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**Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Grant Aid Scheme**

**Guidance Notes 2023/24**

**Aim:**

The purpose of the Sports Grant Aid scheme is to provide financial support to help athletes, coaches/volunteers and sports clubs from the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area attain their full potential. The finances for this will be made available through the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and administered by the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum.

**Club Development Grants:**

The four elements focus on increasing quality opportunities provided by the Borough’s sports clubs and recognition of success.

* **National Governing Body (NGB) Quality Accreditation/Reaccreditation Grant and Advancement Grant**

To recognise Clubs that have achieved the minimum operating standards as set out by their National Governing of Body.

Initial Accreditation will be a maximum award of £500.

Reaccreditation/Advancement Grant will be a maximum award of £300.

* **Volunteer Development Grant**

To assist clubs with the development of volunteers through the hosting of/or attending generic courses including First Aid, Child Protection or specialist coaching to develop coaches (not players).

Up to a maximum of £500 per club per annum (up to 50% of eligible costs).

*Clubs can apply for Cost of Course, Tutor Fees, External Facility Hire, Accommodation Costs.*

* **Grant Aid for Coaches & Umpires/Referees**

To assist Clubs with the cost of their coaches, umpires/referees undertaking a relevant Governing Body Coaching/Umpiring/Refereeing Award

Up to a maximum of £1000 per club per annum (up to 50% of eligible costs).

*Clubs can apply for Cost of Course,Accommodation Costs.*

* **Representative Sporting Teams**

To recognise teams who have competed at a Northern Ireland, Ulster, or All-Ireland final or higher (only the top 2 teams will be recognised)

The grant award will depend on the location of the final i.e.:

* Within Northern Ireland/Ulster - £1,000 maximum grant award
* Within Ireland - £1,500 maximum grant award
* Outside of Northern Ireland and Ireland - £2,000 maximum grant award

County Squads with at least 50% of players who live within the ABC Borough are eligible to apply under this element.

General League Competitions are ineligible.

*Applicants can apply for Travel Costs (e.g.Bus/Boat/Flights), Entry Fees and will be paid up to 50% of eligible costs once per annum*.

**Individual Grants:**

These are focused on improving the performance and sporting achievements of local sports people. The elements are:

* **Talented Athlete Grant**

To assist with travel to training and competition costs for individuals who have qualified and represented at Northern Ireland level or above. Where National Teams are not selected in non-team sports, individual applicants who have attained a high standard will be considered e.g., Northern Ireland, Ulster/Provincial or Irish Champion.

**Individuals may hold one successful grant per financial year** for **up to** 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum of £400 and must apply after they have taken part the competition.

The Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all. In recognition of the fact that certain categories of persons (e.g., those with a disability) might incur additional costs in participating in sport, any such individual will be paid a grant of up to 50% of eligible costs, plus up to 50% of relevant additional costs i.e., costs that enable the athlete to compete, up to a maximum overall grant of £400.

* **Leisure Access Card**

To assist individuals selected, in the last 12 months, by their National Governing Body to compete at Northern Ireland, Ulster/Provincial/equivalent, Ireland, GB or County GAA level, with access to gym and swim facilities operated by Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council. Where National Governing Bodies do not select National Teams, individuals who have attained a high standard will be considered e.g., Northern Ireland, Ulster/Provincial or Irish Champion. Provincial or above development squads may be considered.

Please note that only **one** facility can be selected. Age restrictions will apply for gym use for athletes under 16 years of age. The Leisure Access Card will be valid for one year from the date of issue, and any renewal will be subject to a re-application process.

Individuals must also be affiliated, either individually or by Club, to the Sport Northern Ireland, Sport Ireland or UK Sport recognised Governing Body. Individuals must belong to a Club who is affiliated to the Sport Forum, otherwise they will need to affiliate themselves as an individual.

**Criteria for all sports grant aid applications:**

* Financial assistance will only be offered to sports clubs that are affiliated to the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum and individual participants in sporting activities, which are not for profit.
* The sports grant award scheme aims to **provide assistance and not to fund the activity in its entirety**.
* All requests must be submitted on official application forms (there are separate forms for club and individual applications).
* All relevant sections must be **fully** completed with **requested** letters confirming selection from the respective National Governing Body of Sport included.
* Individuals must be affiliated, either individually or by Club, to the Sport Northern Ireland, Sport Ireland or UK Sport recognised Governing Body.
* Clubs must be affiliated to the Sport Northern Ireland, Sport Ireland or UK Sport recognised Governing Body.
* All applicants must be involved in an amateur capacity in their sport.
* All coaches/umpires/referees should be voluntary i.e. not be receiving payment for their coaching services.
* The Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum will acknowledge all requests.
* The amount of financial assistance received or applied forin the previous twelve months from other sources such as Lottery Sports Fund, Mary Peter’s Trust, National Governing Body, Education Authority and sponsorship must be declared.
* The Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum must relate the amount of grant applied for to their financial resources and needs at the time of an application.
* The Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum will require the applying club/applicant to submit a current constitution, most recent independently approved accounts and the Child Protection Policy (if applicable) at the time of application.
* Application for financial assistance will only be considered from:
	+ Clubs based within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area.
	+ Individual members of clubs based within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Council area and who have a permanent home address within this area.
	+ Individuals not attached to a club within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area must have a permanent home address within this area.
* At the discretion of the committee, special awards may be made in exceptional circumstances to assist applicants outside the above criteria. In such circumstances, the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum will document the rationale for making the award.
* Any member of the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum must declare his or her interest in a submission for financial assistance.
* Financial assistance **must**be used for the purpose for which the application was initially made otherwise the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum will recover the award.
* It is in the interest of the applicant to ensure that all relevant sections of the form are fully completed. **Failure to do so will result in the application not being considered.**
* Proof of expenditure will be required before grant aid is released.
* All grants will be subject to audit by the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council.
* Each affiliated sports club submitting an application to the grant aid scheme must have good governance and appropriate control procedures for financial management.
* No grant will be paid until all the conditions of any previous funding to you as an individual or sports club have been met where applicable.
* To ensure that the Grant Aid Scheme is properly and adequately administered, an individual or sports club applicant agrees to co-operate with any requests from the Sports Forum or Council, for additional information or clarification.

* The Sports Forum have the right to enquire and seek further clarification about any financial information or any item of income or expenditure, detailed in a club’s bank statement, submitted as part of an application for Club Grant Aid.
* All applications meeting the criteria will be funded, although the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Sports Forum may choose to reduce the amount per club/individual to maintain the allocation within grant budgets.
* **Other Financial Assistance available:**

Sports clubs are also eligible to apply under the following Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council Grant Programmes:

* Seeding Grants
* Community Development Grants
* Capital
* Community Events Fund
* Good Relations Grants

If you have any questions regarding the grant aid programme please contact Laura O’Hagan, Sports Development Assistant via email; laural.ohagan@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk