

CATEGORY: Ulster-Scots Cultural Bursary Scheme 2026-27

Information for Applicants

Ulster-Scots Cultural Bursary Scheme

- Guidance Notes 2026-27

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1.0 Introduction

Applicants can apply for a bursary of up to £250 towards the development and understanding of Ulster-Scots culture.

These conditions should be read in conjunction with the [Grant Funding Policy](#).

1.1 Purpose of Bursary Programme/Overview of Fund

The purpose of the Cultural Bursary Scheme is to provide support to individuals towards costs associated with organising or attending Ulster-Scots culture-related initiatives.

1.2 General Principles

The fundamental principles of this guidance document are:

Bursary Award is based on evidenced need

- This is a competitive programme and awards will be determined on merit. Applicants must demonstrate how they meet the eligibility criteria for the Bursary.
- All applications must be completed in full.
- Individuals must be residents within the Borough
- Retrospective applications will not be considered i.e. the application must be submitted by the closing date and the activity for which funding is sought must not take place before the closing date.
- Applications will only be accepted online, via the Grant Management System

Accessibility

Information on the bursary programme will be publicly available through the Council's website and proactively promoted across Mailing Lists, Social Media channels and Borough Life. This will include:

- Guidance on completion of the Bursary application
- Grant Management System embedded into Council public facing platform with digital accessibility options available
- Centralised Grant Funding information on Council webpage
- Point of contact clearly communicated for relevant queries

The Council will strive to ensure the process is user friendly, transparent, and fully inclusive.

Accountability

The Council will always adhere to the Grant Funding Policy and guidance criteria outlined within each grant / bursary programme.

- A clear decision-making process will be utilised, with clear rationale and demonstrable evidence to support funding decisions

- Decision making process will be robust and transparent
- Funding decisions will be approved through the Community Development Committee and Full Council with details made publicly available
- Unsuccessful applicants will be entitled to receive feedback on their application
- An accessible Appeals process will be communicated as part of each grant / bursary call

1.3 Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Individuals must be residents who live at a permanent address within the Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough
- Applicants must not have previously received a bursary from Council

1.4 What can be funded?

Up to £250 can be spent on Ulster-Scots culture-related initiatives relating to language and linguistics, music, drama, poetry and literature, dance, and art.

Where relevant, proof of enrolment on courses will be required

1.5 What cannot be funded/exclusions?

- Activity which does not relate to the development and understanding of the Ulster-Scots culture
- Individuals who have previously received a bursary from the Council

2.0 How to answer the questions

2.1 Why have you applied to this Bursary scheme?

This question gathers information about the applicant including contact details and skills/knowledge that will be obtained from receiving a Bursary

2.2 Financial or social barriers

This question gathers information about the financial or social barriers that the applicant is facing and why financial support is needed

2.3 What you hope to achieve

This question gathers information on how this funding will help you to develop a better understanding of the Ulster-Scots culture

2.4 How the scheme will assist you in your future career or development

This question gathers information on how taking part in the scheme will help you in the future.

2.5 How will the Bursary be invested?

This question gathers information on what you will spend the Bursary on.

3.0 How we assess and score your application

3.1 Eligibility assessment

All applications must be submitted in full. Applications that are not complete will not be considered.

A panel will evaluate eligible applications against the scheme criteria. Applicants will be notified via email detailing the outcome of the application.

3.2 Assessment and scoring

Evaluation Criteria:

If your application has met all the eligibility criteria the panel will use the following criteria to score your application:

Criteria	Score
1. Demonstration of need Please describe why there is a financial need for this support	40
2. How will the proposed project develop a better understanding of Ulster-Scots culture	30
3. How will the proposed project benefit you as an individual	30
TOTAL	100

A pass threshold of 60% needs to be achieved to deem the application successful.

3.3 What happens if an application is successful?

The successful applicant must accept the online offer within 10 days of receiving their letter of offer.

One payment of £250 will be made to the bank account of applicant (or parent or guardian if under 18 years of age).

3.4 Monitoring and reporting

If you receive a Bursary you will be in receipt of public funding and this must be accountable. Monitoring and reporting are an essential requirement for you in delivering your project.

3.5 Marketing and promotion

The Council shall be entitled to publish details of the assistance referred to at such times and in such manner as is necessary without further agreement from the Bursary recipient.

3.6 What happens if an application is ineligible/unsuccessful?

If your application is ineligible/unsuccessful for funding, you will be notified via email. Feedback will be available on request.

3.7 Appeals procedure

An appeals procedure will be available to unsuccessful applicants. For further information please contact the officers detailed at the end of this document.

3.8 Fraud and Corruption

The Council is committed to the prevention and detection of fraud and the promotion of an anti-fraud culture.

The Council operates a zero-tolerance attitude to fraud and corruption, whether from internal or external sources. The Council requires staff and individuals/organisations that it deals with, to act with honesty and integrity, to safeguard the public resources and to report all suspicions of fraud and corruption.

Every case of alleged or suspected fraud will be thoroughly investigated in accordance with the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and where appropriate, referred to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The Council will also seek to recover any loss suffered because of fraud and if appropriate, will take civil, and/or disciplinary action.

The following relevant policies can be located on the Council website:

Anti- Bribery Policy - April 2023

Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy - April 2023

Financial Regulations – April 2024

Fraud Response Plan - March 2023

Raising Concerns Policy – November 2023

The Council reserves the right to disallow any other current, pending or future Bursary applications and claims submitted by an organisation or an individual member of the organisation in respect of the financial year and to apply a moratorium on Council funding to any organisation or individual member of an organisation where fraudulent activity is identified within the current financial year and for at least 2

forthcoming financial years. This will also extend to individuals in receipt or applying for a Bursary.

The Council will inform in writing the Chairperson of the organisation, or the individual where fraud is suspected or has been identified. In the case where the recipient is under age of 18 years the parent/guardian will also be notified.

4.0 Application process

Opens	Closes	Assessment/approval	Notification of Outcome
Monday 9 February 2026	Friday 13 March 2026	April 2026	May 2026

Applicants should note that this is a competitive process and will be subject to available budget. Applications as agreed by the panel will be recommended for funding.

Contact details:

For further information, please contact The Funding Unit: E:
fundingunit@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

T: 0300 123 4568

Appendix 1

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council are entitled to disclose your details to other government agencies and departments and bodies engaged in distributing funds (subject to the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998, known as General Data Protection Regulations GDPR from May 2018).

To process your grant application, applicants are advised that:

- Council use the information you give us on the application form during assessment and for the life of any grant we award you to administer and analyse grants and for our own research.
- Council may give copies of this information to individuals and organisations we consult when assessing applications, when monitoring grants and evaluating the way our funding programmes work and the effect they have. These organisations may include accountants, external evaluators and other organisations or groups involved in delivering the project.
- Council may also share information with other departments, organisations providing match funding and other organisations and individuals with a legitimate interest in applications and grants, or for the prevention or detection of fraud.
- Council might use the data you provide for our own research. We recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of vulnerable groups and their details will not be made public in any way, except as required by law.