LAW SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Independent Law Centre Traineeship Grant Scheme

[to assist in the employment of a trainee solicitor by an independent law centre]

1. Objectives of the Scheme

(a) The Law Society of Ireland (the "Society") this year (2026) is introducing a promotional scheme designated the "Independent Law Centre Traineeship Grant Scheme" (the "Scheme") intended to assist a designated independent law centre by means of supplementing financially the direct costs of that independent law centre employing a trainee solicitor.

(b) The Society, in promoting and funding the Scheme, has decided that in the year 2026, one individual grant should be awarded to an independent law centre selected from among the designated independent law centres that make an application.

(c) The cash element of the grant awarded will total €18,000 (eighteen thousand euro) to be remitted to the selected independent law centre by equal monthly payments of €750 in arrears over the course of the two year period of in-office training of the proposed trainee solicitor concerned and will be in addition to a fee discount of €7,000 (seven thousand euro) on the proposed trainee solicitor's fees payable to the Society for attending the Professional Practice Course ("PPC") or the PPC Hybrid.

2. Eligibility Criteria and other Conditions

(a) The eligibility criteria for making an application to the Scheme for a grant are as follows:

i. the applicant independent law centre must be from one of the following designated organisations: Ballymun Community Law Centre, Community Law & Mediation Limerick, Community Law & Mediation Northside, FLAC, Immigrant Council of Ireland, Irish Refugee Council Independent Law Centre, Mercy Law Resource Centre, Phoenix Project and Transparency Legal Advice Centre;

ii. the proposed training solicitor must hold a practising certificate (or be exempted from holding same) and must have been in practice for a continuous period of at least four years at the time of the application;

iii. the proposed trainee solicitor to be identified and to consent to the application being made and who should have passed the Final Examination First Part ("FE-1") before 29th May 2026; and

iv. the applicant independent law centre must commit to paying the proposed trainee solicitor during the two year period of in-office training at least the "living wage" (currently €15.40 per hour) in the event of it being successful in the application; and

v. the proposed trainee solicitor is not related to (including marriage, civil partnership or qualified cohabitation) or connected to (by marriage, civil partnership or qualified cohabitation, to any person related to) any solicitor(s) associated with/working for the applicant independent law centre.

(b) The format of the application form is set out in Appendix A hereto and, when completed, shall be submitted either by post (addressed to Independent Law Centre Traineeship Grant Scheme, Traineeship Section, Law Society of Ireland, Blackhall Place, Dublin 7, D07VY24, DX79 Dublin) or by email (traineesection@lawsociety.ie) by not later than 29th May 2026.

(c) Each applicant independent law centre, in so applying, acknowledges to the Society that:

i. the decision of the adjudicating panel in selecting the independent law centre to be awarded a grant shall be final and conclusive; and

ii. in the event of being successful, if any resultant training contract did not proceed at all or was terminated before the end of the two year period of in-office training of the trainee solicitor concerned the monthly payment of instalments of €750 cash grant would thereupon cease and the training independent law centre would be paid a total grant amount pro-rata to the number of months of the in-office training period completed at the independent law centre by the trainee solicitor unless the training contract was proceeding by reason of an assignment of the training contract to another eligible solicitor within the same independent law centre.

iii. The successful independent law centre which is awarded a grant undertakes to notify the Traineeship section of the Society immediately if a training contract in respect of a grant aided trainee solicitor is terminated.

iv. The successful independent law centre recognises and acknowledges that the purpose of the grant is to promote a traineeship in an independent law centre where, without the grant, the traineeship might not otherwise be provided; and consequently, it is not a grant to, or for the benefit of the trainee solicitor personally; and in the event that the trainee solicitor assigns their Indentures of Apprenticeship to a solicitor not associated with the successful independent law centre during the course of their traineeship, the grant does not automatically follow that trainee solicitor; although it would be open to the new training solicitor within another independent law centre which otherwise fits the criteria of the criteria of the Scheme, to apply to be considered as a potential recipient of the balance of the initial grant, without any guarantee of success.

(d) Each application received will be assessed by the adjudicating panel having regard to the proposal (of a maximum of 1,000 words) submitted as part of each application, which should be indicative of the range of experience the proposed trainee solicitor might gain during his/her two year period of in-office training.

– the Proposal to be marked by the adjudicating panel up to a maximum of 100 points (see Appendix B - “Marking Scheme”).

(e) The adjudicating panel shall consist of three members of the Society’s Education Committee.

(f) The successful independent law centre shall be notified by 1st July 2026 leaving sufficient time that should enable:

i. application to be made to the Society by the proposed trainee solicitor concerned for consent to enter into a training contract with the nominated proposed training solicitor concerned;

ii. (subject to such consent being forthcoming) the training contract to be signed by each party and registered with the Society; and

iii. the trainee solicitor concerned to enter on to the Professional Practice Course or the Professional Practice Course Hybrid commencing later in 2026.

Appendix A – Application Form



Law Society Independent Law Centre Traineeship Grant Scheme to assist in the employment of a trainee solicitor (2026)

Eligibility Criteria

1. Is the independent law centre one of the designated independent law centres? [1]	Yes / No
2. Have you identified a proposed trainee solicitor who will have passed all eight Law Society Final Examination Part One (FE-1) exam papers by 29th May 2026?	Yes / No
3. If granted the Independent Law Centre Traineeship Grant, please confirm that your independent law centre will pay the proposed trainee solicitor at least the living wage, (currently €15.40 per hour).	Yes / No
4. Is the proposed trainee solicitor related to (including marriage, civil partnership or qualified cohabitation) or connected to (by marriage, civil partnership or qualified cohabitation, to any person related to) any Solicitor(s) associated with/ working with the independent law centre?	Yes / No

Independent Law Centre Details

[1] the applicant independent law centre must be from one of the following designated organisations: Ballymun Community Law Centre, Community Law & Mediation Limerick, Community Law & Mediation Northside, FLAC, Immigrant Council of Ireland, Irish Refugee Council independent Law Centre, Mercy Law Resource Centre, Phoenix Project and Transparency Legal Advice Centre.

Independent Law Centre Details

Law Centre name	
Law Centre address	
Law Centre email address	
Law Centre telephone number	

Proposed Training Solicitor's Details

Proposed Training Solicitor's name	
Proposed Training Solicitor's post qualification experience (years)	

Proposed Trainee Solicitor's Details

Proposed Trainee Solicitor's name	
Proposed Trainee Solicitor's address	
Proposed Trainee Solicitor's email address	
Proposed Trainee Solicitor's telephone number	
Number of FE-1 exam papers passed by proposed Trainee Solicitor	

Training Contract Proposal (max 1,000 words)

(For the purposes of the scheme, particular attention will be given by the adjudicating panel to training proposals. The proposals will be assessed on the quality, level and range of work that will be provided to the trainee solicitor.)

Appendix B – "Marking Scheme"

Law Society Independent Law Centre Traineeship Grant Scheme to assist in the hiring of a trainee solicitor (2026)

Marking Scheme [maximum 100 points including bonus points]

Standard Marks	Training Contract Proposal	Quality of proposed work, level of proposed work and range of proposed work	Up to 100 points