

Creating Opportunities (Crowdfunder)



Your Guide to Success



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Welcome To Creating Opportunities

Welcome to Creating Opportunities!

Delivered in partnership with Crowdfunder UK - **Creating Opportunities** is a programme designed to enable **investment** in **new** and **additional projects** to connect communities, enabling more people to take part in sport and physical activity throughout Northern Ireland.

A focus of the project is to create opportunities to 'level the playing field', so that accessibility and inclusion is felt and experienced by those who have been traditionally excluded from not only participating in sport but playing an active role in coaching, officiating, and leading as part of a board. The programme offers **up to 50% match-funding support to a maximum of £5,000** from Sport NI through the Crowdfunder platform.

We want everyone that applies to the Creating Opportunities programme to be **successful** and get it right first time, which is why we have created this guide to show you exactly how to do so.

In this guide we will show you:

- ✓ How to access the Funding Opportunity
- ✓ How to apply and set up your Campaign Page
- ✓ The Application Process
- ✓ Our Funding Conditions
- ✓ Scenarios you may face
- ✓ Useful Tips
- ✓ How to get in touch with Sport NI

Let's get started.

Accessing the Funding Opportunity

Before you apply to Creating Opportunities, we strongly encourage you to visit our website and read through our guidance documents. You can find these under the '**Important Documents**' section on the page below:

<https://www.sportni.net/funding/creating-opportunities/>

These documents will cover the Terms and Conditions of the funding opportunity ensuring that you know the ins and outs of the programme before applying. This won't take long and is an important step to ensure you are **successful**.

Once you have done so and have a good grasp of the programme, please head over to the Crowdfunder Creating Opportunities website (linked below) to start creating your campaign:

[Match Funding | Get +Extra Funding | Crowdfunder](#)

Setting Up Your Campaign Page

Applying to Creating Opportunities

Once you're on the Crowdfunding Extra Funding page, click on the '**Get Started**' button.

From here you will be asked the question:

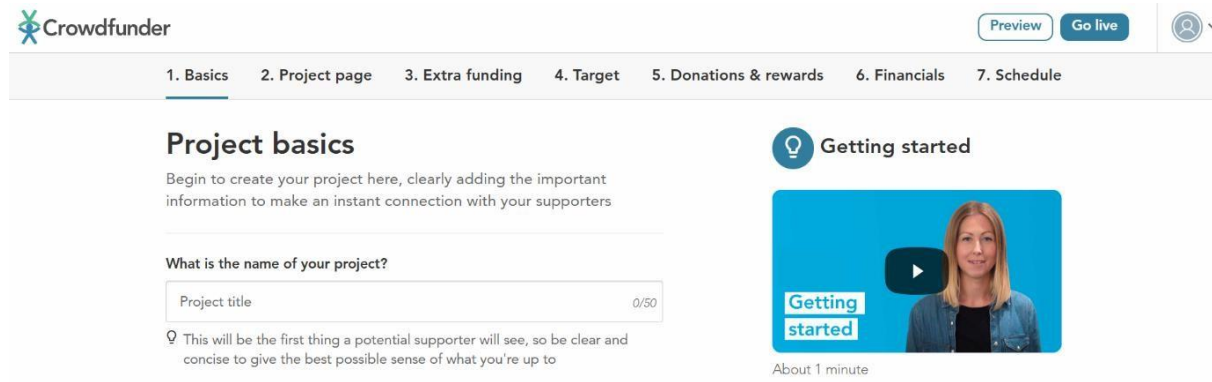
My project is best described as...

For this, choose '**Sport**' and hit '**Next**'.

This will bring you onto the 'Project Basics' page which is where you will start your Crowdfunding journey.

Building Your Campaign

Here is where you will begin to build out your campaign and tell us about your project.



The screenshot shows the 'Project basics' section of the Crowdfunder campaign creation interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with steps: 1. Basics (active), 2. Project page, 3. Extra funding, 4. Target, 5. Donations & rewards, 6. Financials, and 7. Schedule. To the right are 'Preview' and 'Go live' buttons, and a user profile icon. The main heading is 'Project basics' with a subtext: 'Begin to create your project here, clearly adding the important information to make an instant connection with your supporters'. Below this is a form titled 'What is the name of your project?' with a text input field labeled 'Project title' and a character count '0/50'. A tip icon indicates: 'This will be the first thing a potential supporter will see, so be clear and concise to give the best possible sense of what you're up to'. To the right, there's a 'Getting started' video thumbnail featuring a woman, with a play button and the text 'Getting started' and 'About 1 minute'.

This will include the Project Basics, Project Page, Extra Funding, Target, Donations & Rewards, Financials and your Schedule.

Crowdfunder will guide you through this with ease, telling you what to write where and what information is required.

Here is some extra advice from our side to ensure that your campaign gets it right, first time:

Designing Your Campaign Page

When thinking about the design of your campaign page, you need to make sure you are creating a campaign page that targets a wide audience and not just your members.

The aim of Creating Opportunities is to expand your reach beyond your immediate network. Here's some effective ways of doing this:

Your Project Title

Your project title should include the name of your organisation followed by the name of your project (organisation name/project name). To reduce the length of your title, you can abbreviate your organisation type e.g. Football Club to FC, Gaelic Athletic Club to GAC, Cricket Club to CC etc.

Therefore, an example project, from Belfast Football Club with a campaign name of Goals for Girls could be "Belfast FC – Goals for Girls" for short.

Headings

When you are filling in your campaign page text, we encourage you to follow the below headings and sub-headings to guarantee your success first time. This helps to break up information and makes your story easier to read and follow:

1. Tell us about your Organisation
2. What impact does your club have on the local community?
3. What is your project and what is the timeline? (e.g a 12-week football programme for girls)
4. How will your project aim to 'Level the playing field'? (e.g increase number of girls playing football in the Belfast area)
5. How is this something New and/or Additional to your usual activities? (e.g this is something not done before within the club)
6. What's the need for funding? (e.g we require more coaches to help run the programme and to buy more equipment for the girls)
7. How will you spend the money raised? (e.g we will spend the money on 2 coaches (£100 per session x 12 weeks) and 20 footballs (£15 x 10 etc..)

A great campaign follows a clear structure and tells us exactly what is required. Crowdfunder will also provide you with prompts for what to fill in where to keep you on the right track too.

Some excellent example campaigns of those with a clear structure are the following successful campaign:

QUB Golf Club

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/151809a47d04f36af031a14e487e0046>

St. Michael's GAC Magheralin

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/girls-can-play-to-with-st-michaels-magheralin>

Schomberg Boxing Club

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/schombergboxing>

Mid Ulster Stronger Together

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/b279a359e9cf267c6a95b4863fd5f6c7>

Neurodiversity UK-Let's Get Moving

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/neurodiversityuk-lets-get-moving>

Setting your Target

It's important to set your target appropriately based on the financial needs of the project you intend to deliver. Make sure that your target will be an achievable amount to reach and not too ambitious. Once the target is set and the pledge from Sport NI is requested, it **cannot** be amended.

Should you reach your target you can continue your campaign by requesting a stretch target to keep raising funds through the crowd until your campaign closing date. The amount pledged by Sport NI will remain unchanged (even if you have not requested the full £5,000).

Remember, through Creating Opportunities, Sport NI will match up to 50% of your target! Please see the table below of what this may look like for your campaign:

50% match funding from SNI Eligibility		
Total Target	SNI support	Crowd support
£1,000	£500	£500
£5,000	£2,500	£2,500
£8,000	£4,000	£4,000
£10,000	£5,000	£5,000

Images

We want you to show us who you are! Images are good at creating a clear picture of the fantastic organisation you've got. Try to include pictures of the facilities, members of the club, members of the community, and any previously hosted events. This helps to paint a vivid picture of who we are funding and the impact it will have.

Videos

Videos are a great way of pitching your campaign and making it more personable. They should be somewhere between 1 and 3 minutes. Your supporters like to see who they are supporting and understand what the project is about from the people who will deliver it or benefit from it. Your video should include the following topics:

- ✓ The name of your Organisation
- ✓ What your project is and the timeframe of it
- ✓ How your project is new and/or additional
- ✓ Who you are targeting in the community
- ✓ What the funding will be used for
- ✓ A thank you to your supporters

If you are planning to apply for between £4,000 and the £5,000 maximum match-funding from Sport NI, you **MUST** include a video that is bespoke to the project!

Community Based Rewards

Rewards are the best way to extend your reach outside your immediate network. Organisations are seeing real successes from speaking with local businesses, members and friends of the organisation who then donate things to use as rewards.

Previous examples have included:

- ✓ Free Coffees & Cake
- ✓ Discounts on local services such as hairdressers
- ✓ Vouchers for restaurants or even the local Spar

We have even seen a sack of spuds as a reward too! It's a great way of attracting pledges from outside the sports world.

As part of our eligibility criteria, you are required to include a minimum of 2 Community-Based Rewards as part of your campaign.

Our advice is to look beyond your club or organisation and tap into the wider community around you, with a variety of Rewards across different price points (£5, £10, £20). The wider the variety of Rewards that you have, the greater the potential appeal to your crowd.

Have you approached any other local businesses directly or do any of your members or their families have connections to local businesses? Providing discounts, vouchers or physical goods or services from local businesses for your supporters to claim is a great way to crowdfund and achieve the success you need.

For example, do you have any local restaurants that could provide a physical voucher or discount? Not only is it free publicity for them, the face-value of a voucher is often exceeded when used.

Do you have any local garages that offer car services? Car washes? Hairdressing or beauty salons?

People usually like to feel they are getting something of value with a Reward. If a member of the public is intending to pledge £10 and sees if they pledge £20 they get a % discount or a £25 voucher at a local restaurant or shop, they will potentially opt for that.

Building partnerships with services like so is a fantastic way to create new links to your club and helps with creating a legacy!

Wallet Setup:

Crowdfunder will help you to set up your wallet during the details section of your campaign page. This will allow you to start receiving donations.

However, if you find yourself stuck, please use this guide to help you:

<https://help.crowdfunder.co.uk/en/articles/1632624-how-to-set-up-your-wallet-and-receive-your-extra-funding>

Going Live

Once you have filled in all the details for your campaign using the above guidelines, you will see a box to enable you to '**Go Live**'.

As Sport Northern Ireland assesses the campaigns submitted, you may only go live *after* you have been successful in assessment.

Leave this unticked for now.

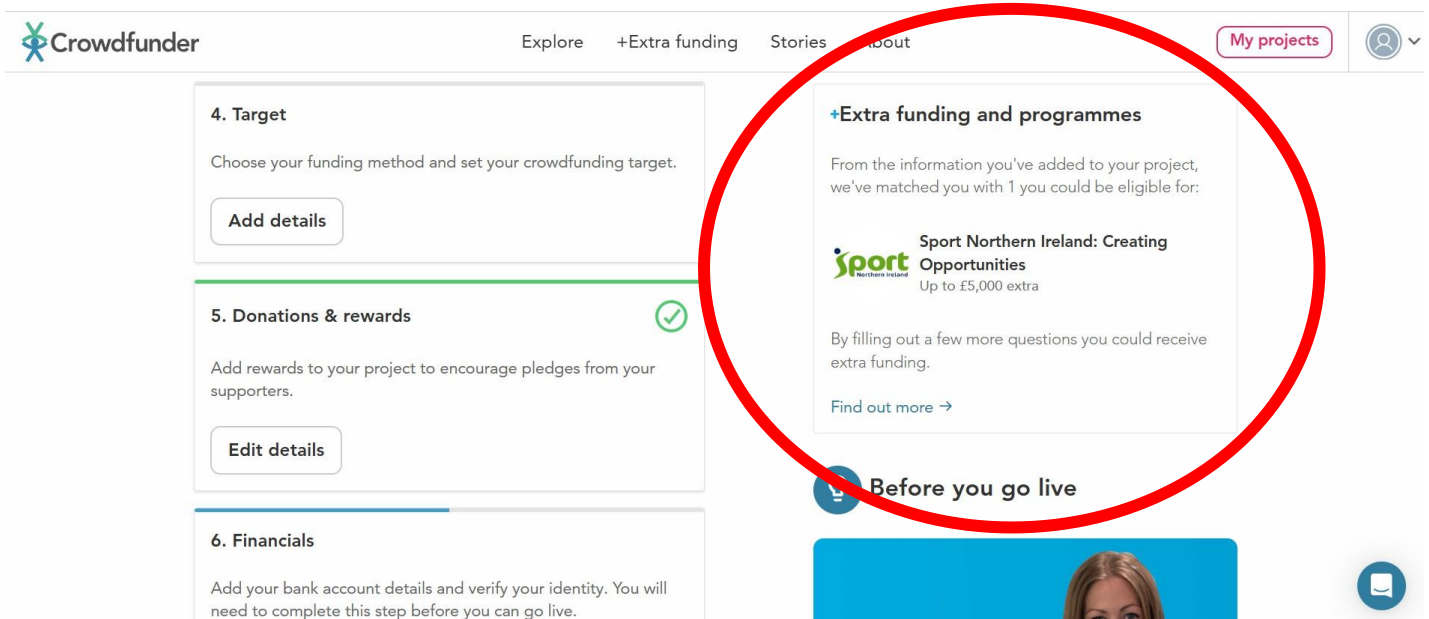
Once your application has been assessed and approved, you will have 2 weeks to go live and begin to fundraise.

Go live

- ☐ I agree to the following fees. I confirm my project meets the [criteria](#) for the fees displayed. I acknowledge Crowdfunder will charge me the correct fee as set out on the [fees page](#) if I have selected the wrong project type.

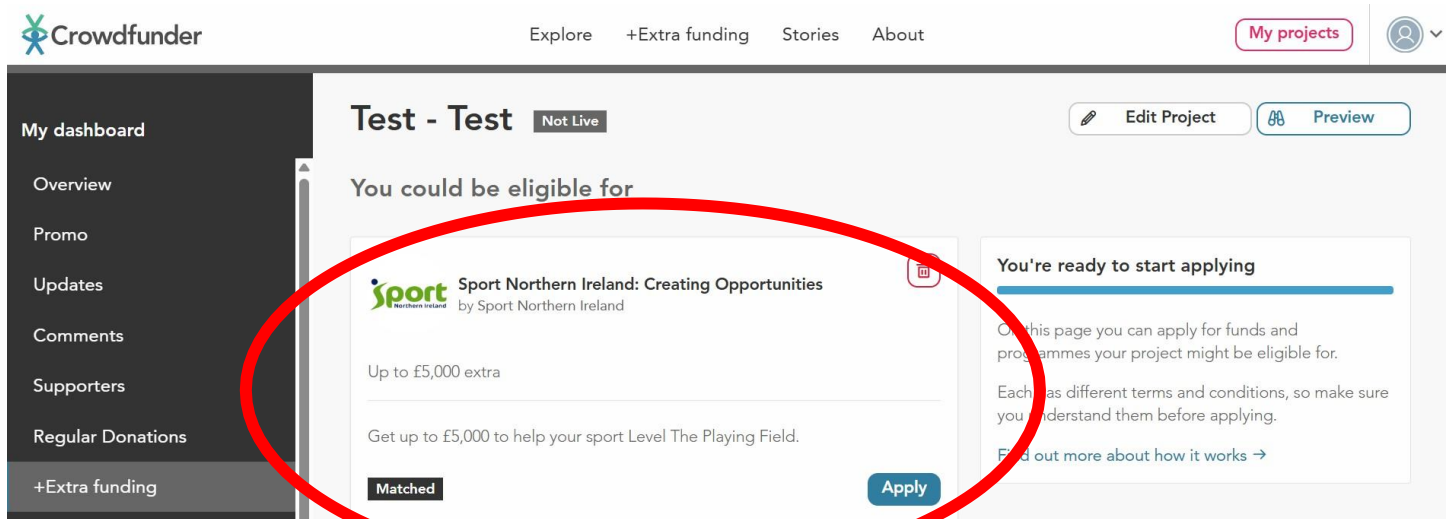
Applying for Sport NI Opportunities:

Once you have filled in all the required elements of your campaign page, you will be prompted to apply for Sport NI Creating Opportunities:



The screenshot shows the Crowdfunder campaign page. The '4. Target' section is active, with a description: 'Choose your funding method and set your crowdfunding target.' and an 'Add details' button. To the right, a red circle highlights a section titled '+Extra funding and programmes'. This section states: 'From the information you've added to your project, we've matched you with 1 you could be eligible for:'. Below this, it features the 'Sport Northern Ireland: Creating Opportunities' logo and text: 'Up to £5,000 extra'. It also says: 'By filling out a few more questions you could receive extra funding.' and includes a 'Find out more →' link. Below the red circle, there is a 'Before you go live' section with a blue bar and a profile picture of a woman.

Once here, click '**Find out more**' to apply for the Creating Opportunities fund. This will bring you into your Dashboard where you will be greeted with the prompt to apply to the funding opportunity.



The screenshot shows the Crowdfunder dashboard. The left sidebar contains a 'My dashboard' menu with options: Overview, Promo, Updates, Comments, Supporters, Regular Donations, and '+Extra funding' (which is highlighted). The main content area shows a project titled 'Test - Test' with a 'Not Live' status. Below the project title, it says 'You could be eligible for'. A red circle highlights a section titled 'Sport Northern Ireland: Creating Opportunities' by Sport Northern Ireland. This section includes the text: 'Up to £5,000 extra' and 'Get up to £5,000 to help your sport Level The Playing Field.' Below this, there is a 'Matched' button and an 'Apply' button. To the right of the red circle, there is a section titled 'You're ready to start applying' with a blue bar and text: 'On this page you can apply for funds and programmes your project might be eligible for. Each has different terms and conditions, so make sure you understand them before applying. Find out more about how it works →'.

Click **Apply** and go onto the next page.

This page is where you will fill in your application for Sport NI Creating Opportunities. It will ask you a variety of questions regarding your application.

Go through the application page in as much detail as possible. This form will ask you a variety of questions in relation to:

- Your Organisation
- Primary Contact Details
- Secondary Contact Details
- About Your Project
- Target Participants
- Declarations

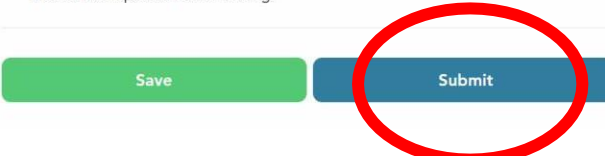
Make sure to align this with your campaign page to ensure that both your campaign page and Creating Opportunities application are the same.



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Crowdfunder website with links for Explore, +Extra funding, Stories, and About. On the right, there is a 'My projects' button and a user profile icon. The main heading is 'Sport Northern Ireland: Creating Opportunities'. Below this, there is explanatory text: 'Complete the form below to apply for up to £5,000 of extra funding from Sport NI. Match funding is available to projects that meet the eligibility and programme criteria set by Sport NI. Sport NI will pledge up to 50% of your target to a maximum of £5,000. You must achieve 100% of your funding target to receive the Sport NI funds. Before completing the application, please read the eligibility and pledge criteria.'

Once the application is filled in, you have ticked the declarations (ensuring your organisation meets the requirements) and are content that your campaign page/application form are complete, hit **Submit**. If you need to make changes, feel free to save and return to the application form via your dashboard to complete at any time.

- Declarations:**
- ☒ Please tick to indicate you have included the name of your organisation in your project title i.e organisation name/project name
 - ☒ Please confirm you agree for your data to be shared with our partner Sport Northern Ireland. To find out more about how they use your personal information, please see their Privacy Notice.
 - ☒ Please confirm that you have read the Information & Guidance Notes, meet the Eligibility and Pledge Criteria and agree to the Creating Opportunities Grant Conditions and Standard T&Cs. You should download and retain copies of these for future reference.
 - ☒ I agree that, if my application is successful, I will complete and submit an End of Project Report as well as participate in potential further follow up conversations/case-studies around the impact of match funding.



At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: a green 'Save' button and a blue 'Submit' button. The 'Submit' button is circled in red, indicating it is the final step to complete the application.

Once you have clicked **Submit**, you will get notification that your application has been received.

Thanks!

Thank you for submitting your application.

[← Back to available funds](#)

What's Next?

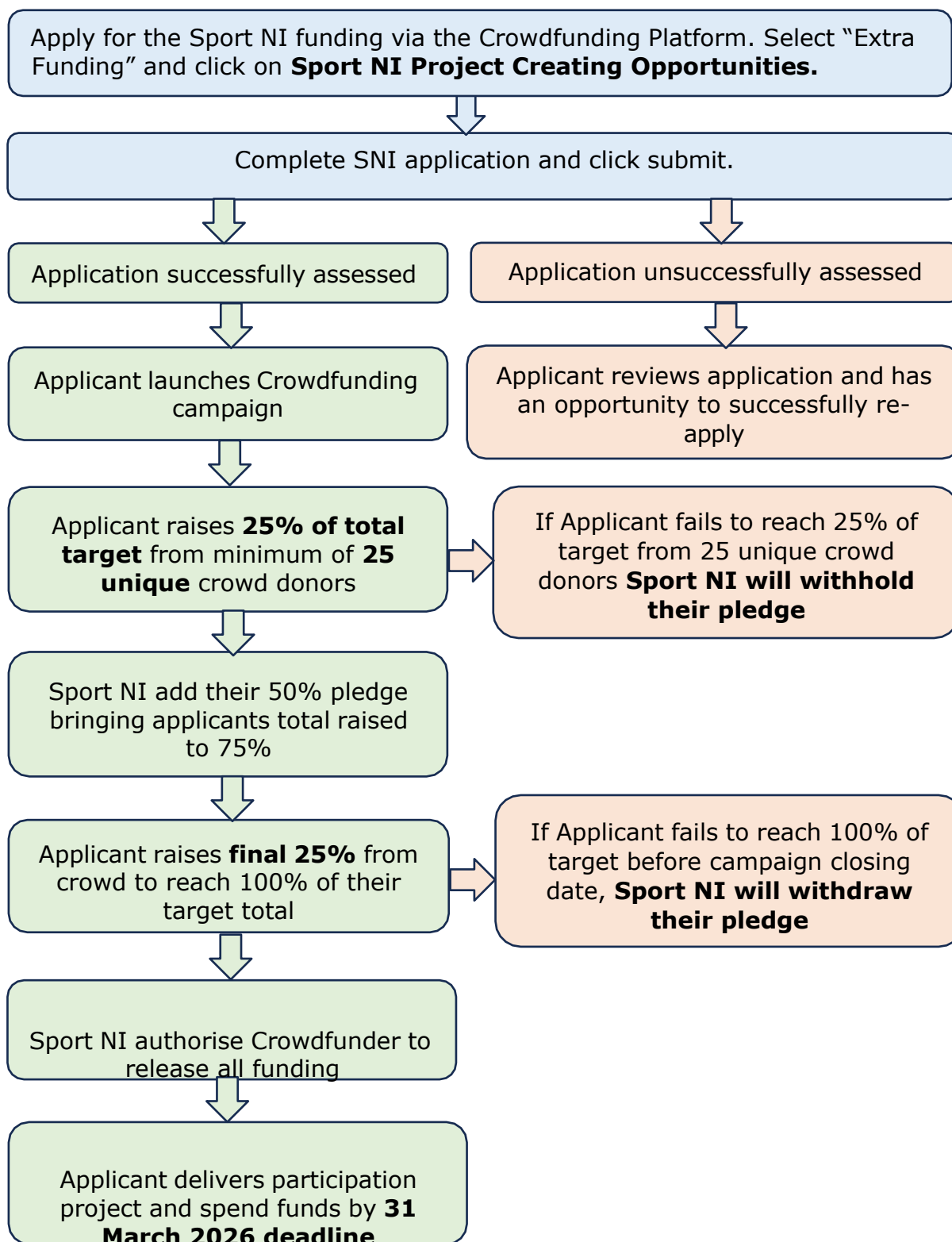
Sport NI will receive correspondence that you have applied to the Creating Opportunities Fund.

When we receive your application, we will be in touch with an email to confirm receipt of your application.

From this, your application will enter into our Application Process which you can see below in the next section.

The Application Process

Please see below our Application Process, which we will discuss further beneath:



There are 5 outcomes associated with the Creating Opportunities fund. These are:

- Acknowledgment
- Successful
- Review
- Re-Review
- Decline

Acknowledgement:

We have received your application! You will receive an email from us to thank you for applying.

Successful:

You did it! Congratulations, you have been approved and can now go live and begin to fundraise for your campaign. You will receive a letter from us indicating this outcome and the next steps you are required to take.

Review:

Almost there, but not quite! There are a couple of changes you are required to make before we can approve your campaign. These can include minor changes such as more detail in a certain section of your campaign page or something a little more major such as you're missing the required video. You will receive an email from us stating what changes need to be made and how to do so.

Re-Review:

This occurs when you have made some changes, but not all of them. Another occasion when this happens is if we do not hear from the campaign owner within a certain timeframe after the initial 'Review' email has been sent. This is your last chance to make the required changes before being assessed. Again, you will receive an email from us stating what changes need to be made and how to do so.

Decline:

Whenever a campaign page is not eligible, it will be declined. This can be for a variety of reasons such as an ineligible project without target groups, spends that we cannot cover or if a campaign is still in template form upon submission. Additionally, those that have been given a 2nd review (Re-Review) letter but do not make the required changes, will also be declined. You will receive a letter from us indicating this outcome.

Funding Conditions

As "Creating Opportunities" is all about being innovative and creative in how you deliver your sport or diversify your offer as a club or organisation, we are not being overly prescriptive in what we will fund.

We are allowing clubs and organisations/associations the opportunity to be as creative as possible to help deliver the outcomes of the programme.

Below is what we will **NOT** invest in:

- Participation Projects not related to 'Levelling the Playing Field'.
- Capital elements not related to your participation project
- Capital elements that cost more than £10K (Projects requesting a Capital element of £10k MUST have no additional delivery costs. I.E. applicants can deliver their participation project in-house and funding would be split with the maximum £5,000 funding coming from Sport NI and £5,000 coming from the Crowd).
- Capital elements that require statutory approvals (such as planning permission).
- Capital elements that require the appointment of design teams.
- Capital elements that fail to level the playing field.
- Activities that replace a statutory function e.g. curriculum time sport delivery (after-school is eligible).
- Existing activities already in place e.g. current training sessions, etc.
- Retrospective costs.
- General organisation running costs (excluding project-specific running costs), office equipment, furniture, maintenance, kits
- Salary costs, loan repayments and endowments.
- Entertainment costs, food and beverages, marketing materials
- Secondary, further or higher education e.g. A Levels, Degrees, etc.
- VAT that can be recovered from HM Revenue and Customs.
- Activities promoting religious or political beliefs.
- Donations/fundraising events or activities.
- Costs incurred before successful Letter of Offer issued.
- Insurance, contingency allowance, affiliation, entry fees or membership fees.
- Accommodation/hotels, team-building activities and travel outside NI
- Strategic planning/development e.g. consultancy fees.
- Access NI registration fees.
- Livestock.
- Closed or Always-On campaigns (on Crowdfunder).
- Campaigns only offering Rewards in the form of membership fees, subscriptions, and prize draws.

- Campaigns not offering a minimum of 2 Community-Based Rewards
- Campaigns that are already 'Live'.
- Projects that do not clearly outline eligible budget spend items in either their campaign page or application form.
- Projects that do not clearly outline eligible timeframe of expenditure and delivery in either their campaign page or application form.

It's important to note that Sport NI will review applications **AND** your crowdfunding campaign page, make sure this is completed before sending through your application. Once you're confident you have a strong campaign page and have been matched to our funding, you can apply. Below is **how** you request a funding pledge from Sport NI.

Note: Campaign pages MUST be completed prior to applying to Sport NI, otherwise your application may be Declined

Once your application has been approved for funding you **must not** change any elements of your campaign page. **Otherwise, any offer of funding will be rescinded.**

To receive a pledge, you will need to do two things:

- 1. raise at least 25% of your initial target, and**
- 2. raise this from a minimum of 25 qualifying (unique) supporters.**

If either of these funding conditions are not met, the pledge will be withheld until both have been met.

Providing these two funding conditions are met:

- Applicants will be provided with an offer which will be valid for 2 weeks after the date of notification. If the applicant does not launch a crowdfunding campaign within 2 weeks of notification, the offer will be rescinded.
- The applicant must raise the remaining 25% from the crowd to achieve 100% of your funding target and receive Sport NI funds.
- If an applicant does not achieve the funding target within the 6-week period (**4 weeks if applying in January**), Sport NI reserves the right to withdraw its support. If an applicant is within 10% of their target, Sport NI may increase the time by a further 2 weeks (**January applicants cannot be extended**).

- If the project fails to reach 100% of the target, the Sport NI funding pledge will be cancelled. The project owner will be encouraged to review what went wrong and, if appropriate, to attempt to crowdfund again.

Scenarios You May Face

As much as we have made this guide to ensure your success within the Creating Opportunities Fund, you may face some unexpected scenarios:

'We only have a few days left and won't hit our target'

We are aware that some circumstances are unforeseen. Therefore, we provide a maximum extension of 2 weeks. This is broken up into an initial week extension, followed by another if required. If you are applying for the funding in January, this extension may not be approved due to the narrow timeframe for delivery and spend.

'I don't have a videographer to record a video'

No problem at all – feel free to use an iPhone/Android that allows video capture in a good quality so that you can upload to the Crowdfunder platform.

'We aren't gaining traction with our fundraising'

Make sure you are using all avenues of getting eyes on your project. Social media is a powerful tool to get the word out so make sure you are using it. Use hashtags on X (formally known as Twitter) to put your campaign in the feed of other sports communities and enable the 'share' option on Instagram and Facebook to allow others to spread the word!

'We haven't received any supporters/donations yet'

Fundraising can take time, which is why campaigns have 6 weeks to raise their target. Make use of weekend funday fundraisers, get families involved and the community. A little from everyone goes a long way. Sometimes all it takes is a little traction and the funding will start to roll in.

Useful Tips

Here are some useful Tips & Tricks that will help you alongside your Crowdfunding journey:

Get Inspiration from Successful Campaigns:

Look at those that have already applied to the Creating Opportunities fund and have been successful! Take inspiration from these and see what sections of their campaign you like and what would also be suitable for your programme. Please do not copy and paste as you will be declined.

Set Clear Goals and Objectives

Define specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals for your campaign. This will help you prepare for the fundraising element.

Understand Your Target Audience

Research and identify the demographics and interests of your community. Tailor your campaign to those that would benefit the most.

Leverage Social Media and Online Platforms

Use your social media channels to promote your campaign, engage with your audience, and encourage sharing. Regular updates and interactive content can help maintain interest and expand your reach.

Build a Pre-Launch Community

Engage with potential supporters before launching your campaign. Building relationships and generating interest early can lead to a strong start and sustained momentum.

Express Gratitude and Acknowledge Supporters

Make sure to show appreciation to your backers through personalised messages or public acknowledgments. Word of mouth can go a long way!

Get In Touch

To get in touch with the Creating Opportunities Team send us an email at:

creatingopportunities@sportni.net

Alternatively, contact the Project Lead Kyle Robinson at:

E: kyl robinson@sportni.net

Mobile: 07779871194

If your query is Crowdfunder specific, please contact our Crowdfunder support team:

E: support@crowdfunder.co.uk

Good Luck!

From all of us at the Sport NI Creating Opportunities team, we wish you all the best in applying for the Creating Opportunities fund and we look forward to receiving your application.

Remember to follow this guide and you will be successful in applying. If you find yourself stuck at any point, please get in touch with us and we will help you along the way.