

LEADER Programme

2023-2027



Your Local Development Company



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

Arna chomhchistiú ag An Roinn Forbartha Tuaithe agus Pobail agus Gaeltachta
Co-funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

Ár dTodhchaí
Tuaithe
Our Rural
Future



Arna chomhchistiú ag
an Aontas Eorpach
Co-funded by
the European Union



Welcome to the LEADER Programme 2023-2027

Welcome to the LEADER (*Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale* i.e. Links Between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy) Programme which has played a key role in the development of County Roscommon for over 30 years. Piloted in 1991, LEADER has become a mainstream source of funds for communities and businesses alike.

The LEADER Initiative was established by the European Commission as a method of activating and delivering rural development in local rural communities. LEADER uses a 'bottom-up' or 'community-led local development' (CLLD) approach to rural development.

Over the three decades of its existence, the LEADER Programme has supported the development of a wide range of innovative and sustainable projects that have brought increased jobs and vibrancy to rural communities across County Roscommon, Ireland and the wider EU.

This Information Booklet aims to tell you about the application process as well as giving an overview of the structure of the LEADER Programme in Co. Roscommon and information on LEADER Themes and Sub Themes, Rates of Aid and Key Issues relating to LEADER.



Proseal GTR

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Proseal



Displacement

Displacement occurs where a project funded by public funds impacts negatively on a similar activity elsewhere. LEADER funding cannot be awarded if it will result in an unacceptable level of displacement e.g. closure or loss of another business, service or community facility elsewhere, both locally as well as across Ireland and the EU. Displacement can occur even where the businesses or services are not identical.

Deadweight

Can you proceed with your project without LEADER funding? If you have the finances available to fund your project yourself, you will not be eligible for LEADER funding.

Cross Cutting Measures

Innovation

All projects seeking LEADER funding are required to demonstrate new innovative ideas, methodologies and practices that show new approaches and originality.

Climate Change Mitigation

Applications for LEADER funding must demonstrate how their project will be delivered in a climate friendly manner and its overall contribution to Climate Change Mitigation. This could include greening of enterprise and community space, bespoke training on climate change, etc.

Inclusion

Inclusion is seen as a universal human right. The aim of inclusion is to embrace all people irrespective of race, gender, disability, medical or other need. It is about giving equal access and opportunities and getting rid of discrimination and intolerance (removal of barriers). Applicants for LEADER funding must demonstrate how their project is inclusive.

Equality

This is a situation in which everyone, people of different races, religions, etc. are all treated fairly and have the same opportunities. Applicants for LEADER funding must demonstrate how their project involves equality.

Funding Ceilings and Grant Rates

LEADER can provide grants of up to €200,000 for eligible capital projects and up to €30,000 for feasibility studies. Full details of grant rates and maximum amounts available are set out in the table on page 16.

Matching Funds

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 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. 5% Rule – promoters must contribute at least 5% of the overall project costs from their own financial reserves (exception – training projects).

Bridging Finance

LEADER funding is paid retrospectively, i.e. if approved LEADER grant aid, a promoter implements their project, pays for all work, equipment, etc. and submits a grant claim to draw down the LEADER grant. Promoters must demonstrate that they have the required bridging finances in place to implement the project. This can be by way of a bank loan, Credit Union loan or social finance loan.

Public Procurement

LEADER funding is considered public funding, therefore applicants for LEADER funding must obtain appropriate quotes/tenders for the proposed project costs, in line with Public Procurement rules. Guidelines on procurement for LEADER project will be issued to all applicants who submit an eligible Expression of Interest. Final procurement must be submitted at Application Stage.

Planning Permission

Planning Permission/Exemption from Planning is generally required for all projects involving development of land and/or property. Promoters must ensure that all aspects of the project for which you are seeking LEADER funding are included in the planning permission/exemption from planning application. Documentary evidence confirming that Planning Permission/Exemption from Planning has been granted by Roscommon County Council must be submitted at Application Stage.

Title

Where a promoter intends to apply for LEADER funding for the development of land or property, you must provide proof of ownership/lease. The following documents are accepted as proof:

- A recently certified copy (by solicitor) of the Folio/Stamped Deed of Conveyance and map, showing the promoter as owner;
- A long-term lease for property in question (minimum of 10 years remaining at application stage) and map.





What types of projects are eligible for funding?

All LEADER funding decisions are focused on achieving the objectives and priorities of the LDS. Projects are only eligible where they are in line with at least one of the LDS objectives.

Projects must also be located, in their entirety, within the Co. Roscommon Sub-Regional Area (i.e. the administrative area of Roscommon County Council, comprising the Municipal Areas of Athlone, Boyle and Roscommon).

Main Eligible Costs

- construction, acquisition or improvement of immovable property;
- purchase of machinery and equipment
- Feasibility Studies (consultancy fees)

Main Ineligible Sectors and Activities

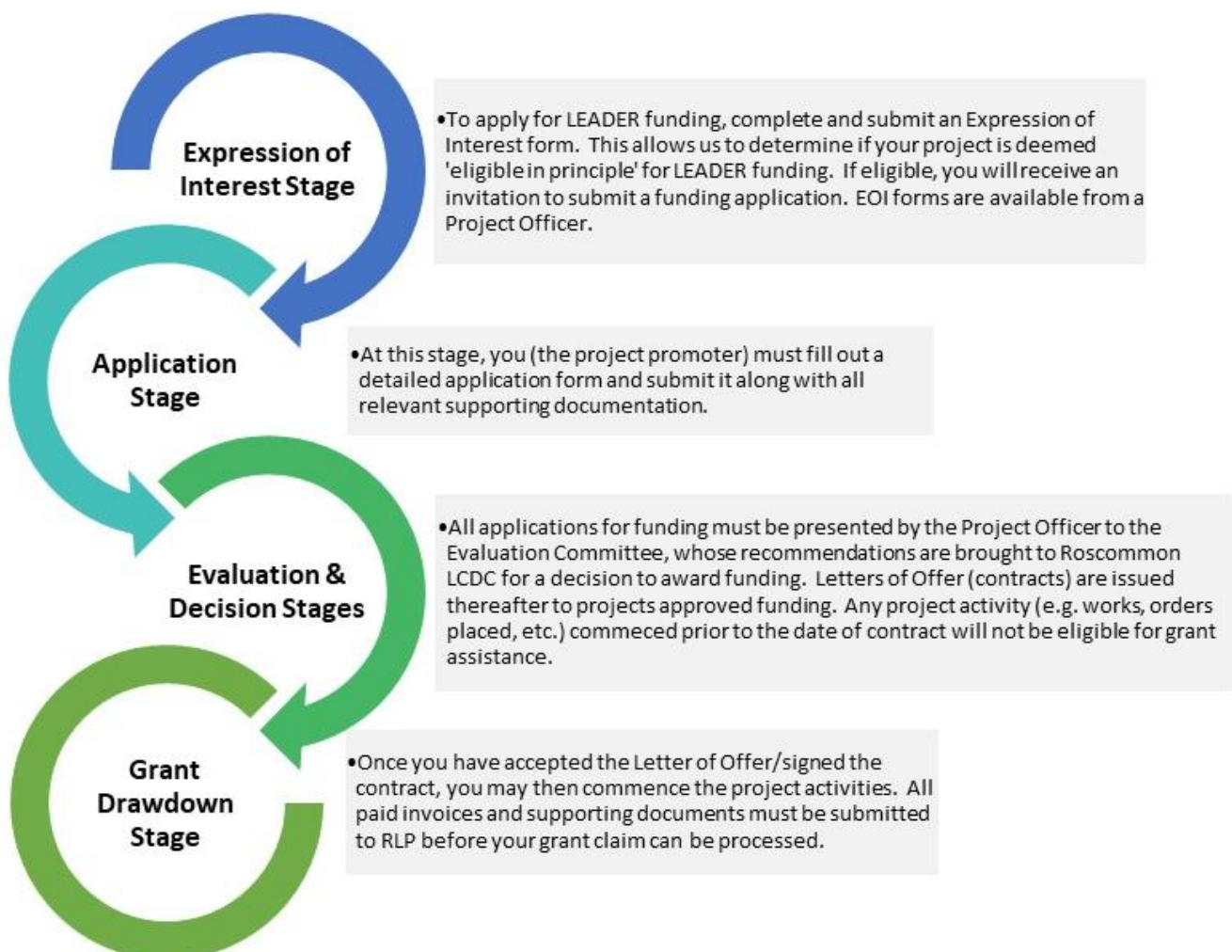
- Primary Agriculture
- Primary Horticulture (including bee-keeping)
- Fisheries
- Childcare
- Schools, Colleges, Montessori Schools, Crèches
- Health Care & Health Care equipment
- Nursing Homes
- Housing
- Conventional retail operations
- Working capital (including stock) and/or Operational Costs (salary/overheads)
- Training provider cannot be a project promotor
- Statutory fines and penalties, criminal fines and damages
- Residential property including B&B's that are part of a private residence
- All motor vehicles including trailers to transport same
- Statutory & Legal Costs
- Loans
- Insurance
- Reclaimable VAT
- Planning Application Fees
- General maintenance works of Public Bodies and/or works that normally come within the remit of Local Authorities and/or are included in the development plan of a Local Authority



The LEADER Application Process



Engaging with the LEADER Programme involves a clear and straightforward process. See below for a step-by-step guide. Throughout the process, the Project Officer will be available to provide valuable support and guidance, along with guidance documents issued. **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.**



LEADER Themes and Sub Themes



Local Development Strategy Themes, Sub Themes, Local Objectives and Strategic Actions

Themes	Sub-Themes	Local Objective	Strategic Action
Economic Development and Job Creation	The Green Economy	To support the sustainable growth of the green economy	To support research, development and implementation of green economy initiatives
	Agricultural Diversification	To support the resilience and enhance the sustainability and economic viability of off-farming operations	Support agricultural diversification development
	Rural Tourism & Recreation	To promote and support the continued development of Roscommon's distinctive tourism offerings for the advancement of rural communities	Support tourism product & infrastructure development, marketing and promotion
	Enterprise Development	To encourage and foster entrepreneurship at all stages of enterprise development	Support for new and traditional business sectors with growth potential in Co. Roscommon
	Rural Food Production	To support the development and expansion of the food sector in Roscommon	Support the growth of food production through research and skills development, networking, marketing and capital supports
	Social, Community & Cooperative Enterprises	To support the development of new and existing social, community and cooperative enterprises across the County	Support the development, training and capacity building for rural social, community and cooperative enterprises
Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion	Rural Infrastructure	To support a needs-led approach to the sustainable development of rural infrastructure	Enhancement/regeneration programmes for rural towns, villages and their hinterlands including unused buildings – development programmes Develop Community Facilities and actions to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of the communities of Co. Roscommon
	Accessible Services	To enhance social inclusion by supporting the provision of accessible services that support all communities and a strong sense of place in Co. Roscommon	Develop social, cultural and recreational actions and programmes to improve the quality of life and well-being of communities in Co. Roscommon
	Optimising Digital Connectivity	To increase access to and uptake of reliable and high-speed broadband and reduce digital poverty in Co. Roscommon	Support the development of digital skills and digital literacy Promote and facilitate digital connectivity
	Rural Youth	To foster the development of youth facilities and services in the county with the aim of creating an increased quality of life and opportunities for our youth	Support for rural youth in Co. Roscommon including social infrastructure, skills development, entrepreneurship support and employment
Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment	To support and promote actions that enhance the environment in Co. Roscommon	Support projects and initiatives that encourage the sustainable use of water and protection and improvement of local biodiversity Support sustainable energy initiatives
	Climate Change Capacity Building	To facilitate increased awareness and involvement in climate action across Co. Roscommon	Enable and empower the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned to enhance collective understanding and implementation of climate change solutions
	Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	To support climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in Co. Roscommon	Support the development of renewable energy potential and energy conservation, and green transitions for communities, agencies and businesses

Rates of Aid

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%	
Analysis and Development	Private	Up to a maximum of 90%	€30,000
	Community	Up to a maximum of 90%	
Training	Private or Community	Up to a maximum of 100%	€200,000

Minimum Funding (Grant) Threshold

Roscommon LCDC will not approve funding of less than €5,000 for any project.



LEADER 2023-2027 Team

The LEADER 2023-2027 Team will advise and support you throughout your LEADER journey.



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CEO



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