

Staffordshire LEADER call for bids Round 4

Priority 3 - Support for rural tourism

From:

Staffordshire Local Action Group

Published:

26th June 2017

Closing date:

20th August 2017 at 12:00 midnight

Fund state:

[Open](#)

Type:

[Support for rural tourism](#)

Location:

[Staffordshire LEADER Programme Area](#)

Funding source:

[European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development](#)

Total Grant Amount for this Call:

[£60,000](#) .

Details

This call invites applications for investments to support high quality, sustainable rural tourism activity by improving facilities and developing high quality visitor products and services which will extend the tourism season in Staffordshire.

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 -

- Accommodation enhancements – encourage the creation of additional bedspaces to increase capacity of tourism businesses. This could also include businesses diversifying to provide accommodation or a community led approach to developing space within villages for accommodation.
- Attraction enhancements to increase spend and employment – support for local tourism facilities to improve or create new visitor experiences. This could include a collaborative ‘tourism hub’ approach to local events and festivals to increase irregular visitors. This could link local recreational facilities (cycling, walking, nature reserves, gardens) at key locations, with investment to support improved and new facilities.
- Marketing initiatives – investing in innovative technology to enhance collaboration between businesses that provides information to visitors - marketing cluster activities via a website. Promotion of local attractions, local food & drink etc. Marketing green infrastructures, linking visitors to

the natural environment. Local signage & interpretation linking local food & drink with local attractions/natural/built environment.

- Capital investment to help achieve a National or Local Quality Marque.
- Develop new tourism and recreational opportunities in woodlands settings, in an environmentally acceptable way.

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

Grants 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 20th 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) 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

Contact details

If you have a question please contact the Staffordshire LEADER Programme Team at cmb.leader@staffordshire.gov.uk