



**Belfast
Harbour**
**COMMUNITY
AWARDS**
2026

Belfast Harbour **COMMUNITY AWARDS**

To support the work of grassroots community organisations and charities.

Belfast Harbour is committed to supporting projects that help to transform our community, create vibrant places and help local people thrive.



Applicants are asked to submit a detailed proposal about their project, including costs, and fill in the Belfast Harbour application form for the request to be considered. They should also include a list of their board members and audited accounts.

What support is available?

The Belfast Harbour Community Awards Fund provides grants of up to £5,000.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria will be available on the Belfast Harbour website. All proposals received will be assessed using the following criteria:

- How does the proposal align with Belfast Harbour's Community Engagement priorities as outlined by the award categories?
- What positive change will the activity deliver for individuals and/or communities?
- What benefits will the project provide to Belfast and/or Northern Ireland?
- Delivery of value in relation to outcomes vs. costs will be assessed.
- Is the proposal innovative and original?
- Is it possible to evaluate impacts?
- Detailed costs and details of funding from other sources must be provided with every application.

Applications will be scored against the above criteria, with available funding allocated in order of merit, as appropriate, and until the point when available funding is oversubscribed.

Who can apply?

Any grassroots, community embedded, not-for-profit organisation may apply. Individuals and businesses are not eligible, and we do not support projects with religious or political objectives. The applications are evaluated by the Belfast Harbour Community Awards Management Team twice yearly to determine funding allocation.

The Belfast Harbour Community Awards Fund is open to projects targeting the following areas and which, ideally, are based within the Greater Belfast area.

Awards categories

- **Supporting Employability and Skills**
- **Supporting Our Environment**
- **Building Vibrant Communities**

What do these categories cover?

Supporting Employability and Skills – creating a skilled workforce, both for now and the future

- Supporting initiatives which support skills development in NI.
- Giving a chance to those who face significant barriers to work.
- Digital skills.

Supporting Our Environment – supporting a sustainable environment for current and future generations

- Working with partners to deliver environmental education.
- Increasing and improving the level of biodiversity activity occurring across NI.

Building Vibrant Communities identifying and tackling social issues key to developing local communities

- Supporting the empowerment of young people and isolated groups to achieve their potential.
- Sustaining our rich and varied maritime heritage.

What are the requirements for the application?

The project must positively impact the local community. The activity relevant to the application must not have begun yet, the project must be generally accessible – that is, it must benefit a diverse local community base.

Shortlisting

Process

All applications will be shortlisted on the basis of the criteria, and Belfast Harbour will aim to communicate a decision within six weeks of each funding deadline.

Publicity

Applicants should be prepared to participate in media and PR activity surrounding successful projects, in both the local press and in Community Awards communications.

How organisations can apply

Submission Guidelines will be detailed on the Belfast Harbour website and on the application form.

In addition, applicants may be required to complete a second stage process. This may include a visit to the project, meeting with a Belfast Harbour representative or a request for further information.

Applications for this year's awards are accepted from March 2nd and again in Autumn 2026. Applications made outside of these periods will not be accepted. Allocated funding from the Community Awards will total approximately £100K.

Future Applications

1. If your organisation is unsuccessful in obtaining money from the Belfast Harbour Community Awards you must leave a period of 12 months from the date of your application before applying again.
2. If your organisation is successful in obtaining funding from the Belfast Harbour Community Awards you must leave a period of 12 months from the date of your application before applying again.



Application Eligibility

- 1.** Funding will only be given to organisations that have charitable status or are affiliated to their governing body.
- 2.** Applicant organisations must have been established for a minimum of 24 months and be able to demonstrate financial records for a minimum of 12 months.
- 3.** Applicants must have an organisational bank account to make payment to.
- 4.** Preference will be given to applications and projects that benefit all sections of the community, regardless of age, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- 5.** Belfast Harbour Community Awards will not be awarded to organisations which have statutory responsibilities such as local authorities, hospitals, surgeries, clinics or schools, unless it is for a project which is over and above the core activities and statutory obligations.
- 6.** Applicants must provide details of programme feasibility, e.g level of interest, expected number of participants and intended outcomes/ monitoring.
- 7.** Applicants cannot be individuals.
- 8.** General funding for medical purposes will not be supported.
- 9.** Belfast Harbour Community Awards funds will not be awarded retrospectively to projects that have already been carried out or have already commenced.
- 10.** Belfast Harbour Community Awards funds will not be awarded for the purchase of land and buildings.
- 11.** Belfast Harbour Community Awards funds will not be made available for salaries (including salaries and overheads).
- 12.** Belfast Harbour Community Awards funds will not normally be awarded for general repair and maintenance of buildings, although a specific item of community benefit may be allowed, such as security or adaptations for disabled use.
- 13.** Belfast Harbour Community Awards funds will not be made to political parties, commercial organisations or those which are working for profit.
- 14.** Belfast Harbour Community Awards funds will not be made available for recurrent expenditure or running costs.
- 15.** A maintenance plan may be required for projects which involve the creation of a physical asset e.g. a garden requiring ongoing maintenance.
- 16.** All successful organisations who receive funding from Belfast Harbour Community Awards are required to complete an evaluation report which is to be provided following the completion of your project. The final 20% of funding will be paid upon receipt of the evaluation report.
- 17.** The following types of events/projects are considered to be ineligible:
 - Programmes which support political or religious objectives
 - Programmes that denigrate, exclude or offend minority community groups
 - Programmes that may present a hazard to the community
 - Programmes that create environmental hazards
 - Programmes that may be perceived to be controversial (at Belfast Harbour's discretion)
 - Programmes offered by advocacy, lobby or special interest groups whose mandate is to influence government policy





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