

Your School Your Club.

2024/25



Information & Guidance



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Introduction to Your School Your Club

Your School Your Club (YSYC) is an initiative to help promote community use of the existing sports provision that is held within the school estate. The main aim is to enhance the current sports provision that will help community groups and sports clubs who require additional facilities to meet their needs within their local community.

Evidence has highlighted that 55% of sports halls in Northern Ireland are located on the school estate, 35% of grass pitches are located on the school estate, and 29% of synthetic pitches are located on the school estate (Your School – Your Club. A Practical Guide to Achieving Community Use of School Facilities).

Since the launch of the YSYC programme in 2017 there have been 37 awards and approximately £3.6m awarded to applicants (schools and councils). The purpose of investments through the YSYC initiative is to help enhance the sports provision within the school estate, so that community use will take place outside core school hours.

Your School Your Club Joint Working Group

The YSYC Joint Working Group (YSYC JWG) is chaired by the Department for Communities (DfC); and current membership includes DfC, Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the Chief Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) which represents Local Authorities, Department for Education (DE), Education Authority (EA); and Sport Northern Ireland (SNI).

Sport NI has a confirmed budget of £500,000 for this financial year, 2024/25. The Joint Working Group is seeking to understand what school estate projects are currently in development, the partners involved, timescales for project delivery, viability of projects for YSYC support, and most importantly, projects that will be able to be completed in 2024/25. To do this, we have developed a two-stage process. Stage 1 Expression of Interest, and Stage 2 Application Form. Sport NI does not have any budget confirmed beyond 2024/25, however we will continue to lobby government department for future years' funding for this programme.

Stage 1 will enable Sport NI to ascertain the projects which are in a state of readiness that can be procured and delivered in 2024/25, through applicants evidencing their ability to meet four Mandatory Requirements. Further information is provided at page 5.

Stage 2 will enable Sport NI to assess and score those applicants and their projects that are ready to progress **and** will best meet the aims of the programme. Further information is provided at page 6.

What Types of Projects Can YSYC Support?

The YSYC programme welcomes a range of projects including:

- New sports facilities, indoor or outdoor (including new school builds);
- Lighting to existing outdoor facilities.
- Upgrade to existing facilities that enhance the community offering.

A list of ineligible projects is provided at Appendix 1.

We would particularly welcome projects that are located in areas of high social need, or that target under-represented groups.

What Funding is Available?

Applicants will usually be required to provide partnership funding for their project. This may include fundraising from the school and/or local community, grant from your local authority, funding from another government department, or from the school's own resources.

Who Can Apply?

The school where the project is located.

OR

The Local Authority, in partnership with the school where the project is proposed (*this is a potential partnership opportunity and therefore may require legal agreement between the Local Authority and Managing Authority of the school*).

STAGE 1 – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Eligibility Criteria

In order to ensure the Joint Working Group can expend the allocated budget within this financial year, your school must be able to confirm, and provide evidence of, the following mandatory requirements:

	Criteria	Notes
1	Board of Governors support	BOG support is essential before a project can be progressed. A letter of support from the BOG Chair will be required.
2	Managing Authority support	Appropriate approval from your Managing Authority (EA, CCMS etc) is essential before a project can be progressed. A letter of support from your Managing Authority will be required.
3	Security of Tenure	Confirmation of ownership. A letter confirming leasehold arrangements or freehold tenure will be required.
4	Planning Approval	Construction or upgrades to sports facilities usually require planning approval. This is through an application submitted to your local authority. A copy of the planning decision letter and the planning portal reference number will be required. NB If you believe planning is NOT required, please provide confirmation of this from your local authority planning officer.
5	Community engagement	An outline of the community engagement undertaken in the development of the proposed project.

Only projects which can answer ‘Yes’ and can provide evidence of the above by 2 September 2024 will be invited to submit a Stage 2 Application for funding in this financial year.

Thereafter, the Expression of Interest portal will be reviewed periodically ahead of future years’ funding rounds.

STAGE 2 – APPLICATION FORM

For this financial year, on 2 September 2024, Sport NI will review the Expressions of Interest, and those applicants who evidenced they have met the Mandatory Requirements will be invited to submit a Stage 2 Application. There will be a closing date for receipt of this Application and is likely to be the end of September 2024.

As the YSYC programme is about increasing community use of schools, the proposed project should have been developed through an understanding of the local community needs.

The Stage 2 Application will be assessed and scored against the following criteria:

Criteria	Evidence
<p>NEED</p> <p>What is the need for the project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details on the sports facilities open to the community within the school site. • Information on the community consultation which identified the facilities needed. • Intention to use letters/forms completed by partner clubs/organisations. • Letter from the Local Authority included, confirming the project meets the needs of the local area.
<p>BENEFITS</p> <p>What are the benefits to the community?</p> <p>Are under-represented groups included/benefiting?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports/community development plan. • Timetable of use. • Key outcomes stated. • Proposed user numbers.
<p>OPERATION/MANAGEMENT</p> <p>How will the new sports facilities be managed and operated?</p> <p>Has consideration been given to opening/closing; daily maintenance; who will deal with issues when in use etc?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational Plan • Organisational Chart • Service Level Agreements
<p>FINANCING</p> <p>How will the new sports facilities be financed?</p> <p>Has the applicant demonstrated financial need?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership funding • Financial Plan (ie maintenance costs, staffing costs, cleaning etc) • Cashflow projections • Asset replacement reserve

Following assessment and scoring of the application, projects which meet the quality threshold will be progressed in score order, until the budget has been expended.

Any projects not funded within this financial year, will be asked to reapply in the Stage 2 Application process for 2025/26. Further details on the criteria and scoring will be provided to those applicants invited to submit a Stage 2 Application.

What Do I Do Next?

Please complete the [Expression of Interest form](#) and in addition you must email the supporting evidence to yourschoolyourclub@sportni.net by 12 noon Monday 2 September 2024 to be considered for funding in 2024/25. Expressions of Interest can be submitted on an ongoing basis for future years' funding.

Thereafter you should start to collate all the information required for Stage 2 Application (noted in the above table) as this will need to be submitted with your Stage 2 Application, before the end of September 2024 for those projects wishing to be considered for 2024/25 funding.

If you need additional information or support for this work, please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Courtney (kevincourtney@sportni.net) who will be pleased to answer any queries.

Appendix 1

Ineligible Projects for YSYC

- New or upgrades to 3G synthetic surfaces
- Upgrades of grass pitches to 3G synthetic surfaces
- Small Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs 35m x 17m) or play parks.
- Security systems e.g. fencing, lighting, alarms, and electronic access systems.
- Standard maintenance projects
- Equipment only projects
- Floodlighting of grass pitches
- Project development costs

This list is not exhaustive.