



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta The Heritage Council

IWTN GRANTS PROGRAMME 2024 INTERPRETATION AND EVENTS

(including Walled Towns Day, small festivals, conservation training & physical and online interpretation)

1. Introduction

A key objective of the Irish Walled Towns Network's Action Plan 2019-23 (currently under revision) is to promote town wall heritage amongst town residents and enhance their pride in place. In 2024 the Heritage Council has allocated €125,000 for IWTN Events and Interpretation projects in member towns. This is an action of the Heritage Council's *Our Place in Time - Ár nÁit sa Stair Strategic Plan 2023-2028*.

The IWTN Interpretation and Events Fund will continue to be available to Northern Ireland members of the IWTN in 2024.

2. Timeframe

- Applications, and supporting documentation, must be submitted through the Heritage Council's online grants system https://www.salespulse2.com/HeritageGrants/dsp_RegistrantDefault.asp by **5pm on Monday 18th March 2024**.
- The process is competitive and applications will be assessed on the basis of information provided.
- Applications received by post, fax or by email will not be considered.
- Late applications or additional information will not be accepted after the deadline.
- Applicants will be notified in writing in early May 2024, following Heritage Council board approval

3. Funding

A fund of €125,000 is available under the IWTN Interpretation and Events Scheme 2024. The scheme is competitive and applications will be scored using the criteria set out on Page 3 and on the basis of information provided.

You must include a minimum contribution of at least 10% towards the project costs. For Local Authorities, this must be a monetary value. For Community groups, the 10% contribution can be in the form of your voluntary contribution as per the rates set out in Section 7 below.

We strongly encourage member towns to have local Walled Town Management Committees in place to assist in the development and delivery of projects.

4. Eligible projects

Over the past decade the festival grant stream has evolved from being solely focused on medieval/post medieval themed festivals to also funding interpretative signage, educational initiatives, plans, feasibility studies and exhibitions. The increased variety of eligible projects has allowed towns to develop schemes that best suit their circumstances.

This year the fund can support:

- a. heritage themed festivals and events, including virtual, of high education value
- b. tour guide and town ambassador training
- c. interpretative actions (e.g., signage, tourist maps, inlay paving to mark line of walls, audio guides, murals, trails, art works (not memorials/monuments), virtual reality, apps, websites and other online interpretative tools e.g., StoryMap)
- d. feasibility studies
- e. innovative lighting and projections
- f. temporary and permanent exhibitions
- g. works to make heritage sites both accessible and safe (this includes the cost of gaining archaeological consent and other permissions).
- h. Conservation Training events – a maximum of €3,000 for conservation training on pre-1939 built heritage in your town. The course(s) may target homeowners, professionals or contractors. They may take the form of an individual lecture or a hands-on course taking place over several days. Examples of eligible training include: the conservation of cast and wrought iron railings, window repairs, repairing slate roofs, sensitively retrofitting protected structures for energy efficiency, lime pointing, managing biodiversity, and sensitively extending your protected structure. The scope of what training can be funded is very wide. For inspiration please check out: <https://www.kings-foundation.org/heritage-craft-skills-all-Ireland>
- i. Projects that promote social inclusion, the reaching of new audiences and collaboration between heritage and the arts are particularly welcome.
- j. Projects that promote awareness and/or conservation of biodiversity in towns, and projects that address the impacts of climate change are especially welcome.
- k. Projects involving two or more member towns are especially welcome.

5. Assessment Process

An internal and external assessment panel will assess the projects based on information provided and against the scoring criteria on Page 3. Recommendations will be presented to the Heritage Council's board for consideration at its meeting in April 2024.

6. IWTN Interpretation and Events Grants 2023 – Project Selection Criteria

1. Applicants must be current, paid-up members of the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN) including Northern Ireland. The IWTN membership fee must be returned with the acceptance of any offer of funding.
2. **For festival and event applications requesting €3,000 and above, a comprehensive marketing plan should be provided. Alternatively, you may complete the IWTN Marketing Checklist and upload it with your application.**
3. Applications for strategic documents and training programmes should be well thought out. Applications should display the likely educational and economic impact the document or training may have on the town(s).
4. There will be four criteria by which all grant applications will be judged:

Criteria	Description	Marks
Feasibility of project	Factoring in the track record of the applicants, the quality of the consultants, contractors and project manager, the expected timeline, the presented budget and finance plan, is this project likely to be successfully completed and the grant fully drawn down by 14 October 2024 ?	20 marks
Quality of application	An easy-to-understand application with a well thought out rationale and methodology. Displays a well thought out timeline and budget. Are strong heritage/social/economic benefits displayed? Are quotes present?	20 marks
Value for money	Does this project display good value for money regarding longevity and likely heritage and social impact? Is it a reasonable application given the constrained nature of IWTN funding? Are there other sources of funding evident?	20 marks
Strategic importance	What is the strategic importance of the project to the town and/or the IWTN? What are the heritage/social/economic benefits? Is it a good example of a project for others to follow?	40 marks

7. Preparing your Budget

- We need to know how much your project is going to cost. Your budget must clearly explain this. You must list all costs (including ones that may not qualify for Heritage Council Funding) in the table provided, and attach a PDF copy of quotations, estimates or other evidence to support the figures
- **Community Groups:** Please be aware that the Applicant group must have a valid bank or credit union account in their name.
- Council may not be able to make an offer for the total amount requested by the applicant. Itemised costs for various portions of the works will help the assessors to establish if partial funding is (a) feasible and (b) represents good value for money.
- The Council is particularly concerned to ensure that all projects apply good

conservation practice. That should be reflected in your budget.

- Grant funding will not cover expenditure in relation to local authority staff costs, travel abroad, office equipment and overheads
- Heritage Council's funding cannot be used to pay for any activities undertaken before the acceptance of a letter of offer. Nor can it be used towards costs incurred after the final reporting deadline.
- **Valuing work – voluntary & other**

You are encouraged to put a value on the work contributed to the project by members of your organisation, by your project team or by other volunteers. Here are some maximum rates to guide you in costing voluntary time:

- €300 a day for professional fees (e.g. project management, specialist conservatory or joiner)
 - €150 a day for skilled labour (e.g. stone mason, cabinet maker, blacksmith,)
 - €80 a day for unskilled labour.
- The Council is particularly concerned to ensure that all projects apply good conservation practice. That should be reflected in your budget.

8. Communicating and engaging the public

Your application must show that your project will include activities that reach out beyond the members of the project team. One section of the application form asks you about your plans for engaging the public.

As the Council is keen to promote active engagement with and raise public appreciation of heritage, a good strategy for communicating with and engaging the public will help your project's chances. Applicants must bear in mind all relevant public health advice when planning and delivering projects.

9. Uploading Documents

You must provide additional information by uploading documents to the online form. These may include:

- quotations, estimates or other evidence to support the items listed in your budget on the online application form
- your programme outline, venue, proposed speakers, heritage entertainers
- for leaflets, a draft text, proposed illustrations, layout, graphic design
- approvals, permissions, licences or consents

This list is not definitive and you may wish to include other supporting information which should be comprehensive but brief.

The number and type of documents will depend on the nature of your project.

Uploaded documents must be in PDF or JPEG format and not more than 10mb each.

10. Database and Data Protection Act 2018

The Heritage Council maintains a computerised database of people and organisations interested in heritage matters. This database is used to communicate with such people about the Council, its activities and its interests; information on the database will not be made available to anyone else save in accordance with the law. If you are not already on it, we would like you to consent to having your details added to this database. However, you are free to refuse consent.

Be aware that all information submitted to the Heritage Council is subject to the **Freedom of Information Act, 1997**, so you should not assume that information in your application will remain confidential.

11. Accuracy of Information

We accept your application and make our decisions in good faith based on the information you give us. So, any misleading statements included (whether deliberate or accidental) in your application, or any information knowingly withheld, could mean your organisation's application is not valid. In that case, the Council will stop assessment and reject the application.

12. Canvassing

The Heritage Council has always stated that canvassing on behalf of any Applicant will automatically disqualify an application. This is indicated clearly on the application form and in previous years a very small number of applications have been rejected for this reason.