

Music Capital Scheme 2025

Award 1 (Non-professional performing groups) Guidelines

Managed by Music Network, funded by An Roinn Cultúir, Cumarsáide agus Spóirt / The Department of Culture, Communications and Sport.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 2pm, Thursday 27 November 2025.

About these Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to help you apply to the Music Capital Scheme 2025 Award 1.

There are 6 parts to these guidelines:

Part 1: An overview of the award (page 1)

Part 2: An overview of funding (page 2)

Part 3: Who can apply – and who can't (pages 2–3)

Part 4: What you can apply for – and what you can't (pages 3–4)

Part 5: How to apply (pages 4–7)

Part 6: Assessment procedure (pages 7–10)

Part 1: An overview of the award

The Music Network Music Capital Scheme is designed to provide support for the purchase of musical instruments and related items for use in live performance contexts.

Award 1 is for non-professional performing groups. The award aims to support these groups to:

- ✓ buy musical instruments
- ✓ maintain or repair musical instruments
- ✓ buy selected items or equipment such as instrument cases, accessories and electronic performance equipment (more examples on pages 3–4).

What is a non-professional performing group?

In broad terms, non-professional performing groups are organisations involved in non-professional music performance. These groups may perform in any musical style.

The Award is also open to venues and community, youth or resource organisations who oversee non-professional music performance.

Organisations applying must be based in the Republic of Ireland.

Part 2: Overview of funding

Overall fund

The total funding available for the Music Capital Scheme 2025 Award 1 is €450,000.

How much to apply for

Your organisation can apply for any amount below €50,000.

The total cost of your proposed item(s) must be less than €50,000.

You may apply for up to 75% of the total cost of your proposed item(s).

Your organisation must fund the remaining 25%. You will have to indicate how you are going to fund this in your application form.

Charges relating to delivery of items (such as delivery charges, bank fees, import fees) can not be funded by the award. This means your organisation must pay for these charges.

Part 3: Who can apply and who can't

Who can apply?

✓ Certain non-professional organisations

Non-professional organisations performing in any musical style who operate on a not-for-profit basis can apply. Some examples of these organisations include:

- amateur or youth ensembles
- community music groups
- choirs
- musical societies, and
- others.

✓ Primary/post-primary schools

Primary and post-primary (secondary) schools can apply if their proposed items relate to non-core curricular activities.

✓ Other not-for-profit organisations

Organisations who oversee established programmes of non-professional music performance may apply. Some examples include:

- resource organisations
- community organisations
- youth groups
- venues
- others.

Music Network is committed to equity and inclusion, and encourages groups from all backgrounds and communities to apply.

Who can't apply?

- × Local Music Education Partnerships directly funded by Music Generation.
However, applications ARE welcomed from local music education providers regardless of any link with Music Generation Programmes
- × for-profit companies
- × individuals
- × organisations based outside of the Republic of Ireland
- × previous Music Capital Scheme awardees who did not comply with the conditions of their award.

Part 4: What you can apply for - and what you can't

Your organisation can apply for items that must be for used for rehearsal or tuition AND live performances given by your non-professional group. Read examples of items the award can and cannot cover below. The examples given below do not cover every possibility. Please contact Music Network if you have a query about an item.

Items that are covered

- ✓ New or second-hand instruments
- ✓ Once-off instrument repair or maintenance costs
- ✓ Instrument accessories (for example: bows, strings, rosin, shoulder rests, drum heads, sticks, brushes, mutes, straps, reeds, mouthpieces)
- ✓ Instrument cases
- ✓ Instrument stands
- ✓ Electronic performance equipment (for example: effects pedals, leads, instrument amplifiers, PA systems and microphones, MDIs (musical digital interfaces), DJ performance equipment)
- ✓ Specialist stools (where necessary)

Items that are not covered

- × Choir risers
- × Lighting equipment
- × Computers or laptops
- × Metronomes
- × Tuners
- × Music stands
- × Sheet music

(continued over page)

- × Uniforms
- × Recording equipment/software

Part 5: How to apply (4 steps)

Applicants must complete an online application form which includes uploading Support Materials (more details below).

Step 1: Set up your organisation's online profile

Please visit www.musicnetwork.ie and set up your organisation's profile on the online application portal.

When you have done this, you can start to complete the application in stages throughout the application period. Drafts do save automatically, but please check that your latest draft has saved before exiting the portal.

Step 2: Read the application form

The online application form consists of six sections. The form asks for details about your organisation in terms of its:

- governance – how it is run
- history
- future plans.

It also asks you about the proposed item(s) your organisation wants to buy, in terms of:

- the individual and overall costs of the item(s)
- the organisation's funding contribution towards the cost (25% of the total price)
- why the organisation needs these items.

It also asks you to provide Support Materials (see Step 3).

Step 3: Gather the Support Materials requested in the form

The application form asks you to upload 4 types of Support Materials (see the 4 points below). The assessment panel need these materials to help them assess your application. If all Support Materials are not uploaded, your application can't be fully assessed.

Our online system accepts most file formats, including MS Word files, Excel files, JPEGs, PDFs and MP3s.

1. List of instruments and musical equipment owned by organisation

If your organisation currently owns instruments and equipment, you need to upload a list of these items and include:

- quantity - how many you have of each item
- the make and model or description of each item
- their state of repair
- their approximate life span – how much longer you expect to be able to use each item.

2. Short biographies of your artistic team

You need to upload a document containing a short paragraph about each key member of your artistic team (100 words per person). This document needs to outline the relevant musical experience of the key people involved in tuition or artistic activities within the organisation.

Examples of key artistic team members may include:

- artistic director
- musical director and/or assistant director
- tutors
- visiting musicians providing tuition or workshops
- others.

3. Audio or video recordings – and a short document

You must submit two musically contrasting recordings which demonstrate your organisation's work.

You must also upload a short document that lists the following details for each recording:

- who is performing
- where you want the assessment panel to start and stop listening (for example, if you submit a video or audio recording of a full concert, you should let us know which portion of the performance you want the panel to assess by indicating the start and stop times)
- where and when the recordings were made.

You can directly upload audio recordings in MP3 format to the online application form.

Links to video recordings, and to audio recordings in other formats, can be included in your short document.

Note: If the assessment panel can't access your links, this means they won't be able to fully assess your application. Please make sure your links and files are publicly accessible, or provide a password if required.

4. Required number of quotations for each item, from separate suppliers

For this award you must seek quotations from different suppliers for prices of each item that you wish to buy, to ensure value for money. You must submit these quotations with your application because the Music Capital Scheme Award 1 must comply with Public Procurement Guidelines – guidelines for buying products.

Your application must include quotations for each proposed item as follows:

Total cost of your proposed item(s)	Number of quotations required
Less than €5,000	2 quotations for each item from 2 separate suppliers
Between €5,000 and €50,000	3 quotations for each item from 3 separate suppliers

Each quotation you submit must clearly show the following 3 details:

- the supplier name
- instrument or item specifications
- cost.

You can upload the quotes for each item in the following formats:

- ✓ a screen capture from the supplier's website
or
- ✓ an email or letter from the supplier.

- ✗ **Links to suppliers' websites are not accepted** because they can change or become inactive.

Step 4: Submit your application

The completed application must be submitted using the online portal by **2pm, Thursday 27 November 2025**.

If you submit your application by the deadline, you will receive an automated email confirming that your application has been successfully submitted.

Note: The automated email may appear in your spam folder. **If you do not receive this email, your application has not been successfully submitted.** In this case, it is your responsibility to contact Music Network, leaving yourself time to resubmit (if necessary) before the application deadline.

Your application will not be accepted if it:

- is received after the closing date and time: **2pm, Thursday 27 November 2025**
- does not include all of the **Support Materials** (pages 5–6)
- does not comply with the conditions of the award (pages 9–10)
- relates to items already purchased or repairs already carried out before funding decisions are made
- is not completed in full. Insert 'N/A' to any sections that do not apply to your application, if necessary.

Tips to help you prepare your application

- Read the Award 1 Guidelines and application form thoroughly while preparing your application.
- Access the range of [Applicant Supports provided by Music Network](#).
- Share the preparation of your application between at least two of your organisation's members.
- Establish your organisation's instrument or equipment needs and research the most suitable purchase options. There is no benefit to requesting either a smaller or larger amount, what matters most is that your request matches the needs of your organisation and that you can demonstrate this clearly in your application.
- Have a clear and realistic idea of the costs involved in your proposal and clearly outline sources of income for the organisation's contribution (25% of total cost).
- Make sure your application is clear and concise; do not assume that assessors are familiar with your organisation, as they may not be.
- Keep the selection criteria in mind (page 8) when writing the application and selecting Support Materials. Support Materials should primarily be recent, should be the best representation of your organisation's work and should relate clearly to the proposed items.
- Prepare and submit your application well in advance of the deadline.

Part 6: Assessment procedure (3 steps)

Step 1: An independent advisor will assess all eligible applications based on the selection criteria on page 8.

Depending on the volume of applications, they may make a shortlist.

Step 2: A panel will then consider and decide on how to allocate funding to successful applicants. The panel includes representatives of Music Network and relevant practitioners from a variety of musical backgrounds. The decision of the panel will be final.

The panel may decide not to award the total award fund if insufficient high-quality applications are received.

While the panel wants to support applicants who fit the criteria, funding is limited and the process is very competitive. This means that although you may meet the criteria, this does not guarantee you will receive funding.

Please note that lobbying — trying to influence the decision outside the official application process — is not permitted.

Selection criteria & priorities

Your application will be assessed based on five equally weighted criteria – see the table below. Keep these criteria in mind when preparing your application.

	Criteria	Weighting
1	Organisation's track record: how the organisation has developed since it started, including its main achievements and activities to date.	20%
2	Organisation's artistic policy and plans: the organisation's artistic goals, programmed activities and future plans.	20%
3	Demonstrated need and suitability of proposed items: why the items you want to buy are needed for the organisation's activities, and their suitability for their proposed use.	20%
4	Plans for use of the proposed items: how the items will be used and cared for, and details of the tuition or support that will be provided to their users.	20%
5	Public benefit: the number and types of public performances given by the organisation.	20%

Priorities of Award 1 2025:

- Applications from organisations whose musical activities involve **participants aged 65 and over** will be prioritised.
- Applications from organisations whose musical activities involve **participants with disabilities** will be prioritised. See the National Disability Authority website for further information: www.nda.ie.

Step 3: Results

All applicants will be informed of results by email in January 2026.

Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback from Music Network within 2 months of receiving results, and may re-apply in subsequent years.

Successful applications

If your organisation's application is successful, you will be asked to:

- complete a drawdown form
- sign a declaration (2 signatories per organisation) agreeing to comply with the conditions of the award
- provide evidence of tax clearance if your award is over €10,000

The names of successful applicants will be published online and in the media.

Summary of the conditions of the award

Below is a summary of the main conditions of the award. [The full conditions are available on the Music Network website.](#)

Important:

Your organisation must read and:

- agree to comply with the [full conditions of the award](#) as part of the application process and
- sign a Declaration Form (2 signatories per organisation) agreeing to comply with the full conditions if awarded. [Preview the Declaration form.](#)

- Your organisation must be based in, and make regular use of the item(s) in, the Republic of Ireland.
- Items purchased must be owned by a constituted organisation which operates as a not-for-profit organisation, a voluntary organisation, or a charitable body.
- The organisation must have its own separate bank account. This is a non-personal account.
- Organisations delivering programmes for children and/or vulnerable adults are required to have adequate protection and welfare policies in place.
- Organisations must operate a clear policy for use, housing and maintenance of items, ensuring that ongoing training and support is available to users. Organisations may provide items for free or for a nominal rent (to contribute to care and maintenance) to

users. Items funded by the Music Capital Scheme are not intended to generate profit for organisations.

- Any proposed change made by an awarded organisation to the specified items for purchase must be approved by Music Network in advance of purchase.
- Organisations must provide copies of receipts for the purchase of approved items to Music Network within two months of award payment.
- Organisations must provide annual reports on the use of funded items for three years from the date the items are received. A template for these reports will be provided by Music Network. See an example here [Award 1 Annual Report Form](#)
- If an organisation is in breach of the conditions, the organisation must refund the award to Music Network. This will then be added to the Music Capital Scheme fund for subsequent years. The organisation may not re-apply to the Music Capital Scheme.
- Awarded organisations must acknowledge the support of Music Network, the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport and the Arts Council in all public facing material (for example: websites, printed programmes and posters, biographies) from the date of the award, for at least three years. Materials for the acknowledgement, such as logos and text, will be supplied by Music Network.