

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL'S



STRATEGIC SUPPORT FUND FOR GROUPS WORKING WITH VICTIMS & SURVIVORS OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND TROUBLES 2012-2013

For use in conjunction with the Application Form for the Strategic Support Fund

Thank you for asking for a Strategic Support Fund application pack. Before you fill in your application form, please take time to read these guidance notes carefully. You will find information about who can apply for funding support, the kinds of financial support we will give and what happens when you apply.

Accessibility

Please contact us to discuss any specific communications needs you may have.

Closing date for applications:

Monday 20th February 2012 – 1pm. **Please note:** applications received after this time will **NOT** be eligible for funding.

Contact Details

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1. Rationale and Background

In 2009, Government released a consultation paper on a Victims & Survivors Service, which will replace all current arrangements in relation to funding for groups (and individuals). Preparations are underway by OFMDFM to plan next steps for the establishment of the Victims & Survivors Service from April 2012.

Between 2010 and 2012, the Community Relations Council was requested to manage the transitional funding arrangements for groups working with individual victims and survivors, until the establishment of the Victims & Survivors Service.

The transitional arrangements included a merger of the Core and Development Grant Schemes to form the Strategic Support Fund for groups delivering services to victims and survivors and a separate Development Grant Scheme for volunteer based groups providing services to individual victims (who do not require staffing and running costs). The Community Relations Council has been asked to extend the Strategic Support Fund for a further year (2012-2013) in order to allow the newly emerging Victims Service the opportunity to establish with a view to transferring funding responsibility fully to the Service during this year.

The Strategic Support Fund provides the opportunity for groups who work with and deliver services to victims and survivors of the Northern Ireland Troubles to make a more strategic application for their core running costs and their service delivery costs.

2. The Community Relations Council

The Community Relations Council was established in 1990 and has been engaged in work with victims and survivors of the Northern Ireland Troubles since its formation. In this time it has worked to assist the development of greater understanding between the different communities in Northern Ireland by means of a number of wide ranging and innovative initiatives. These initiatives have taken place within the Council itself, and through the allocation of funds to groups and organisations beyond the Council, and throughout Northern Ireland. The Council's core aims and related objectives provide a framework through which it channels its work to provide an efficient, effective and challenging response and service to a society emerging from conflict. Support for victims and survivors is an integral part of Council business and the Council recognises that issues relating to victims and survivors are crucial and interrelated to the development of the peace process.

3. Aims and Objectives of the Strategic Support Fund

The Strategic Support Fund (SSF) for groups working with victim and survivors aims to use public funding to:

- help victims and survivors regain fulfilment in their lives and, where appropriate, to help re-integrate them as members of society,
- the emphasis of the Strategic Support Fund will be on the benefits it brings to individual victims/survivors, and
- priority will be given to organisations or groups which provide support services to victims and survivors which they cannot access elsewhere.

This Fund will be managed so as to:

- Promote the unique support provided by groups and organisations to individual victims and survivors.
- Encourage groups/organisations that provide services in parallel with others to develop partnerships that complement rather than duplicate service delivery.
- Encourage cohesion between and within groups and organisations so that service provision can be shared and the fragmentation of groups and organisations avoided.
- Encourage groups and organisations to develop strategic plans which show how their work will be sustained; how they will diversify their funding base; how they will address the training needs of their volunteers, staff and management committee; and how they will aim to provide a service to all communities.

4. Who can apply:

Any constituted voluntary and community victims group or organisation that can provide evidence of need for their support services to victims and survivors resident in Northern Ireland are eligible to submit an application to the Strategic Support Fund.

Volunteer based groups that do not require staffing support costs should **not** submit an application to the Strategic Support Fund; rather they should submit their applications for services to the Development Grant Scheme.

Voluntary and community organisations must have a written governing document (for example a Constitution or articles of association) and at least three people on their governing body or management committee who are not related to each other.

You can find more information about good governance from the Department of Social Development's (DSD) "Setting Standards, Improving Performance – best practice in finance and governance in the voluntary and community sector" which has been used as the benchmark for improving the effectiveness of the victims sector and requirements of Government in relation to the provision of grant aid – copies of this can be downloaded from the following website link: http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/finance_and_governance_for_vcu.pdf

New voluntary and community sector victims groups or organisations

Applications from new voluntary and community sector victims groups or organisations are welcome. If you are a new group or organisation, your committee should adopt a governing document before you apply. We understand that new groups or organisations will not yet have a set of annual accounts. Instead, we need a statement of your projected income and expenditure for your first year. You will also need a NI or UK bank or building society account. All the documents you send us in support of your application must be in the full correct name of your group or organisation, as set out in, for example, your governing document, usually your constitution.

Branches

Your organisation may be a branch of a larger organisation. If so, you can normally only apply for funding if your organisation is an independent branch. By 'independent' we mean that you must have:

- your own constitution/governing document (or separate terms of reference which establish the remit and power of the branch). The Constitution of the entire organisation is not satisfactory.
- a management committee that accords with the requirements of the constitution.
- a NI or UK bank or building society account in the name of the branch organisation and under direct control by the branch.
- your own annual accounts approved by your own management committee, signed and dated and independently verified or audited if applicable.
- direct control over branch income and how you spend it.

If you are not independent you may still be able to apply for funding support, but you will need the support of the larger umbrella or parent organisation.

If you are a dependent branch, but have a management committee, a NI or UK bank or building society account in the name of your branch and produce your own annual accounts, however do not have direct control over branch finances (i.e. the main organisation decides how money is spent), you can still apply for funding support. However, you will need the support of the organisation you are linked to and must ensure that they will take accept legal responsibility for any funding award made to you and any default that may be made on the funding agreement. Your funding application and letter of offer should be signed by authorised officials named in the body's governing document. Please discuss these requirements with the larger organisation that you are linked to before you apply.

If you are a dependent branch and do not have a management committee, a NI or UK bank or building society account or prepare your own annual accounts, the larger organisation that you are linked to should apply for a funding award and specify in the application the details of the branch it is acting on behalf of.

5. How does your group or organization intend to manage its service delivery?

Managing staff and supervising volunteers or sessional workers, operating as an effective management committee, dealing with difficulties/potential conflicts, managing budgets and accounting for public funds, monitoring and evaluation requirements, are all important considerations and responsibilities for groups and organisations.

Applicant groups or organisations should review the effectiveness of their Board/management committees, their governance arrangements, their training and support needs and should identify any learning, information or support needs which they might have in fulfilling their contractual obligations through the Strategic Support Fund.

The following questions might be helpful for your group or organisation to reflect upon:

- How reflective is your group's or organisation's Board/management committee of the communities it serves?
- How are Board/management committee members appointed?
- What experience and skills do committee members have in the management of staff and service delivery?
- Who will control/manage budgets and expenditure; who will monitor/evaluate and how will this be done?
- What training, support or information needs does your Board/management committee have in relation to the management of any grant award received?

Bank or building society accounts

You must have a separate NI or UK-based bank account in the name of the organisation that applies for financial support and will carry out the services or activities detailed in your work plan for funding awards to the Strategic Support Fund.

We require at least two unrelated people to sign each cheque or make a withdrawal. If any signatories are related or live at the same address we need written confirmation from your bank or building society that these people cannot authorise payments together.

6. Important Considerations

Accounts or income and expenditure projections

All voluntary and community sector victims groups or organisations must produce a set of accounts at the end of their financial year. These accounts are then agreed by the members of the group or organisation at its Annual General Meeting. You must send us a copy of your most recent annual accounts, signed and dated as approved. Your annual accounts should not be more than 12 months old. Please note that the annual accounts must be in the full correct name of your group or organisation, as in your governing document and signed as approved by an office holder.

Please apply only for what you need, based on evidence. Please ensure that you consider carefully the requested costs of your service provision. Please attempt to focus on service delivery i.e. requested costs should be in favour of actual delivery of services to victims and survivors rather than your running costs. Ensuring best value for service provision is important in order to maximise available resources for the entire victims sector/population.

You can only hold one funding award or contract at any one time. You can have funding support from the Development Grant Scheme OR funding support from the Strategic Support Fund (not both).

Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adult Policies and other legal requirements

It is important to ensure the safety of any children, young people under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults (individual victims and survivors are classified as vulnerable adults/children) you may work with. If your group or organisation is or will be working with any of these people, you should have a policy that explains how you make sure these people are safe and be able to show that your policy is put into practice. We may ask for policies that are relevant to how your group or organisation will run your service delivery.

Lobbying

Please do not try to influence the decision by lobbying the Community Relations Council, Board members, Committee members or Staff, directly or indirectly.

Publicity

We may use the name of your group or organisation and its service delivery in our own publicity materials if you are successful.

Questions/Queries about your application

If you have any questions or queries relating to your application please contact a member of the CRC Victims Programme team on 028 90 227500.

7. Your Application at a glance:

- PART 1: Application Form questions
- PART 2: Completion of work plan(s)
- PART 3: Checklist of documents to be provided to verify the standing of your group or organisation.

There are three parts to your application: it is essential that you complete all questions on the application form. Assessments can only be carried out on the information provided by your group/organization. Therefore the council urge you to provide as much relevant information as possible to support your application to the Strategic Support Fund.

Group/Organisational Profile

Question 1 This question asks you to provide a profile of your group or organisation.

Categorisation of Groups/Organisations working with Victims & Survivors

Question 2 This question focuses on the categorisation of groups or organisations working with and delivering services to victims and survivors and the following table on **page 7** provides further details with regards to type/category of group or organisation, related assessment criteria, what funding will support and the most appropriate fund for your group or organisation.

Current Funding Arrangements Question 3 This question asks you about your current funding arrangements.

Planning & Management of Service Delivery

Questions 4-7 These questions focus on how your group or organisation plans and manages its delivery of services and asks your group for details on:

- how the needs of victims and survivors are considered within your strategic plan,
- how you focus your services on the needs of individual victims and survivors,
- how you monitor and record the eligibility of your members/clients/beneficiaries of services as victims and survivors, and
- your financial monitoring arrangements.

Monitoring & Evaluation of Service Delivery Question 8 This question asks your group for details on;

- how your group or organisation monitors and evaluates its service delivery.

Partnership Arrangements

Questions 9-12 These questions focus on your organisation's partnership arrangements and ask your group or organisation for details of;

- similar services being delivered locally;
- complementarity of services;

- partnerships to share delivery of services; and
- any networking arrangements.

Type/Category	Assessment Criteria To Be Met:	What funding will cover/Eligible Costs:	Relevant Fund
Volunteer Groups	Must demonstrate the benefit of their work to users Related Development Grant Scheme Criteria for service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expenses, particularly travel costs • social events considered a core part of volunteer operations; and • limited running costs • support towards a work plan of services and activities relating to the 6 areas of need noted on pages 8-10. 	Development Grant Scheme
Self-Help Groups/Organisations	<p>Must show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • openness and accountability to users and have a high degree of user involvement in decision making. • A degree of co-operation with other groups and organisations working in the sector. • A needs assessment; and • The development of and involvement in partnerships with parallel service providers, voluntary or community organisations or groups and/or with the statutory sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running costs; • Administration costs; • Staff training in skills for organisational development; and • Salaries of Co-ordinator/Director, Administrator, Development Officer/Project Worker The number of salaries paid is dependent on the size of the client group and the number of projects/services running. • support towards a work plan of services and activities relating to the 6 areas of need noted on pages 8-10 and guidance re: eligible costs on page 11-14. 	Strategic Support Fund (SSF)
Parallel Service Providers	<p>Must show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a willingness and ability to engage in partnership with the statutory sector and show that the services it provides are complementary to those available in the statutory sector, rather than a duplication of such services. • Evidence of partnerships with self-help and volunteer groups and organisations; • Openness and accountability to their users; • A 3 year strategic plan; • Evidence of a strategy for raising alternative funding; • A strategy for providing services to all communities; • That its professional staff are suitably accredited; • A strategy for sustainability; and • A strategy for 'exiting' Strategic Support Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running costs; • Administration costs; • Staff training in skills for organisational development; and • Salaries of Co-ordinator/Director, Administrator, Development Officer/Project Worker The number of salaries paid is dependent on the size of the client group and the number of projects/services running. • support towards a work plan of services and activities relating to the 6 areas of need noted on pages 8-10 and guidance re: eligible costs on page 11-14. 	Strategic Support Fund (SSF)

Questions 13 Staffing Arrangements

The questions detailed within this section focus on your group's Staffing Arrangements and ask your group or organisation for details of;

- how your group manages, supervises and looks after the training needs of your staff (or intends to if your group has not yet managed staff); and
- any skills/training needs assessments; and
- how staff are able to provide a professional service to meet needs of individual victims and survivors.

Question 14 Sustainability Plans

The four areas to support the sustainability of services have been suggested by leading conflict transformation expert John Paul Lederach and may be taken into account if your group believes its work will extend beyond the end of the funding period. (Further information on these four sustainability areas can be obtained from CRC's website: www.nicrc.org.uk under "Speeches" see: John Paul Lederach's address on Sustainability). What plans has your group considered that involve some of the following models for sustainability:

- 1 Fee for Services;
- 2 Partnership/Pooling of Resources;
- 3 Volunteerism;
- 4 Absorption into existing appropriate institutions.

This completes PART 1 of the application

PART 2

Work Plan

The following section of the application form focuses on the work plan(s) of your group or organisation and asks you to detail, and separate out, your group or organisation's services to individual victims and survivors according to the following six main categories of need:

- 1 *Mental health and well-being*
- 2 *Social Support*
- 3 *Personal and professional development*
- 4 *Truth, Justice and Acknowledgement*
- 5 *Transgenerational/Young People*
- 6 *Organisational Development*

Your group or organisation should consider carefully the specific services that it will deliver to individual victims and survivors. It is important to note that you can be a single category service provider. You do not have to provide multiple services or complete multiple templates. For example: if the needs of the beneficiaries or individual victims and survivors of your group relate to 'befriending and respite' services then you only need to complete a work plan template for your category of need, in this case 'Social Support'. Groups that only provide services under a single category will not be penalised within the scoring process.

You need only submit one template per category of need.

The following are examples of the type of services supported under the specific categories of need:

1. Mental health and well-being – this will include:

- counselling and psychotherapeutic support,
- complementary or alternative therapy provision, and
- related supervision costs.

2. Social Support – this will include:

- volunteer befriending training,
- volunteer befriending co-ordination,
- related supervision,
- respite trips or outings,
- social networking,
- services or activities that help to build self-confidence through social interaction, i.e. 'drop-in' support activities, pastoral care support, and
- welfare advice.

3. Personal and professional development – this will include:

- professional or vocational training or education/learning opportunities for individual victims and survivors to provide support towards employment or careers development, learning new skills, and
- non-professional or non-vocational training/education/learning opportunities for end beneficiaries to assist in learning/skills development, employment or careers development.

4. Truth, Justice and Acknowledgement – this will include:

- services that relate to truth recovery/truth telling and justice work,
- advocacy and campaigning work,
- remembrance, storytelling and archiving services,
- cultural diversity work, etc.

5. Transgenerational/Young People – this will include:

- services that relate to the understanding of the transmission of intergenerational or secondary/shared trauma and its impact on the mental health of young people and their families,
- young people's projects including respite or summer schemes, etc.

6. Organisational Development – this will include:

- strategic planning,
- needs assessments,
- governance training,
- staff or volunteers or committee or board training, etc.

8. Work Plan Questions

Within the work plan template, you will be asked to provide the following information:

- a brief description of the service and its specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded aims and objectives
- start and end dates for the service
- evidence of need
- outputs and outcomes
- staffing proposals, current and new or re-graded posts. Groups need to provide job descriptions and person specifications for each post.
- how the service meets the specified criteria
- other funding awards for the service.
- the budget profile for the specific service being delivered.

Work plan Assessment

The assessment criteria for work plans will relate to the Development Grant Scheme criteria:

- 1 Projects that can demonstrate how they will help people to begin to make the **transition from victim to survivor** as part of a process of healing and recovery.
- 2 Projects and activity programmes for victims of community conflict that will support the **training** of volunteers and staff in relevant support services to assist the healing and reconciliation process (*groups will need to demonstrate work that supports the promotion of best practice*).
- 3 Assistance with **organisational development** and **operational/strategic planning** for groups involved in supporting victims and survivors to become active members of society.
- 4 Projects that will **explore the causes and effects** of the troubles and which will **facilitate the sharing and development of trust and understanding** between participants and an **awareness of their needs** amongst a wider community.
- 5 Assistance with **small scale research costs** involved in evaluating the effectiveness of projects involving victims and the **development of models of good practice**.
- 6 The provision of **small scale seeding support for new groups** working in the area of victims support. (Funding will only be allocated for newly established groups i.e. in existence for up to 1 year).

Eligible Costs

Grants may be made towards the costs of the following:

- A limited number of bursaries will be made available for individuals from groups to attend conferences/seminars relevant to supporting victims/survivors in the healing process. (Individuals from groups or organisations in receipt of a bursary will not be eligible for a further bursary for a period of 12 months from the date of any earlier award.)
- Programme expenses such as the costs involved in the organisation of locally based conferences, seminars or discussion groups, renting facilities, travel and subsistence, assistance towards crèche provision with bona fide registered and accredited child minders, facilitation or research costs and the purchase of small items of capital equipment (i.e. chairs, over head projector etc.)
- Salaries and running costs.

Exclusions

Grants are aimed at specific services/activities. They will NOT cover:

- major capital expenditure,
- cash generative schemes,
- religious services,
- competitions,
- political lobbying,
- retrospective events or activities
- political parties/party political activities.
- Grants will NOT cover travel outside Ireland and the United Kingdom, except in the case of bursaries.
- Small seeding grants will NOT be available to groups that have already secured seeding support from the Community Relations Council in the past.
- Grants will not support the erection of memorials/memorial gardens.

In order to assist the Committee in making decisions to avoid an oversubscription to the Schemes the following capped rates under the six main categories of need will be applied, as they had been previously, for Strategic Support Fund/Development Grant Scheme:

Mental Health & Well-being

Counselling provision

Sessional counselling may be supported up to £35 per session, this will cover the sessional counsellors costs including insurance, supervision costs, etc.

Volunteer counsellors may request support towards offline supervision at a maximum of £40 per session.

Complementary therapies

Complementary therapies – is an all inclusive term to include, but is not limited to, the following services: reflexology, aromatherapy, auricular therapy, reiki, etc.

The following criteria will be applied: Each group may receive up to the following:

- 10 sessions per week x £25 per therapist x 48 weeks = £12,000 per group for complementary therapies.
- Each individual may receive up to 6 sessions
- 480 sessions per year means up to 80 individual clients/members can receive this service per group
- (If a group can get a fully regulated therapist at a cost lower than £25 per session then more individuals will be able to avail of this service.)

Social Support

The classification for 'Social Support' includes the following: respite/ cultural/ remembrance/ social/ networking.

The maximum support a group may be awarded (per annum) is as follows:

2 x day trips and **1 over-night residential (2 days)** will be applied with the following costs:

Day Trips: maximum award per day trip = **£1124**

Max of up to £500 towards bus hire/car/transport costs	£500
Max of up to £12pp towards catering/food/refreshments/admission fees	£624
Max of 52 people per day trip	£1124

Over-night/Residential: maximum award per residential = **£9500**

Max of up to £500 towards bus hire/car/transport costs	£500
Max of up to £100pp per flight	£3000
Max of up to £100pp towards accommodation costs x 2 nights x 30	£6000
Max of 30 people per 2 night residential	£9500

Befriending Training/Service

Befriender Training – Consultancy	£250 x 4 days + VAT (20%) - £1,200
Registration with ILM (accreditation body)	£57 per person
Training Manuals	£25 each
Hire of Venue	Varies – award will be in accordance with financial guidelines, quotations sought, etc.

Co-ordinator Training – Consultancy	£250 x 2 days + VAT (20%) - £600
Registration with ILM (accreditation body)	£57 per person
Training Manuals	£25 each

Hire of Venue	Varies – award will be in accordance with financial guidelines, quotations sought etc
Refresher/Development Training	1 or 2 days per year x £250 per day + VAT
Mileage contribution	40p per mile up to 10,000 miles then reduced to 25p per mile
Co-ordination/Supervision	£10 per volunteer per month
Administration	£10 per volunteer per month
External supervision	Regularity depends on capacity of organisation and should be demonstrated by the organisation
Out of pocket expenses	£2.50pp up to maximum of £5 for volunteer & befriender
Hospitality befriending meetings	£100 per year per organisation
Befriender Rewards Days	Transport/mileage up to £500 Refreshments/Admission up to £12pp 2 reward days per group per year

Transgenerational/Young People

The maximum support a group may be awarded is as follows:

2 x day trips and **1 over-night residential (2 days)** will be applied with the following costs:

Day Trips: maximum award per day trip = **£1124**

Max of up to £500 towards bus hire/car/transport costs	£500
Max of up to £12pp towards catering/food/refreshments/admission fees	£624
Max of 52 people per day trip	£1124

Over-night/Residential: maximum award per residential = **£9500**

Max of up to £500 towards bus hire/car/transport costs	£500
Max of up to £100pp per flight	£3000
Max of up to £100pp towards accommodation costs x 2 nights x 30	£6000
Max of 30 people per 2 night residential	£9500

Counselling provision

Support towards sessional counselling - up to £35 per session, this will cover the sessional counsellors costs including insurance, supervision, etc. Volunteer counsellors may request support towards offline supervision at a maximum of £40 per session.

Complementary therapies

Complementary therapies – is an all inclusive term to include, but is not limited to, the following services: reflexology, aromatherapy, auricular therapy, reiki, etc.

The following criteria will be applied: Each group will receive up to the following:

- 10 sessions per week x £25 per therapist x **48 weeks** = £12,000 per group for complementary therapies.
- Each individual may receive up to 6 sessions
- 480 sessions per year means up to 80 individual clients/members can receive this service per group
- (If a group can get a fully regulated therapist at a cost lower than £25 per session then more individuals will be able to avail of this service.)

Organisational Development

Funding for organisation development is targeted at the following costs:

1. Strategic planning –maximum of 3 days x £250 plus VAT. (New Groups Only)
2. Management committee training – priority will be given to governance training. Maximum of 3 days x £250 plus VAT.

Personal & Professional Development

The following criteria will be applied with regards to this category of need:

1. Funding support will be provided towards in-house programmes. This is to help bring individual victims into groups' premises and provides support towards social interaction/ engagement.
2. No duplication of training that can be attained/accessed through local colleges.
3. Group training only supported - no individual/one-to-one training/no individual bursaries.
4. Cap applied on materials and hire of equipment £10per person per course
5. Minimum groups numbers of 12 individuals.
6. Guest speakers will receive £20 book token. Professional healthcare specialists can receive up to £50 per session upon receipt of invoice from their organisation for their time.
7. Tutor costs will be capped at £25 per hour for maximum 2 hours per session.

Standards

With regards to the provision of the delivery of services to victims and survivors, groups should connect with best practice standards/practice within the victims and survivors sector and the wider community and voluntary sector.

For example, the Community Relations Council supports groups or organisations delivering counselling/psychotherapeutic services who adhere to BACP/IACP guidelines where counsellors or therapists must have achieved Advanced Diploma level as well as over 150 hours of supervised practice.

In addition, the Community Relations Council supports groups or organisations delivering befriending support services who are trained and have relevant policies in place for dealing with the safeguard of vulnerable adults/children, lone work policies, etc.

Budget Profile

On page 12 of the application, the information required relates to Financial Year Budget Projections and you will need to provide the full detailed costings for:

- Services
- Staffing
- Running/Support Costs

This completes PART 2 of the application

PART 3

This includes a checklist of documents to be provided to verify the standing of your group or organisation.

- Constitution or Articles of Association
- Most recent audited accounts
- Strategic Plan (including your group's fundraising plan)
- List of Committee Members/Board of Directors
- Group/Organisational Chart (outlining all current staff working on your behalf)

You are required to provide the above documents to verify the standing of your organisation.

The following documents do not need to be provided now but if your application is successful and you are offered funding, they must be provided along with your signed letter of offer.

- Bank Account Details, including Account Number, Name and Address of Bank, etc. (Please note: It is a condition of grant aid that you must have a separate bank account to manage any funding from this Fund.)
- Proof of accreditation/qualifications of professional staff delivering specific services, i.e. counselling/psychotherapeutic services.

This completes Part 3 of the application

9. The Application Process

Completion of Application Form:

- Responsibility for completing application forms will remain with those groups and organisations submitting the application. Community Relations Council staff will not assist groups and organisations in the completion of application forms but will provide advice and guidance to enable groups and organisations to understand the application process.
- Applicants should understand that whilst careful consideration is given to each application, it may not be possible to assist applicants to the extent requested, or at all, even if the applications come within the criteria set out above. This may depend on the volume of applications received and the size of the fund available.

Deadline for receipt of applications will be Monday 16th January 2012 at 1pm, applications received after this time will not be accepted.

- When we receive your application form and supporting documents, we will acknowledge them within five working days. We will check to see if your application is complete. You should use the checklist at the end of the application form to make sure the application you are sending is complete.

If your application:

- is **complete**, we will give you a unique reference number to use in the future. We will then assess your application.
- is **incomplete**, we will give you a reference number, but we may not be able to process your application further. We will write to you asking for the missing information and give you a deadline in which to send it to us prior to our assessment meeting with your group or organisation. If we do not receive all of the missing information by the deadline, we will not be able to assess your application, and will withdraw it. Please remember this when you apply.

Assessment Meeting

- Applications which are eligible for consideration will involve an assessment meeting with a Council Officer from the Funding & Development (Victims & Survivors) Programme Team.
- This meeting will provide the basis for reviewing your funding application and will identify (and action) any issues or areas which might require further clarification/development ahead of a Council Committee (Victims & Survivors) meeting.
- The assessment meeting with applicant groups or organisations will form the basis for an assessment report to be presented to the Committee (Victims & Survivors), together with a copy of your application and any additional/supporting information.
- Every effort will be made to complete the assessment and decision-making process as quickly as possible. Applicant Groups will be advised of the likely timetable involved and will be informed of where their application is placed at any stage in this process.

Decision Timeline

- It is anticipated that applications considered by the Committee (Victims & Survivors) in March 2012.

Unsuccessful applications

- If your application is unsuccessful, we will let you know why. Your group or organisation will be available to apply to the Development Grant Scheme for support with the delivery of your services or activities with individual victims and survivors.

Successful applications

- If your application is successful we will send you a formal letter of offer and contract which will confirm the amount and what the funding award is for, i.e. budget profile for salaries, running costs and services.

10. Decision & Award Process

- Successful groups or organisations will then be required to sign an agreement to indicate their acceptance of the conditions/requirements detailed in the award offer.
- If successful, any existing Strategic Support Fund and Development Grant contracts will be superseded by the 2012/13 SSF contract.
- It will be a condition of award, and written into each letter of offer, that organisations and groups comply with all necessary monitoring and evaluation and financial requirements. These will be specified in the letter of offer and a copy of the financial guidelines will also be made available. You will have to monitor your service provision detailed in your work plan while it is happening. If your services detailed in your work plan needs to change, you should contact your CRC assessment officer for advice and guidance.
- It will also contain information about how you can publicise your award and service provision.
- If your application is successful, we will issue payment to the NI or UK bank or building society account you gave with your application once we receive your signed agreement form and projected expenditure claim form.
- In your letter of offer you will be provided with details on how your work plan of services will be reviewed, with a Review Form to complete. You will be visited by a verification officer and asked to produce invoices, receipts and bank statements for all expenditure relating to the funding award. Financial guidelines will be available for all groups and organisations at the letter of offer stage.
- All grant recipients will be expected to show, with examples, how their management and financial control systems will operate.
- All successful awardees will be required to actively participate in Community Relations Council training events/information seminars/conferences as a condition of their grant award. Participation in these events will fulfill criteria: “willingness to reach out to other traditions and constituencies, increase mutual understanding and promote good relations in Northern Ireland society” (Section 75 – Northern Ireland Act).
- Payments will be released (normally quarterly upon receipt of a projected expenditure claim), against agreed budget-headings (detailed in the letter of offer) and having regard to agreed work plans, detailed with outputs and outcomes for the forthcoming payment period.

- Decisions on the re-profiling of grant aid will be a matter for the Council's Committee for Victims & Survivors. Decisions will not be prejudiced by the availability (or otherwise) of guidance from Council staff in relation to your application.
- There is a review process open to applicant groups, details of which are available following the decision making process.