



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# Community Services Programme

Interim Programme Manual

Version 1 – January 2023

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## 1. Introduction

The Community Services Programme (CSP) *Interim* Programme Manual outlines the basic information for you in respect of the delivering the programme. It provides information on the vision, strategic objectives, three sub-programmes, funding model, rules, and monitoring framework. This information, plus other relevant information available from the [Pobal Website](#) and [Previous CSP Operating Manual](#) etc., will assist organisations to understand and implement the programme requirements, including the CSP ICT system/reporting platform.

## 2. Vision, Strategic Objectives and Horizontal Principles

The vision of the Community Services Programme (CSP) is:

To support community organisations that operate to a social purpose to provide services that meet identified needs and provide employment locally contributing to sustainable, inclusive and empowered communities.

The strategic objectives of the Programme are:

- To address community needs through supporting services and community assets ensuring these are inclusive and responsive to those experiencing disadvantage or marginalisation.
- To provide employment opportunities and improve the employability of individuals most distant from the labour market/or in disadvantaged areas.
- To strengthen and support community organisations operating as social enterprises to deliver improved facilities and services and to pilot innovative social economy initiatives.

The horizontal principles of the Programme are:

- Promoting social inclusion and equality
- Building sustainable communities

CSP contributes to the Department of Rural and Community Development's (DRCD) mission to "promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland" and Strategic Goal 3 "support empowered, inclusive and resilient communities and a thriving volunteer culture".

CSP will contribute to DRCD's commitment to the values<sup>1</sup> of social inclusion, active participation, collectivism, empowering communities, sustainable development, social justice and human rights, equality and anti-discrimination.

The ambition of the programme is to:

- Support and encourage organisations to focus on social inclusion and addressing disadvantage. There will be an expectation on organisations to ensure that there is meaningful participation with those benefiting from their activities in decisions about the facilities and/or services and/or employment opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup> [Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities – a five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland 2019-2024](#)

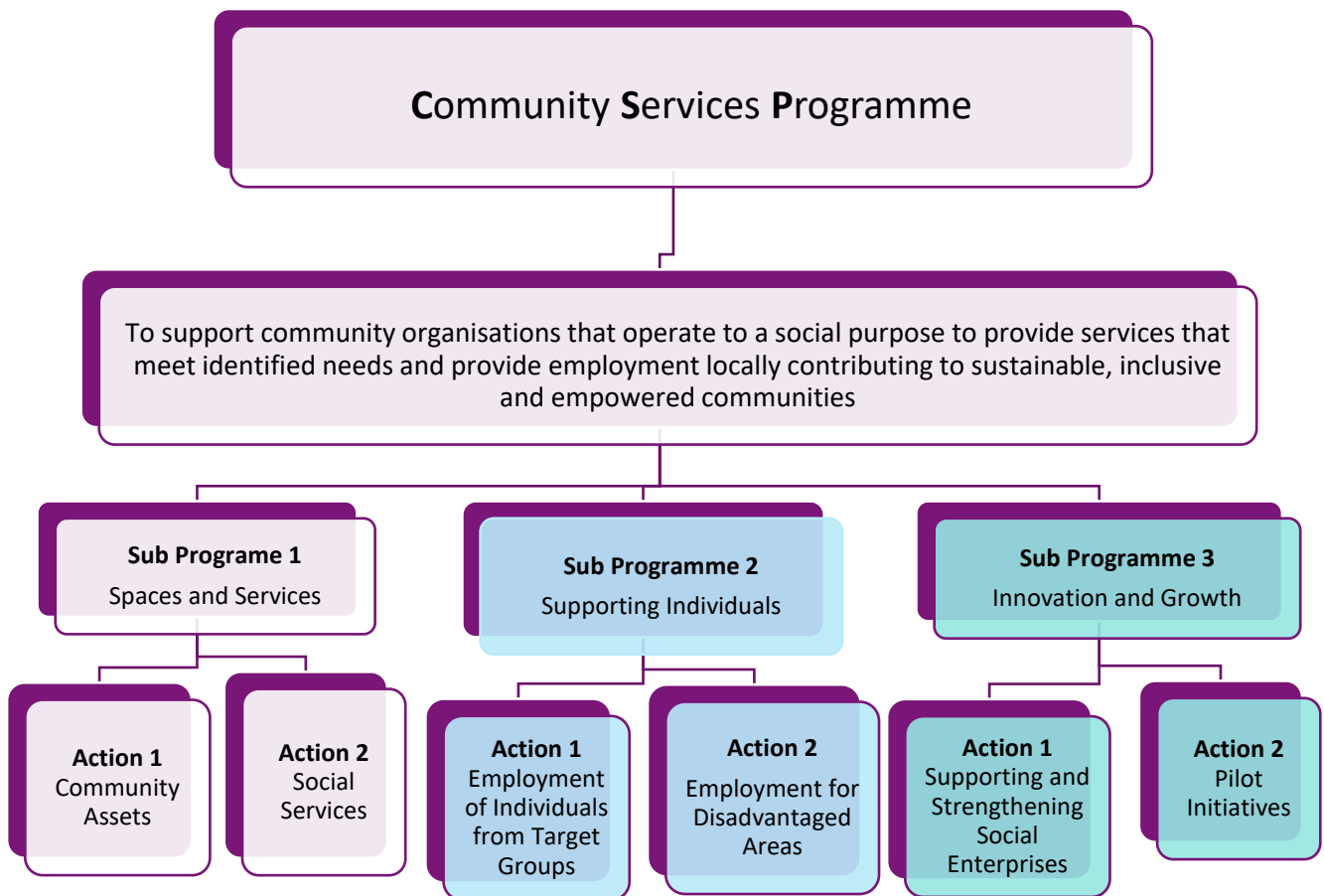
For example, by using simple and straight forward communications to make it easy for individuals and groups to engage in decisions about things that affect them such as in the planning, identifying need and delivery of a service, or in the development and utilisation of community infrastructure or assets in their local community.

- Encourage organisations to generate income to meet the needs of their local community.
- Encourage organisations to avail of training and supports available to them from other Government schemes.
- Building the capacity of organisations so they continue to meet existing and identified emerging needs which improves the quality of life of those most disadvantaged in their community.
- Encourage organisations to strengthen their synergies with labour activation schemes such as Community Employment (CE), Rural Social Scheme (RSS) and Tús.
- Encourage and support organisations to collaborate with other organisations, statutory bodies or, national support organisations in the delivery of their activities.
- Support innovation which improves the social economy/green economy and create employment opportunities, through new calls for applications when funding is available.

### 3. Programme Overview

The programme is divided into three sub-programmes and each sub-programme has its own aim. Figure 1 below provides a graphic illustration of the programme.

Figure 1 – Overview



## 4. Sub-Programmes

The programme is broken down into three sub-programmes:

### **Sub-Programme 1: Spaces and Services**

The main aim of this sub-programme is to support organisations that are addressing existing or emerging local need (responsive), increasing inclusiveness and alleviating disadvantage by:

- Maximising the utilisation of community assets
- Provision of local services
- or both of the above

Note: It is acknowledged that some organisations in this sub-programme are most likely to have limited potential to be self-sustainable.

Organisations supported under this sub-programme are expected to:

- Identify the need for their planned activities. This should be up to date and an ongoing process to improve the quality of their activities and to ensure they are meeting need or addressing current gaps in service provision.
- Have ongoing engagement and participation of the people they serve in the community and their specific target group(s) in decision making and their governance structures.
- Be pro-active in targeting individuals most disadvantaged and vulnerable in the local community.
- Have financial planning in place. This is to ensure improvements and continuity of services/activities within the community and reduce the organisation's reliance on public funding (where possible) and demonstrate how better financial independence can be achieved.
- Demonstrate why they are best placed to deliver the proposed services and/or manage and develop the community asset.
- Demonstrate how their activities are aligned and linked with other local strategies and community planning.
- Have collaboration and linkages with other organisations and public bodies.

### **Sub-Programme 2: Supporting Individuals**

The main aim of this sub-programme is to support organisations with a focus on the provision of "employment" for specific target groups of the Programme and/or where the level of long-term unemployment is high in a specific local area.

In this sub-programme there will be an expectation that organisations will focus on the personal progress for individuals. For example:

- Opportunities for progression within or outside the organisation
- Provision of skills or training
- Linkages with other relevant local supports
- Facilitating training and supports with employment

## **Targeting**

Organisations under this sub-programme are required to provide employment opportunities and supports to those most disadvantaged i.e. focusing on the specified vulnerable target groups that may include areas of high level of disadvantage. The organisation is encouraged to have established links or integrate with other local support organisations in their area to ensure that there is a joined-up approach in supporting employees from vulnerable target groups and disadvantaged areas.

Organisations in this sub-programme are expected to enable employees build their skills to continue to be employed in the organisation and or find employment outside of the organisation. Therefore, some employment opportunities will be timebound and some will not.

## **Sub-Programme 3: Innovation and Growth**

The aims of this sub-programme are to:

- Support the scaling up of specific types of services/activities of social enterprises i.e. accelerate their growth.
- Promote and encourage social enterprises to become self-sustainable.
- Enable innovation i.e. new solutions to local problems; address climate change and improve the circular/green economy.

Where funding is available pilot initiatives will be developed to:

- Meet identified gaps which are a fit with strategic objectives of the Programme.
- Enable innovation i.e., new solutions to local problems; address climate change and improve the green economy.



## 5. Eligible Costs, CSP Funding Model and Ineligible Costs

### Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are limited to a contribution towards direct salary costs for specified roles.

A contribution towards overhead costs or other costs may be added to the eligible costs at the discretion of DRCD depending on the nature of a particular call for applications and the budget available.

The CSP contribution per individual employee will be calculated on a pro-rata basis per Full Time Equivalence (FTE) based on the number of contracted hours, as set out in the employee's contract of employment.

### CSP Funding Model

The CSP contribution will be calculated in line with the new (differential) funding model based on the three distinct components of:

1. Level of Deprivation (40%): Areas with the highest level of deprivation will achieve a higher score.
2. Number of CSP Supported Employees from the CSP Employment Target Groups (20%): Higher numbers of CSP supported employees recruited from the pre-defined list of CSP employment target groups representing disadvantaged or marginalised groups will receive a higher score.
3. Earning Potential of the CSP Services (40%): Organisations most in need of funding will receive a higher score under this metric. Net earnings, annual surplus/deficit and annual turnover from Annual Financial Statements<sup>2</sup> will be taken into account.

An overall rating will be calculated for each organisation that will determine the annual rate of funding as detailed below. The rate applied is dependent on the annual budgetary process by the Department.

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<sup>2</sup> Earnings potential is calculated net of the impact of amortisation and depreciation on the Annual Financial Statements that are reviewed. This is specific to the CSP supported service where this is a pluri-active entity.

Overall Rating		Rate per Employee (FTE)	Rate per Manager (FTE)
High	<b>8-10</b> 80% to 100%	€23,033	€36,000
Medium	<b>5-7</b> 50% to 79%	€21,033	€34,000
Low	<b>0-4</b> 0% to 49%	€19,033	€32,000

CSP contribution valid as at 01/01/2023. DRCD reserves the right to:

- amend/adjust the scoring framework based on policy priorities
- increase/decrease the funding rates in line with annual budgetary process for the Programme

### **Ineligible Costs**

The following costs are not eligible for funding under this Programme, unless by exception as agreed with DRCD for a specific call under the programme.

- Salary or other employment costs not directly related to the CSP supported services/facilities/activities.
- The costs of employing “Casual workers” defined as part-time workers who works less than 13 weeks continuous service, are not in regular or seasonal employment or are casual based on a collective agreement.
- Any financial contribution towards the following associated employment costs for CSP supported employees:
  - Pension Costs
  - Redundancy Costs
  - Training or supports
  - Equipment
  - Legal costs associated with employment of staff
  - In kind contributions
- Contribution towards the following salary costs/roles:
  - People providing professional medical services e.g. Care Assistants providing medical care, nurses, occupational therapists etc. *Note: salary contributions towards care assistants providing social and practical (non-medical supports) are eligible*
  - Licensed Premises Bar Staff
  - Community Development Workers
  - Youth Workers
- Retrospective costs i.e. any costs which occur prior to the “Delivery Period” as defined in the Grant Agreement.

Note: This is an indicative list. DRCD reserves the right to update and amend the ineligible costs during the programme life cycle.

## 6. Programme Specific Rules

- a) Grants are only provided for a minimum of one full time equivalent (FTE).
- b) Organisations may employ individuals on a full time or reduced hours' basis including job sharing arrangements.
- c) The number of hours worked by employees is determined by the employer to meet their requirements.

For the purposes of calculating the grant contribution under CSP, full time or reduced hours working is equivalent to:

Full Time Employee equals Full Time Equivalence (FTE)	Employee who works a minimum of 37.5 hours per week
Reduced Hours Employees (PT)	Employee who works less than 37.5 hours per week

- d) The grant cannot be used to employ people who are also in receipt of the following statutory payments: State pension (contributory and non-contributory); Illness benefit; Invalidity pension, and labour activation scheme payments such as Community Employment (CE); Tus; Rural Social Scheme (RSS) or Job Initiative (JI).
- e) The organisation must provide a separate income and expenditure schedule to their Annual Financial Statements for their CSP funding, as per DPER Circular 2013/14.
- f) Where the organisation has more than one unique service, the organisation is required to provide separate income and expenditure schedules to their Annual Financial Statements for each unique service supported by CSP.
- g) Sub-contracting employees supported by the Programme to third parties is not permitted. The grantee must be the employer and the duties performed and benefits (including financial benefits) must accrue to the grantee organisation.
- h) The CSP contribution cannot be used to employ an individual (in either a Manager or FTE position) once that individual reaches their 66<sup>th</sup> birthday. The employer has the right to continue employing that person after their 66<sup>th</sup> birthday if desired, but the funds to do so must come from another source.
- i) A minimum of 70% of CSP supported employees (excluding Managers) must be from the CSP Employment Target Groups. In exceptional circumstances where this is not achievable, the organisation must contact Pobal to agree this on a case-by-case basis. See next section for the pre-defined list of CSP employment target groups.

## 7. Employment Target Groups

The following target groups are a priority in terms of employment of people under the Community Services Programme:

- People who are in the workforce but unemployed and seeking to return to work i.e., people who are in receipt of Jobseeker's Benefit (JB), Jobseekers Allowance (JA); people who are signing for credits
- Qualified Adults (*Adult dependants of those in receipt of social welfare payment*)
- People with Disabilities (PWD) i.e. *in receipt of Disability Allowance, Blind Pension, Partial Capacity Benefit, or other disability benefit*
- Ex-prisoners or people with a criminal conviction and in contact with the Probation Service
- Migrants
- Refugees
- Asylum Seekers
- Irish Travellers
- Roma
- People *coming from* a labour activation scheme i.e. Community Employment, TUS, or RSS placements
- One Parent Families (*people who parent alone without sufficient resources and are in receipt of social welfare payments*)
- People who are deserted, separated, divorced or widowed (*People in receipt of Widow/er's non-contributory pension, surviving Civil Partner's non-contributory pension, or deserted Wives allowance/benefit*)
- Carers (*people in receipt of Carers Allowance/Benefit who want to return to the workforce*)
- People who are homeless
- Stabilised and recovering drug misusers
- Ukrainians- displaced by the war

Note: In accordance with the 70% Employment Programme Rule, the remaining 30% of the employees supported by the Programme may come from the general population or other target groups.

## **8. Displacement and Duplication**

When choosing or delivering a service supported by CSP, it is important that organisations avoid or minimise, as far as possible, the displacement of other businesses or enterprises or organisations (private or not for profit) currently providing the same service within their impact area. It is important that organisations supported by the Programme assess the local impact and effect of their service not only for the target groups but for other local businesses or organisations. In terms of employment, it is important the organisations supported by the Programme are working collaboratively and there are synergies between the Programme and labour activation programmes such as the Community Employment, Rural Social Scheme and Tús.

## 9. Monitoring Framework

A set of outcomes and output indicators have been developed for the Programme. Table 1 below shows the outcome indicators for each sub-programme.

For further details, refer to the [Monitoring Framework](#), which is also available to download from the CSP Pobal Webpage [HERE](#).

Further information on the monitoring requirements of the programme will be available in due course.

Table 1: Outcomes

Sub-Programme 1: Services & Spaces	Sub-Programme 2: Supporting Individuals	Sub-Programme 3: Innovation and Growth
1. Spaces and Services are provided and managed for the use of community groups/organisations/ local businesses. Upgrades are completed where required to better service demand.	1. Individuals from specific target groups gain employment within CSP supported services.	1. To strengthen community organisations operating as social enterprises to deliver improved facilities and services.
2. Spaces and Services are responsive to demand driven community need.	2. Individuals from specific target groups are supported to progress their career within or outside of CSP supported service (including increasing an employee's relevant skills, knowledge, and personal attributes).	2. To pilot innovative social economy initiatives.
3. Spaces and Services are readily available for beneficiaries.		3. To provide employment opportunities and improve employability of individuals most distant from the labour market.

## Appendix 1

### Eligible and Ineligible Organisations & Services

#### Eligible Organisations

Eligible organisations must:

- Have a registered office based in the Republic of Ireland.
- Be a community and voluntary sector organisation i.e. operating on a “not-for-profit” basis for the benefit of the community they serve.
- Be incorporated e.g. be a company limited by guarantee or co-operative which is registered with the Companies Registration Office and the Registrar of Friendly Societies (for co-operatives).
- Have a governing body such as a board or committee and a governing document that has been formally adopted by the organisation.
- Be tax compliant i.e. be registered with Revenue and obtained a tax clearance certificate. Newly formed organisations need to have completed their registration and requirements with Revenue before application for a grant.

#### Ineligible Organisations & Services

The following organisations are not eligible for funding under this Programme, unless by exception as agreed with DRCD for a small number of existing services.

- Any Community and Voluntary organisations or committees not registered with the Companies Registration Office or Registrar of Friendly Societies.
- Childcare Service Providers
- Advocacy Organisations
- Rental of Enterprise Space
- Mediation and Counselling Organisations
- Lobbying Organisations
- Private individuals
- Private Trusts
- Private for-profit-organisations (private companies)
- National Governing Bodies
- Public or Statutory Bodies or Organisations
- Local Authorities
- Education and Training Boards, Schools, Third Level Institutions

Note: Organisations in contract under the existing Community Services Programme which do not meet this criteria will continue to be supported by the Programme, by exception.