



CLÁR 2021 SCHEME OUTLINE

LOCAL AUTHORITY MEASURES: 1, 2 AND 3(A)

Background

CLÁR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in rural areas that have experienced significant levels of de-population. The funding works in conjunction with local/Agency and other Departmental funding programmes and on the basis of locally identified priorities.



CLÁR Programme for 2021

There is a 10% increase in funding, bringing the allocation for 2021 to €5.5million. The 2021CLÁR programme will be delivered through four separate Measures as follows;

Measure 1: Support for Schools/Community Safety Measure

Measure 2: Outdoor Community Recreation Facilities

Measure 3: Community Wellbeing Measure

(a) Community Gardens & Allotments

(b) Mobility and Cancer Care Transport

CLÁR Innovation Measure: Funding for innovative or pilot projects that address specific challenges faced by communities in CLÁR areas.

This Scheme outline refers to Measures 1,2 and 3(a) which are delivered through the Local Authorities (LAs).

Timelines

Scheme launch	Monday, 15 th March 2021
Applications due to Clare County Council	Friday 23 rd of April 2021
Applications due to DRCD	Friday, 7 th May 2021
Funding awarded	Early July 2021
Projects completed and drawdown	31 st March 2022

Progression of Projects

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure that the project will be completed and funding drawn down within the above timelines. LAs may be asked to report on the progression of approved projects on an interim basis.

The Department may grant an extension under exceptional circumstances. Any extension request must be submitted in writing to the Department stating the reason for the extension and the new completion/drawdown dates. The Department reserves the right to allow or deny any extension request.

Applications

The 2021 programme will allow for applications to be submitted to the LA from schools, community groups and Local Development Companies under Measures 1 and 2 and applications may be submitted to the LA from community groups in respect of Measure 3(a). Community Groups can include local sporting organisations where the infrastructure being supported through the application is for the benefit of the community generally (not just the sporting organisation) and is made freely available to all members of the community without any additional restrictions or requirements being imposed.

Up to **10 project** applications in total, between Measures 1 and 2, and up to **3 project** applications in total under Measure 3(a), may be selected by the LA for onward submission to the Department for its consideration.

The proposed projects should be of sufficient quality, in line with the scheme outline, and consistent with developmental planning at a local level, including LECPs and town plans.

Applications under Measure 1 may include a number of different elements (see Detailed Measure Outline below) in respect of a single facility (school or community) up to the maximum funding limit outlined in the Measure.

Application Process for 2021

The applications process for CLÁR 2021 remains the same as 2020. Local Authorities are requested to give details of all projects in the 'Application Overview' (MS Excel) document. The declaration must be signed by the Director of Services undertaking to ensure that all required permissions, match-funding, etc. are in place and confirming that the information provided complies with the 2021 CLÁR Scheme Outline. Please note that the 'Application Overview' must indicate which projects the LA itself would prioritise in the context of planning at a local level and the ranking given to each project by the LA.

Proof of permissions, match funding, etc. is not required at the time of application but must be available to the Department or its agents on request for a period of 6 years from the date of application. This substantially reduces the amount of additional material that Local Authorities must submit with their applications.

In addition to a completed 'Application Overview', the Local Authority will also be required to submit a 'Project Application' form (MS Word) in respect of each individual project.

The LA must ensure that the Project Application forms are fully completed and comply with the 2021 Scheme Outline. In particular, under Measure 2 Outdoor Community Recreation Facilities, the LA must ensure that funded facilities must be publicly accessible with clear arrangements to insure and manage the facility. Any facilities funded under Measure 2 must be open to the public without a requirement to be a member of a club, enrolled in a school etc. Facilities on school grounds must be open to the public outside school hours.

The Department may not be in a position to follow up regarding missing documentation or incomplete application forms. Incomplete application forms may not be considered.

Applications should be submitted directly to Clare County Council's, Department of Rural and Community Development by **Friday, 23rd of April 2021**. Following assessment and short listing, 10 applications in total for Measures 1 and 2 can be submitted by Clare County Council to the Department for consideration. Up to 3 projects can be submitted for Measure3(a).

Assessment Criteria

In assessing applications for recommendation to the Minister, a number of factors will be considered including the indicated order of priority; the range, mix, quality and impact of proposed projects; previous funding provided, and other relevant considerations.

The quality and clarity of the completed application form, and the information provided in respect of the need and rationale for the project, are particularly important in selecting the successful projects.

The number of projects approved in each County may be determined with reference to the size of the CLÁR area in the County relative to the overall size of the County.

Project Delivery

It is expected that the LA will take a lead role in the delivery of many of the projects approved by the Department. However, LDCs may, with the agreement of the LA and the relevant community applicants, be permitted to take on the project delivery phase. In such cases the Department will enter into a contract directly with the LDC and not the LA. Projects to be delivered by the LDC should be clearly identified on the Application Overview and Project Application Form.

It is the responsibility of the party entering into contract with the Department, as appropriate, to meet any shortfall arising out of any project non-compliance.

The Department is encouraging and promoting an enhancement of biodiversity when reinstating/landscaping areas e.g. native pollinator plants under Measures 1,2 and 3(a) of the CLÁR 2021 Programme.

All projects must conform with [public procurement guidelines](#).

Eligible Costs

Applications should detail the eligible costs associated with the proposed project. Please note only items of a **capital** nature, integral to the project are eligible.

All administration costs/professional fees associated with the proposed project should be kept to a minimum and be clearly detailed on the Application Overview. Such costs will be eligible up to a maximum of **10%** of the overall project costs.

Grant Payment Arrangements

Funding may be drawn down in phases in respect of each project individually or collectively;

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50% on completion of at least 50% of the project, and |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50% when the project has been fully completed. |

A compliance sheet will be provided for completion and this must be submitted to the Department with the final drawdown request along with evidence of payment.

Drawdown requests for payment must only be submitted by the LA/LDC when the LA/LDC **have issued payment** and the relevant works **have been completed**. It is not acceptable to submit a drawdown request to the Department if invoices etc. remain unpaid by either the community group and/or the LA/LDC.

Detailed Measure Outlines

Measure 1: Support for Schools/Community Safety Measures

CLÁR 2021 will consider support for interventions that make the school/community facility environs healthier and safer for the children attending the schools, and for children and adults using the community facilities. The works can only take place to the environs of the school/community facility and not to any part of the exterior/interior of the school/community buildings.

In this context the table below outlines some of the supports eligible for funding in CLÁR areas under this measure.

Type of Intervention	Possible Funding to be Allocated
Purchase and replacement of Flashing Amber Safety Lights.	Max €7,000 per set
Purchase of child safety signs	Max €1,000 per sign
Purchase of digital speed safety signs, indicating that cars are entering a particular zone.	Max €14,000 per set
Upgrade road markings on approach roads to Schools/community facilities.	Max €1,000
Erect pedestrian crossings in small towns and villages at schools/community facilities.	Max €22,000
Construction and upgrading of access footpaths next to schools or community facilities.	Max €30,000
Car parking facilities to access schools or community facilities.	Max €30,000
Provision of bus shelters	Max €25,000
Provision of public lighting	Max €30,000
COVID-19 safety related intervention (need and rationale must be demonstrated in the Project Information	Max €50,000

section of the application form).	
Overall max per project, if there are a number of elements above included in applications for a single location	Max €50,000

Eligible Applicants:

Schools, Community Groups, Local Development Companies, Local Authorities.

Selection of Projects:

Projects proposed to the Department must be selected on the basis of:

- being located in a CLÁR area
- an application by a school, community organisation or LDC to the LA
- evidence that all necessary permissions are in place
- evidence where applicable that ownership/lease is in place
- full estimated costs including administration/professional fees (procurement not required at this point)
- evidence that match funding is in place, where relevant
- clear evidence of need
- relevance to the LECP/other plan.

Rate of Aid

A minimum grant of €5,000 and maximum grants as listed in the table above will apply to this measure. The scheme will provide up to 90% of the cost or the maximum amount outlined in the table above, whichever is the lesser. The remaining 10% or balance of the cost should be provided through Local Authority/community/other resources with a minimum of 5% cash contribution from the school/community. Philanthropic contributions will be accepted as full or part of match funding costs.

Measure 2: Outdoor Community Recreation Facilities

CLÁR 2021 will consider supports for the enhancement of existing and/or the development of new accessible outdoor community recreation facilities.

This Measure is being expanded in 2021 to include playgrounds, MUGAs and amenities for teenagers/young adults through facilities such as skateboard parks. Upgrades to existing playgrounds, MUGAs, skateboard parks are also eligible.

Eligible Applicants:

Community Groups, Schools, Local Development Companies, Local Authorities.

Selection of Projects:

The measure will be implemented via the LA's. Projects proposed to the Department by the LA's must be selected on the basis of:

- being located in a CLÁR area
- an application by a community organisation, school or LDC to the LA
- evidence that all necessary permissions are in place
- evidence, where applicable, that ownership/lease is in place
- full estimated costs including administration/professional fees (procurement not required at this point)
- evidence that match funding is in place where relevant
- being open to the public without appointment, and that the necessary insurance is in place
- projects that allow the lighting of fires e.g. BBQs have the express permission of the landowner on file
- clear evidence of need
- relevance to the LECP/other plans.

Types of Intervention

The Measure will support a variety of capital interventions provided that they contribute to the enhancement of existing, and/or the development of new, accessible Outdoor Community Recreation Facilities. The list below provides an indication of the types of interventions that may be supported, but is not exhaustive:

- Outdoor Cinema Screen
- Bandstand/Amphitheatre
- Outdoor Drinking Water Fountain
- Covered Seating & Picnic Benches
- Associated Landscaping & Path Widening
- Playgrounds/ MUGAs (new or upgrades)
- Skateboard Parks
- Exercise Class Space
- Public Toilets & Bins
- Car & Bike Parking

The application form must clearly outline the need and rationale for the interventions put forward.

All projects must display and encourage abidance by the *Leave No Trace* principles. The cost of appropriate signage may be included in the overall project costings.

Rate of Aid

A minimum grant of €5,000 and a maximum grant of €50,000 for projects will be available. The maximum grant payable will be 90% of the project cost or a maximum of €50,000, whichever is the lesser. The remaining 10% or balance of the cost should be provided through the local authority/community/other resources with a minimum of 5% cash contribution from the community. Philanthropic contributions will be accepted as full or part of match funding costs.

Measure 3(a): Community Gardens and Allotments

This measure supports community gardens, allotments and sensory gardens. These facilities must be publicly accessible.

Eligible Applicants:

Community Groups, Local Development Companies, Local Authorities.

Selection of Projects:

The measure will be implemented via the LA's. Projects proposed to the Department by the LA's must be selected on the basis of:

- being located in a CLÁR area
- an application by a community organisation or LDC to the LA
- evidence that all necessary permissions are in place
- evidence, where applicable, that ownership/lease is in place
- full estimated costs including administration/professional fees (procurement not required at this point)
- evidence that match funding is in place
- being open to the public without appointment, and that the necessary insurance is in place
- projects that allow the lighting of fires e.g. BBQs have the express permission of the landowner on file
- clear evidence of need
- relevance to the LECP/other plans

Types of Intervention

The types of items to be funded could include groundworks, footpaths, raised beds, native pollinator plants, sensory planting and equipment, polytunnels, sheds, rainwater harvesting tanks, fencing, gates, tools as appropriate, benches, picnic tables, shelters and outdoor pizza ovens/BBQ areas.

The application form must clearly outline the need and rationale for the interventions submitted for funding.

All projects must display and encourage abidance by *Leave No Trace* principles. The cost of appropriate signage may be included in the overall project costings.

Rate of Aid

A minimum grant of **€5,000** and a maximum grant of **€50,000** for projects will be available. The maximum grant payable will be 90% of the project cost or a maximum of **€50,000**, whichever is the lesser. The remaining 10% or balance of the cost should be provided through local authority/community/other resources with a minimum of 5% cash contribution from the community. Philanthropic contributions will be accepted as full or part of match funding costs.

Funding Conditions for Rural Schemes funded under the Department of Rural and Community Development.

All expenditure registered through the Department’s Rural Schemes i.e. Town and Village Renewal Scheme, CLÁR, Outdoor Recreation and Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) will be subject to the terms of the Public Spending Code which can be found at <http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie/>.

In addition to this, the requirements outlined below will apply to all funding approved through those schemes. The need for adherence to all of the requirements will be reflected in the contractual agreement between the Department of Rural and Community Development and the grantee approved for funding under the scheme.

1.	Projects are expected to commence and be completed in line with the timelines set out in the relevant Scheme Outline.
2.	The Department may de-commit funding allocated to projects under the Scheme where the project is not completed within the time specified, and where the express agreement of the Department to extend the funding arrangement has not been agreed in advance.
3.	The grant funding for the approved project will be provided from the Department of Rural and Community Development’s capital budget. Administration and/or professional costs associated with the proposed project, where allowed for in the Scheme Outline, should be kept to a minimum. These costs must be clearly documented in the application and are only permitted up to a maximum of 10% of the overall project costs.
4.	Not Applicable
5.	A cash contribution as set out in the relevant Scheme Outline is required. The grantee will be required to provide confirmation that the cash contribution is in place and retain a record of the source of the cash contribution.
6.	Projects must be completed in full in order to drawdown the full grant amount. Where it is established that a project has not been completed, the Department may request the grantee to repay any funding received

	on the project. Any changes to the proposed project must be advised and agreed with the Department in advance of the change being implemented.
7.	Where an element of the approved project is not carried out as per the project application, grant funding may be reduced to reflect the amended project.
8.	If the project involves works on buildings or lands that are not in the ownership of the grantee, a minimum 5 year lease must be in place from date of project completion.
9.	In the case of funding allocated to enterprises or facilities (i.e. community centre, hubs, vehicles under CLÁR etc.), it is a requirement that they must operate as funded for a minimum of 5 years following release of the final stage of funding, otherwise funding may have to be repaid. Where they do not operate as funded this must be advised and agreed with the Department in advance.
10.	All appropriate financial, Public Procurement and accounting rules and regulations must be complied with and each grantee will fully account for the funding received in a timely manner.
11.	Full and accurate documentation to support all expenditure should be maintained and accessible by Department officials for audit purposes at all times and for a period of six years from the date of completion of the project.
12.	Grantees will acknowledge the support of Project 2040 / Department of Rural and Community Development/ Government of Ireland, and any other applicable sources of funding (as identified in the relevant Funding Agreement) in all public announcements, advertising and signage, as appropriate, relating to the project. In addition, the Department may seek to use the project in the broader promotion of its policies.
13.	Grantees will provide any reports and information relating to the project as may reasonably be requested by the Department of Rural and Community Development from time to time.
14.	On-going monitoring and evaluation of the project outputs and outcomes should take place in the context of assessing the impact of the project. Grantees will be expected to collect appropriate data to facilitate this learning on an on-going basis. On request, a brief report (1-2 pages) on

	the outputs and outcomes of the project funded should be completed and made available to the Department.
15.	Each grantee, will provide a contact point/points to the Department to facilitate payment and information requests. The Department should be updated on any changes to contact personnel in a timely manner.
16.	A checklist confirming compliance with funding conditions relating to the grant aid will be required upon project completion.

Non-Compliance with the conditions as outlined or any additional stipulations agreed during contract negotiations may result in the requirement to refund part or all of the grant aid awarded.

Queries

Any queries should be submitted to ruraldev@clarecoco.ie.