Important Information on SHEP Fees & Payment Methods
SACE Cork Spring 2026

Summary

Thank you for your interest in training, or further training, with SHEP. Our philosophy is to keep our training **as affordable and as accessible as possible**. The vast majority of our courses have a participant fee which we try to keep to a minimum). We believe our training offers tremendous value for money. In general, the training fee to each participant is less than €8 per hour.

Because we are core-funded by the HSE, **all SHEP courses are subsidised**. Every participant benefits from this HSE support because without it the standard course fee for all courses would be significantly higher.

The HSE core grant to SHEP is used to cover most of the coordination and administration costs of SHEP courses. Fees collected from participants are used to pay the costs of the two Trainers (and where applicable the module Trainers) who co-facilitate the course and to contribute towards costs such as supervision, promotion, administration, and the presentation of certificates.

The payment of fees is arranged between the participant and SHEP Finance Team who can be contacted if you have a query. It is a deliberate policy in SHEP not to involve Trainers in the collection of participant fees: this is to allow the Trainers to focus on their work with participants. However, should you experience difficulty the important thing is to talk to someone in the Project, and this may include approaching a Trainer if this is what you wish to do.

Depending on the course you may be able spread the payments over a number of months

Our preference is to receive the balance of the fee in one payment when the course place is being offered. We appreciate this is not possible for everyone. For the moment, for most courses, SHEP operates an interest-free fees **Payment Plan**. This means that the cost of the course may be paid over a number of months (though not longer than the length of the course) on a monthly basis, by **Standing Order**. If this option is available, and if you wish to apply for it, you will need to complete the Payment Plan Form and Standing Order Mandate (which you will receive with your letter of offer) and return them to SHEP by the agreed date before the course commences. Please do not arrange the Standing Order independently of SHEP - it needs to be done through the SHEP Finance Dept.

You may be able to source some grant support yourself

Some participants have been supported by their employers or by their Local Development Partnership to undertake training with SHEP. Other participants have received assistance from the Department of Social Protection. St Vincent de Paul has also provided support to some applicants who meet certain requirements. SHEP cannot make such applications on behalf of participants, but we encourage you to make your own enquiries.

Availability of Reduced Fee places this Spring 2026

The ability of SHEP to offer reduced fee places has depended on the availability of funding in the **SHEP Bursary Fund** (to which people and companies have made donations). Unfortunately, this has been depleted after recent rounds of trainings. There is now insufficient fund available to offer any reduced fee places.

What happens if you have financial difficulties?

The Project understands that from time to time a participant may experience difficulties with the payment of fees. The Project will be as supportive as possible and will make every reasonable effort to accommodate participants with financial difficulties. However, if such a situation arises, it is essential for the participant to contact either the Financial Administrator, the relevant Training and Development Officer, or the Director (in confidence) as soon as possible so that a suitable arrangement can be put in place.

A participant who has not paid the fee in full (and who has not made arrangements with SHEP to pay the balance) will not receive a Certificate (or a Statement of Attendance).

What happens if you leave the course before it ends?

It is the policy of The Social and Health Education Project that if a participant leaves the course before it ends he/she is liable to pay in full the cost of training delivered up to his/her last date of attendance, as well as a sum amounting to 20% of the cost of the remainder of the course and that in such instances the initial deposit if also forfeited.

Don't hesitate to contact us if you need assistance

Thank you again for your interest in SHEP training. If you are unsure about any of this and need assistance please don't hesitate to ring us at the main office on

(021) 4666180, or on
(087) 7728089 for courses run in Kerry
(085) 8626844 for courses run in Limerick.

THE SHEP CERTIFICATE IN SOCIAL AWARENESS AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT
'Training for Transformation'

Frequently Asked Questions for course in Cork Spring 2026

Who is this course for?
The training is designed

- As Part Two of the SHEP Foundation Programme (the first part being the Personal Development course) as a continuation of your personal journey of growth and development, through deepening your awareness of the wider social relationships with which you are involved
- **To people from Community** who would like to explore their experiences of engaging with the themes explored in the course. using an experiential learning groupwork approach.

What are the aims of this course?
The course aims to develop and deepen awareness of how we relate and co-operate in groups and communities, how we are shaped by the society we grow up in and how we, in turn, shape society through our lives and actions in response to the world we experience individually and collectively. As such the course is a continuation of a journey of awakening awareness, as to how we are in relation to ourselves and those around us, however with a widened focus for that inquiry. Through facilitated experiential exploration of these themes the course aims:

- to develop awareness of how we are **shaped by the society** we grow up in and how we, in turn, shape society through our lives and actions
- to deepen awareness and knowledge of the impact of **wider systems** on our personal development and wellbeing
- to enhance participants' ability to work on, and explore themes together, especially in relation to finding ways of working towards a better society for all
- to develop understanding and **confidence to act** in ways that represent a **balanced response to both individual and group needs**
- **to develop awareness and the skills required for ef**fective participation as active citizens
- to provide a focus and a starting point for those who aspire to be more involved in **community**, whether it is at a local, national or international level
- to develop **capacities (awareness, understanding and skills) for community building and leadership**
- to develop **connections to our natural environment**

Themes around which awareness grows through the course?

- Roles within groups
- Working co-operatively in a group situation
- Behaviour in groups
- Dealing with conflict constructively
- Leadership styles
- Talents, skills and strengths in leadership
- Why society is the way it is now
- Values
- Community Building
- What changes are needed and what we can do
- What the important issues in our community
- How do realities of Gender, Power, Diversity, inter-culturalism, justice … impact our lives
- Development, environmental challenges and sustainability

Is assessment part of the course?
Participants are not required to undertake any written work and there are no formal assessments or examinations. However, for their own benefit, participants are encouraged to record their learning during the course in a personal learning journal.

What is the methodology used?
Experiential group work is used throughout the course, providing opportunities for participants to make discoveries firsthand, instead of hearing or reading about others' experiences. Through active involvement, reflection and sharing, participants find meaning and gain knowledge from their own experience and the group becomes a learning community. There is an onsite activity weekend day to connect with the natural environment as a community building experience and to process learnings.

How big will the training group be?
The group will normally consist of 23-26 participants, facilitated by team of facilitators

Will I get a certificate?
Certificates will be awarded to those who have attended a minimum of 80% of the course.

Where and when will the course be held?
- Subject to numbers applying, one group will be run this Spring in the **Bessboro, The Meditation Centre, Blackrock, Cork Eircode T12 D922.** The course will take place over 5 weekends

How much does the course cost?
- The cost of the course in Cork in 2026 is €550 (the same as it was over the last few years).
- There is a **booking deposit to complete an application of €100** which is returnable if not offered a place or if the course does not proceed due to insufficient number of applications to form a group of 18 people minimum

How do I apply for a place on the course?
An application form can be downloaded to print out from https://www.socialandhealth.com/training/shep-certificate-social-awareness-community-empowerment/
or alternatively obtained from SHEP by contacting
021-4666180 for Cork, or on (087) 7728089 for courses run in Kerry or on 085-8626844/086-1451408 for Limerick.

To apply please complete and return the application form. Letters to those being offered places will issue the last week of August, or earlier if the group is full at an earlier point.