

TRAINING LINKS 2026 - 2028

ELIGIBILITY, SELECTION & APPEALS PROCESS

Stage 1 - Eligibility

1. All applications submitted by the closing date of **5pm on Friday, 24 April 2026** will be considered by The Wheel using the eligibility criteria as detailed in the Training Links 2026-2028 Programme Overview, Section 7. This is Stage 1 of the overall selection process.
2. The Wheel will complete an eligibility assessment sheet for each application during the eligibility review.
3. All applications that pass the eligibility review will move forward to the next stage of the process; Stage 2 – Selection.
4. The Wheel will notify ineligible applicants following the Stage 1 review by **1 May 2026**. Ineligible applicants can use the appeals process within 5 working days by contacting The Wheel on traininglinks@wheel.ie clearly outlining the reason for appeal. The Wheel will adjudicate on the merit of the appeal and communicate a final decision to the Training Network within 2 working days of receiving the appeal.
 - Stage 1 - Eligibility review: 27 April – 1 May 2026
 - Eligibility appeals process: 4 – 11 May 2026.

Stage 2 - Selection

1. It is anticipated that there will be two independent expert assessors (the panel) identified by The Wheel to undertake the selection process. The Wheel will provide advice and support to the panel as required.
2. The panel will consider all eligible applications.
3. The panels final recommendations will be based on the information provided in the application form, and how these have taken account of the Training Links programme objectives, the priority areas and the cross-cutting challenges.
4. The final recommendations will be based on the funding requested in each application and the total funding available.
 - Selection by independent panel: 12 – 26 May 2026.



Stage 3 – Confirmation of Selection

1. All shortlisted applications will need to be reviewed by the panel working together, discussions held, and final recommendations agreed.
2. All applications that have been reviewed by the individual panel member; i.e., not just the ones that have been shortlisted, will be available to the other member of the panel, in advance, should they so wish.
3. A final successful group who demonstrates the diversity as described in the Training Links 2026-2028 Programme Overview must be selected. As part of its evaluation and performance monitoring process, members of the The Wheel's Sector Skills Team will meet with the panel to discuss their recommendations and confirm the final shortlist of successful applicants.
4. The Wheel will notify **unsuccessful** applicants of their results following the Stage 3 review on or by **29 May 2026**. Unsuccessful applicants can use the appeals process within 5 working days by contacting Maria Couchman, Director of Skills at The Wheel, on mariacouchman@wheel.ie clearly outlining the reason for appeal (see Stage 4 – Appeals).
5. Some additional Training Networks will also be identified as a backup list so that if any of the successful Training Networks are not able to take up the programme, there are Training Networks selected to take their place on the programme.
6. Applicants will be notified about their result by **12 June 2026**.
 - Stage 3 - Confirmation of selection: 26 - 29 May 2026
 - Selection appeals process: 1 - 5 June 2026

Stage 4 – Appeals

Appeals relating to Stage 1 - Eligibility

1. Applications for Training Links 2026-2028 must be submitted by **5pm on Friday, 24 April 2026**.
2. All applications will then be reviewed for eligibility by The Wheel (see eligibility criteria as detailed in the Training Links 2026-2028 Programme Overview, Section 7).
3. Ineligible networks will be notified on or by **1 May 2026**.
4. Ineligible applicants can use the appeals process within 5 working days by contacting The Wheel on traininglinks@wheel.ie clearly outlining the reason for appeal. The Wheel will adjudicate on the merit of the appeal and communicate a final decision to



the Training Network within 2 working days of receiving the appeal.

- Stage 1 - Eligibility review: 27 April – 1 May 2026
- Eligibility appeals process: 4 – 11 May 2026

Appeals relating to Stage 2 - Selection and Stage 3 - Confirmation of Selection

1. Following the assessment and selection process, The Wheel will notify **unsuccessful** applicants of their results on or by **29 May 2026**.
 2. If dissatisfied with the outcome, unsuccessful applicants may appeal. Appeals must be submitted by email to Maria Couchman, Director of Skills at The Wheel, on mariacouchman@wheel.ie clearly outlining the reason for appeal by **5 June 2026**. The appeal must clearly state on what grounds the independent selection panel's decision is being appealed.
 3. If deemed appropriate by The Wheel, the appeal will be put forward to an independent appeals assessor. This person is not a member of the original independent assessment panel and is not a member of staff at The Wheel.
 4. The Wheel will respond with the decision of the independent appeals assessor to the applicant on or by **12 June 2026**.
 5. The decision of the independent appeals assessor will be final.
 6. Eligibility and selection criteria are available in the Training Links 2026 - 2028 Programme Overview, as well as on The Wheel's website <https://www.wheel.ie/training-links-programme-2026>.
 7. Following any appeals review, all successful networks will be notified by **12 June 2026**.
- Selection appeals process: 1- 5 June 2026
 - Decision on appeals: 12 June 2026
 - Results shared with successful applications: 12 June 2026

