

Gaisce SUAS

Bursary Fund 2026/27

Supporting Participation, Reducing Barriers.

Overview

"The individual stories of each of the young people participating in the Gaisce programme reminds us of the immense potential that lies within each and every one of us, no matter our circumstances. It is of the upmost importance that all young people feel included, heard, seen and supported."

- President Catherine Connolly, 2026

Gaisce - The President's Award is delighted to launch the Gaisce SUAS Bursary Fund for 2026-27.

Two of Gaisce's core values are **Inclusion and Equality**; every person having the opportunity to grow their potential through equality of access, participation, and outcome.

With support from the Department of Education and Youth and other philanthropic supporters, **Gaisce SUAS** seeks to alleviate barriers that some young people may face when embarking on and achieving their Gaisce Award.

The Gaisce SUAS Bursary Fund aims to increase participation and access to the Gaisce Award programme for young people experiencing marginalisation or who may be living in difficult circumstances.

This fund supports a core Gaisce objective; to reach more young people, especially those on the periphery of society. For this deliverable, Gaisce has a fund of €80,000 which we will award across two bursary strands.

There are two bursary strands available:

1. **Uplift**, funded by the Department of Education and Youth.
2. **Youth Justice**, funded by a philanthropic supporter.

Uplift Fund

The Uplift Fund will be awarded to individuals or small groups of young people **via** their organisation or Gaisce Award Partner (i.e., School, youth service, etc).

The fund intends to:

- Reduce barriers to participation in the Gaisce Award for those experiencing disadvantage.
- Ensure that more young people than ever can achieve Gaisce Awards, reflecting the diversity of our society.
- Ensure young people aged 14-25 across our society can see themselves in the Award.

This fund is open to applications that meet the associated criteria from existing Gaisce Award Partners (GAPs) and GAPs that are new to Gaisce, or that haven't done it in some time.

The grant band amounts are as follows:

- **€250** - For groups who want to support 1-2 disadvantaged participants
- **€500** - For groups who want to support between 3-5 disadvantaged participants
- **€750** - For groups supporting between 6-9 disadvantaged participants
- **€1000** For groups supporting 10 or more disadvantaged participants

Note: You must have a President's Award Leader in place in order to avail of this funding. More information [here](#). Only one application per Gaisce Award Partner (GAP) is permitted.

Youth Justice Fund

The **Youth Justice Fund** will be awarded to individuals or small groups of young people **via** their organisation or Gaisce Award Partner (i.e. Youth Diversion Project).

This fund is open to applications from youth diversion, probation and custody organisations who can demonstrate barriers to participation.

The Youth Justice grant amount is **€1000** per organisation. Only one application per Gaisce Award Partner (GAP) is permitted.

What types of activities are funded?

Gaisce SUAS is designed to be used to provide targeted support to individual participants who are experiencing marginalisation or difficult circumstances, as they complete their award.

The fund will contribute towards **participant support costs** associated with Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award requirements.

This can be for an individual or a small group of young people, with varying grants available depending on the number of participants you intend to support.

Gaisce SUAS Uplift Fund	Participant Support Costs (Bronze, Silver, or Gold)	• €250 - For groups who want to support 1-2 disadvantaged participants • €500 - For groups who want to support between 3-5 disadvantaged participants • €750 - For groups supporting between 6-9 disadvantaged participants • €1000 For groups supporting 10 or more disadvantaged participants
Youth Justice Fund	Participant Support Costs (Bronze, Silver, or Gold)	€1000 bursary per organisation

Participant support costs covered under this fund include the following areas:

- **Challenge areas costs:** Costs related to challenge areas for participants experiencing marginalisation and/or disadvantage (i.e. transport, gear, equipment), with the Community Involvement Challenge Area.
- **Accessibility:** Supporting accessibility for participants experiencing marginalisation and/or disadvantage with additional support needs i.e. accessible transport or accessible activities for any of the Challenge Areas.
- **Sustainability:** The purchase of equipment/gear that can be utilised for current and future participants experiencing marginalisation and/or disadvantage, supporting a sustainable approach and use of funds.
- **Adventure Journey:** Adventure journey costs (i.e. transport, accommodation, adventure journey provider fee, equipment, etc.) for individual or small groups of participants experiencing marginalisation and/or disadvantage.

Important:

- The bursary fund is **not** intended to cover all costs that may be associated with completing the Award.
- The bursary fund is not designed to subsidise costs for large groups, rather targeted towards individual/s needs.
- The registration fee for Gaisce Awards **cannot** be covered by this fund.

Funding Criteria

The following funding criteria apply to this grant:

- Funding sought must directly support the participant/s who experience marginalisation and/or disadvantage to engage in their Gaisce Award.
- If the organisation applying is new to Gaisce, they must register to become a Gaisce Award Partner with at least one President's Award Leader (PAL).
- Applicants must be able to adequately demonstrate how the participant(s) experience disadvantage and barriers to their participation.
- Applicants must demonstrate how the funding will be used to directly support participant/s to complete their Gaisce Award, and PAL/s must be committed to supporting the participant/s on all Challenge Areas of their Gaisce Award.
- Funding must only be used for the applicable costs.
- The participant/s who the grant is intended to support must be registered for a Gaisce award or should be registered within the lifecycle of the grant.
- PAL/s must engage with their Gaisce Development Officer during the lifecycle of the bursary.

Application requirements:

- Only **ONE** application per PAL/GAP/organisation will be eligible for consideration.
- Funding must be payable to the **organisation's bank account**.

If these criteria are not met, unfortunately you cannot avail of the SUAS Bursary Fund.

How much funding is available?

The maximum fund any organisation can apply for is €1000 in total. You must detail in the application how many participants the bursary fund is intended to support.

The amount of funding you receive will depend on the available funding, number of applications and proposed use of funds.

The funding applications will be assessed by the Gaisce Selection Committee and weight will be given to aspects such as socioeconomic disadvantage, barriers to participation, impact on participation, and proposed use of funds.

The decision of the Gaisce Selection Committee is final and cannot be appealed.

The closing date for applications is **5pm on Friday 23rd October 2026** and no late applications will be accepted.

Disbursement

You will be notified by email of the outcome of your application in late November 2026.

If successful, your organisation will be required to complete and return an Agreement Form in order to access the Bursary. The Bursary amount will then be paid from Gaisce to the verified bank account of the organisation.

Funds must be spent between **December 2026 - August 2027**.

Support and Monitoring

All successful SUAS Bursary awardees will be supported by the [Gaisce Development Officer](#) associated with their region.

The Development Officer will provide any additional support, information, and check-in with PALs during the lifecycle of the Bursary.

It is essential that Bursary recipient organisations engage with their Gaisce Development Officer or the Youth Justice Project Officer.

Will I have to complete a report? What sort of documentation is required?

You will be required to complete an **online final report**, for which a link will be provided. This will provide space for sharing and explaining your outcomes, the activities related to the grant, the impact for participants, and detail of expenditure.

The deadline for reporting is 31st August 2027. Failure to submit a report will disqualify you from future bursaries.

PAL/s are also required to respond to contact made by their Development Officer during the lifecycle of the Bursary Fund.

You may be expected to show receipts upon request by Gaisce for payments related to the Bursary Fund, so please store these records safely.

How to apply

To apply for this grant, you must complete an **online application form**, which can be accessed via the links below.

There are two separate streams under the SUAS Bursary: Uplift and Youth Justice.

Please ensure that you complete the correct application form associated with the stream you want to apply for.

Uplift Fund: [Click here to access Uplift online application form](#)

Youth Justice Fund: [Click here to access Youth Justice online application form](#)

Applications open on Thursday 1st October 2026 and the closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 23rd October 2026.

Important: Only one application per organisation is permitted.

When to apply - key dates

Applications open: 1st October 2026

Applications close: 5pm, 23rd October 2026

Bursary announced: By 20th November 2026

Payment of Bursary: December 2026

Period for spending of fund: January - August 2027

Report due: 31st August 2027

Details of Fund

Participant Support Costs (Bronze or Silver or Gold award)

Amount funded	Grants available between €250- €1,000 (depending on the number of participants you wish to support).
Who is the funding for?	Young people who experience barriers to participation in the Gaisce award, for example due to marginalisation, disadvantage, fewer opportunities, and inequality. The bursary should support young people to achieve their Gaisce award, who might otherwise not be able to participate.
What is funded?	Participant support costs: Costs associated with completing the Gaisce award, such as: • Adventure Journey: Adventure Journey costs for participants experiencing marginalisation and/or disadvantage ➤ Transport ➤ Accommodation ➤ Adventure Journey Provider fee, ➤ Equipment • Community Involvement: Costs related to participating in a Community Involvement activity i.e. transport • Accessibility: Costs related to supporting access and addressing accessibility needs for participants that experience disadvantage with additional support needs or a disability. <i>Only in particular/special circumstances will the following areas be funded:</i>

	• Personal Skill: Costs related to participating in a personal skill activity i.e. transport, equipment, programme fee • Physical Recreation: Costs related to participating in a physical recreation activity i.e. transport, equipment, programme fee • Sustainability ➤ Camping equipment ➤ Hiking/outdoor clothing, shoes, or gear that will belong to the organisation and used for further participants
What is not funded?	• PAL/GAP staff costs • Activities not related to the Gaisce Award • Gaisce registration fees • Mileage

Ineligible funds:

The list of items not funded is not exhaustive and the Bursary Selection Committee, convened by Gaisce, reserves the right to deem other activities ineligible, as necessary. If you are still unclear as to whether costs are eligible or not, please contact suas@gaisce.ie.