

QUALITY OF LIFE – SMALL GRANTS SCHEME 2026

Guidelines for voluntary organisations

1. Aim

The Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector (MIV) is once again issuing a small grants scheme, aimed at encouraging voluntary organisations to implement in practice projects and initiatives with the aim of improving the quality of life within our communities.

2. Eligible applicants

Voluntary Organisations registered and compliant with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (OCVO) by the time of submitting their application for the grant.

3. Possible projects and initiatives

Improving quality of life through initiatives aimed at:

- a) Rendering the environment around us more accessible
- b) Organizing inclusive social activities in our community
- c) Reduction of social inequalities
- d) Further inclusion in leisure, culture or sports activities
- e) Encouraging further involvement and inclusion of end beneficiaries, particularly persons in situations of vulnerability, in voluntary work
- f) Providing services and support to persons finding themselves in situations of vulnerability
- g) Inclusion and participation of persons with disability in the community
- h) Promoting the use of technology as a means towards inclusion
- i) Actively supporting skills development, and the engagement and empowerment of communities
- j) Advocacy, outreach and networking efforts in line with the disability/voluntary policies
- k) Research in line with the local disability/voluntary policies.

4. Ineligible project/initiatives

- a) The project/initiative is/has been granted through another EU/National fund.

5. Funding available

- a) The total amount allocated under the Scheme throughout 2026 is of sixty thousand euros (€60,000).
- b) Every project may be allocated up to a maximum of five thousand euros (€5,000) incl. VAT.

- c) Applications are considered throughout 2026 until funds are exhausted.
- d) Each organisation can **only benefit from one (1) proposal during the same calendar year.**
- e) At least three (3) quotations from suppliers of goods or services are to be submitted with the proposal, in respect of every stated expense that exceeds the sum of one hundred euros (€100).

6. Award criteria

- a) The award criteria are indicators that allow the Evaluation Board to evaluate the quality of projects and/or initiatives submitted for the small grant. Based on these criteria, grants will be awarded to those projects which are aligned to and maximising the overarching objectives of the Scheme.
- b) The award criteria indicated in Annex 1 of these Guidelines describe exactly which elements will be taken into consideration to assess the quality of the proposal/initiative.

7. Selection and payment of grant money

- a) Applications submitted shall be evaluated through an Evaluation Board composed of three (3) MIV Officers well-versed in the subject areas, as appointed by the Permanent Secretary.
- b) The Evaluation Board has the right to request further documentation from the Applicant. If this is not submitted by the deadline provided by the Board, the Application will be automatically rejected.
- c) The marks obtained in the evaluation shall be converted into funds according to the percentage achieved. This percentage shall be applied to the eligible costs of the project, as indicated in Annex 2, up to a maximum of €5,000 incl. VAT. For projects that exceed €5,000, the funding shall be calculated solely on this maximum limit of €5,000.
- d) If the Evaluation Board accepts a Proposal, the Applicant / Beneficiary will be requested to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector (MIV) outlining the grant obligations.
- e) Full payment approved by the Evaluation Board will be processed upon project completion, and upon submission of:
 - i. Final project report as per template provided;
 - ii. Original fiscal receipts covering the total amount approved;
 - iii. Subject that the project is completed by the thirtieth (30th) November 2026;

- iv. And subject that the Evaluation Board is satisfied that the Proposal was carried out according to the originally-approved application and subject to onsite inspection by the Board, when and if required.
- f) If the above criteria are not respected, the MIV will not be obliged to affect the payment.
- g) In case the Organisation decides that it will no longer proceed with the execution of the proposal, it shall inform MIV immediately.

8. Application form, submission and queries

- a) The application form is available in both Maltese and English versions and be accessed through <https://vofunding.org.mt>.
- b) Applications for Proposed Projects for financing under the **Quality of Life Small Grants Scheme 2026** are to be submitted **only online** through the above link.
- c) E-applications must include a detailed estimated budget (included in the e-application form) in which all prices are given in Euro (€) and corresponding quotations.
- d) Any e-application which exceeds the maximum limits will not be automatically excluded but will be scaled down within the limits set by the Guidelines.
- e) Applications that do not follow these Guidelines, or which lack information requested on the Application Form, shall be rejected.
- f) Any queries in respect of this Scheme should be addressed by email to skemi.miv@gov.mt.

9. Branding / Publicity

- a) Apart from measures foreseen for the visibility of the project and for the dissemination and exploitation of its results (which are award criteria), there is an obligation of minimal publicity for a granted project. Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector and the **Quality of Life Small Grants Scheme 2026** in all communications or publications, in whatever form or whatever medium, including the Internet, or on the occasion of activities for which the grant is used.
- b) This must be done according to the following instructions:
 - i. Use of the Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector and the **Quality of Life Small Grants Scheme 2026** logos;
 - ii. Use of disclaimer stating the following: “This project has been funded through the **Quality of Life Small Grants Scheme 2026** managed by the Ministry for Inclusion, and the Voluntary Sector”.
- c) Post-project completion, all branding must remain on materials used, both virtual (e.g. websites / social media) and physical (e.g. booklets / premises / equipment).

- d) The project inauguration date should be discussed with the Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector two months in advance.
- e) If these provisions are not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced.

10. Data Protection

- a) All personal data contained in the e-application form and grant agreement shall be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) and the Data Protection Act (Chapter 586 of the Laws of Malta).
 - b) This data will be processed solely in connection with the implementation and evaluation of the **Quality of Life Small Grants Scheme 2026**, without prejudice to the possibility of transferring such data to the bodies responsible for inspection and audit appointed by the Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, and/or the Ministry of Finance, through which the funds for the **Quality of Life Small Grants Scheme 2026** are made available.
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Annex 1 – Award Criteria for applications received for Quality of Life Small Grants Scheme 2026

Award Criteria addressing Volunteering Strategy	Mark
Directly relates to Volunteering Strategy	30%
Relevance towards objectives of the scheme	5%
Leadership of youths / adults / older persons within the voluntary sector ¹	25%
Presentation of proposed budget breakdown (itemised) and quotations	10%
Dissemination of project – proposed project publicity / marketing	10%
Previous funding experience in other local schemes	5%
Sustainability of project	15%

Award Criteria addressing Disability / Autism Strategy	Mark
Directly relates to Disability Strategy / Autism Strategy	25%
Relevance towards objectives of the scheme	5%
Efforts to ensure accessibility for all ²	15%
Leadership of persons with disability within the project/initiative ³	20%
Presentation of proposed budget breakdown (itemised) and quotations	10%
Dissemination of project – proposed project publicity / marketing	10%
Previous funding experience in other local schemes	5%
Sustainability of project	10%

¹ The evaluation will also take into consideration the element of intersectionality within the project proposal

² Accessible Event Planning (Autistic Self-Advocacy Network – US – led by disabled people): <https://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Accessible-Event-Planning.pdf>
 Accessible Environments (National Autistic Society – UK): <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/autism-know-how/autism-accreditation/autism-friendly-award/guides-and-resources/accessible-environments>
 Design for the Mind – Neurodiversity and the Built Environment (British Standards Institution): https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Design-for-the-mind-Neurodiversity-and-the-built-environment-Guide.pdf
 Accessible Online Events/ Meetings/ Webinars (Autistica – International Research Consortium based in UK – led by disabled people): <https://www.autistica.org.uk/what-is-autism/coronavirus/accessible-online-events>
 Access for All Design Guidelines (Physical Accessibility in the Built Environment – CRPD, Malta): <https://www.crpdp.org/mt/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Access-for-all-2011.pdf>

³ The evaluation will also take into consideration the element of intersectionality within the project proposal

Annex 2 – Eligible Costs for Quality of Life Small Grants Scheme 2026

In order to be eligible under this scheme, costs must:

- Be necessary for the Implementation of the Project;
- Costs must support the deliverables of the Project;
- Be consistent with the principles of sound financial management in terms of value for money and cost-effectiveness;
- Be incurred during the lifetime of the Project as defined in the agreement;
- Be truly and actually incurred by the beneficiary;
- Be recorded in the beneficiary’s accounts in accordance with the application accounting principles;
- Be declared in accordance with the requirements of the application tax and Social Security legislation;
- Be identifiable and verifiable, and backed up by original supporting documents; and
- Be innovative and not a repeat purchase of previously approved Projects by the same organisation.

Activity costs	Directly linked to the Implementation of the Project, provided that it is consistent with the budget presented in this e-application. Achievements to be described in the interim/final report and supported by quotations, original invoices, cash sales and VAT receipts.
Marketing Dissemination and exploitation of results	Promotional, dissemination and exploitation of project results activities that must be clearly outlined in the e-application form. Achievements to be described in the interim/final report and supported by quotations, original invoices, cash sales and VAT receipts.
Hospitality costs	Hospitality costs related to food and beverages are limited to a maximum of €500 including VAT, provided that such expense is consistent with the budget presented in this e-application form. Achievements to be described in the interim/final report and supported by quotations, original invoices, cash sales and VAT receipts.