CONTENTS

1. Guidance and Information Links
2. Funding Period
3. Targeted Delivery Areas
4. Maximum Available Award
5. Partnership Applications
6. Application Assessment Criteria
7. Essential Assessment Criteria
8. Cost Scoring Methodology
9. Operational Standards
10. Need Identified
11. Impact to be Achieved
12. Funding Opportunity Outline
13. Key Performance Indicators



1. GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION LINKS

ALL FUNDING APPLICATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO THE ALLOCATION AND AVAILABILITY OF FUNDING FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

All applicant Organisations should read the guidance notes regarding applying for the EA Funding Schemes for Regional and Local Voluntary Youth Organisations below completing an application. Outlined below are links to this information.

1. Guidance Notes for Applicants
2. Terms and Conditions of EA Youth Service Funding for Voluntary Youth Organisations
3. Moderation and Monitoring of EA Funded Voluntary Youth Organisations
4. Financial Verification of EA Funded Voluntary Youth Organisations
5. Use of the Education Authority Logo for EA Funded Voluntary Youth Organisations

2. FUNDING PERIOD

Start Date	1st April 2026
End Date	31st March 2029

3. TARGETED DELIVERY AREAS

Assessment of application responses will be based in the context of delivery for the following target areas

DISTRICT ELECTORAL AREA	WITH FOCUS ON
Slieve Croob	Castlewellan
LOCAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN AREA	Newry, Mourne and Down

4. MAXIMUM AVAILABLE AWARD

Max Available for the full funding period of this funding opportunity	£126,395
Max Available Award Year 1 (2026-27)	£41,088
Max Available Award Year 2 (2027-28)	£42,121
Max Available Award Year 3 (2028-29)	£43,186

**Funding levels will be reviewed annually and are:*

- *Subject to budget from the Department of Education*
- *Subject to change as a result of partnership work*
- *Subject to changes based the DE review of Youth Work Policy.*
- *Subject to the outcome of the Task and Finish Group on SEND*

5.PARTNERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The Education Authority welcomes partnership applications. As part of your application the option will be provided to make a partnership application. Should you choose this option you will be required to provide an outline of all partners involved and meet the associated essential criteria requirements which denotes expectations for responses from partnership applications.

6. APPLICATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Applications which meet the above Essential Criteria will be evaluated by panels and scores weighted as outlined below. Applicant organisations are required to meet the minimum marks in ALL AREAS to be considered for

Criterion	Weighting	Available Marks	Minimum Marks Required
Child and young person centred	20%	200	**50**
Delivering services based on need and through partnership	40%	400	**150**
Evidence informed	30%	300	**100**
Budget (see cost scoring methodology)	10%	100	N/A
Total	**100%**	**1000**	

7. ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

The following criteria are essential requirements for all applications for this award that provide assurances to the Education Authority that appropriate governance, safeguarding, policy and tenure arrangements are in place to deliver on the award requirements.

Criterion	Minimum Grade Required
Organisations (including all partners in a collaborative application) are Registered Local Voluntary Youth Organisation(s)	Active and Verified Registration with EA as a Local Voluntary Youth Organisation
Organisations (including all partners in a collaborative application) are not part of any other collaborative application within the same funding ID	Single Applicant Organisations are not part of any other Local Area Based Funding Application OR Any partner is part of any other application to the same Funding ID received by the Education Authority
Declaration (and if applicable by upload) on your application that your organisation has suitable tenure and premises in place at the point of application, which include appropriate insurance, health and safety arrangements to deliver on this award in the targeted delivery area	Yes Response required Where applicable upload of evidence to support
(If applicable) Letters of Support outlining the contribution of all joint applicants provided, who are verified as registered with the Education Authority Youth Service as a Local Voluntary Youth Organisation.	Letter of support per joint application provided, outlining the role of the partner in the delivery of the award which is signed & dated by a Management Committee/Board representative.
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies that meet the requirements outlined for the scheme (see requirements here**)**	All required areas covered in Policy
Organisation Governance Arrangements in place to meet the requirements of Bonafede status (see requirements here**)**	All required areas of governance covered in documentation, Signed & Dated
Application costs do not exceed the Maximum available award, outlined for this funding opportunity	Figures are equal to or less than the Maximum available award
Delivery of all youth work (including awarded funding opportunities) are required to embed the follow Polices/Frameworks within the delivery of awarded plan • **Community Relations Equality & Diversity (CRED) Policy including the CRED Addendum** • **Joint Department of Health and Department of Education Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework**	Confirmation that all applicant(s) associated with the application will deliver in line with these policies and frameworks

*All applicant organisations **must pass the Essential Criteria** for their application to be considered for assessment.*

IMPORTANT NOTE: Applications who fail to meet the any of the areas in essential criteria will NOT be assessed by panels.

8. COST SCORING METHODOLOGY

Costs will be evaluated on the basis using the figures provided in the application questions by all organisations to this particular funding opportunity. Marks will be awarded using the **Lowest Price Methodology**. In this methodology the lowest total cost scores **full marks** (100 marks) and the lowest total cost is divided by each of the other applications to this funding opportunity and multiplied by the marks available (100). The actual score therefore will be determined by the applicant organisations cost's distance from the lowest applicant organisations total cost. The cost is to include the following only;

- **Staff Salaries**
- **Programme Development**
- **Overheads**

These costs must be included on your application form where you are instructed to do so. **All assessment panel members will not have access to your costs or total marks awarded for cost.**

Applicants or Organisations who provide budget figures for funding opportunity in response to their application questions in will not be considered for assessment.

Applicants will be required to submit a detailed budget breakdown using the template provided. You must submit your original Excel Spreadsheet and not a PDF Version or other file types.

Example of Lowest Cost Methodology

Organisation	Total Cost	Lowest Price Methodology	Awarded Marks
Organisation 1	£1,000	Lowest Price	100 Marks
Organisation 2	£1,001	(£1,000 ÷ £1,001) x 100	99 Marks
Organisation 3	£1,500	(£1,000 ÷ £1,500) x 100	66 Marks
Organisation 4	£2,000	(£1,000 ÷ £2,000) x 100	50 Marks
Organisation 5	£2,500	(£1,000 ÷ £2,500) x 100	40 Marks

9. OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

If successful, organisations will be assessed as part of ongoing moderation and monitoring of funding by EA in the following areas:

Operational Standards

- Organisation are required to ensure the voice of children and young people, including wider stakeholders within the delivery area are consulted on regarding the design and delivery of services to meet identified need.
- Robust quality assurance processes/systems are in place to ensure a culture of continuous improvement is in place relating to the awarded funding, and effective action is taken to address areas for improvement.
- Engage in developmental opportunities to enhance service provision to include support from any activities arising from the Practice and Workforce Development Strategy. Sessions are allocated to support this in a proportionate manner.
- Engagement with the designated Regional Strategic provider to achieve improvements, if required.
- Reporting is completed in line with the terms and conditions of funding in the stated formats and within the stated dates.

10. NEED IDENTIFIED

Following an extensive Needs Assessment process, young people and other stakeholders have articulated a range of needs and issues within Castlewellan and the broader Slieve Croob DEA. The priority issues that the Youth Service can have a positive impact on, through this funding opportunity, include:

- Access to safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces is limited, particularly for young people from rural backgrounds.
- Young people lack access to life skills education and preparation for adulthood, limiting their independence and resilience
- The emotional health and wellbeing of young people is negatively impacted by anxiety, bullying, online vulnerabilities, stress, body image concerns, risk taking behaviours and social isolation
- Limited access to play and leisure opportunities which promote personal and social development as well as a sense of belonging
- Delicate feelings of safety in homes, schools, and communities affect young people's sense of stability and trust
- Ongoing peer pressure and substance misuse, with few positive alternatives or protective influences
- Consideration within this area should be given to young people who wish to access services through the medium of Irish language

Delivery of this award will ensure youth provision is accessible 2 nights per week.

11. IMPACT TO BE ACHIEVED

The Newry, Mourne and Down Youth Development Plan has committed to delivering services based on need and through relevant partnerships as a strategic theme, requiring accessible universal youth provision to be available for children and young people in the area at the right time and place based on available resources. The delivery of this award will ensure youth provision is accessible at evenings and weekends.

The successful delivery of this funding award will ensure that children and young people have access to quality youth work in a safe and welcoming space within the community. Impact will be measured to demonstrate the extent to which young people have:

- Increased protective factors in their lives
- Increased sense of belonging
- Enhanced social and emotional skills development
- Increased agency to make informed decisions
- Improved social connectedness
- Increased sense of power to change the world around them

12. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY OUTLINE

EA Strategic Theme: Delivering services based on need and through partnership		
Headline Goal	Accessible, universal youth provision is available at the right time and place.	
Actions to Achieve Goal	• Delivery of open access youth provision, in safe and welcoming spaces supported by Local Area Based Funding. • Promote and develop the voice of children and young people in all aspects of service planning and delivery. • Contribution to other Actions outlined within the Local Youth Development Plan, as prioritised by the awarded organisation(s).	
We will deliver: (Output)	Delivery Requirement	When (Plan Year/s)

Youth Work Provision	• Delivery of open access youth provision, in safe and welcoming spaces, for a minimum of 6 hours per week, 48 weeks per year.
	• 46 weeks must include a minimum of 2 evenings to ensure Youth Work is:
	  ○ Delivered in the right place
	  ○ Accessible at the right time
	  ○ Planned to prioritise young people aged 9-18 years old
	  ○ Facilitated through a broad curriculum, in-line with the Model for Effective Practice
	  ○ An average attendance of 35 young people, or more, per session
	• Consult with young people to develop a Delivery Plans part of the conditional offer phase for funding, detailing the thematic youth work programmes agreed for delivery which:
	  ○ Aligns with the need identified and contributes to the impact to be achieved (sections 10 & 11).
	  ○ Includes an appropriate participative structure to ensure the voice of children and young people is reflected within the planning and delivery of the funded programme.
	  ○ Reporting tasks to be completed accurately and submitted within the given deadlines.
	  ○ Directly engage young people in the development of Year 2 and Year 3 delivery plans which will be agreed on an annual basis.
	• Contribute to the sharing of practice and promotion of collaboration by engaging in quarterly meetings organised by EA.
	• Report annually on the membership for that period via the Youth Service Engagement Framework.
	• This funding cannot be used for school-based delivery.
		2026-2027
		2027-2028
		2028-2029

13. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

The Education Authority reserves the right to terminate funding or apply funding sanctions if the successfully awarded organisation(s) fails to meet the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) outlined below and within the Terms and Conditions that accompany the Funding Award Letter of Offer:

Priority Area	Key Performance Measure
Moderation and Monitoring	• **Maintain a minimum level of "Standards Met" through Moderation visits carried out by an EA Officer. 1 Moderation visit will be carried out by EA per annum.** • **Maintain a minimum level of "Standards Met" through Monitoring visits carried out by an EA Officer. 1 Monitoring visit will be carried out by EA per annum.**
Financial Verification & Receipting and Vouching	• **Maintain a minimum level of "Satisfactory" financial verification visits carried out on a basis of one per annum by an EA Officer for the period of the funding. N.B. follow up financial verifications maybe required where concerns are noted. Verification, Receipting and Vouching are carried out on the following frequency** • **Over £5,000 to £30,000 total funding per annum requires the return of income and expenditure report at end of year or project term along with Original Receipts/Invoices and Statements** • **Over £30,000 funding per annum requires the return of income and expenditure report at end of year or project term along with Original Receipts/Invoices and Statements AND a Financial Verification Visit by an EA Officer(s)**
Reporting	• **Reporting tasks completed accurately and submitted within the given deadlines** • **Annual Report submitted**
Operational Standards and Embedding Policy	• **Organisation are required to ensure the voice of children and young people, including wider stakeholders within the delivery area are consulted on regarding the design and delivery of services to meet identified need.** • **Robust quality assurance processes/systems are in place to ensure a culture of continuous improvement is in place relating to the awarded funding, and effective action is taken to address areas for improvement.** • **Engage in developmental opportunities to enhance service provision to include support from any activities arising from the Practice and Workforce Development Strategy. Sessions are allocated to support this in a proportionate manner.** • **Engagement with the designated Regional Strategic provider to achieve improvements, if required.** • **Reporting is completed in line with the terms and conditions of funding in the stated formats and within the stated dates.** • **Embedding of key policies relevant to Youth Work which must include CRED Policy, Health & Wellbeing Framework and Shared Education Policy.**
Contribution to Headline Goals	• **Operational delivery of Universal Youth Work Provision in line with the published funding opportunity.** • **All agreed Programmes delivered, achieving the intended outcome, within the timeframe agreed.** • **Effective participative structures in place and delivered as agreed as part of your delivery plan.**