



<b>Subject:</b>	Shared Island Civic Society Fund
<b>Date:</b>	12 June 2025
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mark Mulholland, External Funding Co-ordinator

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</b>	
Insert number <input type="checkbox"/>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Information relating to any individual</li><li>2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual</li><li>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)</li><li>4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter</li><li>5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained</li><li>6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction</li><li>7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</li></ol>	
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update in relation to the current open funding call under the Shared Island Civic Society Fund being managed by the Irish Government's Department of Foreign Affairs (DfA), and potential advice sessions of Belfast organisations for future funding opportunities.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the update provided in relation to the current round of the Shared Island Civic Society Fund and the commitment of future founding rounds until 2027;</li> <li>that an online information session has been organised for local organisations on Thursday 12 June 2025 on the requirements of the current funding call, details of this session has been shared with all elected members and relevant officers to share across their local networks; and</li> <li>that following engagement between officers and DfA officials, plans are being developed to run a future in-person session in late summer with Belfast organisations as to potential opportunities for successful applications under future rounds of this fund.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<b>Shared Island Civic Society Fund</b>
3.1	The Shared Island Civic Society Fund is an initiative to promote practical North South cooperation and engagement across a range of sectors and themes, consistent with the objectives and commitments of the Good Friday Agreement.
3.2	The Shared Island initiative is a whole-of-government priority which aims to harness the full potential of the Good Friday Agreement to enhance cooperation, connection, and mutual understanding on the island and engage with all communities and traditions to build consensus around a shared future.
3.3	The Civic Society Fund is intended to provide project funding to complement work supported through the Reconciliation Fund and other Government resources; and to promote practical North South cooperation between civic society actors, deepening such relationships on an all-island basis.

3.4	<p>A total of €6 million will be available from 2025 to 2027, it is anticipated that a total of up to €2 million will be made available in this round to support successful projects. The maximum grant awarded to any project is €50,000. The average grant awarded in previous rounds was just under €30,000. Applications will be strengthened by the inclusion of funding contributions from the participating partner organisations.</p>
3.4	<p>The Fund will prioritise applications relating to, but not limited to, the following areas, including applications from regional or national representative bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate and environment.</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Youth</li> <li>• Migrants</li> <li>• Social Enterprise, charity and voluntary sector.</li> </ul>
3.5	<p>All applications must have a clear North South dimension and only applications from civic society organisations based in the South engaging in new project/programme work with a partner(s) in the North or civic society organisations in the North engaging in new project/programme work with a partner(s) in the South will be considered. East/West dimensions and partners to such projects will also be welcomed.</p>
3.6	<p>The following areas are not eligible for funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standalone activities that are not part of a wider project/programme.</li> <li>• Operational costs, such as core salaries and overheads</li> <li>• Capital costs.</li> </ul>
3.7	<p>The deadline for applications is 27 June 2025, guidance notes and the application form are available from <a href="#">the Department of Foreign Affairs website</a>.</p>
3.8	<p>Considering the tight timeframes for this current funding round. The Council has requested that DfA hold an online information session, taking place on Thursday 12 June, to provide information to prospective applicant organisations based in Belfast. As there will also be future rounds under this Fund the Council will work with DfA officials to facilitate an in-person session to provide guidance and support for local organisations on project requirements and tips for future opportunities.</p>

	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices - Documents Attached</b>