An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and Community Development

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland 2040

Ár dTodhchaí Tuaithe
Our Rural Future

CLÁR 2024 Scheme Outline
Measure 3 'Our Islands'

Background

CLÁR (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) is a targeted investment programme for rural areas that aims to provide funding for small infrastructural projects in rural areas that have experienced significant levels of de-population.

CLÁR Programme for 2024

The CLÁR Programme allocation has increased from €7.8m to €8.7 million in 2024. The 2024 programme will be delivered through three separate Measures as follows:

Measure 1:	Developing Community Facilities & Amenities
Measure 2:	Mobility, Cancer Care, Community First Responders and Meals on Wheels Transport
Measure 3:	'Our Islands'

This Scheme Outline refers to Measure 3: 'Our Islands' which is delivered via direct application to the Department.

2024 Our Islands Funding

Recognising the critical role that community and voluntary organisations play in the provision of vital services to vulnerable sectors of the community and particularly on our off-shore Islands, CLÁR 2024 has a specific measure to respond to the needs of these Island communities.

Like many of our other CLÁR areas, the Islands have seen significant levels of depopulation over the last number of years and also face specific challenges such as rural isolation, population decline, service accessibility and social disadvantage.

This Measure will fund interventions on inhabited off-shore Islands under:

i) Island Community Transport; and

ii) Island Community Amenities.

Timelines

Scheme launch	12 April 2024
Applications due	19 June 2024
Funding awarded (Indicative)	October 2024
Projects completed and drawdown	30 April 2026

Eligible Costs

i) Island Community Transport

Unless agreed otherwise with the Department in advance of application, vehicles in receipt of CLAR funding on inhabited off-shore islands must be hybrid/electric in line with Climate Action Plan commitments to reduce emissions and reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels.

The measure will cover the cost of:

- the purchase of hybrid/electric vehicles (and fit out, where necessary)
- PV solar panels to be erected on community facilities which are generating electricity for a connected electric vehicle charging point. This must be in tandem with the purchase of a hybrid/electric vehicle.

Applicants should provide full details regarding the costs associated with the purchase and/or fit out of vehicles, charging points and PV Solar Panels.

This is subject to the following conditions:

- Projects must be located on inhabited off-shore Islands.
- Any vehicle funded must be in good condition and not more than 5 years old.
- Any vehicle funded must be used solely for the activities outlined and not for any commercial transport routes.

- The Department's support for the project must be acknowledged in signage on the vehicle in accordance with the Department's Branding Guidelines.
- Only one vehicle per Island will be considered.
- The Department must be advised of the main location of the vehicle (where it will be parked overnight) and Eircode or XY coordinates provided.

The scheme will not cover any ongoing running costs such as insurance, maintenance or fuel. Applicant organisations will be required to outline how they will manage the ongoing operation of the vehicle.

The measure is open to established organisations/groups that operate on a voluntary basis, where possible. For this measure social enterprises may also be considered eligible. In the case of community transport, the provision of transport services must be provided free of charge where possible (nominal fee may apply to passengers to cover the operating costs of the vehicle) where justified in the application form.

It is a policy of the Department that no displacement occurs with regard to existing services or economic operators who may be faced with an unfair competitive advantage.

Applications under Island Community Transport will be accepted directly by the Department from established representative organisation/groups that operate on the islands.

The purchase of wheelchair accessible vehicles is encouraged or vehicles that can service both community transport and emergency services transportation as required.

ii) Community Amenities

This Measure will consider supports for the enhancement of existing and/or the development of new accessible community amenities. All community amenities funded under this programme must, in so far as practicable, be accessible to all abilities and ages.

The list below provides an indication of the types of projects that may be supported, but the list is not exhaustive:

- Small scale renovation works to community facilities open to the wider community such as community centres/sports centres/clubhouses of sporting groups/youth centres/mens sheds etc
- Multi-Use Gaming Areas (MUGAs) including upgrades
- Playgrounds/Skateboard parks/Pump tracks/Cycling tracks
- Walking/Running /Athletics tracks
- Handball Alleys/Tennis Courts/Basketball Courts/Cricket Grounds
- Community Gyms/Community Cinemas
- Sensory Gardens/Community Gardens/ Allotments
- Access to unique local heritage sites / areas of natural beauty
- Outdoor Bowling Areas/Outdoor Toilet Facilities/Car Parking
- Improving access at sports grounds
- Solar Bins
- Biodiversity Planting
- Community Refuse Facilities

The application form must clearly outline the need and rationale for the interventions put forward. Applications should detail the eligible costs associated with the proposed project. Please note only items of a **capital** nature, integral to the project are eligible.

All administration costs/professional fees associated with the proposed project should be kept to a minimum.

All projects must display and encourage abidance by the *Leave No Trace* principles. The cost of appropriate signage may be included in the overall project costings.

In the assessment process, DRCD will prioritise project applications that are in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), projects that adopt an environmentally friendly approach, and projects that conserve or enhance biodiversity.

Applications under this measure will be accepted directly by the Department from established representative organisation/groups that operate on the islands or from the relevant local authority.

Eligible CLÁR Area

This Measure will fund projects on inhabited off-shore Islands. CLÁR eligibility is based on being physically located within a designated CLÁR DED.

Rate of Aid

i) Island Community Transport

Unless otherwise agreed with the Department, vehicles in receipt of CLÁR funding must be electric/hybrid in line with Climate Action Plan commitments to reduce emissions and reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels.

This measure will provide up to 90% of the total cost of a community hybrid or electric bus/vehicle (including fit-out) with an electric charging point (powered by solar PV panels).

Maximum grant available of €100,000 for a vehicle, increasing to €120,000 where solar panel and charging point are included. Maximum one application per Island. A match funding contribution of 10% is required. Philanthropic contributions may be accepted as full or part of match funding costs.

Match funding must be in place at the time of application

ii) Community Amenities

The scheme will provide up to 90% of the total cost subject to a maximum grant of €50,000.

Assessment Criteria

It should be noted that, in assessing the applications received, a number of factors will be considered including the indicated order of priority (where applicable); the range,

mix, quality and impact of proposed projects; previous funding provided and other relevant considerations.

The applicant must ensure that the application form is fully completed and complies with the 2024 Scheme Outline.

Procurement Requirement

For guidance on procurement and the most up to date requirements, contact the Office of Government Procurement (website: www.OGP.gov.ie; email: support@OGP.gov.ie

Please note that a penalty may apply if public procurement guidelines are not followed.

Application Process

Applications must be submitted on the Measure 3 – Our Islands application form.

Applications should include supporting information requested in the application form including a detailed breakdown of all costs, evidence of match funding, quotation as previously outlined etc.

Grant Payment Arrangements

Groups should note that the payment of the grant will be made on the basis of vouched expenditure i.e. grant will be paid after the group has purchased the goods. Groups may need to arrange bridging funding to cover the amount of the grant while awaiting this payment from the Department. **The goods/vehicles must NOT be purchased prior to the announcement of successful applicants**.

Deadline for Receipt of Applications

Applications should be submitted directly to the Department at CLAR@DRCD.gov.ie by 19 June 2024

The Department may not be in a position to follow up regarding missing documentation or incomplete application forms. Incomplete application forms may not be considered.

If you do not receive acknowledgment of receipt of your application within 10 working days, please contact the Department at the email address below.

Any queries should be submitted to CLAR@DRCD.gov.ie

Non-Compliance with the conditions as outlined or any additional stipulations agreed during contract negotiations may result in the requirement to refund part or all of the grant aid awarded.

Annex 1: Funding Conditions for Rural Schemes funded under the Department of Rural and Community Development

All expenditure registered through the Department's Rural Schemes i.e. Town and Village Renewal Scheme, CLÁR, Outdoor Recreation and Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) will be subject to the terms of the Public Spending Code which can be found at http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie/.

In addition to this, the requirements outlined below will apply to all funding approved through those schemes. The need for adherence to all of the requirements will be reflected in the contractual agreement between the Department of Rural and Community Development and the grantee approved for funding under the scheme.

1	Projects will be expected to commence and be completed in line with the timelines set out in the relevant Scheme Outline.
2	The Department may de-commit funding allocated to projects under the Scheme where the project is not completed within the time specified, and where the express agreement of the Department to extend the funding arrangement has not been agreed in advance.
3	A cash contribution as set out in the relevant Scheme Outline is required. The grantee will be required to confirm that the cash contribution is in place at time of application and retain a record of the source of the cash contribution. The Department may request evidence of same during the assessment process.
4	Projects must be completed in full in order to drawdown the full grant amount. Where it is established that a project has not been completed, the Department may request the grantee to repay any funding received on the project. Any changes to the proposed project must be advised and agreed with the Department in advance of the change being implemented.
5	Where an element of the approved project is not carried out as per the project application, grant funding may be reduced to reflect the amended project.

6	If the project involves works on buildings or lands that are not in the ownership of the grantee, a minimum 15 year lease must be in place unless otherwise agreed with the Department.
7	In the case of funding allocated to enterprises or facilities (i.e. community centre, hubs, vehicles under CLÁR etc.), it is a requirement that they must operate as funded for a minimum of 5 years following release of the final stage of funding, otherwise funding may have to be repaid. Where they do not operate as funded this must be advised and agreed with the Department in advance.
8	The National Public Procurement Policy Framework and appropriate corporate governance requirements must be complied with. Each grantee must fully account for the funding received.
9	Full and accurate documentation to support all expenditure and procurement should be maintained and accessible by Department officials for audit purposes at all times and for a period of six years from the date of completion of the project.
10	Grantees will acknowledge the support of Project 2040 / Department of Rural and Community Development/ Government of Ireland, and any other applicable sources of funding (as identified in the relevant Funding Agreement) in all public announcements, advertising and signage, as appropriate, relating to the project. In addition, the Department may seek to use the project in the broader promotion of its policies.
11	Signage must be in place at all CLÁR funded projects. These signs must be in a prominent location, of durable quality, acknowledge the CLÁR funding and be of sufficient size to be clearly visible to the public. These signs must following the Department's Branding Guidelines.
12	Grantees will provide any reports and information relating to the project as may reasonably be requested by the Department of Rural and Community Development from time to time.
13	On-going monitoring and evaluation of the project outputs and outcomes should take place in the context of assessing the impact of the project. Grantees will be expected to collect appropriate data to facilitate this learning on an on-going basis. On request, a brief report (1-2 pages) on the outputs

	and outcomes of the project funded should be completed and made available to the Department.
14	Each grantee, will provide a contact point/points to the Department to facilitate payment and information requests. The Department should be updated on any changes to contact personnel in a timely manner.