



## Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)

### Level 5 - Capital Grant Application Guidelines

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## Section 1: The Access and Inclusion Model

In November 2015, the Government launched the *Report of the Inter-Departmental Group on Supporting Access to the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme for Children with a Disability*. The report sets out a clear vision for a comprehensive, child-centred model of supports which will ensure that children with disabilities can access and meaningfully participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme in mainstream pre-school settings. This model, entitled the Access and Inclusion Model or AIM, involves seven levels of progressive support, moving from universal to highly targeted, based on the strengths and needs of both the child and the pre-school.

These guidelines have been developed to support Early Years' Service Providers' and parents to complete the AIM Level 5 - Capital Grant Application form. A service provider, in conjunction with a parent, can apply for equipment, appliances or a capital grant towards the cost of minor alterations to the pre-school setting. This is done by completing the relevant part of the application form on PIP.

Applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible for level 5 supports and preferably three months in advance of enrolment of the child in the ECCE setting. This timeframe reflects the need to process applications, as well as the time required to complete minor capital works or arrange for the provision of equipment.

Where the applicants are unsure about the equipment, appliances or minor alterations they may need, they can contact the Early Years Specialist (Access and Inclusion) service for advice. Alternatively, if the child is already in receipt of services from the HSE, then the applicants could contact the HSE for advice.

### 1.1 Definition of Critical to Participation

Services are considered **critical to participation** in the ECCE programme where it is reasonably agreed that a child, in the absence of those services, and taking into account other existing or available services and supports:

- i. is unable to access the pre-school setting due to environmental barriers,
- ii. is unable to commence the ECCE programme,
- iii. is unable to remain on the ECCE programme, or
- iv. is unable to meaningfully participate in the activities provided as part of the ECCE programme,

It is further agreed that the provision of the particular services will help to ensure that the child can access and meaningfully participate in the ECCE programme.

To participate meaningfully, children with a disability should be enabled to reach their full potential in terms of experiencing new skills and opportunities, and actively engage in social activities and interactions with their peer group.

## Section 2: General Information

### 2.1 Level 5 Capital Grants Available

Three types of supports may be requested through the Level 5 AIM Capital Application form.

The supports available include:

- A) Capital funding towards minor alterations;
- B) Equipment for children that are blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing;
- C) Equipment for children with all other types of disability.

## 2.2 Preparing Your Application

This is a rolling application process i.e. there is no deadline, however there is a limited amount of funding available for 2016.

Please consider, with the child's parent/guardian or carer, what capital supports are necessary and critical to enable the access and meaningful participation of the child in the ECCE programme in your service. Consider this in the context of the above definition of critical to participation.

Seek advice from your local City or County Childcare Committee, or disability service provider, and the Early Years Specialist service as required.

## Section 3: Eligibility Criteria

### 3.1 Minimum Requirements

Before commencing the application form please ensure that you meet the following eligibility requirements:

- ✓ Be an existing service that is a registered pre-school setting under an active DCYA contract to deliver the ECCE Programme.
- ✓ The child must qualify to start in the ECCE programme between September 2016 and April 2017 i.e. born between 1st January 2012 and the 31st March 2014.
- ✓ This application must be made in conjunction with the child's parent/guardian/carer and the parent/guardian/carer must have provided their signed consent to apply on their behalf.
- ✓ Ensure the child is/will be availing of the ECCE programme.
- ✓ The service must be tax compliant with an up to date Tax Clearance Certificate or Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN) and Tax Registration Number (TRN).

### 3.2 Information/Documents required for the application process

Where we identify that information is missing or needs clarification, we may need to contact you as part of our appraisal process. If you notice an error in your application after it has been submitted, please notify us by emailing [aimteam@pobal.ie](mailto:aimteam@pobal.ie) (do not send sensitive data via email).

**Please note:** If all required documentation is not submitted this may result in the application being deemed incomplete/ineligible.

**Table 1 Information/Documentation Required**

<b>AIM Informed Consent completed and signed by parent/guardian/carer.</b>
<b>Child Information:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full Name</li><li>• Date of birth,</li><li>• Gender</li><li>• PPSN or existing ECCE registration ID/Profile ID</li><li>• Planned start date and number of days per week (if not already started)</li></ul>
<b>Parent/Guardian/Carer Information:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full Name</li><li>• Contact number</li><li>• Contact email</li><li>• Residential address</li></ul>
<b>Reports by a designated professional to support the application form:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The type of report depends on what support is being applied for.</li></ul>
<b>- Minor Alterations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An architect,</li><li>• An engineer,</li><li>• An occupational therapist working for or on behalf of the HSE, or such other category of health and social care professional as may be recognised by Pobal, in consultation with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Department of Health, for the purposes of this scheme.</li></ul>
<b>- Equipment (aids &amp; appliances for blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing children):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Letter of Recommendation from a Visiting Teacher, or</li><li>• An occupational therapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE, or</li><li>• A speech and language therapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE.</li></ul>
<b>- Equipment (aids &amp; appliances for all other types of disability):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An occupational therapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE, or</li><li>• A physiotherapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE.</li><li>• A speech and language therapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE, or such other category of health and social care professional as may be recognised by Pobal, in consultation with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Department of Health, for the purposes of this scheme.</li></ul>
<b>Quotations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equipment (aids &amp; appliances) – not required</li><li>• Minor Alterations – you must attach the chosen quote with your application.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maximum Total allowable grant is €7,000 inclusive of VAT.</li><li>• <b>Please see public procurement rules section 4.5a below</b></li></ul></li></ul>

**Please Note:** The submission of reports detailed in the table above should negate having to submit a full health assessment. Private assessments are not eligible for inclusion in the application. **If an assessment is unavailable or has been done privately, the parent/guardian/carer along with the pre-school manager can complete the Level 4 Access & Inclusion Profile to request support in accessing Level 5.**

## Eligible Capital Categories

### Eligible Minor Alterations:

Minor alterations associated with access in/out of the pre-school setting

Minor alterations associated with access to and from play areas

Minor alterations associated with the reconfiguration of toilet and changing areas

Minor alterations associated with the reconfiguration within the ECCE room to facilitate ease of access and quiet space

Other as specified by the applicant (*exceptional cases that fall outside the above categories and which will be considered on a case by case basis*)

### Eligible Aids & Appliances:

Category	Description
Portable Ramp	Portable or temporary threshold type ramps
Specialised Chairs	Adjustable chairs with accessories – i.e. footrests, armrests, backrests,ommel seats, pelvic cushions. Also, adjustable benches.
Changing Table/Nursing Bench	Height-adjustable changing table or nursing bench.
Hoists and Slings	Mobile hoists and slings for transferring children.
Positioning Supports	Corner chairs, wedges, rolls, move-n-sit cushions.
Toileting Supports	Toileting supports, such as; adapted toilet seats, toilet support cushions, adjustable arm rests and footrests, aperture ring reducers, over-toilet chair, potty and commode – stand alone with arms and footrests.
Therapy Related Items	Therapy mats Items to develop balance or coordination (therapy/peanut balls etc.) Multi-sensory items.
Gait trainers, standers and standing frames	Gait trainers designed to develop balance and help children to learn to walk unassisted. Standers and standing frames to support children with significant mobility issues to stand for periods of the day.
Assistive Technology & Equipment for children who are deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired.	Equipment for pupils who have been assessed as blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing and that require specialist equipment in order to access the ECCE curriculum.
Duplicate Items	In general items which a child requires outside the ECCE setting will not be eligible under this scheme. However, where a piece of equipment is critical to a child's participation in the ECCE programme but cannot be transported from home a duplicate item may be eligible.
Play & Learning Material	While it is expected that the ECCE setting will have a range of toys and learning material suitable to all children, including children less developed in some areas of development that their peers, adapted or therapy related toys and learning material may be eligible under this scheme.
Other	Equipment not listed under the categories above should be applied for under this category. Equipment applied for under the 'Other' will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Funding decisions will be arrived at based on supporting material supplied.

## Section 4: A Step by Step Guide to filling out the Capital Application Form

### 4.1 Applicant Details

This section will be auto filled through PIP.

### 4.2 Confirmations

In this section you are required to confirm, by ticking the boxes provided, that you comply with all the statements listed.

#### Informed Consent

- ✓ Ensure that you and the parent have read and understood the Privacy Statement
- ✓ Print off a copy of the 'Informed Consent' for the parent/guardian or carer to read and sign.
- ✓ Scan and attach the signed 'Informed Consent' form to the application as directed.

### 4.3 Child and Parent Data

This section captures basic information about the parent and child, **including the child's PPSN number** used as a unique identifier in the PIP system. Where an ECCE child has already registered, the existing Registration or Profile ID number along with the child's full name and date of birth may be used in place of the PPSN when submitting the child's application on PIP.

#### Troubleshooting:

<b>Saving the Form as DRAFT</b>	The Capital Application form may be saved as a draft before submission on PIP. Please click on the 'Save Draft' button at the bottom of the page. However, once the child's PPSN is entered on the application form it must be either submitted or the PPSN must be removed in order to save the form as a draft.
<b>Child's PPSN Not Validated</b>	Where the child's PPSN is not validated, PIP will prompt you to submit a PPSN Validation Service Request. Please attach evidence of PPSN where this is required. Once the PPSN service request has been attached, the application form can be submitted.
<b>Using Level 4 Access &amp; Inclusion Profile to start a Level 5 Capital Application</b>	The service request option can be used to submit additional information about a child/the setting. If you are also completing the Level 4 Access & Inclusion Profile to access Level 5 Capital Grant Supports please ensure that you include a note using the 'Other' Service Request Option stating you also wish to apply for capital funding.
<b>Submitting Additional Information</b>	Where you wish (or where Pobal requests) to submit additional information about a child/setting please use the 'Other' Service Request option. Additional documents may be attached here as required. Please note that the submission of the appropriate professional reports should negate services and parents having to submit full assessments.

**Using the 'Other' Service Request Option:** - Under **Service Requests** please select 'Add Registration Request'

**Service Requests**

Add Registration Request

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*Under Reason, select 'PPSN Validation' or 'Other' as required. Complete comment section as show in example below and attach documents where required.*

**Service Requests**

Reason	Comment	Attachment
Other	Please see attached additional information to support our application	<input type="button" value="Click here to attach a file"/>
<input type="button" value="Remove Request"/>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Add Registration Request		

#### 4.4 Health Supports

Applicants can include a description of what health services have been recommended and/or provided as a result of an assessment carried out by a healthcare professional working for, or on behalf of, the HSE.

In order to ensure that the appraisal team can evaluate the application fully, and in the understanding that there is a limited budget available, it is important to supply the necessary supporting documentation and information to evidence the need for the requested minor alterations and/or equipment.

**Please Note: Private assessments cannot be considered under Level 5 AIM Capital Funding.**

To access Level 5 Capital Grants without an assessment or with a private assessment, please complete the Level 4 Access & Inclusion Profile to request an assessment from a designated professional working for, or on behalf of, the HSE and that you include a note using the 'Other' Service Request Option stating you also wish to apply for capital funding.

#### 4.5 Capital Funding Request

You must indicate what type of capital supports are necessary and critical to enable the child to participate in the ECCE programme.

The types that can be applied for are:

- A) Minor alterations;
- B) Equipment for children with blind/visual impairments or deaf/hard of hearing; or
- C) Equipment for children with all other types of disability.

*Please Note: Applicants can apply for both minor alterations and equipment.*

#### Minor Alterations

A service provider, in partnership with a parent, may submit an application for a capital grant towards the cost of minor alterations.

The types of alterations that are eligible under the AIM Capital funding are as follows:

- To support access into and out of the ECCE room/setting.
- To support access to and from the play areas.
- Reconfiguration of the toilet and changing areas.
- Reconfiguration within the ECCE room to facilitate ease of access and a quiet space.
- Other – in exceptional circumstances other minor alterations will be consider if they are deemed critical to participation in the ECCE setting; these will be considered on a case by case basis.

Alterations may include fixtures, fittings and partitions (fixed and portable) but where there is an equipment element (see equipment list) then please tick both boxes to apply for both an alteration & equipment grant.



## Designated Professional Report

An application should be accompanied by a short report by a **'designated professional'** which indicates the nature of the proposed minor alteration works and confirms:

- a) that the proposed minor alteration works **are necessary and are critical** to enabling the participation of the child in the ECCE programme in the relevant pre-school, and
- b) that the proposed minor alteration works are compliant with the *Building (Part M Amendment) Regulations 2010*, and
- c) the service provider will also be required to confirm that the pre-school setting will not be rendered non-compliant with the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#) as a result of the minor alteration works.

For the purposes of this category, a designated professional is limited to:

- (i) an architect,
- (ii) an engineer,
- (iii) an occupational therapist working for or on behalf of the HSE, or
- (iv) Such other category of health and social care professional as may be recognised by Pobal, in consultation with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Department of Health, for the purposes of this scheme.

### Please note:

- The same designated professional report for (iii) and (iv) can be used to cover both minor alterations and equipment. Samples of the reports can be found on the AIM web-page at [www.preschoolaccess.ie](http://www.preschoolaccess.ie).
- Where a designated professional from (iii) or (iv) above is recommending alterations, additional guidance may need to be sourced from your architect/engineer (i) and (ii) on what specific alterations are required to meet what is recommended and ensure compliance with Part M building regulations. You can apply for up to €300 (inclusive of VAT) to cover the costs of your architect or engineer's report.
- A short report template has been designed for use by healthcare professionals working for, or on behalf of, the HSE that can be used by them specifically for the purpose of AIM Capital. See AIM web-page for copies of template. **This template is for use by HSE or HSE funded healthcare professionals only. Your architect/engineer should use their own standard reports and be on headed paper.**
- The short Professional Report must be:
  - a) Specific to a named child
  - b) Specific to the pre-school setting that the child is attending

## Costs & Public Procurement Requirements

### For this Application:

- You must attach the chosen quote to the application, in accordance with public procurement, to support the amount of grant requested. Where the lowest quote has not been chosen a clear and robust rationale must be provided.
- You will be asked to confirm that you will comply fully with statutory procurement requirements in relation to any Grant awarded.
- You may be required at any stage of the process to produce evidence that you have followed public procurement requirements including application, appraisal, pre-contract, pre-payment and verification stage. You will be required to hold records for 7 years once the final payment has been made.

### Professional Fees

- In the case of the designated professional at (i) or (ii) above, the service provider can apply for a contribution towards the cost of any professional fees.

- One valid quote for professional fees should be included with the application.
- No professional fee will apply in the case of the designated professional at (iii) or (iv) as they will be working by or on behalf of the HSE.

### Summary breakdown of costs by alteration type

- Cost of proposed alterations by individual alteration type
- Total cost of proposed alterations (which should be a sum of the above)
- Total cost of architect/engineer fees if applicable (max. of €300 inclusive of VAT can be applied for)
- Total cost of the alterations and professional fees
- Total amount of the grant requested (maximum of €7,000 inclusive of VAT covering both alterations and professional fees can be applied for)
- Own Funds to complete the project – where the total costs exceed €7,000 (inclusive of VAT) this is the amount that service provider contributes from their own funds.

### Public Procurement Requirements

All applicants will be required to adhere to public procurement guidelines in relation to minor alterations. The number of quotations/tenders will be dependent on the total cost of the proposal. This requirement is based on public procurement guidelines for Ireland.

- The maximum grant that can be applied for under AIM Level 5 Capital Grant is **€7,000**.
- The number of the quotations/tenders required is dependent on the total project cost, which may or may not be greater than €7,000.
- It is important that you observe the public procurement rules and submit the required number of quotations/tenders/ based on the **TOTAL PROJECT COST**.

**Table 2 Public Procurement Requirements**

Costs	Number of quotations/tenders required
For total building works and repairs less than or equal to €5,000	One written quotation/tender is required
For total building works and repairs greater than €5,000 but less than or equal to €25,000	A minimum of 3 written quotations/tenders are required
Where the total cost of the capital works is greater than €25,000	Follow the public procurement guidelines for supplies and services.
<p><b>Please Note:</b> for a quote to be considered valid it must contain the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be dated within 3 months of the application</li> <li>• Be on headed paper</li> <li>• Include a VAT number or confirmation that the supplier is not registered for VAT</li> <li>• Be clearly itemised</li> <li>• Where more than one quote is attached, they must be from separate providers.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Multiple Items/Works from the same Supplier:</b> Where you intend to have multiple pieces of work done from the same supplier and the total cost is less than €5,000 inclusive of VAT, one quotation is sufficient as long as the quote meets the requirements detailed above. You cannot split the costs of the capital works across multiple suppliers in order avoid public procurement thresholds.</p>	
<p>Here is a link to the <a href="#">public procurement guidelines</a></p>	

## Equipment

### 1. Applications for equipment for blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing children

A service provider, in partnership with a parent, may submit an application for equipment in respect of a blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing child. **A list of specialised equipment can be found in Section 3.**

An application should be accompanied by a short report by a designated professional which specifies the precise equipment sought and confirms that:

- a) The proposed equipment is necessary and critical to enabling the participation of the child in the ECCE programme in the relevant pre-school, and
- b) The proposed equipment is not already available in the pre-school setting or capable of being transferred to and used in the pre-school setting.

For the purposes of this category, a designated professional is limited to:

- (i) a visiting teacher, or
- (ii) an occupational therapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE, or
- (iii) a speech and language therapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE.

In the case of the Visiting Teacher, this report is generally termed a 'letter of recommendation'. Both the letter of recommendation and designated professional reports are specific to the ECCE child named in the application and are specific to the pre-school setting. See AIM web-page at [www.preschoolaccess.ie](http://www.preschoolaccess.ie) for samples of these reports.

### 2. Applications for equipment for all other types of disability

A service provider, in partnership with a parent, may submit an application for all other types of equipment which may be required for a child with a disability. An application should be accompanied by a short report by a designated professional which specifies the precise equipment sought and confirms that:

- a) The proposed equipment is necessary and critical to enabling the participation of the child in the ECCE programme in the relevant pre-school, and
- b) The proposed equipment is not already available in the pre-school setting or capable of being transferred to and used in the pre-school setting.

For the purposes of this category, a designated professional is limited to:

- (i) an occupational therapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE, or
- (ii) a physiotherapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE.
- (iii) a speech and language therapist working for, or on behalf of, the HSE, or
- (iv) such other category of health and social care professional as may be recognised by Pobal, in consultation with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Department of Health, for the purposes of this scheme.

The designated professional reports named above are specific to the ECCE child named in the application and are specific to the pre-school setting. Samples of the reports can be found in the appendices and on the AIM website [www.preschoolaccess.ie](http://www.preschoolaccess.ie). **These templates are for use by HSE or HSE funded healthcare professionals or DES Visiting Teachers only.**

If service/parent does not have one of the 'designated' professional reports, then please complete Access & Inclusion Profile under Level 4 in the first instance, flagging support required for level 5 eligibility.

## Submission

In this section you are required to confirm, by ticking the boxes provided and where appropriate to your application, that you comply with all the statements listed in the application.

### Section 5: Next Steps & Further Supports

Once you submit an application both you and the parent/guardian/carer will receive an acknowledgement via email.

Your application will be reviewed by the Pobal - AIM team who may contact you for clarifications or further information.

Once a decision is reached, Pobal will send you a letter of approval or notify you in the event your application has been unsuccessful.

If approved and depending on whether the grant is for minor alterations or equipment either a Grant Agreement or a Standard Operational Agreement will be issued to the service.

Grant agreements for minor alterations will outline the reporting and compliance requirements.

### Additional Supports:

If you are unsure about whether to apply for a Level 5 Capital Grant or have any further questions on AIM, additional support is available from:

- Your local County Childcare Committee – see AIM web-page at [www.preschoolaccess.ie](http://www.preschoolaccess.ie) for contact details.
- Pobal & Early Years Specialists (Access & Inclusion) Tel: 01 511 7222