

Department of Education and Skills

Circular Letter TLBU 0073/2011: Devolved Grant for Minor Capital Works 2011

**To: Chief Executive Officer, Higher Education Authority
Presidents /Directors of the Institutes of Technology**

1. Introduction

The Minister for Education and Skills Mr. Ruairi Quinn T.D. has secured approval from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to apply savings arising within the Department's overall budget to implement a dedicated minor works grant scheme in the higher education sector. Funding due to institutions will be disbursed immediately.

2. Scope of Scheme

The range of works against which the funding under this scheme may be applied include all necessary improvement works, refurbishment works, health and safety works, infrastructural works, purchase of equipment, alarm systems, lifts, ramps, access facilities, energy efficiency systems, signage, upgrade works to teaching and non teaching spaces. This is not intended to be a prescriptive list. Ultimately, it is a matter for governing authorities to prioritise the works against which the funding may be deployed subject to ensuring that the conditions of the scheme, as set out in paragraph 4 below, are complied with fully.

3. Level of funding to be provided under the scheme

The level of funding available in the current year is as follows:

- There will be a campus allowance of **€68,500** payable to all institutes of technology and universities with institutions that operate from more than one campus qualifying for a higher allowance. Such institutions will be notified of the increased allowance at the point of payment.
- There will be a further per capita of **€139.386** payment per full time undergraduate students enrolled on approved courses. Enrolment figures will be based on the 2010/2011 academic year.
- Full details of individual allocations to institutions will be notified at the point of payment.

4. **Terms and conditions of the Scheme**

The governing terms and conditions of the Scheme are as follows:

- (a) Minor works against which funding may be deployed must have been carried out in 2011. This is an immensely important condition laid down by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform as a condition of the Scheme. No deviations from this condition are permissible. Accordingly none of the funding under the scheme can be allocated to expenditure expected to arise in 2012 or later years.
- (b) Compliance with all standard conditions governing the delivery of publicly funded capital projects is mandatory. These include, inter alia, adherence to public financial procedures; ensuring that expenditure against which the funding is to be deployed is fully vouched and certified with all relevant documentation available for inspection; adhering to all Health, Welfare and Safety at Work legislation; compliance with all relevant Building Regulations as appropriate; use of new forms of contracts for public works; and all associated legislative requirements.
- (c) In all cases value for money is required to be achieved. To validate the attainment of value for money a separate accounting record is required to be maintained of all expenditure incurred under this scheme. The expenditure incurred should be vouched with invoices and receipts retained for a minimum period of **seven** years. Expenditure under the scheme is open to audit in the normal way.
- (d) It is expected that funding will not be available for minor works in the higher education sector in the period 2012 to 2016. Necessary minor capital works expenditure presenting in this period must be met from institutions own resources.
- (e) Institutions are required to file a report with the Department/ HEA by the end of June 2012 detailing the manner in which the funding under this scheme was expended. A template form will issue to institutions to assist in this matter.

5. **Queries**

Enquiries about any aspect of this Circular should be referred to the Third Level Planning and Building Unit; Department of Education and Skills; Tullamore: Telephone (057) 9324328, Fax: (057) 9325345 or to the Higher Education Authority; Brooklawn House; Shelbourne Road; Dublin 4: Telephone: 01-2317100, Fax: 01-2317172.

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