An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige
Department of
Children and Youth Affairs

EARLY YEARS CAPITAL

2017

APPLICANT GUIDELINES

pobal
government supporting communities

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1   Overview of Early Years Capital 2017

1.1 Early Years Capital 2017

Through Early Years Capital 2017, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs aims to support the sector to increase the number of available places in registered early years services in 2017 and to contribute to improving the sustainability and quality of early years provision.

€4m is available for allocation in 2017 across three strands as follows:

-        Strand 1: Service Expansion (€3m)

-        Strand 2: Building Improvements & Maintenance (€500,000)

-        Strand 3: Natural Outdoor Play Space (€500,000)

Strand 2 is not open to private early years services.

Capacity

One aim is to enable the expansion of early years services in areas of greatest need, where it is evident that supply is not meeting demand. This year's programme will include and support the expansion of places for 0-3 year olds as well as increasing the number of ECCE rooms. It is anticipated that demand for places will continue to rise due to the expansion of the Early Childhood Care (ECCE) and the announcement of the Affordable Early Years Service Providers Scheme in the 2016 budget.

Sustainability

Alongside increasing the number of places in services, it is important that buildings, specifically community services that received large capital investment in the past, remain fit for purpose and are energy efficient. This year's programme will include opportunities for investment in works, which will contribute to improving sustainability by reducing the energy and building maintenance costs in the short term.

Quality

The quality initiative component of the capital grant this year aims to provide opportunities for children to play outdoors in a way that promotes physical development, provides health benefits and facilitates children to learn about risks and challenges in a natural and safe environment. This initiative is targeted at smaller services, particularly those in disadvantaged areas who have not previously availed of such funding.

1.2 The Role of Pobal

Pobal has been appointed to administer the Early Years Capital 2017 on behalf of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA).

For more information about Pobal and what we do, please visit our website at www.pobal.ie

The programme will open for applications on Friday 24th March and will close for applications at **3pm on Friday 21st April, 2017.**

All queries about the programme should be sent via e-mail to onlinesupport@pobal.ie.

2. Important things to know

2.1 Who is eligible to apply?

Early Years Services must meet the following basic eligibility criteria:
- Have a PIP Account
- Be registered with Tusla
- Be tax compliant i.e. have a Tax Registration Number (TRN) and Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN)
- Receive funding from one of more of the DCYA programmes outlined in the table below.

Funding Strand	Funded under the following DCYA Programmes:
Strand 1: New 0-3s places	- Community Childcare Subvention (CCS); - Training and Employment (TEC) programme - Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).
Strand 1: New ECCE places	Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
Strand 2: **Building improvement or maintenance**	- Community Childcare Subvention (CCS); - Training and Employment (TEC) programme - Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE **AND** Have previously received funding of €200k, or more under EOCP or NCIP funding programmes
Strand 3: **Natural Outdoor Play**	- Community Childcare Subvention (CCS); - Training and Employment (TEC) programme - Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

If you do not meet the basic eligibility criteria, the online form will not allow you to complete and submit your application form. If you believe that you are eligible to apply and the application form is not available to you on the system, you can contact us **via e-mail at onlinesupport@pobal.ie** and we will endeavour to respond to you within 2 working days.

2.2 What is the application process?

This is an on-line application process via the PIP system on the Pobal website (www.pobal.ie)

The call for applications is a competitive application process. Your application will be in direct competition with all other applications received**. Only applications that meet the required standard and have submitted all the required documents will be considered for funding.**

No application forms, information or submissions will be accepted via email or hardcopy.

2.3 What you need to do in advance

In preparing the information for your application, we urge you to read this document and to view the on-line tutorial videos which will be available on the PIP portal when the application process opens. We also advise you to:-

- Download a WORD version of the application form from our website to prepare what is required. www.pobal.ie
- Be as concise as possible in preparing your proposal and in the information included in the application form.
- Have your current PIP User Name, password and DCYA reference number ready to enable you to access the on-line form
- Have your planning permission reference number ready (if applicable)

Multiple Services

Where an owner has **multiple services**, the maximum number of grants awarded will be two.

DCYA reference numbers

Where an applicant is seeking a grant under Strand 1 to expand their services by either creating a new facility or by relocating their service, the applicant must apply using the DCYA reference number for the new facility. In exceptional circumstances, where you have not yet been issued with your new DCYA reference number, you may apply using your current DCYA reference number. However you will not be issued with a grant agreement or receive any payments until you complete the process with Tusla and DCYA and receive your new facility number.

2.4 Completing the online application form

Applications must be made using the online application form, accessed through the PIP portal, using your current User Name and Password. Please refer to our online support guide which can be found on the PIP portal.

You will be directed to enter your DCYA reference number, which the system will use to automatically generate your personalised application form. If an application form does not open for you, it may be that you are ineligible to apply as your organisation/service does not meet one or more of the basic requirements. If you believe that you are eligible to apply and the application form is not available to you on the system you can contact us **via e-mail at onlinesupport@pobal.ie** and we will endeavour to respond to you within 2 working days.

Some information on the application form will be pre-filled from your records on the PIP system. You must contact Pobal if your details have changed so that they can be amended.

Please be aware that some boxes in the application form have character limits i.e. there is a limit on the amount of text you can insert into the box. Please try to be concise and factual in your responses. The character count includes spaces, punctuation and lines.

You will be able to edit, save and exit your application form as often as you like. However, **once you submit your on-line application, the information within the form cannot be edited and no additional documents can be attached or submitted.**

The application form must be completed in full. If you have not completed all the mandatory questions, denoted by a red asterisk, you will not be able to successfully submit your application form.

2.5 Key Dates

Application guidance	Week commencing 20th March 2017
Online application open	Friday 24th March 2017
Applications close	**3pm on Friday 21st April 2017**
Appraisal of applications	April/May 2017
Grant outcomes	June 2017
Grant Agreements issued to successful applicants	June 2017
Date by which your grant and own funds must be fully spent and reported to Pobal	**30th November 2017**

Please **give yourself sufficient time to complete the application form online.** Applications received after the closing date **(3pm on Friday 21st April)** will be automatically deemed ineligible.

All project proposals must be realistic, achievable and time bound. If successful, applicants must be ready to start their project as soon as they have received an approval email from Pobal. All projects must be completed, and the final expenditure report submitted to Pobal, by 30th November 2017. No exceptions to this deadline will be made.

2.6 Decision Making

Pobal will appraise all applications and make recommendations to the Department for the Children and Youth Affairs. All Pobal recommendations will be presented to the Minister for approval and final decision.

Section 4 outlines the criteria used to appraise each application. All decisions will be communicated via e-mail to all applicants.

2.7 Post Approval

- Pobal will issue a grant agreement to all successful applicants, which you will be required to sign and return within the timeframe specified.
- All applicants must be tax compliant prior to the issuing of the grant agreement and a further check will be undertaken by Pobal prior to payment.
- A condition of the funding will be that you must agree to continue to provide childcare services for a minimum of **3 years** post completion of the general terms and conditions of the grant agreement and final payment of the grant
- All applicants are required to comply with public procurement guidelines.
- Where applicants are registered for Value Added Tax (VAT), the grant awarded will be net of VAT.
- All applicants must report to Pobal on the total project costs. **All monies must be spent and reported to Pobal before 30th November 2017.**

2.8 Payments

- **All of the grant awarded must be expended and reported to Pobal no later than 30th November 2017**
- Payment of the grant will be as follows:
  - ✓ 90% of the grant awarded on receipt of your signed grant agreement and fulfilment of any prepayments conditions outlined on the grant agreement
  - ✓ 10% of the grant awarded will be paid retrospectively on receipt of the final on-line financial return detailing how the grant was actually spent. Only when all the correct information is received with the on-line return will the final payment be released.

3. Additional support for applicants

Pobal has a help desk, which is available to applicants during the application period. You can contact the help desk in the first instance by e-mail at onlinesupport@pobal.ie or telephone 01-5117222

Pobal has developed a number of on-line tutorial videos support which will be available on the PIP portal when the application process opens.

Applicants may also contact their local City/County Childcare Committee for additional support and advice.

Section 4: Selection and award criteria per strand

Early Years Capital 2017 **Strand 1: New Places**	
Overview	This strand will support the expansion of early years services in the community and private sector, particularly in areas of greatest need where it is evident that supply is not meeting demand. Funding under this strand must be used for: - The creation of a minimum of 6 additional places for 0-3 year olds **and/or** - The creation of a minimum of 11 additional places through new or additional ECCE room(s) or - The provision of new early years services in areas where demand is evidenced but is clearly not being met.
Programme Requirements	Applicants must meet the following criteria: - Demonstrate a need for the expansion of the service - Demonstrate that their service will not displace or duplicate another local service. - Planning permission. ✓ Provide evidence of planning permission i.e. have a planning permission reference number on the application form. ✓ Where planning permission is not required, the applicant must provide a letter from the relevant Local Authority stating clearly that planning permission is not required. - Rent or lease agreements for new facilities. ✓ Where the expansion of a service requires "new premises" that will be rented or leased, the applicant must provide evidence that the landlord or owner has/will enter into a future rent/lease agreement for at least 3 years. ✓ For current facilities, you are asked to confirm that the appropriate rent/lease agreement is in place and will remain in place for at least 3 years. - Attach one quotation or estimate for each cost applied for. - Complete the application form by the closing date via the on-line application form. Applications who meet this criteria will then be appraised against the following: **Meeting the strand priorities** Applicants must clearly outline the number of additional places which they will create and their type. They must provide supporting evidence and/or analysis to corroborate the current demand and potential demand. **Value for money** The cost per additional full time place created and the justification and explanation for the costs provided by the applicant is taken into account in assessing value for money. **Capacity of the organisation** The track record and performance of the applicant in relation to current or previous contracts or grant agreements with Pobal/DCYA is reviewed as part of the appraisal process. - Pobal will consult with the City/County Childcare Committees on applications which meet the minimum requirements to double check the information provided in the application form.
Who is not eligible to apply?	- Applicants wishing to improve the quality of the facilities or infrastructure without providing an additional ECCE room by September 2017 or additional spaces for 0-3 years. - Services only offering afterschool provision. - Services that do not have appropriate planning permission from the Local Authority to operate an early years service.

	• Services that do not have evidence of planning permission in place at the time of application (if required)
How much can I apply for?	• The maximum grant you can apply for under this strand is €50,000. • The minimum grant you can apply for under this strand is €25,000. • The maximum amount of funding for <u>equipment</u> is €5,000 as part of a bigger application. **You cannot apply for equipment only.** Where the total project costs exceed €50,000, applicants must provide evidence of the total funding package in their application.
Eligible Costs	• Alterations and refurbishment works associated with the provision of additional places for 0-3 year olds and or ECCE. • New build costs associated with the expansion of places for 0-3 year or increased ECCE places. • The purchase of a prefabricated structure to create additional places for 0-3 year olds and or ECCE. • Fit-out costs to create additional places for 0-3 year olds. • Fit-out costs for additional ECCE places. • Additional play equipment to facilitate the increase in ECCE places and/or 0-3 year old places. **Note:** You cannot apply for equipment only.
Ineligible costs	• General repairs and maintenance of existing buildings to maintain current services • Architect fees • Legal fees • Any professional fees and planning permission fees associated with the capital works • IT equipment, including laptops and PCs • Security cameras • Office equipment • Stand-alone equipment

	Early Years Capital 2017 **Strand 2: Building Improvements and Maintenance**
Priority	This strand aims to ensure that facilities run by **community based** early years services continue to be fit for purpose, are energy efficient and maximise the effective use of the building.

Programme Requirements	To be eligible, applicants must:
	• Be a community early years services, which received a capital grant greater than or equal to €200,000 or more under the EOCP or NCIP funding programmes.
	• Provide evidence of need of the proposed works; for example a report for an engineer, architect, quantity surveyor or any other relevant professional.
	• Have attached one quotation or estimate for each cost applied for.
	• Have completed the application form by the closing date via the on-line application form.
	
	Applications who meet this criteria will then appraised against the following:
	• **Value for money**
	  The cost per additional full time place created and the justification and explanation for the costs provided by the applicant is taken into account in assessing value for money.
	• **Capacity of the organisation**
	  The track record and performance of the applicant in relation to current or previous contracts or grant agreements with Pobal/DCYA is reviewed as part of the appraisal process.
	
	• Pobal will consult with the City/County Childcare Committees on applications which meet the minimum requirements to double check the information provided in the application form

Who is not eligible to apply?	Private early years' service providers are not eligible to apply.
How much can I apply for?	• The maximum grant an applicant can apply for under this strand is €20,000. • The minimum grant an applicant can apply for under this strand is €10,000. Where the total project costs, under this strand exceed €20,000, applicants must provide evidence of the total funding package in their application.
Eligible Costs	• Essential repairs to the existing building and facilities • Replacement of the building's fixtures and fittings • Works highlighted as a direct result of an inspection by TUSLA/DES or other competent authorities • Works to remove internal divides or rearrange internal spaces to improve efficiency.
Ineligible Costs	• Architect fees • Legal fees • Any professional fees and planning permission fees associated with the capital works

	Early Years Capital 2017 **Strand 3: Natural Outdoor Play Area**
Priority	The objective of Strand 3 is the creation of "natural" outdoor play areas, which will contribute to improving the quality of early years' services and have a positive impact on the environment. The natural outdoor space will be constructed using natural products and will provide opportunities to facilitate children's ability to learn about risk, exploration and challenge.
Programme Requirements	To be eligible and recommended for the funding, applicants must: • Have 25 or fewer unique children registered in the services as at 28th Feb 2017. • Have attached one quotation or estimate for each cost applied for. • Submit the application on time via the on-line application form. • Have applied for eligible costs under this strand. Applications who meet the basic criteria will then appraised against the following: • **Meeting Strand 3 priorities -** Each applicant will be required to demonstrate how the natural outdoor play area proposed will improve the quality of early years' services and have a positive impact on the environment. • **Capacity of the organisation** The track record and performance of the applicant in relation to current or previous contracts or grant agreements with Pobal/DCYA will be taken into account. • **Deprivation Score** In the event of over subscription of this strand, regard will be given to the level of disadvantage in an area (indicated by CSO statistics and Pobal Haase Deprivation Index) when ranking applications. • Pobal will consult with the City/County Childcare Committees on applications which meet the minimum requirements to double check the information provided in the application form.
Who is not eligible to apply?	• Early years services who have 25 or more unique children registered in the services as at 28th Feb 2017. • Applicants who received a grant for natural outdoor space under EYC 2013.
How much can I apply for?	The maximum grant you can apply for under this strand is €5,000. The minimum grant you can apply for under this strand is €3,000. Where the total project costs exceed €5,000, applicants must provide evidence of the total funding package in their application.
Eligible Costs	**Indicative List of Eligible Costs** • Natural shade – Trees, hedging, willow structures • Canvas sun shelters, tents, tunnels, parachutes canopies etc. • Hard Top • Natural Grass • Gravel/ clay/ large rocks • Mounds • Sand/ bark chippings/compost • Bird boxes and feeders • Natural planting / growbags/ window boxes/ hanging baskets • Trellis • Flower beds/ compost

	• Tree rope swings & traversing walls • Ride, balance and steer wheeled toys, stilts and buggies. • Tree stumps for balance and coordination • Tools for digging, planting, woodworking • Sensory gardens • Enclosed areas – e.g., dens, tunnels, boxes • Comfortable seating – benches, logs, cushions • Fixed seating – benches, treehouses • Flexible seating – bean bags, rugs, cushions • Natural areas – Trees to sit under, willow domes • Nature trails with replicas of animals along the way
Ineligible costs	• Permanent construction projects • Rubber matting, grass matting and safety surfacing (including astro turf) • Clothing and footwear