



## FAI Mini-Pitch Programme



## GUIDELINES





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## **Introduction**

It is the objective of the FAI in partnership with UEFA to support local authorities, communities and the football family in their efforts to develop and promote the practice of grassroots football by funding free-access playing facilities. This is also an opportunity for UEFA, in the year of its 50th anniversary, to mark its attachment to the very foundations of football: popular practice of the game.

### **1. Objectives**

Through the Jubilee Mini-pitch Project, UEFA has give each member association the opportunity, in the form of a financial grant of a maximum amount of €650,000 to set up accessible playing facilities in the form of mini-pitches for local communities throughout Ireland.

The programme will start on 1 August 2006 and run until 31 July 2008. The overall objective is to realise a maximum number of mini-pitches all over the territory of each member association within the overall budget of up to €17,000 per mini pitch. All projects must be submitted during this period.

The minimum objective is to have at least 40 proposed mini-pitches following receipt of applications, at which time we will seek the funding from UEFA in order that these would be installed in the Republic of Ireland by the end of the programme.

### **2. Structure**

The decision-making body in charge of the approval of the projects submitted by local authorities will be the *Mini Pitch Steering Group* which is made up of an internal committee from the FAI with a nominee from the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism and an independent Chairperson

The FAI's Licensing and Facility Development Unit will work with successful applicants in order to manage the implementation of the process.

Regular reports on progress will also be sent to UEFA's Assistance Programmes Unit.



### 3. Mini-pitch projects

All mini-pitch projects submitted should conform with following technical specifications and meet the following safety requirements:

Size:	from 250 m <sup>2</sup> to 1000 m <sup>2</sup>
Field:	artificial turf/asphalt/concrete/macadam or similar surface
Perimeter fence:	wooden panels resistant to local climatic conditions or metal panels or metal nets where deemed appropriate; wooden or metal handrail on top of the perimeter fence to stabilise the entire structure
Metal posts:	aluminium or steel (10 year warranty against rust, etc.)
Goals:	appropriate to size of the pitch; type of football goals securely fastened to the ground and affixed to the structure
Additional equipment:	2 basketball blackboards, 2 posts with volleyball net (21x13m pitch only)
Screws and bolts:	stainless steel screws and bolts for parts in contact with aluminium; all other parts in contact with steel to be galvanised. All these parts need to be totally integrated in the structure.
Anti-theft plugs:	ribbed plastic and plugs hammered solidly in place
Ground:	concrete or asphalt/gravel or sand ground with perimeter concrete frame, depending on the field and product
Location:	This should be a nationwide project; the mini-pitches should be installed preferably near to schools, and in areas where as many children as possible can take advantage of them.

### 4. Ownership

The local authority will be the owners of the mini-pitch playing facilities.

Ownership of the playing facilities can be handed over free of charge to beneficiaries (football clubs, municipalities, other public or non-profit entities)



provided that respect of the maintenance and a free-of-charge access policy is fully guaranteed.

## 5. Procedure

### 5.1. Application procedure

In order to avail of financial assistance, Local Authorities are asked to fill in the application form provided and return it no later than 5pm on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2006 to; **FAI Mini Pitch Programme, FAI Facility Development Unit, Imbus House, Dublin Airport, Co. Dublin**. Alternatively applications can be emailed to [aodh.cronin@fai.ie](mailto:aodh.cronin@fai.ie)

If the application is not complete or if the project does not meet the main objective or the basic material and/or formal conditions, it may be returned to the applicant local authority. Additional information/confirmation may be requested.

### 5.2. Approval phase

Upon receipt of applications, the FAI's Licensing and Facility Development Unit will submit the application to the Mini Pitch Steering Group. The Group may approve or reject a project, or ask for additional documentation if needed.

The project is then presented and subject to final approval from the UEFA HatTrick Board.

After final approval of the project, the Licensing and Facility Development Unit will establish, in coordination with the applicant local authority, a Letter of Acceptance formalising the FAI's / UEFA's approval of the application and regulating, among other elements, the disbursement of the funds.

### 5.3. Implementation and monitoring phase

Once the application has been approved, the FAI will make contact with the local authority and make available to them the results of a tender competition undertaken by the FAI for the specifications outlined in section 3 of this document and from which the local Authorities may



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make a selection. However, Local Authorities are free to undertake their own tender process. The FAI would ask that the implementation phase be carried out without delay and in liaison with the FAI Licensing and Facility Development Unit.

Any difficulty arising during the implementation and realisation of the project(s) must be communicated to this Unit.

The use of The FAI and UEFA marks or intellectual property rights by local authorities or by any third party participating in the mini-pitch programme is subject to the FAI's and UEFA's prior approval.

Any communication plan, advertising or marketing campaign in relation with the mini- pitch programme is subject to the FAI's prior approval and shall fully comply with FAI's communication and media policy.

The grassroots pitches constructed with the support of the funding will be identified as such by the placing of a special plaque, in the appropriate language, acknowledging the FAI and UEFA's contribution.

The inauguration of the first such pitch in each county should be a special occasion, attended by Local Authority, Football Association and possibly also UEFA officials, and with the presence of the local media.

### **6. Finance / payment**

UEFA will support, through the financial grant of up to €17,000, the cost of the mini-pitch playing facilities set up by the local authority.

The beneficiaries (football clubs, municipalities other public or non-profit entities) should be expected to contribute in terms of land and maintenance and the balance of the cost of installation i.e. Ground works / Floodlighting etc.

The local authority and/or the beneficiaries shall bear all direct and indirect taxes or levies.

The FAI is free either to make a one-off payment or to split the financial grant into different installments, depending on the nature of the project and on the timetable of the implementation phases. In case of non-respect of agreed deadlines, payment of installments may be postponed by the FAI.



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In the spirit of the mixed funding concept, it is in the interests of local authorities to make every possible effort to seek additional funding with external partners (municipalities, other public or private entities, sponsors).

In case of violation of the implementing guidelines, or in case of mismanagement in the implementing process, the FAI may decide at any moment to suspend its contributions or withhold future payments.