

SportArti

Guidelines and Regulations 2026



ISSUED: JUNE 2026



ALLOCATIONS

SESSION BUDGET	MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE AMOUNT PER PROJECT
EUR 50,000	EUR 5,000

CO-FUNDING	DISBURSEMENT
The fund may cover up to 100% of total project costs	70% upon signing of grant agreement 30% following approval of final report

TIMEFRAMES

DEADLINE	RESULTS	ELIGIBLE TIMEFRAME
28th July 2026	15th September 2026	01 st October 2026 – 30 th April 2027



1. Introduction

SportArti is one of Arts Council Malta's (ACM) tools to sustain and support the cultural and creative ecology through the integration of arts and culture within football nursery environments. Developed in line with ACM's collaboration with the Malta Football Association (MFA), the scheme seeks to encourage football nurseries that are members of the Youth Football Association and Gozo Youth Football Association to engage with creative practitioners and explore innovative ways of embedding arts and culture within their programmes. The scheme also reflects Arts Council Malta's commitment to fostering broader access to creativity and the arts across youth and community settings.

The scheme encourages collaborations between football nurseries and creative practitioners for each project.

The objectives of the scheme are:

- To bring creative practitioners into football nursery environments to work with young athletes, coaches, coordinators and nursery communities in a collaborative and innovative way;
- To support projects that engage with the football nurseries' local community and the Maltese artistic scene;
- To support projects that integrate arts and culture within football nursery programmes and add value to participants' development and to the nurseries' environments;
- To promote existing good practices and encourage new levels of excellence and innovation in the integration of arts and culture within football nurseries;
- To encourage collaboration between football nurseries, the culture and creative industries, and relevant sports stakeholders within the MFA/YFA context.

Requirements in line with Arts Council Malta's Strategy 2030.

In line with its commitment to supporting the arts through a sustainable and accountable approach to public investment, as well as through development and support, advocacy, research and collaboration, ACM draws applicants' attention to the following documents in line with ACM's ongoing Strategy framework, with particular focus on the four strategic areas of fair practices, community and inclusion, well-being and international exchange:

[Right to Culture – Resource Pack](#) when developing the proposal in relation to how to engage with communities and the considerations of everyone's cultural rights in their work. The resource pack is aimed at increasing awareness regarding inclusivity and supporting the implementation of cultural rights in our day-to-day practice.

[Charter for the Status of the Artist](#) when proposing operational and programming activities to ensure acceptable and decent working conditions for artists and creative practitioners which embraces artistic freedom, accessibility, formal/informal/non-formal skill recognition, decent socio-economic conditions, non-discrimination and equity, ethical considerations and adherence to intellectual property rights and international labour law. The Charter for the Status of the Artist is meant to provide a dynamic frame of reference for any legislation, policy, or initiative which directly or indirectly impacts artists and cultural and creative sectors, ensuring that any action is aligned with the ultimate long-term vision of elevating the status of artists in Malta in line with their tangible value to society.



2. Definitions

A) Activities falling within the cultural and creative sector:

1. Arts (literature, visual arts, music, performing arts, interdisciplinary);
2. Creative Business Services (design, architecture, cultural tourism and cultural services);
3. Contemporary Heritage Practices (including crafts, traditional festivals and celebrations, cultural sites, antiques, and of the reinterpretation, adaptation, or revitalisation heritage traditions in response to contemporary social, cultural, or technological contexts);
4. Media (publishing and printed material, audiovisuals, including film and video production, film servicing, television, video games, radio, online media).

B) Applicant

- An applicant shall be a Voluntary Organisation registered and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations which also operates as a Football Nursery and is a member of the Youth Football Association or the Gozo Youth Football Association.
- The applicant takes the leading role and should fulfil the Eligibility Criteria in Section 3.
- If selected, the successful applicant shall carry out the project as per the agreed proposal following the development period and have the main legal responsibility for managing the project as the Beneficiary.
- Applicants cannot be employees of Arts Council Malta, Malta Football Association, Youth Football Association, Gozo Football Association and Gozo Youth Football Association or involved in the management of SportArti.

C) Application

- An application is an online submission, inclusive of all mandatory documents and any annexes to the application form made by an eligible applicant.

D) Beneficiary

- The beneficiary is the recipient of the grant. The beneficiary is responsible for the implementation of the proposal supported by the Scheme. The beneficiary of the grant may not be changed throughout the duration of the funded project and until the final disbursement is issued.
- The disbursement of the grant may only be issued on behalf of the beneficiary.
- The beneficiary is responsible to ensure that any fiscal receipts for the goods and services received are addressed to the beneficiary.

E) Creative Professionals

- All artistic and creative individuals professionally active in the cultural and creative sectors.
- The proposed creative practitioner/s must not be a full-time employee of the applicant voluntary organisation / football nursery or entity collaborating in the proposed project.

F) Disbursement of Funds

- The grant will be disbursed as indicated on page 2 of these guidelines and regulations. A payment will be issued on behalf of the applicant.
- The applicant must have an active bank account when submitting the application. In the absence of an active bank account, the grant may be rescinded.



G) Eligibility

- Applications will first be screened in terms of technical and artistic eligibility by the Fund administrators and managers. Proposals which are not considered eligible in terms of the set criteria shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

H) Evaluators

- Arts Council Malta and the Malta Football Association appoint a team of external sectorial experts for each call within this scheme. The appointed board may be composed of local or foreign professionals.

I) Evaluation

- Applications deemed compliant and eligible are evaluated against the criteria established in these guidelines.

J) Football nursery

- A football nursery is an organisation providing structured football training and development opportunities for children and young people within a youth and community sports environment and operating as a member nursery within the Malta Football Association, Youth Football Association, Gozo Football Association and Gozo Youth Football Association structure.

K) Non-formal learning

- Non-formal learning encompasses structured learning experiences taking place outside the formal curriculum, including arts and culture initiatives delivered within football nursery settings.

L) Innovative participatory approaches

- Innovative participatory approaches refer to methods of engagement that respond to the contemporary needs of children and young people by combining artistic, cultural and sports-based practices.

M) Local community

- Local community refers to a group of people residing or interacting in a common space and who share a set of social, economic, geographical, and cultural resources.

N) Management and administration:

- Malta Football Association is responsible for the management of this scheme. All official correspondence, including the online submission of applications, must be submitted by the stipulated deadline on these guidelines and regulations.

O) Mandatory documentation:

- Any document(s) needed to support your proposal and aiding the evaluation of your project (eg. track records, portfolios, artistic CVs, official correspondence confirming rental of space, permits or other).

P) Maximum funding:

- There is a ceiling amount of €5,000 per project to be allocated. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the project.



Q) Voluntary organisation

- An organisation which is legally established and/or publicly registered in Malta, having a statute. Voluntary organisations must be registered and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations in accordance with the Voluntary Organisations Act requirements (<http://www.maltacvs.org>). The applicant must be a legally authorised representative of the organisation.

3. Eligibility

Projects will first be screened in terms of eligibility. Ineligible proposals in terms of the points below shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

Maximum eligible timeframe to implement the project: Football Season 2026/27.

3.1 Who can apply?

The Grant is open to Voluntary Organisations registered and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations which also operate as:

- A registered Football Nursery and a member of the Youth Football Association and Gozo Youth Football Association;
- A registered Football Club, and a member of the Malta Football Association (MFA) and who have athletes aged between 5 and 12 years.

The applicant shall assign a representative, staff member or one of the collaborators as project coordinator to act as liaison person with Arts Council Malta and Malta Football Association and be responsible for project implementation. The applicant may also use project funds to engage an external coordinator.

3.2 Who cannot apply?

- Applicants who do not submit the below mandatory documents:
 - a copy of your Maltese ID card (including the front and back side) or your Maltese residence permit or your Maltese citizenship certificate or your Maltese passport;
 - a signed statute of the voluntary organisation;
 - and proof of current membership with the Youth Football Association and Gozo Youth Football Association
- Applicants who do not qualify under the definition of applicant for this specific scheme.
- Nurseries which are not registered with the MFA/YFA
- Voluntary organisations which are:
 - not enrolled, registered and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations;
 - who have not presented their updated accounts to the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations;
 - which do not have a registered address in the Maltese Islands.



3.3 What costs can be covered¹

This grant may cover up to 100% of the following costs (up to a maximum of €5,000 per project, whichever is the lowest).

- Artistic fees;
- Contingency, not exceeding 10% of the total cost;
- Digital initiatives including but not limited to subscription to software, service providers and creation of online resources;
- Fees related to training and professional development;
- Health and safety measures;
- Hire/purchase of equipment (purchase of equipment will only be considered if deemed necessary to the project);
- Indirect costs, not exceeding 5% of the total cost (examples – servicing: electricity, water, cleaning; telephone/fax/internet connections; postage and mailing; paper, ink/cartridge, stationery, etc);
- Insurance;
- Marketing, PR and communications (not exceeding 10% of project total; these may include but are not limited to photography and videography for project documentation and participant portfolios);
- Other fees directly related to project implementation (including but not limited to legal, service providers, participation fees, linguistic fees etc.);
- Project management (including but not limited to administration, coordination and/or development);
- Rental of spaces;
- Standard accommodation (excluding long-term rental or part of);
- Travel (economy class) including but not limited to public transport, air travel, car/vehicle rental);
- Travel VISA.

For more information about presenting your budget, refer to our General Budget Guidelines available on <https://artscouncilmalta.gov.mt/funding-and-grants/general-budget-guidelines/>

3.4 What costs cannot be covered?

- Costs already covered by public cultural organisations or another public funding programme managed or co-managed by Arts Council Malta or other public agency, Government department or ministry;
- Costs which are already covered through usual operational budgets (space which is owned by the applicant or the partner/supporting organisation/individual);
- Funding for the creation or upholding of bursaries, contests, competitions, prizes or scholarships;

¹ All costs will be considered only if these resources are not already covered/cannot be covered by the applicants or supporting/partner organisations.



- Fees for services provided by Public Cultural Organisations or other public agency, Government department or ministry;
- Recoverable VAT, where applicable;
- Reimbursement of salaries or part of;
- Retroactive costs;
- Subsistence, catering and hospitality.

3.5 What applications are not eligible?

- Activities receiving local public funds through established Government line-votes;
- Activities that are not related to culture, arts and the creative industries;
- Activities whose objective is fundraising or political propaganda;
- Applications submitted after noon (12:00) of the respective day of deadline;
- Applications for funding the creation or upholding of contests, competitions, bursaries, prizes, or scholarships;
- Events held on a regular basis, including annual projects, annual festivals, annual nursery shows/showcases, regular training programmes, prize-days, publications, art and craft exhibitions etc. However, yearly projects may be used as platforms to present the work developed through the scheme;
- Incomplete applications as explained under Section 5.1 – Checklist of these guidelines;
- Activities or research forming part of established academic programmes or the applicant's ordinary training obligations;
- Initiatives eligible under Festivals Malta, Annual Cultural Activities Scheme, VOPS, National Book Council, Valletta Cultural Agency, Malta Arts Scholarships or any other State-funded programme dedicated to Maltese arts/culture;
- Projects that would have already started and/or taken place before the result is notified to applicant(s);
- Projects which are already funded by other national or EU-funded programmes;
- Projects whose duration does not entirely fall within the eligible timeframe;
- Visits abroad unless the applicant makes a strong case that these are an essential part of the project;
- Participant exchanges;
- Training programmes required to renew professional licenses or accreditations.

Any other activity which may be developed outside the scope of SportArti is not eligible for support.

Applicants can submit more than one application under the same call. However only one of the applications can be funded per session. Applicants may benefit from only one awarded application through this scheme during a calendar year.

4. Evaluation

The Evaluation Board will base its decision upon the following criteria:



4.1 **Criterion 1: Concept (40 marks)**

This criterion considers the impact on young players personal development and active engagement in creativity and the arts within football nursery contexts. Proposals should explore innovative concepts for the engagement of participants in creative environments (This should also include evidence on how the proposal considers the principles within the Right to Culture - Resource Kit and the Charter for the Status of the Artist as in Section 1).

The allocation of marks in respect of Project Concept is assessed on the following:

- a. Provide the requested information, according to the applicable age Group (20 marks)

For Under 6, 7, 8, 9

Projects that involve participants and young athletes in the creative process. The use of creativity and exposure to new art forms, skills and techniques as well as teamwork and inclusivity to reach creative objectives set through the project will be considered.

For Under 10 & 11, 12, 13

Projects that call on participants' creative skills in engaging within the project's processes, from the planning and development stage to the implementation of the project itself. The use of newly acquired skills and techniques as well as teamwork and inclusivity to reach creative objectives set through the project will be considered.

- b. **For all applicants:**

Projects which push the boundaries of traditional arts, promote new and innovative ideas and help participants use the arts in new contexts, formats or places. Experimentation, technology, media and audience interaction are considered favourably. (15 marks)

- c. **For all applicants:**

What are the plans beyond the implementation of this proposal? (5 marks)

4.2 **Criterion 2: Project management (20 marks)**

This criterion considers the opportunities for participants to participate and contribute during each phase.

The following points are to be addressed in not more than 300 words:

- a. Proposals which maximise the football nursery's artistic development opportunities and bring added value to the applicant organisation through the outcome and end result. (10 marks)
- b. Projects which help to develop participants' creative skills, including new ways of carrying out tasks, exploring different perspectives and problem solving, while responding to the different needs and capabilities of participants. (5 marks)
- c. Projects which expose participants to different applications of the arts, which may increase participation in the arts within the football nursery as well as within the community. Such projects may also increase opportunities for participants who do not usually engage in arts or cultural activities. (5 marks)

4.3 **Criterion 3: Audience engagement (20 marks)**

This criterion considers the creation of new networks and collaborations as well as the development of existing ones.



The following points are to be addressed in not more than 300 words:

- a. Collaborations with one or more identified creative practitioners to maximise the potential outcomes of the project. This criterion will consider the level of collaborations proposed as well as their relevance to the development and implementation of the creative project proposed. (10 marks)
- b. Projects which encourage interaction between participants, the football nursery, the local community and the artistic scene. (10 marks)

4.4 **Criterion 4: Budget (20 marks)**

This criterion considers how well planned and realistic the presented budget plan is.

The following points are to be addressed in not more than 300 words:

- a. Please provide a clear budget breakdown including expenses directly related to the proposed project. Kindly explain the rationale for the expenses of the project. (15 marks).
- b. Provide quotations to support your budget. (5 marks)

5. Submitting the application

Follow these steps to apply:

1. Read these guidelines and regulations very carefully.
2. Check whether your proposed idea can be addressed by this scheme.
3. Press the [link](#) that will take you to the online application system.
4. Follow the instructions step by step. Fill in all the required information from the online application including the budget and attach the supporting documentation.
5. Submit the application. You should be receiving an automatic acknowledgement by the system. If you do not receive such a notification, contact us on generalsecretary@mfa.com.mt.

In case of difficulty or if you would like to consult us regarding this fund you can call us on 2334 7230 Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 16:00 or email us on fundinfo@artscouncil.mt and generalsecretary@mfa.com.mt.

It is your responsibility to present a complete application form as explained in these guidelines and regulations. If you do not present all the necessary information and documentation, your application will not be processed and evaluated.

Prior to the application deadline, the Council's representatives will not be checking your application forms. It is solely at the Council's discretion to request that applicants provide any missing mandatory documentation following the call deadline.

Upon the submission of the application, applicants accept that should the application be awarded funding, the name, the project title and the amount awarded can be published by the Council.

A decision on funding will be made on the strength of the submitted information and supporting documents.



Applications handed in after 12.00 (noon) of the respective deadline cannot be accepted.

5.1 Checklist

In order to be complete, applications must be accompanied by:

- A proof of the applicant's active bank account
- Applicant organisation profile and the relevant artistic / coordinator CVs to be included in the applicant profile;
- Audiovisuals/portfolio showing the artist's work, as relevant to the proposal. (Audiovisuals up to 10MB may be uploaded directly in the application form. Larger files these may be provided as a link);
- An audio or audiovisual file not exceeding 5 minutes in which the applicant provides a short description, a rationale and / or motivation for submitting this proposal;
- Letters of intent from collaborators, partners and potential venues;
- Protection of minor clearances where applicable. If not available upon application, the Police conduct will suffice upon application. The POMA clearance must be submitted prior to the implementation of the Project in the case of an artist that will be in direct Contact with minors;
- Quotations and supporting material, if available.

6. Evaluation process

This scheme is competitive and will be evaluated by a board of sectorial experts according to established criteria.

As specified above, each criterion is allocated a number of specific marks. In order to be considered for funding, projects have to obtain an average of at least 60 marks.

Nevertheless, the evaluation session and funding decisions depend on the quality of the submitted proposals and on the availability of the funds. Therefore, obtaining 60 marks or more does not automatically mean that you will be awarded the funds. The Evaluation Board may decide not to allocate the total funds available for a particular call if the proposed projects do not reach the required level in terms of the fund criteria.

Eligible applications will be assessed by an evaluation team selected by Arts Council Malta and Malta Football Association on the basis of their professional experience. The ACM and MFA will select evaluators on the basis of their independent and professional experience. The evaluators will present an assessment on each of the proposed projects, indicating the relevant ratings awarded.

6.1 Communication of results

On the day indicated on page 2, you will receive your result notification from Malta Football Association. Together with the covering letter, we will also attach a copy of the evaluation form, indicating the reasons and marks leading to the Evaluation Board's decision, according to the fund criteria.



The order of classification of the projects, according to the marks allocated by the evaluators, will be published online. Only the names of the successful projects will be published. In the case of projects which have not been awarded any funds, only their reference number will be published.

If you have any difficulties concerning your results, kindly email us on fundinfo@artscouncil.mt and generalsecretary@mfa.com.mt within five (5) days of receiving your funding decision.

No information on the evaluation process will be released before the official result notification. Any form of soliciting will automatically disqualify an application.

All information received by the Fund administrators, managers and evaluators will be considered confidential, both during and after the evaluation process. Provisions on data protection and confidentiality for successful projects will be included in the grant agreement.

7. Project implementation and monitoring

Beneficiaries must provide full documentation to support the application and budget plan. The contingency indicated in the budget plan will support any variations from the proposed total cost. Under no circumstances will the MFA be in a position to increase the grant awarded.

Upon provision and approval of the above mandatory documentation, a contract specifying the conditions of the fund will be signed. The grant may only be awarded upon completion of the above process within the established timeframe.

70% of the total amount allocated by the Evaluation Board will be processed after the signing of the contract. The remaining 30% will be disbursed after the submission of the final report by the beneficiary, following approval by the Council.

The beneficiaries must use the Council's logo on all related material and specify that the project was supported by the grant as follows: **Supported by Arts Council Malta and Malta Football Association**, in all marketing, PR and printed material. The grant received must be used solely for the purpose for which it was awarded, in line with the submitted proposal and the contract.

Beneficiaries must notify the MFA immediately if changes affecting the nature of the project take place during implementation. Changes cannot be implemented unless approval is received. The MFA reserves the right to revise or withhold the final payment if the change in the project is not considered to be in line with the initial proposal or if the MFA is not informed of the changes within a reasonable time.

Beneficiaries must make themselves available for visits and communication with the MFA or the Council's representatives for monitoring purposes, both during the implementation of the project as well as after its completion.



The MFA also reserves the right to revise the final payment if the total expenditure is less than that estimated in the application form.

7.1 Report

At the end of your project you will be required to submit a detailed report highlighting the work carried out and the project achievements by not later than six (6) weeks after your project is concluded. MFA will provide a template for your report. If relevant, together with this report, beneficiaries must submit copies of any high resolution photos and videos, relevant marketing, publicity or information material developed for the funded project.

You will also be required to present an actual income-expenditure breakdown together with all supporting documents including the fiscal receipts and/or VAT invoices to support the actual income-expenditure incurred to implement this proposal.

The ACM and MFA retain the right to make use of submitted project material.

The ACM and MFA retain the right to recover funds in case these are not being used and/or are misused and/or are not used according to the submitted budget.

8. Complaints procedure

Filing a complaint will not affect your chances of receiving support from Arts Council Malta in the future. All complaints will be treated with confidentiality.

8.1 Grounds for complaints

Applicants can make a complaint regarding procedural anomalies and irregularities during the submission and evaluation process in terms of the procedures stipulated in these guidelines and regulations. Complaints cannot be made concerning:

- The Council's or Government's policies and procedures;
- The merits of the application in terms of the criteria stipulated in these guidelines and regulations.

Only applicants may file complaints concerning their project.

8.2 Filing a complaint

Complaints must be made in writing and must be as clear as possible. The complaint must state the grounds and the reasons for the complaint, providing a detailed explanation and justification supported by relevant documentation or testimonials as to why the complainant deems that irregularities were committed in the procedure/s stipulated in these guidelines and regulations or in standard good governance rules and regulations governing the public sector. The decision at the end of the complaint process shall be final. Complaints need to be made to the Director Funding on



fundinfo@artscouncil.mt and generalsecretary@mfa.com.mt within five (5) working days of receipt of your funding decision. You will normally receive a reply to your complaint within ten (10) working days.

In case you are not satisfied with the reply, Arts Council Malta and Malta Football Association will convene a Board that will discuss your complaint further. If you approach our complaints procedure, then you would be accepting that we can use information about your project to address the complaint. The decision of the Board is final.

Need advice?

Arts Council Malta and Malta Football Association offer pre-submission consultation services and match-making sessions to help secure support for your project. We are there every step of the way.

We can help you determine whether the core concept and profile of your project are in line with the targeted support mechanism, facilitate match-making sessions between football nurseries and creative practitioners where applicable, and provide feedback on the way you plan to present your project. To make the best of our services, plan ahead and get in touch with us at least two weeks before the submission deadline.

You are welcome to contact us as follow:

for matters related to the artistic elements of your proposal call us on 2334 7230 or send us an email on fundinfo@artscouncil.mt.

for any technical queries related to the applicant's eligibility or technical queries related to the application form call us on 2338 6000 or send an email on generalsecretary@mfa.com.mt.

Guidelines updated on 15th June 2026