

NALA Student Development Fund

Information booklet 2023

For centres wishing to apply for the fund.



National Adult Literacy Agency
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh

What is the Student Development Fund?

SOLAS, the state agency that oversees further education and training in Ireland provides €40,000 for the Student Development Fund and NALA administers the fund.¹

The fund enables local adult education centres to carry out a non-tuition group activity for adults improving their literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

The fund encourages student empowerment by:

- Requiring centre staff to ask students what they would like to do with the fund before applying;
- Supporting an activity that adds to students' learning experiences; and
- Asking students to give their opinions as part of the fund.

One of the conditions of the fund is that the centre gathers student feedback on topics set by NALA. We estimate that this takes one hour. This student feedback informs NALA's work. We share the feedback in a report on the fund that is sent to NALA's stakeholders. See the [Report on the NALA Student Development Fund 2022](#).

Your organisation has to be a [member of NALA](#) to apply for the fund.

- Small organisation members can make one application.
- Large organisation members can make two applications.

¹ The NALA Student Development Fund is **dependent on NALA receiving the funding from SOLAS** in 2023.

Who can apply for the fund?

The fund is specifically for adults who have gone back to education, ESOL students and for centres working with young people who have left school early. For example young people attending a Community Training Centre or on a Youthreach programme. This fund is not available to secondary schools. See criteria for the fund below also.

Key dates:

- The closing date for you to apply for the fund is 5pm on Friday **31 March 2023**.
- NALA will let you know if you are successful no later than Friday 28 April 2023. This date may change depending on when SOLAS confirms NALA's funding.
- As soon as you have confirmation that your application is successful, you can begin to use the fund. Please note NALA cannot fund activities that happen before you hear from NALA that your application was successful.
- Your online report, including student feedback plus all receipts you would like to be reimbursed for must be in to NALA by the closing date of **31 October 2023**. NALA will not be able to reimburse your centre if you submit your report after 31 October 2023.

How much can you apply for?

You can apply for funding up to the value of €1,000. The fund is a subsidy as in it may not cover all the costs of what you plan to do or to purchase. NALA firstly scores each application against the criteria for the fund outlined below. Then we consider how many applications the Agency can support, and to what level.

Looking for ideas on what you can do with the fund?

See page 10 of last years' report: [2022 Student Development Fund Report](#).

How does your centre get the actual funding?

- You centre pays for the activity or equipment first and NALA reimburses you later. NALA sends successful applicants a link to an online report that you will must fill in no later than 31 October 2023 (you can send your report to NALA before that date and we will reimburse you sooner). NALA's accounts run from January to December. Anyone that sends reports to NALA after 31 October 2023 will not be reimbursed.

- Once we receive your report and receipts, we check that all is in order. Then we lodge the money into your organisations' account. Please note payments cannot be paid into an individual's account, only organisations' accounts.

How does NALA decide who receives the Fund?

Three judges - a student representative from NALA's Student Subcommittee, an Adult Literacy Organisers' Association (ALOA) representative and a NALA member of Staff - mark each application according to the criteria set out below. Each application is scored out of 100 points as follows:

Criteria	Maximum points to be awarded
1. The application supports the right group of people.	10 points
2. Students were involved in deciding what to apply for.	10 points
3. The centre consulted with its wider organisation.	5 points
4. It is clear from the application what NALA would be funding.	20 points
5. The application promotes student development.	10 points
6. The centre agrees to gather student feedback.	5 points
7. It is clear how students will hear about the event and get the chance to take part. In the case of equipment, it is clear how it will be decided which students can use the equipment and how it will remain a resource for the centre.	10 points
8. Costs are provided and value for money is shown.	20 points
9. Any other points of interest that NALA would want to support (for example supporting one of the target groups in the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy or a really interesting project).	10 points

Below we explain further the nine criteria NALA has for judging applications.

1. You have the right group of people.

The fund must be used for an activity or to buy equipment that supports students who are improving their literacy, numeracy or digital skills on courses that are pitched at, up to, and including Level 4 (not beyond Level 4). Students can be in one-to-one or group tuition. They may be improving their literacy as part of a programme, for example a National Learning Network programme, family learning, ITABE², VTOS³ or Youthreach. Unfortunately secondary schools, even where using the Learn with NALA website, cannot apply for this fund.

2. You have involved students in deciding what to apply for.

You ask students to see what they would like to do with the fund. Their ideas for the fund have been taken on board.

3. Your centre has consulted with its wider organisation.

If your centre is part of an ETB⁴ you need to discuss the application with your manager. SOLAS who gives funding to NALA would like to see an ETB wide approach to the fund (rather than centres applying separately).

4. NALA knows from the application what it would be funding.

Be clear about what exactly you will do with the fund. For example “A cultural trip” is too vague. If you say you want to go to a specific place then it is clearer to the judges what exactly we would be giving the funding for. Please note NALA cannot fund something that has already taken place or has already been bought.

5. What you have planned will promote student development.

The activity itself should be empowering for students – give them a chance to share and learn from each other, try new things in a safe environment or help build their confidence or knowledge of society.

² Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education.

³ Voluntary Training Opportunities Scheme

⁴ Education and Training Board

6. Your centre has agreed to gather student feedback.

You will set aside one hour to gather the feedback with students. We will let you know the topic when we let you know your application has been successful. You will summarise the feedback before sending it into NALA.

7. It is clear how students will hear about the event and get to take part.

You tell us in the application how you will ensure students hear about the activity and how they will know they can take part. If you intend to buy equipment, tell us the arrangement you have for borrowing it. Also how it will remain a resource for the centre and how using the equipment will benefit students using it.

8. You have realistic costs and NALA can see good value for money.

Have realistic costs, email quotes to accompany your application if it makes it clearer. This fund can cover travel, lunch, external facilitator costs and costs for activities. We do not cover photocopying, light, heat, tutor and material costs. Be precise about any equipment you want to buy. NALA looks at the cost per student to see if there is value for money. Please note you pay for the activity first, then after we have checked your report is in order, we reimburse your centre. You pay for the event, or equipment, first. NALA reimburses you later.

9. You have highlighted any other points of interest.

Also tell us any other points of interest. For example, if you are targeting a hard to reach group or why a particular activity or piece of equipment was chosen.

What if you need to change what you applied for?

If your application is successful but you wish to change your event, you must discuss possible changes with NALA's Literacy Student and Development Officer, Margaret Murray by emailing mmurray@nala.ie or by telephone 01 412 7928. Margaret will get back to you to let you know if your new suggestion fits or not with the fund. In this instance, NALA may change the amount of funding we give to you.

How do I apply for NALA's Student Development Fund?

NALA has an [online application form](#) that you fill in to apply.

If you have a question, email Margaret Murray, Literacy Student and Development Officer, NALA on mmurray@nala.ie or telephone Margaret on 01 412 7928.