

# County Roscommon LEADER 2023-2027

## Frequently Asked Questions

<b>1</b>	<p><b>Who can apply for LEADER Funding?</b> Individuals, businesses, social enterprises and community/voluntary groups are all eligible to apply for LEADER funding.</p> <p>A <b>Social Enterprise</b> is defined as an enterprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That trades for social /societal purpose</li> <li>• Where at least part of its income is earned from its trading activity</li> <li>• Is separate from Government</li> <li>• Where the surplus is primarily re-invested in the social objective</li> </ul> <p>To be defined as <b>community group</b>, a group must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A non-profit distributing group; and</li> <li>• Institutionally separate from the state; and</li> <li>• Coming together, or has come together, to pursue a common cause or interest for the good of their community; and</li> <li>• Autonomous and engaged in voluntary activity; and</li> <li>• Promoting the interests of the wider community rather than the commercial interests of its members; and</li> <li>• A group, or project whose membership does not consist of any secondary economic beneficiaries e.g. local business people coming together as a community body to apply for funding to being tourists into an area.</li> </ul> <p>Community/Voluntary Groups are not required to register as a limited company or to have Charitable Status in order to apply for LEADER funding.</p>																								
<b>2</b>	<p><b>How do I apply for LEADER funding?</b> The application is a two-step process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Step 1</b> Applicants should complete an Expression of Interest Form (EOI) for each project. EOIs must be submitted to Roscommon LEADER Partnership, preferably by email to <a href="mailto:leader@ridc.ie">leader@ridc.ie</a>.</li> <li>• <b>Step 2</b> If your Expression of Interest form is deemed <b>eligible in principle</b>, you will then be issued with an application form and invited to submit your application for LEADER funding.</li> </ul>																								
<b>3</b>	<p><b>How much funding can I/we apply for?</b> The rates of aid for LEADER funding are as follows:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #00b050; color: white;"> <th colspan="4">Summary of Current Funding Ceilings and Support Rates</th> </tr> <tr style="background-color: #00b050; color: white;"> <th>Type of Project</th> <th>Applicant</th> <th>Maximum Rate of Aid</th> <th>Maximum Funding</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Community Projects not involving Economic Activity</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Community</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Up to a maximum of 75%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">€500,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community Projects involving Economic Activity</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Community</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Up to a maximum of 75%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">€200,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Investment and other supports (including promotion undertaken as part of the implementation of a project)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Private</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Up to a maximum of 75%</td> <td rowspan="3" style="text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">€200,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Community</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Up to a maximum of 75%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Community under accessible services sub-theme targeted at hard to reach communities</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Up to a maximum of 75%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Summary of Current Funding Ceilings and Support Rates				Type of Project	Applicant	Maximum Rate of Aid	Maximum Funding	Community Projects not involving Economic Activity	Community	Up to a maximum of 75%	€500,000	Community Projects involving Economic Activity	Community	Up to a maximum of 75%	€200,000	Investment and other supports (including promotion undertaken as part of the implementation of a project)	Private	Up to a maximum of 75%	€200,000	Community	Up to a maximum of 75%	Community under accessible services sub-theme targeted at hard to reach communities	Up to a maximum of 75%
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4	<p><b>What is a Targeted Call (Time Specific)?</b></p> <p>LEADER 2023-2027 requires 1 targeted call per annum over the lifetime of the programme. This means that a public call will be made for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) under specified themes and subthemes of the programme within a defined timeframe. For example, projects may be invited to submit an EOI by a specific deadline date. If these EOIs are eligible in principle, they will be invited to submit a full application within a specified timeframe and all applications will be assessed together. This is a competitive process and projects will be compared. The purpose of this process is to ensure that funding is targeted where it delivers the most value and to ensure that all projects have an equal opportunity to apply for funding.</p> <p>For certain sectors, it is intended to run only time specific/targeted calls in Co. Roscommon which means that there may not be funding available for your project until a call is announced under the theme/subtheme your project falls into. Time specific/targeted calls will be widely publicised RLPs website/Social Media, local press, at information meetings, etc.</p> <p>The targeted call is a two stage process;</p> <p><b>Stage 1 - Call for EOIs</b></p> <p>A public call will be made for EOIs stating;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LEADER theme or sub-themes being called</li> <li>• The proposed overall budget for the call</li> <li>• The maximum level of funding available to any individual project</li> <li>• The closing date for receipt of EOIs</li> </ul> <p><b>Stage 2 – Application stage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EOIs deemed eligible will be invited to submit a full application</li> <li>• Applicants will be informed of the qualifying criteria and marking scheme to be used</li> </ul> <p>Applicants will be informed of the closing date for receipt of applications and the timeframe for assessing and notifying applicants of the results.</p>											
5	<p><b>What is a Rolling Call?</b></p> <p>A rolling call means that project applications will be assessed on a continuous basis until the budget for that project activity is fully allocated i.e. funding is allocated on a first come first served basis. However, if your project type has been listed under our Targeted Call (Time Specific) schedule, you may have to wait until that closed call is announced before your EOI will be assessed for eligibility.</p>											
6	<p><b>Can I still submit an Expression of Interest Form (EOI) even if there isn't a targeted call open for my project?</b></p> <p>Yes. We accept EOIs on a continuous basis. This helps us to plan effectively for the future and respond to local needs. If you submit an EOI outside of a targeted call, your details may be placed on a database and you will be informed of any calls as they arise. Note that you will have to re-submit your EOI once the call opens.</p>											
7	<p><b>What happens when I send in my Expression of Interest (EOI)?</b></p> <p>Once we receive your Expression of Interest form we will send you a letter of acknowledgement. Your project idea will then be assessed for eligibility and you will be informed of the outcome. If your EOI is eligible, you will be invited to make a full application for funding.</p>											
8	<p><b>My EOI has been deemed eligible in principle; what happens next?</b></p>											

	A Project Officer from RLP will inform you of the documentation required to complete your application and the decision making criteria and processes. Initially this may be in the form of a training seminar/webinar; however there will also be an opportunity to meet with a Project Officer to discuss your proposal and get guidance on the application process.
<b>9</b>	<b>Once my application is submitted, what happens next?</b> Your Project Officer will assess your project against the LDS, LEADER Operating Rules and other relevant plans, etc. and will prepare a project assessment report. All projects are then fully assessed and scored by an independent Evaluation Committee before going to Roscommon Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) for a final decision. Your Project Officer will guide and advise you during this time.
<b>10</b>	<b>How long will it take to get a decision on my application?</b> It may take a number of months between the time that you are invited to make an application and a final decision regarding funding for your project is made. This is to allow project promoters sufficient time to prepare their application and submit the documentation required. The Evaluation Committee and LCDC also require time to carry out a full assessment of the project.
<b>11</b>	<b>If my project is approved what happens next?</b> If your project is approved LEADER funding, you will be issued with a Letter of Offer (contract). Once this has been accepted, signed and returned to RLP, you may commence work on your project and/or incur expenditure on the project.
<b>12</b>	<b>If my project is refused, what happens?</b> If your project is refused (turned down) for funding, you will receive a letter outlining the reason/s for refusal. You can appeal this decision and information about the appeals process will be included in your refusal letter.
<b>13</b>	<b>Who is involved in LEADER in County Roscommon?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roscommon Local Community Development Committee is the <u>Local Action Group (LAG)</u> for the delivery of LEADER 2023-2027 in Co. Roscommon. Roscommon LCDC makes the final decision on LEADER grant applications in the county.</li> <li>• Roscommon LEADER Partnership is the <u>Implementing Partner</u>. This role involves the day-to-day running of LEADER, including assisting and advising project promoters.</li> <li>• Roscommon County Council is the <u>Financial Partner</u>. This role involves the monitoring and management of the financial aspects of the LEADER Programme, including payment of grant aid.</li> </ul>
<b>14</b>	<b>Who do I contact for more information and/or to submit an EOI?</b> All queries, etc. relating to the LEADER Programme should be made to: <b>Contact:</b> Roscommon LEADER Partnership <b>Address:</b> The Cube FlexiSpace, Lanesborough Road, Roscommon Town, F42 DX61 <b>Tel:</b> 090 663 0252 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:leader@ridc.ie">leader@ridc.ie</a> <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.rosleaderpartnership.ie">www.rosleaderpartnership.ie</a>
<b>15</b>	<b>Can a sporting organisation apply for funding under the LEADER 2023-2027?</b> Yes. Terms & Conditions may apply.
<b>16</b>	<b>If I/we have been approved and/or received funding from another source, can I/we apply for LEADER funding for the same project?</b> <u>If you are collaborating with or seeking funding from other agencies in relation to your project, it is crucial you declare this from the outset.</u>  Where a promoter is considering applying for more than one stream of public funding for their project, the aim, in the first instance, should be to identify separate projects, or parts of projects, to be supported through each public funding source so that collectively the separate projects can result in better outcomes for the communities concerned. An example might be a cycling trail where LEADER funds the trail itself, the local authority funds signage and access points for the trail, and the LEO works with specific businesses along the trail. <u>Public matching funds</u> may be used as a contribution to the delivery of a LEADER project, however, such matching funds must be in the form of a cash contribution.  Public Matching Funds relates to a cash contribution and does not relate to scenarios where another funds such as Sports Capital Grant does not provide a cash contribution, but instead, funds specific items of a project and requires the same invoice(s) to make payment as a presented for LEADER funding payment.

	<p>Funding from other EU sources cannot be used to match-fund LEADER projects. Funding from other public funded sources (e.g. Fáilte Ireland, local authorities, Waterways Ireland, etc.) may be permitted as matching funds for a LEADER project providing it is in the form of a cash contribution and it is not sourced from an EU fund.</p> <p>Public matching funding is allowed subject to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• only applications submitted by community applicants are eligible; and</li> <li>• the overall level of public funding does not exceed 95% of the total eligible project cost; and</li> <li>• there must be a minimum cash contribution (i.e. private matching funding element) of at least 5% of total eligible project costs; and</li> <li>• the LAG must confirm, and upload to the LEADER IT System document repository, that the matching funding is not from another EU source; and</li> <li>• The matching funds must be identified in the LEADER application form submitted; written confirmation must be obtained from the provider of the matching funding stating the amount of cash contribution it will provide towards the LEADER project and that the matching funding being provided is not from another EU source; and</li> <li>• All supporting documentation in respect of public matching funding must be maintained in the same manner as for all other LEADER projects; and</li> <li>• the public bodies providing the matching funds must not be the project promoter or beneficiary.</li> </ul>
<b>17</b>	<p><b>If I/we miss out on responding to a targeted call for projects, when can I/we apply for funding?</b></p> <p>If the entire budget for the sub-theme under which your project could be funded has been allocated to targeted calls and only 1 call will be made over the lifetime of the Co. Roscommon LEADER Programme 2023-2027 (i.e. the call you missed), they you will not be able to apply for funding for your project.</p>
<b>18</b>	<p><b>If I/we have more than 1 project idea, can we apply for funding for both at the same time?</b></p> <p>Promoters are advised to submit one single EOI (and subsequent Application form if the EOI is deemed eligible in principle) for an overall project. The promoter can then apply for Phased Payments for their project, if necessary. If the project ideas cannot be combined, promoters should consider their capacity to deliver (financial, personnel, etc.) two or more projects at the same time before submitting the EOIs.</p>
<b>19</b>	<p><b>Can I get phased payments for my project?</b></p> <p>Yes, subject to certain conditions, a promoter can request a maximum of 5 phased payments for their project. The approval of phased payments is at the discretion of Roscommon LCDC. Promoters should identify the need for Phased Payments at Application Stage. Promoters must incur a minimum of 20% of eligible project costs prior to Claim 1.</p>
<b>20</b>	<p><b>When can I/we apply for funding?</b></p> <p>LEADER 2023-2027 is currently open for Expressions of Interest in County Roscommon.</p>
<b>21</b>	<p><b>Is there support available to fill out EOI and Application forms?</b></p> <p>LEADER Project Officers at Roscommon LEADER Partnership are available to assist and advise promoters on the completion of the necessary paperwork. However, RLP staff will not be in a position to complete EOIs and application forms on behalf of promoters. If professional advice is necessary, then the promoter must source and pay for this themselves.</p>
<b>22</b>	<p><b>Can I/we use our own time/labour as a source of matching funds for our project?</b></p> <p>Contribution in Kind is eligible for community-led projects and farm diversification projects (farmer's own labour) only. Contributions-in-kind cannot constitute the full amount of matching funding. There must be a minimum cash contribution of 5% of the total eligible project costs. The value assigned to the contribution-in-kind must be included with the funding application.</p> <p>Contributions-in-kind in the form of works, goods, services, including paid labour donated to the project; or land and real estate, i.e. for which no cash payment supported by invoices; or documents of equivalent probative value has been made, are eligible if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the LEADER funding does not exceed the final total eligible project cost, excluding contributions-in-kind and the 5% cash contribution; and</li> <li>• the value assigned to the contribution-in-kind does not exceed the market cost of the works, goods, services or land and real estate in question; and</li> <li>• the value and the provision of the contribution-in-kind has been independently assessed and verified.</li> </ul>
<b>23</b>	<p><b>What Private Matching Funds do I have to have in place?</b></p> <p>This is dependent on both the promoter and project type. LEADER provides a percentage of funding to projects approved. The remainder of the funding for the project must be provided by the promoter. In the case of</p>

	<p>private promoters, this must be from a private source (funds on hand, bank loan, etc.); for community projects, cash contributions from public bodies and agencies may be used as matching funds but not grant schemes and programmes operated by public bodies (see point 17). 5% Rule – promoters must contribute at least 5% of the overall project costs from their own financial reserves (exception – training projects).</p> <p>All promoters will be required to demonstrate, at application stage, that they have sufficient private matching funding and bridging finance in place to complete their project or relevant phase thereof.</p>																							
24	<p><b>Do I/we need Planning Permission to apply for LEADER funding?</b></p> <p>Generally, planning permission is required for any development of land and/or property. Planning Permission should be obtained from Roscommon County Council for all aspects of the relevant project. Costs associated with obtaining Planning Permission are not eligible for LEADER funding in this instance. If the development is exempt from planning, a Planning Exemption should be obtained from Roscommon County Council.</p> <p>Evidence of Planning Permission granted or an Exemption from Planning must be submitted at Application Stage.</p>																							
25	<p><b>What are the Procurement Requirements for LEADER?</b></p> <p>Project promoters must demonstrate that they have complied with EU public procurement law and national procurement guidelines appropriate to their project.</p> <p>National Procurement Guidelines apply where the award of total public funding (from LEADER and public matching funds) <u>is more than 50% of the project costs</u>. An outline of the threshold requirements is set out in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="312 909 1497 1704"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">National Procurement Thresholds</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Contract Type</th> <th>Amount (excl. VAT)</th> <th>Procedure</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="3"><b>Supplies &amp; Services</b></td> <td>Less than €5,000</td> <td><b>Seek</b> verbal quotations from one or more interested and competent suppliers/service providers - these can be sought verbally but responses must be obtained in writing.  Best Practice – Seek a minimum of 3 written quotes; a record of verbal requests must be submitted with your project application.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>€5,000 - €50,000</td> <td><b>Seek</b> written quotations from a minimum of 3 suppliers on the basis of responses to written specifications.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>€50,000 - EU Threshold* (currently €221,000)</td> <td>Publish Contract Notice on eTenders <a href="http://www.etenders.gov.ie">www.etenders.gov.ie</a> – Open Procedure.</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2"><b>Works Related Services</b></td> <td>Less than €50,000</td> <td><b>Seek</b> written quotations from a minimum of 3 suppliers on the basis of responses to written specifications.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>€50,000 – EU Threshold* (currently €221,000)</td> <td>Publish Contract Notice on eTenders <a href="http://www.etenders.gov.ie">www.etenders.gov.ie</a> – Open Procedure.</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2"><b>Works</b></td> <td>Less than €200,000</td> <td><b>Seek</b> written quotations from at least 5 firms on the basis of responses to written specifications, or follow the eTenders process.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>€200,000 - EU Threshold* (currently €5,538,000)</td> <td>Publish Contract Notice on eTenders <a href="http://www.etenders.gov.ie">www.etenders.gov.ie</a> – Open or Restricted Procedure**</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>More detailed procurement guidelines will be issued as part of an Application Pack to all promoters whose EOI has been deemed Eligible in Principle. Where professional procurement advice is required, the promoter must cover this cost themselves.</p> <p>Where the procurement process has been completed and LEADER funding approved for a project, project promoters cannot make any changes to what is approved, e.g. the project promoter should not change supplier(s)/contractor(s) for any reason without first consulting your Project Officer. <u>Unauthorised changes to projects may result in the procurement rules being breached resulting in penalties and/or the project being deemed ineligible for LEADER funding.</u></p>	National Procurement Thresholds			Contract Type	Amount (excl. VAT)	Procedure	<b>Supplies &amp; Services</b>	Less than €5,000	<b>Seek</b> verbal quotations from one or more interested and competent suppliers/service providers - these can be sought verbally but responses must be obtained in writing.  Best Practice – Seek a minimum of 3 written quotes; a record of verbal requests must be submitted with your project application.	€5,000 - €50,000	<b>Seek</b> written quotations from a minimum of 3 suppliers on the basis of responses to written specifications.	€50,000 - EU Threshold* (currently €221,000)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders <a href="http://www.etenders.gov.ie">www.etenders.gov.ie</a> – Open Procedure.	<b>Works Related Services</b>	Less than €50,000	<b>Seek</b> written quotations from a minimum of 3 suppliers on the basis of responses to written specifications.	€50,000 – EU Threshold* (currently €221,000)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders <a href="http://www.etenders.gov.ie">www.etenders.gov.ie</a> – Open Procedure.	<b>Works</b>	Less than €200,000	<b>Seek</b> written quotations from at least 5 firms on the basis of responses to written specifications, or follow the eTenders process.	€200,000 - EU Threshold* (currently €5,538,000)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders <a href="http://www.etenders.gov.ie">www.etenders.gov.ie</a> – Open or Restricted Procedure**
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