



Twinning Grant Programme 2025-26

Guidance Notes

Deadline for Submission of Application
Rolling Fund

Guidelines Number	TTG
Version Number	4
Author	P. O'Brien

Date of Screening of Policy	
EQIA Recommended?	YES/NO
Date Adopted by Council	
Date Guidelines Created	24.08.18

Contents

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. Purpose of Grant Programme
- 1.2 Overview of fund
- 1.3 Levels of grant award
- 1.4 General Principles
- 1.5 Who can apply?
- 1.6 What can be funded?
- 1.7 What cannot be funded?
- 1.8 Exclusions

2.0 How to answer the questions

3.0 How we assess and score your application

- 3.1 Eligibility assessment
- 3.2 What if an application is not eligible?
- 3.3 Assessment and Scoring
- 3.4 How decisions are made
- 3.5 What happens if an application is successful?
- 3.6 What happens if an application is unsuccessful?
- 3.7 Fraud and Corruption
- 3.8 Government Funding Database
- 3.9 Late applications

Appendix 1

- General Data Protection Regulation
- Freedom of Information Act

1.0 Introduction

These guidance notes provide an overview of financial support available through the Twinning Grant 2025-2026. They will help you and your organisation decide if the financial assistance offered is appropriate to support the needs of your organisation.

You may find it helpful to discuss your project with the following officer before submitting your application:

Pauline Donaghy
Democratic and Central Services Manager 028 70347164
pauline.donaghy@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

1.1 Purpose of Grant Programme

The purpose of the Twinning Grant is to support the legacy twinning associations to continue existing legacy links and explore future potential opportunities for twinning which promote the objectives and identity of the Council.

1.2 Overview of fund

- The budget available for twinning is £10,000 and each of the 4 legacy Council twinning associations can apply for up to £5,000 per year.
- The Funding Unit will administer the grant on a project-by-project basis from 2025/26

1.3 Levels of Grant Award

Twinning Grant Programme	Maximum Grant Amount
1. Grants are available for maximum of 100% of the total projects cost up to a maximum of £5,000	Up to £5,000

The level of grant awarded will depend on how the project meets the assessment criteria and there is no guarantee that successful applicants will receive the amount applied for. Grants awarded will be up to a maximum of 100% of overall project costs.

All grant awards will be determined on the basis of merit. Applicants are advised that organisations that have been successful in securing Council funding in the past will not automatically be guaranteed funding in the future. Council reserves the right to reduce the amount of funding awarded if we do not consider that the amount applied for represents value for money or if the level of applications exceeds the budget available.

Please Note: Groups will have to provide all evidence requested once the project expenditure is complete. This will include original invoices, original bank statements, post project monitoring report or any other documentation deemed necessary. This list is not exhaustive. If requested documentation is not supplied then payment cannot be made. Please do not apply for funding if you cannot supply these items.

Applications will be considered for projects operating between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026.

Applications are restricted to no more than one per organisation in any financial year i.e. **only one grant will be awarded to a Twinning Association in any one financial year.**

1.4. General Principles

In line with Council's Grant Funding Policy the overarching principle for all Council grant funding is that of meeting local needs which have been identified and prioritised by Council or by others but acknowledged by Council. Any activity that cannot be shown to meet the following basic requirements will not be provided with funding:

- Have a clearly identified need.
- Can deliver outcomes which meet this need.
- Deliver cost effective and quality service provision, fitting with the purpose and remit of the funding.
- Be delivered by a credible organisation with the capacity to deliver the project as stated.
- Reflect the statutory remit of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, aligning with Council's Corporate Plan, the relevant Service plan and that they can meet the specific criteria of the fund.
- Applicants must demonstrate their commitment to promoting Good Relations and Equality of Opportunity.
- In the interests of transparency, equality and accountability all applicants will have a right of appeal should their application be rejected.

1.5 Who can apply?

- Formally constituted Twinning Association based in the Causeway Coast and Glens area whose twinning arrangements have been formally endorsed by Council.
- To be eligible for grant-aid, you will have to show that your organisation is a bona fide organisation that is well run and that it has a properly adopted "Governing Document" such as a constitution or memorandum and articles of association which clearly show that it is non-

profit making and taking. Evidence that a constitution has been formally adopted must be supplied.

- Twinning Association with a formal memorandum of understanding in place with their twinned counterparts. A copy of this documentation must be provided.

Only groups which meet these criteria can apply to the Twinning Grant Programme.

If an organisation is satisfied that it is an eligible formally constituted organisation as outlined, it **MUST** be in a position to meet the following criteria:

- Be committed to Equal Opportunities in terms of organisational policies and the delivery of services to those being served or represented.
- Be non-party political and open to the full range of local opinion.
- Have a constitution / governing document that has been adopted at a public meeting showing clearly defined purposes that are for the public benefit in line with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.
- Be able to demonstrate a fair and equitable ethos through established aims and objectives in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998).
- Be able without prejudice to the obligations of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), to demonstrate regard to the desirability of promoting Good Relations between persons of different religious belief, political belief, political opinion or racial group.
- Be accountable to local people through an established constitution, open membership, committee elections, accounting procedures and Annual General Meetings. The Office Bearing positions of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer should be held as a minimum.
- Have appropriate and adequate insurance cover for all activities and all actions proceeding such as costs, claims, demands and liabilities whatsoever, arising from all or any of the group activities. To also ensure that any individuals or organisations worked with are properly insured.
- Ensure that all group activities abide by the law and that the necessary permissions are obtained for activities from the appropriate body/authority.
- Ensure that Child Protection Policy / Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures are in place and adhered to as and where appropriate.
- Have a bank/building society account and keep a proper record of group accounts.
- Be able to produce an annual statement of independently audited or certified accounts, or be able to present a bank statement in the case of newly established groups.

- Have arrangements in place for dispersing the group's funds if they dissolve/ end.
- Agree to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's promotion, monitoring, evaluation, and training procedures as required.
- Be prepared to take part in any peer supported workshops that the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council deems necessary

It is a stipulation of all successful grant applications that the Council's branding appear on all publicity material during the duration of the grant and that Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's involvement is acknowledged. In order to ensure compliance it is essential that publicity materials are submitted to Council at least two weeks prior to the event.

If requested, applicants must attend press opportunities.

Post event the applicant will be required to complete the Council's monitoring and evaluation form, and to provide information detailed, in order to demonstrate how the organisation met the criteria detailed in their application form. Organisations may be visited by Council officers to carry out a Post Project Evaluation.

1.6 What can be funded?

Eligible items of expenditure may include:

See below examples,

- Venue hire
- Transport
- Equipment hire
- Signage
- Advertising, marketing and media costs
- Printing
- Administration (stationery, postage etc.)
- Hospitality

1.7 What cannot be funded?

Examples below:

- Award ceremonies
- Primarily tourism focused events where the organization cannot demonstrate significant community involvement

- Events which consist mainly of competitions.
- Applications for funding which are considered to be the responsibility of another statutory organisation or Council fund or applications that have applied and secured funding from another Council programme.
- Retrospective expenditure where projects have started or services/items have already been obtained and paid.
- Applications where the applicant will have a personal financial benefit.
- Costs that are not auditable e.g. Cash payments unsupported by an approved petty cash system.
- Core running costs including overheads such as electricity, rent, rates, membership fees and annual premises and organisational insurance. Electricity costs may be eligible where the supply is specifically for an event on site.
- Staff salaries
- Purchase of equipment;
- Costs towards banking charges and / or repayment of debt.
- Costs that can be claimed back from elsewhere e.g. VAT.
- Alcohol costs.
- Gratuities, gifts and prizes.
- Charitable donations
- Any costs not approved by the assessment panel.

1.8 Exclusions

In general the following will not normally be eligible for funding from the Twinning Grant:-

- Individuals/Non-Twinning organisation
- Groups operating outside the Causeway Coast and Glens Council area
- Organisations with charitable fundraising as their main focus
- Organisations who have substantial, demonstrable reserves
- Political Organisations

2.0 How to answer the questions

Applications for financial assistance from Causeway Coast and Glens for 2025-26 should be submitted online at www.causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

Guidance on completing the application online is provided on the web-site link.

Hard copies can be made available. Please contact the Central Funding Unit on email grants@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

3.0 How we assess and score your application

Every application that is received requesting a Town Twinning Grant will be assessed for the following:

- to ensure that the organisation is eligible to apply to this particular Grant Programme
- for reassurance of each organisation's capability to deliver the proposal, and
- How well the proposal meets community needs and contributes to Council's Strategic Priorities.

An acknowledgement receipt will be electronically issued to you once your submission has been received. The Funding Unit will assess your application for eligibility. If your application is eligible to apply for grant aid, it will be forwarded to the relevant section for a full assessment and scoring against the stated criteria.

3.1 Eligibility assessment

The assessments in respect of Part 1 of the application are awarded a pass or fail eligibility rating.

If the organisation, based on the information supplied is able to satisfy the Council of their eligibility to draw down the grant, they will progress to the next part of the process.

3.2 What if an application is not eligible?

If your application is not eligible, you will be notified immediately and the reasons will be outlined to you, if your application is deemed ineligible, it will not proceed to assessment and scoring.

If an organisation is not eligible for funding from the Town Twinning Grant Programme, organisations should contact the staff member listed on page 3 who will help signpost to other sources of funding.

To avoid duplication of funding, if an organisation or its activities are deemed to be the responsibility of other Council Departments, statutory agencies or voluntary bodies then an organisation will be signposted to a relevant agency / organisation that they should apply to.

Whilst your application cannot be re-directed to another fund, you may be signposted to another fund, where you will be required to complete and submit the relevant application form.

3.3 Assessment and Scoring

Each application will be assessed and scored against the criteria listed below which has been specified by Causeway Coast and Glens Council.

Example below

Criterion	Pass	Fail
1. Aligned to Council's strategic Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civic pride• Tourism development• Sports, arts, culture• Economic development		
2. Provide a full itemised breakdown of all costs.		

3.4 How decisions are made

When the assessment scores are finalised the applications will be presented to Council's Twinning Sub-Committee and recommendation to full Council for information.

3.5 What happens if an application is successful?

If an application is successful, Council will issue a letter of offer which is a legal agreement with the organisation to deliver on the proposals outlined in their application form.

Signed Letters of Offer will need to be returned before any funding is released

Council funding is usually paid retrospectively.

Grants on occasions be released in two instalments – 50% of the grant will be awarded upfront if the organisations does not have sufficient reserves followed by remaining 50% once evaluation/financial claim is verified satisfactorily.

Successful organisations are required to submit an end of funding evaluation report. Officers may discuss the monitoring information with the groups that were funded and also with some of the people who have benefited from the community activity.

All groups will be obliged to have a representative attend Council's 'grants' training

3.6 What happens if an application is unsuccessful?

If an application is not successful officers from the Council will be available to meet with the organisation to go through their application, develop a working relationship and provide practical developmental support to address areas of concern.

An Appeals Process / Review Procedure is also available if an application is unsuccessful. The purpose of this is to ensure that the decisions taken and procedures followed by Committees for individual applications are applied fairly and consistently. The Review will provide an independent process through which an applicant will have the opportunity to demonstrate to the Review Panel that either:

- the outcome was unreasonable or
- that the proper procedures were not followed

Appeals on any other grounds will not be considered.

3.7 Fraud and Corruption

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is committed to carrying out business fairly, honestly and openly and has a zero tolerance towards fraud, bribery and corruption. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council expects full compliance with the requirements of both the Fraud and Corruption Policy and Bribery Act 2010 from Groups or Individuals applying for, or in receipt of grant aid. This is also relevant to Councillors, Employees, Agents, Partners and Suppliers involved in your project/event. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is committed to developing, implementing and maintaining effective procedures and controls to prevent any occurrence of fraud and corruption. The Fraud and Corruption Policy can be found on the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council website.

All cases of irregularities or anomalies involving attempted or suspected fraud will be reported to appropriate authorities, including the Northern Ireland Audit Office, PSNI and any other relevant funding body (if applicable) or departments within the Council (if applicable).

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council reserves the right to disallow any other grant applications and claims submitted by a group or an individual member of a group in respect of the financial year and to apply a moratorium on Council funding to any group or individual member of a group where fraudulent activity has been identified within the current financial year and for at least two forthcoming financial years. This also applies to individuals applying or claiming for bursaries.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council will inform the group's Chairperson where attempted or suspected fraud has been identified.

3.8 Late applications

It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that their application is submitted prior to the advertised time and date of closing. Applications received after the closing time/date will not be considered for funding. No exceptions will be made and there is no recourse to appeal.

Appendix 1

General Data Protection Regulation

- We will use the information you give us on the application form during assessment and for the life of any grant we award you to administer and analyse grants and for our own research.
- We may give copies of this information to individuals and organisations we consult when assessing applications, when monitoring grants and evaluating the way our funding programmes work and the effect they have. These organisations may include accountants, external evaluators and other organisations or groups involved in delivering the project.
- We may also share information with other government departments, organisations providing match funding and other organisations and individuals with a legitimate interest in applications and grants, or for the prevention or detection of fraud.
- We might use the data you provide for our own research. We recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of vulnerable groups and their details will not be made public in any way, except as required by law.

Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives members of the public the right to request any information that we hold, subject to certain exemption that may apply. This includes information received from third parties, such as, although not limited to, grant applicants, grant holders and contractors. If information is requested under the Freedom of Information Act we will release it, subject to exemptions; although we may consult with you first. If you think that information you are providing may be exempt from release if requested, you should let us know when you apply. For further information please visit the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.gov.uk.