

# ASSETS RECOVERY COMMUNITY SCHEME (ARCS)

ARCS Scheme 2027/28-2028/29-2029/30

## Guidance Notes

**ARCS - Proceeds from crime directed into community projects to prevent crime or reduce the fear of crime for the benefit of**



# **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

The Asset Recovery Community Scheme is open to applications for funding in each of the following financial years - 2027/28, 2028/29 and 2029/30.

The funding available to organisations is a minimum of £5k and maximum of £25k per year, per application. The maximum total funding, across all three years if applicable, is £75k per application.

Please be aware that it is unlikely that all applications will be successful and those that are successful may receive partial funding. Applicants should not therefore make any commitment, financial or otherwise, until the decision of the ARCS funding panel is determined and notified to applicants via receipt of a Letter of Offer.

The funding is available for projects running between:

1 April 2027 – 31 March 2028

1 April 2028 – 31 March 2029

1 April 2029 – 31 March 2030

You may apply for each of the three years or less if desired.

Claims for expenditure are only eligible from the date in the letter of offer from the Department up to the 31 March 2030 or sooner depending on the project.

The decision of the ARCS funding panel is final and there is no appeals process.

## 1. Applicants must be able to demonstrate:

- how the project meets the ARCS essential criteria and, where possible, the desirable criteria;
- that appropriate management, governance and financial policies and procedures are in place, including safeguarding policies where relevant, and that these policies etc. are regularly reviewed and complied with and provided to the Department on request;
- the assessed need for funding from ARCS;
- that there is no funding from another source covering the same proposal;
- the added value/benefits that the project will deliver;
- that the funding will be utilised and benefits/activities delivered within the delivery period of the Scheme in 2027/28, 2028/29 and/or 2029/30.
- provide clear timelines for funding requirements for the period up to 31 March 2028, 31 March 2029 and/or 31 March 2030.

### The application form asks: 'How does the proposal meet the funding criteria'?

The **essential** criteria for ARCS funding is: “**to prevent crime, reduce the fear of crime**”.

ARCS funding should **also** benefit **victims**, or **communities** or **the environment** or any combination of these three priority categories.

The **desirable** criteria for ARCS funding is:

- Alignment with the Programme for Government 2024-2027 priority of keeping communities safe.
- Alignment with the Northern Ireland Organised Crime Strategy 2021 – 2024 and subsequent addendum action plans.

Programme for Government 2024-2027 –  
[Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most](#)

Northern Ireland Organised Crime Strategy -  
<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/organised-crime-strategy>

The 2021-2024 Strategy commits the use of ARCS funding to:

- support programmes that tackle crime or reduce the fear of crime;
- support the creation of safe and resilient communities;
- send a message that crime does not pay;
- seek to increase public confidence in the justice system;
- reduce reoffending;
- divert vulnerable individuals away from engagement in criminal behaviour.

## 2. The application form

Please:

- complete the form using typescript if possible (or black ink);
- note that incomplete forms will be rejected;
- applications on the wrong forms will be rejected;
- applications exceeding the maximum word limit per section will be rejected;
- be aware that the information provided on this form may be made available to other Departments/Agencies for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime;
- note that funding awarded will be recorded on the Government Funding Database;
- submit your form by email via [ARCS@justice-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ARCS@justice-ni.gov.uk) **by 5pm on Monday 16 November 2026**. (if your application form is in hard copy format, please contact the ARCS Programme Team in the Department of Justice on the email above to make arrangements for receipt, before the closing date).

## 3. Who can apply for funding?

- Community and Voluntary Groups and Organisations with a Management Board or appropriate governance structure
- Registered Charities
- Statutory organisations seeking to deliver projects in community settings

#### 4. The following applications will not be eligible for funding:

- Applications from individuals or private sector businesses.
- Applications for capital funding costs; e.g. high value items (vehicles, bicycles, large gym equipment, CCTV systems, smart phones, tablets, computers, fixed assets) and infrastructure/building schemes, such as sheds or major building or renovation works will **not** be possible. (Lower value items, for example, equipment to facilitate the overall objectives of the project may be considered).
- Applications for residentials, repeat or regular events and existing activities or repeat funding of projects previously funded by ARCS except where the applicant provides evidence of ongoing need or extenuating circumstances that the panel may wish to consider.
- Applications that have a disproportionately high level of costs allocated towards diversionary, reward/incentivisation type activities are discouraged. Any incentivisation allocation should be no more than 10% of the project costs.
- Applications for salaries, general administration or core annual running costs i.e. rent, insurance, utility charges, unless they are integral to the proposal itself and appropriately apportioned.
- Applications for Statutory Service Delivery – which should normally be undertaken within the remit of a statutory service delivery organisation.
- Applications for schemes that are already (or should be) funded or delivered through another service provider.

#### 5. Assessment of applications

Proposals will be assessed and scored by an ARCS Panel, who will look for sound evidence that the criteria have been met. In addition to the indicators at Section 1 above, the ARCS panel will assess and score applications against:

- Evidence of need for the proposal in addressing specific issues and problems.

- Evidence of meeting the ARCS essential criteria
- Evidence of meeting the ARCS desirable criteria.
- Evidence of the performance measures and the intended benefit/impact for victims, community and/or the environment.
- That the project is transformational and innovative.
- Value for money.

It is the applicant's responsibility to clearly demonstrate how their proposal satisfies the above criteria through the information provided in the application form as this will be used by the Panel to score the application.

## **6. Deadline for applications**

Applications must be submitted by **5pm on Monday 16 November 2026**.

## **7. Questions about the Scheme or the application form**

Queries can be directed to the ARCS Programme Team in the Department of Justice via email: [ARCS@justice-ni.gov.uk](mailto:ARCS@justice-ni.gov.uk)

## **8. Publicity**

A full list of the projects awarded funding under this ARCS Scheme will be published by the Department of Justice on its website.

## **9. The ARCS budget and promoting the Scheme**

The ARCS budget is generated from payments made against confiscation orders following a criminal conviction. Confiscation cases are brought forward by partner agencies of the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF).

Literature or publicity material for any project that receives ARCS funding should refer to the funding being received from the Department of Justice under the Assets Recovery Community Scheme (ARCS). A Department of Justice logo or an OCTF logo will be provided to all successful projects.

### Completing the Outline Implementation Plan at Appendix 1 of the Application Form

Projects that secure funding will be asked to report regularly and *proportionately*, on progress/success, providing an overview of what has been achieved, who has benefitted and how?

When completing Appendix 1 of the Application Form it may be helpful to think in terms of:

- How much will we do?
- Are the proposals value for money?
- Who will benefit as a result and how will this be measured?
- If appropriate, how will participants in the project be sourced?
- What evidence can we provide of the need?
- Can we provide evidence of the impact the project will have?