

Budget 2021 Submission

**RECOVERY  
THROUGH  
CO-OPERATION  
COLLABORATION  
COMMUNITY**



**the  
wheel**

Stronger Charities.  
Stronger Communities.



# **PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION**

to the Department of Public Expenditure  
and Reform and the Department of Rural  
and Community Development

## **SUBMITTED BY**

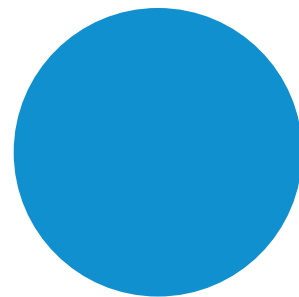
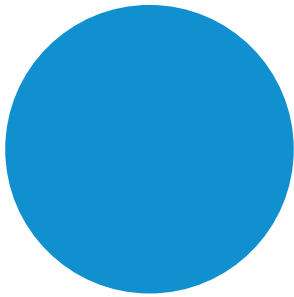
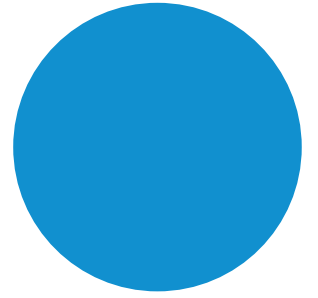
The Wheel, The National Association  
of Charities, Community and Voluntary  
Organisations and Social Enterprises

## **AUGUST 2020**

# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
The Community and Voluntary Sector — A Vital Resource for Ireland’s Social and Economic Recovery	6
The Sector’s Response to COVID-19: Service Provision, The Crisis, and Community Response	7
The Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis on The Community and Voluntary Sector	8
<b>Priorities for Budget 2021</b>	<b>9</b>
1 Provide Adequate and Sustainable Funding for the Sector	10
2 Streamline Regulation and Compliance Requirements	12
3 Bring Down the Cost of Insurance	14
4 Comprehensively Resource New Strategies for the Community and Voluntary Sector and Social Enterprise	15
5 Implement the IRG Report on Health and Social Services	17
6 Develop Framework for Collaborative Working and Support for Mergers	18
7 Increase Budget Allocations for the Department of Rural and Community Development	19
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>About The Wheel</b>	<b>22</b>

# INTRODUCTION



# INTRODUCTION

The community and voluntary sector is an essential element of, and a safety net for, Irish society and our economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the extent to which we rely on its services, as well as the integral role that it plays in supporting our people and communities. It is a vital part of our social infrastructure, a significant player in Ireland's economy, and will have an essential role in delivering the vision of an inclusive recovery for Ireland.

As community and voluntary organisations face an increasingly uncertain operational climate, The Wheel calls on Government to secure the future of the sector by supporting five key areas of action:

- Ensure adequate funding and sustainable funding arrangements for the sector;
- Provide additional COVID-19 support — building on the Stability Fund for Charities — to deal with the projected €445m collapse of fundraised/earned income which will not be made good by the Wage Subsidy Scheme or its successors;
- Streamline and fund statutory compliance requirements;
- Bring down the cost of insurance; and
- Implement and resource existing strategies for the sector.

In order to fully address these key areas, The Wheel has identified the following seven budgetary priorities:

**1. Provide adequate and sustainable funding for the sector.**

**2. Streamline regulatory and funding-related compliance requirements and provide for the costs of compliance.**

**3. Bring down the cost of insurance.**

**4. Comprehensively resource the new strategies for the community and voluntary sector and social enterprise.**

**5. Implement the recommendations of the Report of the Independent Review Group on the Role of Voluntary Providers in Publicly Funded Services (IRG Report).**

**6. Develop a framework for collaborative working and provide resources and supports for mergers.**

**7. Increase budget allocations for the Department of Rural and Community Development.**

# THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR — A VITAL RESOURCE FOR IRELAND'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Ireland's community and voluntary sector is an integral part of our social infrastructure and a very significant player in Ireland's economy. Charities, community and voluntary organisations, and social enterprises provide essential services in every constituency in Ireland. These include health and disability, social care, education, housing, poverty relief, the arts, and sport, as well as international development. The sector is the unseen force powering our communities, driving positive social change, and giving people a voice, while providing vitally important supports and services.

- According to the 2020 Benefacts report, the community and voluntary sector manages an income of €14.2bn. This is 5.5% of the figure reported by the CSO for Ireland's GNI for 2018 (€254Bn).
- However, the Government's five-year strategy to support the Community and Voluntary Sector, published in 2019, cites the total direct and indirect value of the Sector as €24bn. This is just over 9% of Ireland's GNI for 2018 (€254Bn).

Additionally, the community and voluntary sector constitutes a major social economy within the wider economy. It comprises **32,842** community, voluntary and charitable organisations, involves over **86,481** volunteer directors and trustees, directly employs **165,000** people, and manages a **€14.2bn** turnover per year.

These organisations raise over half of this income (**more than €8.3bn**) themselves, majorly subsidising the cost of public services in Ireland. Indecon Economic Consultants (in a [report](#) published by the Charities Regulator in 2018) estimate that total direct, indirect, and induced value of the work of Ireland's charities exceeds **€24bn** per annum and supports **289,000 employees**.

The sector mobilises hundreds of thousands of volunteers, and delivers the majority of our social and community services at a saving to the state. It constitutes a major *social economy* that drives employment while simultaneously meeting the national demand for essential services. It also progresses social inclusion, equality, and the health and wellbeing of communities.

The community and voluntary sector, involved as it is in every aspect of Irish life, plays integral roles in our society. It:

- **Enables people to participate as active citizens in our democratic life and supporting inclusion by all;**
- **Provides every-day, essential health, social and community services to people and communities; and**
- **Plays a key role in the economy supporting 289,000 employees (with the total induced value to the economy exceeding €24bn per annum).**

The sector provides a foundation of supports to vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalised members of our communities, and has been — and will continue to be — vital in alleviating the social scars of COVID-19.

With its direct experience in supporting communities, the sector is ideally placed to work with Government to identify key wellbeing indices that can facilitate an inclusive and holistic recovery from the impact of COVID-19.

# THE SECTOR'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19: SERVICE PROVISION, THE CRISIS, AND COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Ireland reacted swiftly to the new challenges of COVID-19; the country's first response was to prioritise public health and wellbeing, deprioritising the immediate needs of the economy to bring the virus under control.

Ireland's national network of community and charity organisations played a key role in this response; they were well-connected, trusted, and ideally placed to provide flexible and immediate support where it was needed most. The importance of established services — those already embedded within their communities — was clearly evidenced in the crisis, and both Government and the public have widely acknowledged the vital role charities played throughout the period. In a climate characterised by increasing uncertainty and financial insecurity, the sector responded swiftly to ensure existing and increased demand for services was met, and that services were adapted to meet the emerging need of those made increasingly vulnerable by COVID-19. Thousands of organisations working in the areas of homelessness, supports for older people, health, mental health, and children and family services, mobilised, adapted and collaborated with each other and local and national Government to ensure services continued to reach the most vulnerable in every part of the country.

## COVID-19 Community Outreach (CCO)

A significant part of the coordinated sector response was the **COVID-19 Community Outreach (CCO) initiative**, a national response to the societal impact of the coronavirus outbreak, coordinated by The Wheel and Irish Rural Link, and funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development.

The Government announced the programme on 27 March and since then through to July, thirty five Local Community Champions across the country worked tirelessly to link and support the work of community and voluntary organisations responding to meet the needs of those who were cocooning. The aim of the programme was to ensure no person would be left behind during the pandemic.

Over three months, the Community Champions:

- Linked thousands of people who were cocooning into local services so their needs were fully met;
- Linked volunteers to hundreds of community and voluntary organisations and vice versa; and
- Identified gaps in services and reported back to local authorities.

The Community Champions also dealt with the social implications of the crisis such as the intense loneliness and isolation experienced among those cocooning, delivery of school meals and food parcels to families in need, and connecting with people when family were unable to.

Throughout the three-month period CCO supported **134,811** people through a network of **14,877** community and voluntary organisations and **36,821** mobilised volunteers. The programme was a success, in no small part, due to the leadership of the champions in communities, the collaboration of community and voluntary organisations with local authorities and agencies, and the support of Government departments.

The CCO programme is a clear example of how collaboration between charities, community and voluntary organisations, social enterprises, and Government empowers communities.

We welcomed statements from the Department of Rural and Community Development regarding the success of the CCO programme:

*The Department was delighted to provide funding towards the COVID-19 Community Outreach Project. The DRCD works closely with the Community and Voluntary Sector and this project served to embed that relationship further. We look forward to continuing to work with the sector into the future to help our communities face the challenges of recovery.*

# THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS ON THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

As noted above, the community and voluntary sector responded to the challenge of COVID-19 with an extraordinary surge of effort to support people and communities impacted by the disease. Organisations reorganised services to remotely deliver; responded to the need for socially distanced and safe services; cut costs and redirected resources to priority areas; and designed new service responses targeted at meeting emergent need. The sector responded in this way **in the face of the single greatest ever reduction in earned/fundraised income.**

Information from [Benefacts](#) (a part-Government funded non-profit data analysis service) and 2into3 (a fundraising consultancy) indicates that the loss in earned and fundraised income reported by charities to date will amount to a total loss of approximately €1.5bn if current losses continue for the whole of 2020. **This amounts to a projected €379m loss of earned/fundraised income per quarter of the crisis.**

**As approximately 42% of a charity's costs are non-pay it is estimated that the sector is facing a €160m un-recoupable loss (which will not be made up from the Wage Subsidy Scheme) in generated income (from fundraising and earned income) per quarter.**

The Wheel, in collaboration with a coalition of sector bodies, sought financial support for the sector from Government in response to the COVID-19 emergency. We, along with the wider community and voluntary sector, warmly welcomed the €35m Stability Fund – an acknowledgement of the severity of the immediate financial situation.

This scheme, however, was primarily designed to enable the worst-hit charities to remain operational in the short term, helping them to cope with urgent cash-flow and liquidity needs after the collapse in fundraised and earned income. Further needs remain.

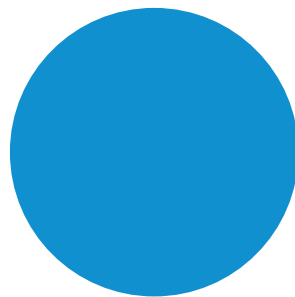
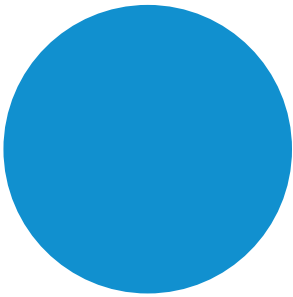
Applications made by community and voluntary organisations to the €35m Stability Fund have already reached over €180m. As noted above, there is a projected un-recoupable loss of €160m per quarter. It is anticipated that the Stability Fund for Charities will provide for €35m of this shortfall. This leaves an outstanding income gap of €125m that charities urgently need filled for Q2 alone, in addition to a projected gap of €160m for Q3 and Q4, totalling to a projected total gap of €445m for 2020 if charities are to continue to provide their essential supports and services to year-end.







# **PRIORITIES FOR BUDGET 2021**



# 1. PROVIDE ADEQUATE AND SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR THE SECTOR

Despite carrying out essential and ongoing work on behalf of the state, many sector organisations in receipt of statutory funding face serious financial precarity problems. Much of this is related to uncertainty of income streams beyond annual allocations. The benefits of multi-annual funding are acknowledged by Government and employed for several current funding schemes and for capital funding schemes for physical infrastructure. Many private-sector and international funding bodies also recognise the importance of forward-planning for charities engaged in delivering vital services and supports to the public, and provide funding in this way.

A coherent, long-term funding strategy for the sector is required. It should be linked to additional resources to support collaborative work and mergers where appropriate.

Commissioning and service delivery policy should follow a needs-driven approach. Government should not operate on the assumption that “bigger is better”.

We are calling on Government to ensure that statutory funders restore funding reductions initiated in 2008/2009, provide additional funds to meet the COVID-19 challenge (see below), and ensure budgets meet the full costs of services.

To address these issues The Wheel proposes:

- **Provision of €445m additional funding for the community and voluntary sector** to compensate for the projected total COVID-related earned/fundraised income shortfall (un-recoupable through any other scheme or source). This will help to sustain the sector and enable it to play its part in the COVID-19 recovery. This funding should build on and be additional to the DRC administered €35m Stability Fund for Charities already announced and should take the form of increases in service budgets managed by relevant line department funding or part-funding or with policy-responsibility for the relevant organisations.
- **Introduction of multi-annual (three- to five-year) funding arrangements**, initially on a three-year basis. As the default approach, this will facilitate better services, enable long-term planning, and assist effective staff recruitment and retention. Multi-annual funding is a framework objective contained in the State’s strategy for the community and voluntary sector (*Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland*), which Government has committed to fully implementing in the new Programme for Government.
- **Funding services and supports on a full-cost-recovery basis.**  
For the nonprofit sector to continue to deliver high-quality services and supports we need a funding model that allows for a realistic assessment of costs. Innovative funding should take into account the need for organisations to fund core costs, pay staff adequately, train and develop staff, and make provision for pension contributions where appropriate.

In addition to the COVID-19 related projected €445m gulf in earned/fundraised income, many state-funded/part-state-funded organisations have borne very significant additional COVID-19-related costs such as PPE, the cost of redesigning and relocating services to be consistent with creating safe, socially distanced work environments, and the costs of providing staff with IT and remote-working equipment. It is essential that these costs are included in Departmental and Agency (HSE, Tusla, etc.) budget lines to support community and voluntary sector partners.

- **Introduction of a direct tax incentive for Major Gifts and Donors** — additional to the current charitable tax relief scheme — as recommended in the 2012 Forum on Philanthropy Report (the only recommendation not yet activated).

This tax incentive should have a minimum level no lower than €5,000 and be capped at €1m. Tax relief should go directly to the donor where major-gift donations are made to grant-making foundations, trusts, donor-advised funds, and charities opting into such a new Major Gift Scheme.

The Wheel also proposes that all relevant stakeholders should be involved in the development of a coherent policy and finalising the next philanthropy strategy. This will ensure an effective and meaningful set of initiatives are agreed and rolled out.

- **Government should make provision for sustainable terms and conditions for staff of (HSE Funded) Section 39 and (Tusla funded) Section 56 organisations that provide essential services.**

Commitment is needed from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, The Department of Health, Department of Children, and the HSE and Tusla to resource organisations adequately and make provisions for sustainable terms and conditions for Section 39 and Section 56 employees providing essential services.

- **Charities VAT compensation scheme to be extended beyond its initial 3-years and funding increased to meet demand.**

Applications totaling almost €40m for the recently introduced VAT Compensation Scheme for Charities show the extent of the negative impact on charities of the EU anomaly that prevents charities reclaiming VAT. However, this very welcome VAT Compensation Scheme introduced by Government provides only a €5m rebate against the €40m claimed. Denmark, which has a similar population size to Ireland and a similar charity structure, provides a €20m rebate under its rebate scheme. The current scheme should be incrementally increased in line with Danish rebate levels to provide a proportionate rebate to charities on independently fundraised income.



## 2. STREAMLINE REGULATION AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

The state has rightly made a big investment in recent years in regulation and compliance processes, including the establishment of the Charities Regulator, which The Wheel campaigned for over many years. However, there has been no equivalent investment in charities to **support their capacity to comply**.

Many charities, community and voluntary organisations, and social enterprises are struggling to provide vital services and supports as resources are being diverted to fulfilling regulatory and compliance requirements for which no funding is provided.

In addition, many organisations are required to **duplicate reporting information** across state bodies, which is wholly inefficient and adds a further and totally unnecessary burden on organisations' limited resources, as well as draining unnecessary resources from Government departments, agencies, and regulators. A community and voluntary organisation providing services in a range of areas might have multiple Service Level Agreements with different departments and agencies, as well as additional compliance requirements related to finance, tax, fundraising, insurance and external grants.

To enable responsive services through streamlined compliance systems, we are seeking Government to now make an equivalent investment in charities to enable and support their capacity.

To address these issues The Wheel proposes:

- **A commitment to provide for the cost-of compliance (and good governance) in funding agreements.**

Many funding authorities only contribute to the marginal cost of the service they are funding, making no contribution to the general governance and compliance-costs incurred by (part-) funded organisations. Yet the work done for funding authorities would not be possible without such governance and compliance cost overheads. We are seeking a commitment that all funding authorities make a proportionate contribution to the governance and compliance-costs incurred by funded organisations in the course of their work.

- **A comprehensive review of all existing compliance and regulatory requirements, with the aim of streamlining procedures to reduce duplication and make better use of resources.**

A streamlined compliance and regulation system would allow charities to enter their data on a 'report once, use often' basis, accessed by multiple departments as required. A streamlined system would also reduce the administrative costs to Government departments in repeat processing of information and reports. Collaboration between all relevant bodies in developing a more streamlined system would ensure it meets the needs of both community and voluntary organisations and Government departments, avoiding the unintended consequences of adding work and reporting for charities, community and voluntary organisations, and social enterprises.

- **Improved information sharing and communication systems between state bodies to reduce duplication of information requests and increase efficiency.**

This should be facilitated through a charity-passporting system or alternative as identified in Indecon’s Report into the Potential for a ‘Charity Passport’ Facility for Charity Data in Ireland commissioned by the Charities Regulator. We call for the recommendations in the Indecon report to be implemented including:

- Individual funding and regulatory agencies should review their current reporting requirements.
- A ‘Forum of Funders/Regulators’ should be established to help coordinate reporting requirements, and identify areas where information requests could be streamlined.
- Funding agencies should consider including an allowance for the cost of reporting by charities in making funding decisions.
- If a decision is made to proceed with a comprehensive Government Compliance Passport, careful consideration needs to be given to ensuring that this is done in a way, which maximises take-up and use.



### 3. BRING DOWN THE COST OF INSURANCE

The unsustainable rise in insurance costs is having a very serious effect on many charities, community and voluntary organisations, and social enterprises.

The Wheel is working as a part of the Alliance for Insurance Reform (AIR) to ensure that community and voluntary organisations can continue to carry out their vital work.

**The full recovery of the economy through SMEs and the recovery of society through voluntary and community groups from the impact of Covid19 will not happen unless insurance is resolved.**

While nothing that has happened so far has applied downward pressure on premiums, all the reforms that will deliver a sustainable insurance environment have been identified and much of the groundwork has been done. There is much that needs to be done and we appreciate that this was acknowledged in the Programme for Government but we want to focus on the reforms that will have a meaningful impact quickly.

- **Cut unfair general damages to reflect international norms and ensure that legitimate minor injuries attract modest damages. We expect that general damages for minor injuries will be dramatically reduced.**
- **Urgently review and re-balance the “common duty of care” so that occupiers are required to take a duty of care that is reasonable, practical and proportionate but not absolute, ignoring personal responsibility**
- **Ensure that An Garda Síochána has the resources necessary to pursue insurance fraud to its fullest extent and do so as a matter of urgency.**
- **Get commitments from insurers to a schedule of reductions following the delivery of all the reforms listed above and in the Programme for Government.**

In general, these reforms will not cost the State. Indeed it is likely that they will save the State money particularly if the frequency and cost of claims against the State are reduced. And grant-aided organisations will be able to use their grants for the purposes for which they were intended, not to pay their insurance bill.



## 4. COMPREHENSIVELY RESOURCE NEW STRATEGIES FOR THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

We very much welcome the Government's decision to re-appoint a senior cabinet minister and continue the Department for Community and Rural Development (DRCd). Both of these factors have enabled significant progress for the sector in recent years, including the development by the DRCd of a suite of policies for the charity, community and voluntary, and social enterprise sector. These comprise;

- *Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland 2019–2024 (published August 2019);*
- *The National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland (published July 2019); and*
- *National Volunteering Strategy (currently in development).*

The Wheel commends the new Government for strongly re-committing to implementing these strategies and supporting the community and voluntary sector in the Programme for Government.

Following the widely-acknowledged vital role the community and voluntary sector played, supporting and sustaining vulnerable people through the COVID-19 crisis, whilst simultaneously experiencing the largest ever decline in its income, now more than ever it is essential that meaningful Government support is delivered through the comprehensive resourcing of these strategies to develop and maintain a thriving and sustainable community and voluntary infrastructure.

We particularly welcome that the Programme for Government commitments to:

*Publish a strategy to support volunteering, including the development of a comprehensive supporting infrastructure and measures to disseminate best practice.*

*Fully implement Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities, the five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland up to 2024.*

In line with these commitments, The Wheel proposes:

- **Dormant accounts funding**  
This should be further expanded and be accompanied by a dedicated budget line to support the Department of Rural Community Development and provide additional funds for Community and Voluntary Sector development.
- **Sufficient resources to fund the strategies for the sector**  
Sufficient resources should be allocated to the Department of Rural and Community Development to enable full implementation of the commitments contained in the Five-year Strategy for the Community and Voluntary Sector; the National Social Enterprise Policy; and the soon-to-be-announced National Volunteering Strategy and National Rural Strategy.
- **Additional funding support for training and development needs of the Sector**  
We are also recommending that additional resources be applied through the NTF to support the crucial training and development needs of the Community and Voluntary Sector to enable it to both create learning opportunities for the existing 190,000 strong work-force to upskill to respond to the new remote-working and socially distanced working environment AND to enable the sector to create training/work experience opportunities for the increasing number of people who will be seeking work as the crisis fully manifests in the economy.

– **Investment in community engagement and active citizenship**

We note the Programme for Government commitment to *Carry out a comprehensive review of Public Participation Networks and Local Economic and Community Plans to ensure they are fit for purpose for climate action and community development. We welcome the PFG commitment to “Task every local authority/Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) with developing a County Integration Strategy to promote, through a participative process, the inclusion of minorities.”* The PPNs are the primary mechanism for Local Authority engagement with communities. While this is an important step in fostering a more democratic local Government structure, there is some way to go to build real participation and partnership in local Government decision-making. Investment in community engagement is needed to support capacity building and the establishment of local dialogue forums to support participation in the development of the Local Economic and Community Plans, and the Local Authority budgets.

To underline the significance of these recommendations, we draw attention to key content of *Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities, the five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland*, which notes that:

*Community and voluntary organisations will be supported with appropriate funding models for the supports and services they deliver in partnership with Government, creating greater financial certainty and sustainability, improving capacity and effectiveness, and ensuring viability of services for communities. Funding organisations for the ‘additional marginal’ service provided, rather than the actual cost of delivering the service, often requires organisations to provide public-funded services at a loss, threatening their sustainability and, ultimately, the services they deliver.*

*A better use of resources, underpinned by a more strategic approach to planning and service provision and Multi-annual funding models, will also contribute to better outcomes for disadvantaged communities. Annual funding approaches are less efficient and significantly limit the effectiveness of community development, for example, which requires long-term support and approaches to build effective local relationships between community workers and communities.*





## 5. IMPLEMENT THE IRG REPORT ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The Wheel strongly endorses the findings in the report of the Independent Review Group established to examine the role of voluntary organisations in publicly-funded health and personal social services (IRG report). We very much welcome the recognition in the Programme For Government that 'Supporting the Dialogue Forum working with voluntary organisations to build a stronger working relationship between the State and the voluntary healthcare sector' and believe this work will be essential in providing better care to communities, as we forge a recovery from COVID-19.

The Wheel believes that the IRG report maps out solutions for a more efficient, effective and fruitful relationship, which will result in person-centred service provision across a range of fields.

To address these issues The Wheel proposes Government continue to engage and support the work of the Dialogue Forum and to prioritise the following recommendations made in the IRG Report:

- Simplification of service agreements;
- Avoidance of duplication in reporting;
- Multi-annual budgeting;
- A system to manage deficits; and
- Provision of governance training and supports for smaller organisations.



## 6. DEVELOP FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATIVE WORKING AND SUPPORT FOR MERGERS

In delivering essential services and supports, many charities and community and voluntary organisations **work in partnership with Government bodies** to provide essential services and supports. Increasingly, these organisations are struggling with the complex and demanding nature of partnership working, which has changed significantly in recent years. Commissioning-based approaches and the use of Service Level Agreements can run contrary to the spirit of partnership-working approaches and generate a large compliance demand.

To address these issues, The Wheel proposes:

- Development and publication of a formal framework for collaborative/partnership working between voluntary organisations and their statutory counterparts; and
- Establishment of a partnership mechanism to review effectiveness.

Additionally, charities have a responsibility to collaborate whenever possible and should avoid unnecessary competition. Many charities actively consider merging following collaborative initiatives. However, there is a significant cost associated with mergers. Merging also presents the risk of funding loss, as merged entities might subsequently lose the separate funding they receive from statutory sources. This could result in a reduction of such organisations' ability to deliver services and supports, thus representing a significant disincentive to mergers.

To address these issues, The Wheel proposes:

- Establishment of a **dedicated budget of €2m to incentivize and cover the costs of mergers and collaborative work** in the charity, community and voluntary sector, similar to the model which facilitated trade union mergers in the past.
- Commitments to merging organisations that their overall level of statutory funding (where relevant) will not be reduced following merger.
- Additional supports and guidance for charities seeking to merge or collaborate.



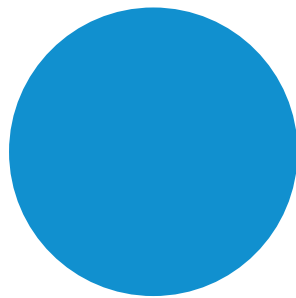
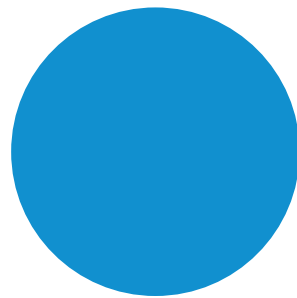
## 7. INCREASE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In order to achieve the aims stated above and to improve the wellbeing of people and communities supported by the community and voluntary sector.

***In advance of and in addition to the priority funding sought above,*** the Wheel believes that a general baseline increase of 5% in Budget 2021 should be applied to allocations to the Department of Rural and Community Development and proposes the following:

Scheme/Funding Stream	Projected Figure for 2021 Budget	The Wheel's proposed increase of 5%	The Wheel's proposed total figure for 2021 Budget
Supports for community and voluntary sector (National Lottery)	€12,588	€629	€13,217
SICAP, local/regional development supports (National Lottery)	€44,065	€2203.25	€46,268.25
Local Community Development Committee (Support)	€2,405	€120	€2,525
Supports for disadvantaged communities	€6,500	€325	€6,825
Dormant account measures	€12,570	€628	€13,198
Programme for Peace and Reconciliation	€6,967	€348	€7,315
Community Enhancement Programme	€4,500	€225	€4,725
Community Services Programme	€46,890	€2,344	€49,234
Social Inclusion Units	€550	€27	€577
Public Participation Networks	€2,450	€122	€2,572

# CONCLUSION



## CONCLUSION

This submission contains a comprehensive developmental agenda to sustain and enable Ireland's community, voluntary, and charitable sector. Our recommendations will help the sector to maximize its contribution to the recovery and wellbeing of communities in Ireland, and to our economic and social lives. It also contains specific proposals for priority attention in Budget 2021 in the context of the COVID-19 crisis which brought about a host of extraordinary challenges that have impacted every community, business, family, and individual in every section of our society. We commend this submission to Government and look forward to engaging in the period ahead to work towards a thriving community, voluntary and charitable sector which will continue to deliver vital services and supports as we move into the next phase of the country's recovery.

We welcome the statement of intent set out in the Programme for Government committing to a recovery of our economy, our society, and our communities:

*We must take the good things we have learned from the pandemic and apply them towards a resilient future. This is a Programme to recover our economy, rebuild our society, renew our communities, and respond to the challenges we face both nationally and internationally.*

At The Wheel, we believe we are all best served by a recovery model rooted in community, much like our collective perseverance to date has been made possible by our deep-rooted community connections – all supported by the long-standing infrastructure of the charity, community, and voluntary sector.





# ABOUT THE WHEEL



# PASSIONATE ABOUT COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ACTION

The Wheel is Ireland's national association of community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises.

We are the representative body for this vibrant and diverse sector, and together with our members, we shape and promote conditions in which people and their communities thrive.

We passionately believe that community and voluntary action improves and enriches communities and society. Our simple but ambitious mission is to make Ireland a fair and just place for all by strengthening the capacity and capability of community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises to play their part.

We do this by:

- representing these organisations;
- supporting these organisations to do their work; and
- promoting the importance of the voluntarism and community values that power these organisations.

The Wheel has over 1,750 members and provides support services and representation on behalf of its members relating to matters that reflect their collective interests.



For further information, please contact Ivan Cooper, Director of Public Policy, The Wheel. ([ivan@wheel.ie](mailto:ivan@wheel.ie)).



**Stronger Charities.  
Stronger Communities.**

**The Wheel**, 48 Fleet Street, Dublin 2

+353 1 454 8727

[info@wheel.ie](mailto:info@wheel.ie) | [www.wheel.ie](http://www.wheel.ie)

Find us on Twitter, Facebook,  
LinkedIn and Youtube

Registered Charity Number:  
20040963

Company Number: 13288

CHY Number: 302282