

## **Staffordshire LEADER call for bids Round 4**

### **Priority 2 - Support for micro and small businesses and farm diversification**

From:

Staffordshire Local Action Group

Published:

26th June 2017

Closing date:

20th August 2017 at 12:00 midnight

Fund state:

[Open](#)

Type:

[Micro and small businesses and farm diversification](#)

Location:

[Staffordshire LEADER Programme Area](#)

Funding source:

[European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development](#)

Total Grant Amount for this Call:

[£200,000](#)

### **Details**

This call invites applications for investments to support the development of new rural business activity and the growth of existing businesses, including farms, with an emphasis on new markets, diversification, innovation, ICT and sustainability

There is potential to generate new business and employment in Staffordshire from new land-based activities and supporting rural enterprise and the local priorities detailed below highlight the areas of opportunity in the Staffordshire LEADER programme area.

The identified local priorities detailed below reflect the areas of intervention that the Staffordshire LEADER programme looks to address, that will help support a more vibrant and sustainable rural economy across the programme area.

Call for bids will need to consider and address the local priorities detailed below -

- Development of sustainable farm diversification projects such as farm-based recreation, bed and breakfast accommodation, farm shops, outdoor pursuits and adding value to local food production.
- Capital investment to support new business starts.
- The construction of rural workspace to provide workshops, factories, and facilities, with a priority for the re-use of existing redundant buildings.
- Cluster activity to secure new markets or supply chains.
- Support the creation of new rural branding and food processing/handling opportunities e.g. Chase Venison, Staffordshire Charcoal
- Support Local Food & Drink – support for local food & drink businesses to start/grow. Includes support for 'niche' products linked to quality local food & drink, micro-breweries, local vineyards, local markets, investment in new or

expanding markets, farm shops, community shops/markets selling local produce etc.

- Investment in micro businesses to expand and take on their first employee
- Investment to develop a new product or innovate an existing product
- Investments which enable an existing business to reach new markets or extend the customer base.
- Projects which adopt an innovative approach to providing a “Home Business Hub” for rural Staffordshire

**NB: The Staffordshire LEADER programme looks to help support and improve the rural economy of Staffordshire. Priority will be given to applications that deliver strong economic benefits (jobs) to the LEADER programme area.**

## Location

Projects must be located within the rural Staffordshire LEADER programme area (<http://staffsleader.org.uk/map-of-qualifying-area/>).

## Value

Grant applications will be available for this call from £2,500 up to £40,000 depending on \*state aid already received.

LEADER intervention rate should be calculated at 40% of total project costs.

*\* A useful approved EU mechanism for State aid is the de minimis regulation, based on the Commission’s view that small amounts of aid are unlikely to distort competition.*

*The De Minimis Regulation allows small amounts of aid – less than €200,000 over 3 rolling years – to be given to an undertaking for a wide range of purposes.*

## Deadlines

Expressions of interest deadline Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August at 1200 midnight.

## How to apply

There are 2 stages to the application process – an expression of interest and a full application. The Staffordshire LEADER Local Action Group will assess applications at both stages and only the highest-scoring applications will be successful. Applicants will need to fill in 2 application forms to apply for a grant: Stage 1: an expression of interest then if successful Stage 2: a full application.

Please refer to the Staffordshire LEADER Applicant Handbook and website ([www.staffsleader.org.uk](http://www.staffsleader.org.uk)) for further details about the application process.

## **Registering with the Rural Payments Agency**

If an expression of interest is endorsed by the Local Action Group, the applicants will need to register with [Rural Payments Agency](#) before submitting the full application. (If they have already registered, they won't need to do this again.) After registering, applicants will get a Single Business Identifier for their application. Applicants must still register with Rural Payments even if they have a Single Business Identifier. Applicants needing support to register for Rural Payments can call the Rural Payments helpline on 03000 200 301.

## **Decisions on expressions of interest**

If an expression of interest is endorsed, the Staffordshire LEADER Local Action Group will ask the applicant to submit a full application.

The LEADER Applicant Handbook explains in more detail what an applicant must do to apply for a grant, how grant applications are assessed and how to meet the terms of a grant funding offer if an application is successful.

The handbook is available to download at [www.staffsleader.org.uk](http://www.staffsleader.org.uk)

## **Contact details**

If you have a question please contact the Staffordshire LEADER Programme Team at [cmb.leader@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cmb.leader@staffordshire.gov.uk)

