for Events is not eligible under this scheme. Please refer to www.lawwaters.ie to learn more about our Small Grants and Events Scheme.

How and when to apply

You must apply through LAWPRO's online grants system located on our website www.lawwaters.ie. We only accept applications submitted online. We do not provide or accept paper applications. To consider your application, we must receive your online application along with supporting documents by **Tuesday, 14th January at 5pm**. Applications, or additional information will not be accepted after this time. We will let you know, in writing, whether your application is successful or not within four weeks of the deadline.

Please Note: Only one application can be made per organisation.

Supporting Information

You **must** submit the following supporting documents with your application:

1. Organisation Constitution (Streams 1 and 2)

The Constitution of your organisation.

2. Organisation Accounts

- **Stream 1:** Most recent Bank Statement.
- **Stream 2:** Most recent audited or accountant verified accounts.

3. Background information (Streams 1 and 2)

Background information on your organisation such as your most recent Annual Report, Strategic Plan, partnership agreements, and so on.

4. Work Plan (Stream 2 only)

4(a) Complete Costed Work Plan

Where possible, workplans should be based over a three-year period.

The work plan must include the 2025 budget. We need information that allows us to assess budgets, a detailed outline of what you are proposing, how you will manage and deliver the work plan and how the fund will support your objectives. The budget must provide details of expenditure areas and other sources of income.

The work plan should outline actions and initiatives clearly linked to the following:

- Water Action Plan 2024: A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland
- National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030
- Climate Action Plan 2024
- And any other relevant national plans.

4(b) Outcomes of your Work Plan

In Appendix 1, we list examples of outcomes that we would like to be achieved as a result of this grant fund. Outcomes are changes, impacts, benefits, or any effects which happen because of your work. The number of outcomes you achieve will vary depending on the actions in your work plan and should be proportionate to the size of grant you are requesting or the specific focus of your work plan.

We expect work plans to achieve some outcomes more strongly than others. Please focus on the outcomes that are strongest. If you are successful in your application, you will use them in your final report to LAWPRO.

5. Support letters (Stream 2 only)

A minimum of two letters of support from key external stakeholders or other organisations you work closely with (this can include local authorities, state agencies and departments, and other natural heritage NGOs and community groups working in the catchment).

How we assess your application

Once your application is submitted, we will check it first to make sure your organisation meets the criteria for eligibility and that all supporting information has been provided. Applications that do not pass this stage will not be assessed further.

Only applications that pass the initial eligibility screening stage will proceed through the following stages:

Stream 1:

- a) An internal review and recommendation
- b) Senior management approval of recommended applications.

Assessment Criteria – Stream 1	Marks
Relevance of application to Catchment Support Fund objectives	100
Relevance of application to WAP objectives	50

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Proven delivery of water quality related activities	50
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Stream 2:

- a) An internal review and shortlisting. Applications must score at least 50 marks under each criteria below to pass.
- b) Review by an External Panel.
- c) Senior management approval of recommended applications.

This is a competitive process and funding will be allocated to applications that score highest against the four Criteria listed in the table below.

Assessment Criteria – Stream 2	Marks
Demonstrate how the work plan directly supports WAP delivery	100
Demonstrate organisational and management capacity to deliver the proposed work plan (within the timeframe of the fund - by year end 2025)	100
Demonstrate how the organisation will use the fund to build capacity within the organisation and develop partnerships & networks	100
Demonstrate how the fund will provide value for money and how other funding sources will be leveraged	100

Assessors will consider applications using their professional judgment based on the information you provide within the application, knowledge of the previous work of your organisation, and the competitive context in which all applications are evaluated. Each criterion will be scored 1 - 100. The scores are indicative and are based on the contents of the application.

- **Poor (0-19):** The information provided lacks the detail and content to allow an assessment against the criteria to take place.
- **Not Sufficient (20-49):** While the application answers the criteria at a minimum level, there are areas where detail is missing, or the information is unclear.
- **Sufficient (50-65):** The application has addressed most of the criteria. There are some gaps.
- **Good (66-80):** The application addresses the criteria very well. Any gaps are minor, and not material to addressing criteria.
- **Excellent (81-100):** Indicates the application addresses all relevant aspects of the Criteria. There are no gaps, all concerns are addressed.

Supporting Documents

Please refer to the checklist on Page 12 to ensure all required supporting documents are included in the application. Failure to provide the required supporting documents will negatively impact your application or may result in your application being ineligible. Supporting documents cannot be submitted once the closing date has passed.

Funding Decision

We will contact all applicants in writing in early February 2025 to advise them of the outcome of applications. If your application is successful, you will be asked to sign a grant agreement agreeing to LAWPRO Terms & Conditions. Please note that all successful applicant organisations must commit to activities relating to public engagement and project promotion.

Awareness Raising Events

All organisations offered funding by LAWPRO (Stream 2) must undertake at least one awareness raising or public engagement activity to promote their work during the duration of the funding. Events can be run during National Heritage Week, National Biodiversity Week or anytime outside of these weeks. Organisations offered funding by LAWPRO (Stream 1) are not obliged but are encouraged to undertake at least one event. Such events can be funded under our Small Grants and Events Scheme which you can apply for separate to this application.

Project Promotion and Acknowledging Funding

All organisations offered funding must include appropriate acknowledgment of the LAWPRO Catchment Support Fund in 2025 and comply with our guidelines. Recipients of LAWPRO funding must acknowledge LAWPRO when speaking about their project and in any printed or online publicity for example social media, digital resources, radio or tv interviews, and any type of printed materials. If successful, you will receive a communications plan with your grant letter of offer.

Reporting and Funding

If the application is successful, the applicant organisation will be responsible for all costs related to the application submitted. The applicant is responsible for the submission of a detailed final report and evidence of expenditure to LAWPRO before the deadline of 15th November 2025.

Applicants must confirm commencement of their work, in writing to LAWPRO in a timely manner and must work closely with LAWPRO during the funding period.

How we pay the Grant

You will receive your grant after we have assessed the final report and found it to be satisfactory. However, you can choose to have two interim grant payments.

Grant payment(s) will be based on:

- submission of detailed activity report
- evidence of expenditure relating to the grant offer

Under Department of Finance rules, we are obliged to seek proof of payment from grantees before releasing grant monies. However, we will be seeking approval to make payments based on evidence of expenditure. Successful applicants will be advised of any changes in requirements.

Please note: If your organisation does not have charitable tax exemption from Revenue you will have to have current Tax Clearance verification in place to receive grant payments of €10,000 and over.

Canvassing

Canvassing by TDs, Senators, or City/County Councillors on behalf of an applicant will automatically disqualify an application. This does not preclude applicants from seeking advice or letters of support from their Local Authority Heritage/Biodiversity/Climate Officers or any other relevant body.

Applications are subject to Freedom of Information Acts.

Appeals Process

LAWPRO is committed to providing open, accountable, and accessible systems and procedures in all areas of its work. Applicants may appeal against a funding decision. Please email funding@lawwaters.ie if you wish to make an appeal.

Closing date for Applications

We must receive your online application along with supporting documents by:
Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 5 pm.

We wish you the best with your application.

Checklist

Use this checklist to review your application materials. If you have uploaded all the items on the checklist and have completed all the questions on the online application form you are ready to submit your application.

Supporting documents **must** be uploaded with your application:

No	Document Type	Stream 1 Requirement	Stream 2 Requirement
1.	The Constitution of your organisation	✓	✓
2.	Most recent audited or accountant verified accounts/financial statement		✓
3.	Most Recent Bank Statement (account must have the same name as applicant organisation)	✓	✓
4.	Background information on your organisation such as your most recent Annual Report, Strategic Plan, partnership agreements, etc.	✓	✓
5.	Completed Work Plan including budget for 2025 and intended outcomes		✓
6.	A minimum of two letters of support from key stakeholders or other organisations you work closely with.		✓
8.	For applications that include the hiring of new staff, you must provide a clear job description for the post		✓
9.	Evidence of Tax Clearance from Revenue for application > €10,000		✓



Tel: 052 616 6230

| **Website:** www.lawaters.ie

| **Email:** funding@lawaters.ie

Appendix 1

For Stream 2 applicants, you must consider the outcomes set out below and include them in your work plan for 2025:

Outcome	Possible Actions
<p>The funded organisation will become more resilient.</p> <p>We want our funding to help your organisation strengthen its ability to respond to challenges and opportunities to secure its long-term future and financial sustainability.</p>	<p>The kinds of things that could help you do this include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing your governance to ensure that you have the right mix of skills to help your organisation thrive. ● Exploring new operating models. ● Updating and developing business plans / strategic plans in relation to current conditions. ● Developing advocates and / or ‘local catchment champions’ to support your organisation and its work. ● Decreasing your costs. ● Creating efficiencies in how you work. ● Forging sustainable partnerships and mutually beneficial collaborations to share resources. ● Leveraging funding from other sources.
<p>A wider range of stakeholders and state bodies will be engaged with via your work.</p> <p>We want our funding to help you make your organisation become more inclusive through co-creation and by removing barriers that have previously excluded certain groups and people.</p>	<p>The kinds of things that could help you do this include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work to understand your audience demographics and who is currently underrepresented in what you do ● Work to understand and remove barriers to participation in your water quality activities. ● The development of co-creation as your organisation's way of operating. ● Collaboration with community groups and agencies working with excluded groups.

Outcome	Possible Actions
<p>Outreach and mobilization - capacity to deliver *Excludes events e.g. shows, Heritage Week etc.</p>	<p>We want LAWPRO funding to assist you to development capacity in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improved awareness of water quality and the collective goal of protecting or improving water quality under UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6: Clean Water and Sanitation. ● Generate greater understanding of the objectives of the Water Action Plan. ● Increased engagement related to the multiple environmental benefits of aquatic biodiversity and climate action in the water environment for all users e.g. education programmes, training delivery. <p>NOTE: Events are covered under our small grants scheme. Contact your Community Water Officer.</p>
<p>The funded organisation will be more skilled, confident and diverse.</p>	<p>We want LAWPRO funding to help you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and diversify your workforce (which includes both paid staff and volunteers and board members or Trustee) so that you are better equipped to address the challenges and opportunities that your organisation encounters. E.g. internal or external upskilling and training. ● Collaborate with other natural heritage and non-sector organisations to share skills and knowledge.