

Priority 3

Support for rural tourism

Total available funding: €461,004.00 (2015 – 2020)

Applications must be for at least £2,500 with a maximum grant amount of £40,000. In exceptional circumstances a higher grant amount may be awarded to projects which demonstrate exceptional economic outputs including job creation. The maximum intervention rate is 40%.

Please note, de minimis state aid regulations mean that a maximum of €200,000 is available to any one applicant in any 3-year period. If an applicant has other public funding, this may count towards the de minimis amount and reduce the amount of money they can apply for.

The kinds of tourism business start-up and business development projects that are likely to attract funding will be those developing high quality visitor products and services that link tourism providers, extend the tourism season and encourage visitors to stay.

Who can apply?

- New or existing micro or small businesses
- A community group which wants to invest in small-scale infrastructure to support and develop tourism
- A group of rural tourist businesses working together to develop groups of activity local authorities and administrators
- Public-private partnerships
- Non-Government organisations
- Organisations in charge of tourist and recreational development

Small-scale infrastructure for tourism covers a range of physical investments, such as small buildings for tourist information centres, visitor centre, shelters and signage along trains and interpretations boards. It will also cover related small IT infrastructure such as e-booking systems for tourist services.

Eligibility;

Eligible areas of support include;

- Developing high quality visitor products and services which encourage tourist's to stay longer, link tourism providers together and extend the tourism season
- Developing quality accommodation where they are clearly defined wider benefits to the local tourism economy and where activities do not displace existing accommodation
- Supporting tourism activities/niche products linked to quality local food, culture, heritage and rural crafts/assets such as heritage events and festivals promoting local culture
- Supporting shops, catering services—restaurants and cafes where there are wider benefits to the local tourism economy
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- Developing access infrastructure to help people connect to the natural environment such as pathways and cycle-ways
- Supporting tourism information centres and associated visitor information
- Developing and associated marketing and signposting of culture, leisure, heritage, visitor activities or attractions
- Supporting events and festivals
- Developing innovative technology that enhances collaboration between businesses and provides information to attract visitors

Costs could include;

- Construction costs, acquisition or improvement to immovable property
- General costs linked to facilitating investments such as architect, engineer, consultation fees (cannot total more than 15% of project's total eligible costs)
- Marketing and promotion where these are part of a larger project
- Capital costs involved in supporting events and festivals
- Short term salaries associated with project development of events and festivals
- Intangible investments including acquisition or development of computer software and acquisition of patents, licenses, copyrights, trademarks.

