



Social Causes Fund

Guidelines for the approval of projects and initiatives

SCOPE OF THE FUND

The Social Causes Fund, is set under Article 16 of the Gaming Act, 2018, (Chapter 583 of the Laws of Malta), and further regulated by the Social Causes Fund Regulations (Subsidiary Legislation 583.11).

Article 16 of the Gaming Act, 2018, states:

(1) There shall be a fund to be known as the "Social Causes Fund," which shall be composed of monies collected in such manner as may be prescribed by the Minister (responsible for the gaming sector) in regulations, which shall be used for the fulfilment of responsible gaming endeavours and other good causes.

(2) There shall be a Social Causes Fund Committee, composed of such members and with such functions as the Minister responsible for Finance may determine, to administer the Social Causes Fund.

(3) The funds from time to time standing to the credit of the Social Causes Fund shall be paid out by the Committee to such persons, organisations, bodies or other entities pursuing deserving causes in the public interest, in such manner as may be determined by the Minister (responsible for the gaming sector), in consultation with the Minister responsible for Finance, in regulations made under this Act.

Article 4 of the Social Causes Fund Regulations further states:

(1) The funds from time to time standing to the credit of the Fund shall be paid out by the Committee, without any further appropriation, to such persons, organisations, bodies or other entities pursuing objectives of a religious, philanthropic, cultural, sports, educational, social or civic nature or in support of other deserving causes, and in such amounts, in such manner and at such times, as may be determined by the Committee.

(2) The Committee shall ensure that the manner in which persons, organisations, bodies or other entities may apply for funding, and the criteria which are used to determine whether such persons, organisations, bodies or other entities may make such request and whether funding should be granted, are made readily available to the general public.

As set in the Regulations under the Act, the Social Causes Committee, is set to seek that the available funds are reasonably shared and that the different objectives of the Fund relate to the following respective areas of activities:

- Religious
- Philanthropic
- Cultural
- Sports

- Educational
- Social
- Civic

The Act and Regulations also contemplate the possibility of "...other deserving causes," as an additional area of activity that might be considered for funding purposes. However, this should, at no time, be considered as an objective.

Parameters of Financing

Due to the nature of the financing of the fund and, in order to ensure that the available funding is shared by as many beneficiaries as possible, any proposed projects and initiatives can only be considered for financing if:

- Financing needs are "one off" in nature and are not to include any recurrent commitments to support the project;
- Total contribution towards the proposed project should not exceed €50,000;
- Promoters would commit themselves to co-finance their project by a minimum of 33 per cent of its total cost;
- Under exceptional circumstances the Committee may opt to finance the whole requested sum of more than 67% of total costs. The Committee may also consider to recommend allocation of funds in such amounts and in such manner to deserving causes of a recurring nature.
- Agreements of a three-year duration may be entered into to fund philanthropic, social, cultural and sports annual events. At present these include 'L-Istrina,' the 'Rockestra' Concert,' the President's Fun Run and Puttinu Cares.

Beneficiaries

The Fund supports projects and initiatives proposed by individuals, NGOs enrolled in the Register of Voluntary Organisations in terms of the Voluntary Organisations Act of 2007 (Chapter 492 of the Laws of Malta), sports organisations registered with Sports Malta in the Register of Sports Persons in terms of the Sports Act of 2002 (Chapter 455 of the Laws of Malta), any corporate body set up by any other Act including Clubs and Limited Liability Companies, civic, cultural, educational and religious organisations and also specific groups/Boards set up for the purpose of organising the project or initiative in respect to which funding is requested.

The Committee is to confirm with the relevant competent authorities whether a proponent requires enrolment/registration or not or is otherwise exempted from such enrolment/registration. Where no enrolment/registration is required by law or an exemption is in place, any such proponent will still be eligible for funding in terms of these Guidelines.

However, although not emanating from the Act, the following limitations or exclusions apply: -

1. In the case of Limited Liability companies, the Committee must ensure that:
 - Its objectives, as outlined in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, are consistent with the objectives of the Social Causes Fund. For example, a company seeking to finance a cultural event should have the organisation of such events outlined in its objective's clause;
 - The event being financed from the Social Causes Fund would not result in any profits to the company;
 - The beneficiaries of the proposed initiative or project are deemed to fall within the scope of the Gaming Act, by the Committee.

Projects and initiatives proposed by a Limited Liability Company as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility, to be jointly supported by the Social Causes Fund and falling within the parameters of the Act and Subsidiary Legislation do not fall within the above exclusion.

In addition to the above, payments for services rendered or goods delivered by commercial entities for the execution of a funded project or an initiative should not be construed as being a contribution by the fund to a Limited Liability Company. This is especially the case when the Committee recommends that the disbursement of expenditure should be made against receipt and the payment is made directly to the supplier of the goods or services and, particularly, because of the lack of a formalised and accountable structure on the part of individuals and Boards that would have been specifically set up in order to support the proposed project or initiative.

2. Projects and initiatives submitted by political parties, political-party-affiliated organisations or by politically-oriented organisations;
3. Projects and initiatives submitted by entities that are funded by Central Government (such as Local Councils, agencies etc.), unless their involvement is limited to a sponsorship of the cause that is being promoted by an individual or organisation that is not excluded by these Guidelines.
4.
 - a) An NGO, an organisation or a Club needs to be enrolled in the Register of Voluntary Organisations as a Voluntary Organisation in terms of the Voluntary Organisations Act of 2007 (Cap. 492) when applying for funding. However, the Committee may recommend funding where it is proven that funding will be used for humanitarian cases;
 - b) A sports organisation needs to be registered with Sports Malta in the Register of Sports Persons in terms of the Sports Act of 2002 (Chapter 455 of the Laws of Malta). Provided that this paragraph 5 is conditional that where no enrolment/registration is required by law or an exemption is in place, any such proponent will still be eligible for funding in terms of these Guidelines.

Applications and Selection Process

1. Applications may be made by the submission of the formal application form that can be downloaded from the OPM's website <https://opm.gov.mt> or on completion of an e-form application from the servizz.gov website on <https://servizz.gov.mt>. The Committee reserves the right to seek further clarifications when not satisfied with the information being submitted.
2.
 - a) NGOs, Clubs and Organisations are to submit for sighting by the Committee their Certificate of Enrolment issued by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations in terms of the Voluntary Organisations Act of 2007 (Chapter 492 of the Laws of Malta);
 - b) Sports organisations are to submit for sighting by the Committee their Certificate of Registration issued by Sport Malta in terms of the Sports Act of 2002 (Chapter 455 of the Laws of Malta).
3. The Committee will carry out a selection process of the requests received.
4. A letter of commitment for each beneficiary is drawn up and sent to the respective project applicants. This commitment letter would indicate the amount of funding that would be allocated to each project, as well as any approved terms and conditions related to each approved project or initiative. The letter should also remind the beneficiary to submit photographic evidence of the completed project as well as direction regarding the publicity obligations giving visibility to the Social Causes Fund's donation towards the project.
5. Refused application forms will also be notified.
6. Projects are to be finalised within two (2) years from the letter of commitment.
7. In exceptional circumstances, applicants whose projects have fallen behind schedule and will not be ready within 2 years, may apply for an extension. To be considered by the committee, the extension request must include a solid justification, and an updated work schedule with a clear commitment of when the project will be ready.

8. If for whatever reason the commitment is not completed within the set time-frame and no extension agreement has been formalised between applicant and committee, the commitment and/or any subsequent balance will be withdrawn.
9. If an applicant applies for a successful project and it is found that the project has been financed by another scheme and is double funded, project will be disqualified and applicant has to pay back any funds given.
10. A withdrawal letter will be sent to the Project Leader.
11. The Committee will not disburse any funds unless it is first provided with evidence that the project or initiative would have been carried out. Such evidence is to include original fiscal receipts, certificates of works, photographic evidence, physical inspection or any other form the Board feels appropriate.
12. The carrying out of a project includes the permanent fixation of a recognition for the contribution of the Social Causes Fund to the project. Beneficiaries are to contact the Secretary of the governing board of the Fund for the appropriate specifications and design of the recognition.
13. When a payment is presented to a beneficiary, a declaration confirming its receipt by the appropriate and authorised beneficiary is to be signed.
14. Once the project is finalized, due recognition is to be given with appropriate signage, promotion etc. indicating that the project was funded by the Social Causes Fund.
15. Applicants with projects that include restoration of artistic/religious/cultural artifacts of historical significance and importance should make the restored items available for viewing for the general public with free entrance (possibly against a voluntarily donation) periodically.

The Social Causes Fund Committee