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## Family Matters grant programme 2022-2025 Expression of interest guidelines

Please read the guidelines carefully before proceeding – if you're not sure whether your initiative is eligible for funding, you're welcome to [contact us](#).

### Background

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St Stephen's Green Trust (SSGT) is an independent social justice grant-maker which works across the island of Ireland. Our primary purpose is to make grants to groups to allow them to effect positive social change in areas which trustees deem to be critical. SSGT believes supporting advocacy and activism to achieve social change is the best use of independent funding and this forms the basis of our strategic philanthropy. We aim to work in solidarity with grantees in a way which respects their dignity and leadership in the causes we fund. We commit to effective stewardship of the funds entrusted to us by our donors. SSGT has supported people and families affected by imprisonment and convictions for the past 30 years. More information about our work is on our website – [www.ssgt.ie](http://www.ssgt.ie).

SSGT believes putting families at the heart of the criminal justice system and processes is the 'golden thread'<sup>1</sup> which can reduce the harm of imprisonment and contribute to rehabilitation. Therefore, a strategic aim of SSGT is to **contribute to improving the system of support for families affected by convictions and imprisonment to improve rehabilitation and resettlement outcomes**. Evidence shows that prisoners who manage to maintain family bonds whilst in prison have significantly reduced reoffending risks upon release. Families cannot bear this burden alone and should be supported in this role. However, SSGT acknowledges family relationships are complex and systems should take account of the best interests of both the family and the prisoner.

### Grant Programme Outcomes

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SSGT has developed a strategy for the grant programme which emerged from a [Current Context](#) paper. We believe that supporting the improvement and development of family centred approaches in prison and probation systems leads to improved outcomes for all.

The grant programme has two funding strands which will support work across the island.

In **Strand 1**, groups can apply for one-year grants of up to €7,000/£6,000 for work which tests new approaches, adds value to current family support work and develops pathways to knowledge and learning around how to improve the situation for families. These initiatives should be relevant to the programme outcomes listed below. The focus is on children and families with a loved one affected by convictions and imprisonment as well as developing and strengthening systems which acknowledge prisoners as a family member<sup>2</sup>.

**Strand 2** will fund groups - up to €25,000/£21,500 pa for one to three years which are working strategically towards the programme outcomes outlined below. Funded groups should have a good understanding of the context for family support systems in the criminal justice sector and have ambitions for improvement using a systems change approach. Groups should only apply under one strand unless there are particular reasons for applying under both strands – for example as part of a consortium.

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<sup>1</sup> The Farmer Review (2017) identified the principle of strengthening family relationships as a 'golden thread' that should run through the prison system and agencies that surround it.

<sup>2</sup> Our reference to 'family' is a broad definition and includes significant others.

Programme Outcomes

**Outcome 1: Family-centred approaches to rehabilitation and reintegration become normalised in the prison system, at the point of imprisonment, during the sentence and on release:** we are interested in work with people affected by imprisonment and convictions which has a strategic focus on their role as family members, and a recognition that partners and children serve the sentence too. This is a systems-focused approach which uses current evidence to effect change.

**Outcome 2: The voice of prisoners and their families adds to the evidence base and understanding of the value of family-centred approaches to reintegration and maintaining family bonds:** The voices of people most affected by decisions which impact them need to be heard at local and national levels. This could include establishing platforms and mechanisms which allow them to participate in decision-making forums and have their voices heard. Many people with lived experience of the criminal justice system develop a set of capabilities that enable them to advance transformative change, both in the lives of people affected by imprisonment and convictions and in the lives of those who make decisions which affect them.

**Outcome 3: Government and state bodies are held accountable for reducing the harm of imprisonment to families:** the focus is on ensuring duty bearers acknowledge the need for change and act accordingly. We are interested in improved practice, procedures, policies and legislation which results in relevant agencies better meeting the needs of the whole family.

We are particularly interested in collaboration between groups, sharing learning and testing new approaches. SSGT believes advocacy and activism in pursuit of an organisation’s mission is an important element of achieving systems change and we encourage its incorporation into funded work. Activities which support families should be accessible to all and take account of the diversity of prisoners and families affected by imprisonment and the different pathways in and out of imprisonment and convictions. SSGT is also working with the IPRT on its [Children and Families Network](#), a network of community-based organisations, researchers and advocacy groups focused on children and families affected by imprisonment. The recommendations in IPRT’s 2021 report, *‘Piecing it Together: Supporting Children and Families with a Family Member in Prison in Ireland’* are aligned to the outcomes SSGT is seeking for this grant programme. The report’s analysis and recommendations provide a good basis for understanding SSGT’s strategy on the pathways to effecting positive and progressive change.

## Grant Programme Criteria

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For the most part SSGT does not fund general service provision but can fund initiatives which add value to existing services through embedding family-centred approaches. We welcome initiatives which build on the services provided by an organisation, for example by supporting the participation and voice of those most affected in decision which affect them. We value the building of relationships that will last beyond the funded work; take account of gender and other differences in the impact of, and the different pathways in and out of imprisonment and convictions.

Both funding strands have a two step process, the timeline for which is below. The first stage is an expression of interest in which the group outlines what it wants to do and broad costings. If the expression of interest is accepted, further information is sought and assessment may involve meeting with the applicant. Organisations invited to the next stage are not guaranteed a grant and there is likely to be more applications than funds available.

SSGT will accept applications from non-profit groups across the island. Groups do not have to be registered charities, but a minimum level of governance is required.

**We strongly encourage potential applicants to talk to us in advance of making an application – a short email outlining the project activities (in three or four paragraphs) should be emailed to [orla@ssgt.ie](mailto:orla@ssgt.ie) and we will arrange to telephone you to discuss it.**

## Grant Programme Process

- Applications will be accepted from charities and not for profit groups working across the island of Ireland. If your group is not a registered charity, we will request additional documentation to undertake governance checks.
- **Strand 1** is for one-year grants of up to €7,000/£6,000 for work which tests new approaches, adds value to current family support work and develops pathways to knowledge and learning around how to improve the situation for families. [Apply here](#).
- **Strand 2** will fund groups - up to €25,000/£21,500 pa for one to three years - which are working strategically towards the programme outcomes. Funded groups should have a good understanding of the context for family support systems in the criminal justice sector and have ambitions for improvement using a systems change approach. [Apply here](#).
- SSGT places emphasis on learning from its grants and the programme has proportionate monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanisms built into its work.
- It is mandatory that the group has a safeguarding policy and process in place proportionate and appropriate to the context of its work.
- Questions on the application form are below – you might find it helpful to review these before you start the process. A budget has to be uploaded. You can use your own budget template or we provide a guide.
- The deadline for receipt of applications is **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> Sept 2023**.

Family Matters Grant Programme Timeline	
Opens for application	Mon 24 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
<b>Deadline for Expressions of Interest</b>	<b>Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> Sept 2023</b>
Decisions on EOIs	Thurs 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2023
Deadline for receipt of further information	Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2023
Trustees make decisions on grants	Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov 2023
Funded work can begin	November 2023

If you are having difficulties with the online process, please contact Sharon Mutesi at: 085 755 2009 / info @ssgt.ie. Sharon is available Monday to Thursday mornings.

The online process allows you to save and resume. **We strongly recommend you use this function so information is not lost.**

You will be requested to submit the form and an acknowledgement will be issued.

**Family Matters Grant Programme Deadline:**  
**Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023**  
**Strand 1 – [apply here](#)**  
**Strand 2 – [apply here](#)**

We are grateful to our donors who made this grant programme possible: the Bridget Clancy Fund and Porticus.

<b>THIS IS NOT AN APPLICATION FORM – IT IS FOR GUIDANCE</b> <b>APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE MADE THROUGH THE ONLINE FORM</b> Questions marked with an asterix (*) on the online form have to be answered	
<b>PART 1: ORGANISATION DETAILS</b>	
Organisation Name	
Are you a registered charity	
Charity Number	
Website/Social Media	
Address line 1	
Address line 2	
City	
County	
Postcode	
Is this a collaborative proposal	
(If yes) Name of other partners	
Please describe the role of each partner in the project	
<b>Contact Details</b>	
First name	
Last name	
Role at organisation	
Email	
Telephone	
<b>Your Organisation</b>	
Outline the main activities of your group, including type and level of activity	
Are you currently or have you previously been involved in working towards the outcomes identified for this programme?	
(If yes to above) Please tell us about the activities involved and describe the progress made towards the outcomes. How you will know you were successful, what information you gathered and how it was used.	
<b>PART 2: PROJECT DETAILS</b>	
Project Name	
What do you want to do with the funding applied for? Describe the main grant activities and timeframe. Are they part of a wider project or programme – if so set out how this grant will add value to current activities	
What will be the result of these activities? Focus on outputs rather than longer term impact	
What do you expect to happen in the medium term as a result of these activities and outputs and how will you know you have been successful?	
How do you think this work contributes to the outcomes for this programme as set out in our guidelines?	
What are the risks associated with the work and how do you expect to address them?	
<b>Budget</b>	
In which currency are you requesting funding? € or £	
What is the total cost? Amount requested from SSGT? Please attach an estimate of the total costs (not just the element you are seeking from SSGT). You can download our budget template here <i>You can download and save the SSGT budget template, fill it in and upload or you can upload your own budget if that is preferable.</i>	
<b>SUPPORTING INFORMATION</b>	
No other documents should be sent at this time but if your application goes to the next stage we will require a copy of your most recent Annual Report and Financial Statements. We will also have questions on your Safeguarding policy and practice.	
Is there any additional information you would like to include for which you have not had an opportunity above?	

