

WEST LIMERICK RESOURCES

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST:

THE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES GRANT

KEY DATES

Call Announcement:	2 nd January 2017
Deadline for Submission of Expression of Interest (EOI):	Rolling - Expressions of Interest will be assessed on an on-going basis.
Deadline for Submission of Full Application:	Rolling – Full applications will be invited from those Expressions of Interest deemed eligible.
Proposed Overall Allocation for this Grant:	€450,000

Terms of Reference

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of this document, it is provided for information purposes only and as a guide to expected developments. It is not intended, and should not be relied upon, as any form of warranty, representation, undertaking, contractual, or other commitment binding in law upon West Limerick Resources, Limerick Local Community Development Committee, the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs or any of their respective agents.

All responses to this Call for Submission of Proposals will be treated in confidence and no information contained therein will be communicated to any third party without the written permission of the applicant except insofar as is specifically required for the consideration and evaluation of the proposal or as may be required under law, including the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003.

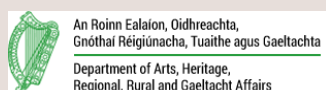


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Key Dates	1
1. Introduction	3
2. The Local Environmental Sustainability Grant	4
3. Link to Local Development Strategy (LDS)	5
4. What Projects Will We Fund?	5
5. What Funding Is Available?	9
6. How to Apply for Funding	10
7. How Will We Evaluate Your Application?	12
Appendix 1: Eligibility Criteria	14
Appendix 2: Standard Conditions Attaching to Grant Offer	15
Appendix 3: Contacts and Further Information	16
Disclaimer	17

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

The Rural Development (LEADER) Programme aims to improve the quality of life in rural areas and to encourage diversification of the rural economy. Limerick Local and Community Development Committee (LCDC) is the Local Action Group (LAG) for County Limerick and is responsible for the management of the LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS) in the county. West Limerick Resources is its implementation partner in the West Limerick area and will deliver the majority of project and animation related actions associated with the implementation of the LDS including managing calls for proposals. Limerick City and County Council are the financial partner and secretariat.

1.2 ABOUT WEST LIMERICK RESOURCES

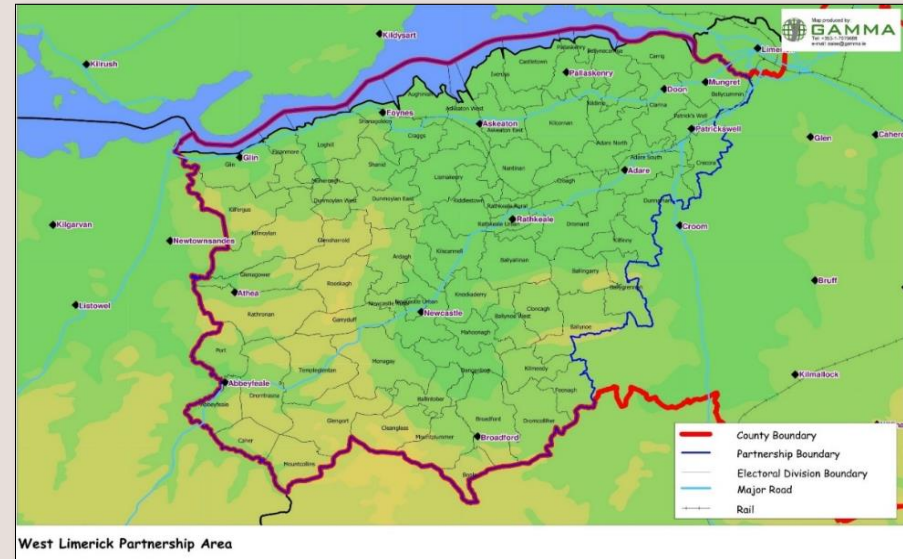
Based in Newcastle West, Co Limerick, West Limerick Resources is a local development company working to achieve positive change in the lives of people living in West Limerick. Committed to the community, West Limerick Resources administers various funding programmes and services which target specific groups within the region. This allows West Limerick Resources to work with the community and with individuals who seek support to develop initiatives that focus on the issues of greatest importance to the people of West Limerick.

West Limerick Resources has been operating the LEADER programme in West Limerick since 1996.

1.3 GEOGRAPHIC AREA

West Limerick Resources covers a catchment area of approximately 520 square miles in the West of County Limerick. The area bounds Limerick City to the East and in the West rises to the Mullaghareirk Mountains along the Cork and Kerry

borders. The Shannon Estuary forms the northern boundary, on which lies Foynes, an important port within the region. All projects supported by West Limerick Resources must be based within this area.



1.4 LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (LCDC)

LCDCs have been established in each local authority area. Their aim is to develop, coordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. There are nineteen members (eight from the statutory sector and eleven from the non-statutory sector) on the Limerick LCDC drawn from local authority elected members and officials; state agencies, local development agencies, community and voluntary organisations; and other representatives of civil society, including business interests, farming interests, etc.

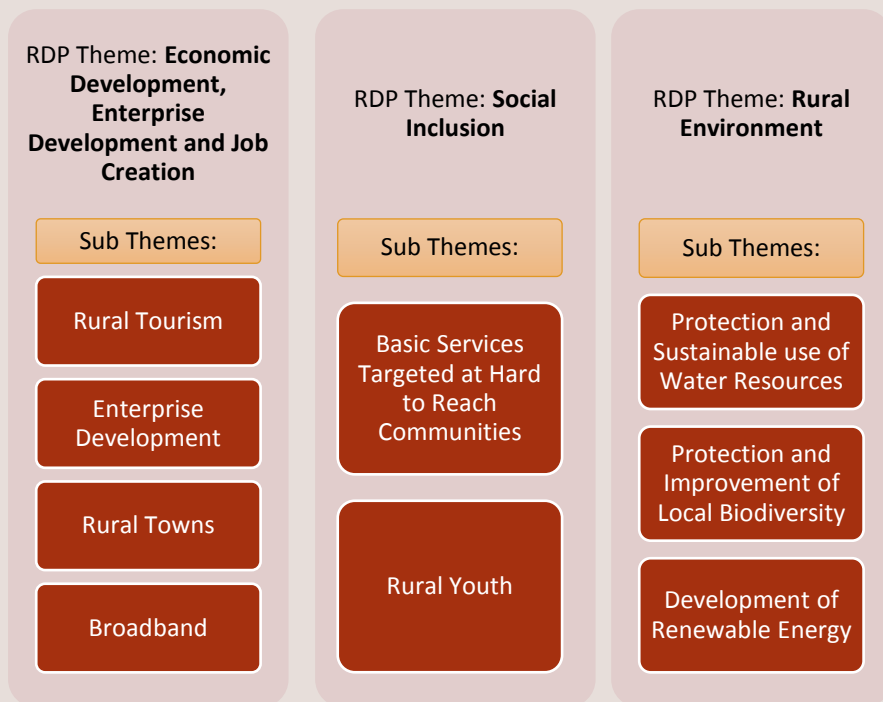
Limerick LCDC is the LAG for Limerick, West Limerick Resources is its implementation partner in the West Limerick area and Limerick City and County Council are the financial partner and secretariat.

1.5 WHAT IS LEADER?

LEADER is a community-led approach to local development funded through Ireland's Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. It supports locally identified initiatives that seek to address locally identified needs and challenges.

The LEADER programme 2014-2020 has identified a number of strategic objectives and priorities for European Union (EU) rural development and is included under priority 6 of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (RDP) which promotes social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

Under the current programme, local projects may be funded under three RDP themes and nine sub-themes as shown below.



2. THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY GRANT

The purpose of the Local Environmental Sustainability Grant is to maximise the potential of environmental actions to contribute to the sustainable development of rural communities.

This grant is divided under two sub-themes:

- Protection and Enhancement of Natural Amenities
- Renewable Energy Usage and Supply

Protection and Enhancement of Natural Amenities: Biodiversity encompasses natural wildlife, flora and fauna and is an important foundation to the healthy functioning of ecosystems. Biodiversity must be protected in order to maintain and enhance the stability of our life support systems such as wetlands, tree cover and peatlands. Greater protection of local water resources is equally important for sustaining healthy and vibrant rural communities. Agriculture, rural tourism, nature and human health depend on the integrity of our rivers, lakes, groundwater and coastal water. Actions that contribute to the protection and sustainable use of water resources and protection and improvement of local biodiversity protect communities from flooding and improve air and water quality while conserving Ireland's natural habitats.

Renewable Energy Usage and Supply: Clean sources of energy have a lower environmental impact on nature than conventional energy technologies. The development of renewable energy projects seeks to mitigate the impact of recent environmental trends, include climate change. Community-based initiatives will play a key role in realising national and EU environmental targets, particularly in the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions through energy infrastructure. Renewable energy technologies also have the potential to generate new employment opportunities in rural areas.

3. LINK TO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (LDS)

This Grant will prioritise the implementation of Local Objective Statements 7 (Protection and Sustainable Use of Water Resources), 8 (Protection and Improvement of Local Biodiversity) and 9 (Development of Renewable Energy) of the Limerick LDS.

Objective Statement 7 aims to build the capacity of local individual, communities and businesses to innovate and enable effective, efficient, financially viable and socially acceptable ways to manage water resources in the LDS areas between 2015 and 2020, including participating in public, private and community collaborative structures.

Objective Statement 8 aims to improve the knowledge base for, awareness of and community innovation and activity in conservation, restoration, protection and sustainable use and management of biodiversity and ecosystem services across the LDS area between 2015 and 2020.

Local Objective Statements 9 aims to build community and business capacity to invest in research, development, testing and deployment of renewable energy and conservation technologies to minimise the impact of climate change, reduce emission, reduce carbon footprint and reduce fuel poverty in the LDS area between 2015-2020, without negatively impacting on the environment.

Leader Theme(s): Rural Environment

Sub-theme(s): Protection and Sustainable Use of Water Resources; Protection and Improvement of Local Biodiversity; Development of Rural Energy

Strategic Action (s): Protection and Sustainable Use of Water; Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity; Renewable Energy Usage; Renewable Energy Supply

Where clear links exist with Renewable Energy Usage and Supply, the Grant may also support the implementation of Objective Statement 2 (Enterprise Development).

4. WHAT PROJECTS WILL WE FUND?

4.1 ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Protection and Sustainable Use of Water: Support will be provided to projects that promote an awareness of, and undertake actions to address, water conservation and water quality through technical assistance, capacity building initiatives and small capital investment. There is a widening recognition of the importance of community-led water conservation programmes in reducing demand on the nation's water resources and wastewater infrastructure. Animation support will be provided to encourage individuals, businesses and local organisations to work together in assessing water usage as well as to identify and implement innovative water conservation initiatives.

Protection and Improvement of Local Biodiversity: Support will be provided for infrastructural and educational projects that raise awareness of the value and importance of conserving local biodiversity through capacity building, training, technical assistance and appropriate capital investment.

Renewable Energy Usage & Supply: Support will be provided to communities and businesses investing in co-operative energy reduction measures, waste reduction measures, greater building efficiencies, tackling fuel poverty and increasing the uptake of local energy supply solutions. On the renewable energy supply side, the grant will focus on supporting communities and businesses to invest in the research and creation of more local sources of energy, which have lower environmental impact.

LEADER must not fund projects that are eligible under other EU funded schemes. Similarly, LEADER must not fund projects that are eligible under another National programme or scheme.

Eligible and ineligible activities under the Local Environmental Sustainability Grant include:

Eligible sectors/activities includes:	Ineligible sectors/activities includes:
General awareness raising on environmental issues and feasibility studies relating to green technologies	Agriculture
The development of local water conservation plans and feasibility studies	Fisheries
Capacity building on the technical aspects of water recycling schemes.	Horticulture including Bee Keeping
Initiatives that conserve water, for e.g. community programmes for rain water harvesting and the use of greywater for fertiliser and general washing.	Staff/Salary Costs.
Awareness raising and practical guidance on how to protect biodiversity domestically.	Improvements/refurbishment of private residential property
Feasibility studies and action plans in respect of larger scale projects that enhance and protect particular aspects of biodiversity.	Courses on instruction or training which form part of the normal education programmes or systems at secondary or higher levels.
Local initiatives that support biodiversity and environmental improvements, for e.g. the upgrading of parks and river walks, establishment of nature	Projects that already have other EU funding either directly or through a national programme

corridors, habitat creation and planting of native species.	
Research, development and implementation of low energy, carbon community initiatives.	General overhead costs
Waste reuse initiatives	Conventional motor vehicles, including cars, industrial/farm/construction vehicles, vans and buses.
Support for low energy/carbon clubs	Actions that are eligible under SEAI
Low energy/carbon benchmarking/tools/training for sectors e.g. agriculture/hospitality	Purchase of land
Establishment of renewable energy consumer co-operatives.	
Micro generation of energy using waste, wood, water and solar.	
Community based approaches to anaerobic digestion	
Local projects involving technologies that deliver sustainable energy alternatives e.g. biomass heating, solar power, community wind farms and community-based heating systems	
Capacity building initiatives focussing on the installation and use of renewable energy technologies	

Please note that a detailed list of ineligible sectors and activities is included in Appendix 1.

4.2 PRIORITY AREAS

Priority areas will include:

- Water conservation initiatives
- Catchment management
- Baseline biodiversity studies
- Biodiversity action plans
- Biodiversity education and awareness projects and initiatives
- The development of green corridors
- Environmental conservation projects and initiatives
- Installation of renewable energy technology in community facilities
- Environmental actions that increase the economic sustainability of rural enterprise

4.3 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Projects must comply with all national and EU legislation, as well as any restrictions or obligations imposed by Government Departments or the relevant Local Authority, which may apply to the proposed project. All projects must have the necessary permissions or licences in place before work commences. Projects must also comply with the relevant Environmental and Heritage Rules of the LEADER Programme.
- Applicants applying for funding will be expected to attend information events related to LEADER funding which will be run by West Limerick Resources in advance of the launch of funding applications.
- All enterprise related proposals proceeding to full application must be accompanied by a detailed 3 year business plan.
- Support, in the form of workshops and/or mentoring, will be made available by West Limerick Resources to develop business plans.
- Applicants must adhere to regulations and best practice with regard to disabled access/facilities and protection of the environment.

4.4 HERITAGE PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Specific Heritage Project Requirements apply in the case of projects affecting heritage. These projects are defined as those that will impact or have the potential to impact upon structure, places or sites of heritage interest including:

- Monuments and places protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004
- Protected Structures and proposed protected structures, within the meaning of the Planning and Development Acts
- Architectural conservation areas within the meaning of the Planning and Development Acts
- Certain types of activities within protected nature conservation sites
- Disturbance of protected species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

All projects where any significant impacts on built or national heritage should adhere to the Heritage Project requirements. Examples of projects which may be eligible under this grant but which are not specifically listed above include:

- Habitat restoration or biodiversity enhancement projects
- Improved access to and amenity use of inland or coastal waters and other biodiversity areas.

Full details of the Heritage Project Requirements are available where relevant and on request.

4.5 LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICES (LEOS)

Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) are the principal deliverers of State support to the micro enterprise sector in Ireland, i.e. less than 10 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees.

The table below summarises the support type provided by the Limerick LEO and LAG:

Support Type	Micro*	Micro other/ Social Enterprise	Small	Medium
Training	LEO	LAG	LEO*	LAG
Mentoring	LEO	LAG	LEO*	LAG
Capital Support	LEO	LAG	LAG	LAG
Market Research	LEO	LAG	LAG	LAG
Feasibility Consultancy Costs	LEO	LAG	LAG	LAG
Technical Development/ Prototype/Innovation	LEO	LAG	LAG	LAG
Salary/Own Labour Research	LEO	n/a	n/a	n/a
* micro enterprise development in the manufacturing and services sectors and those with the potential to trade internationally				

LEOs will focus on the provision of financial aid and soft supports (mentoring, training, management development and networking) for micro enterprise development in the *manufacturing and services sectors and those with the potential to trade internationally*. Pre-enterprise training in each of the above areas as well as the promotion of entrepreneurship will be the responsibility of LEOs.

The LAG will focus on the provision of support for micro enterprise activity for the tourism, social enterprise and craft sectors as well as support for small (10-50) and medium (50-250) enterprises across all eligible sectors.

All proposals relating to commercial ventures in the micro-enterprise sector, must, in the first instance, be referred to the Limerick LEO: (<https://www.localenterprise.ie/Limerick/>).

4.6 DEADWEIGHT

Grant-aid will not be awarded to projects that are capable of proceeding without LEADER funding (i.e. where 'deadweight' would apply). Applications must be accompanied by a declaration by the applicant that the project is not capable of proceeding without LEADER funding.

4.7 DISPLACEMENT

Funding will not be awarded if it will result in an unacceptable level of displacement e.g. closure or loss of business for another enterprise elsewhere, whether it is within West Limerick or a neighbouring area. In the assessment of project applications, displacement will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4.8 PROCEDURES FOR BUILDING AND LAND-USE CHANGE

Generally, planning permission is required for any development of land or property, unless the development is specifically exempted from this need. Projects must comply with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) vis-à-vis the mandatory thresholds above which Environmental Impact Assessment is required for various types and scale of development proposals.

In all cases, the applicant must contact the relevant Local Authority to ascertain whether planning permission is required or not. The applicant must also ascertain whether or not consents are required from the appropriate Government Departments or other Agencies; this will depend on the project type and location.

The applicant must provide documentary evidence that they have ascertained whether an Environmental Impact Assessment and / or consents are required or

and, in cases where they are required, copies of the consents must be included in the full application.

Detailed information on Planning Permission are available where relevant and on request.

4.9 EVIDENCE OF TITLE, LEASEHOLD OR PERMISSION TO USE

Evidence of title or leasehold must be provided in respect of capital projects involving land. Any lease must:

- Be signed by the lessor and the promoter
- Be appropriately witnessed
- Be accompanied by a map identifying the land
- Stimulate the terms of the lease (minimum of 10 years)

Where it is not possible to obtain a lease, legal documentation witnessed by a solicitor, confirming the applicant’s authority to carry out the relevant activities (for at least 10 years) will suffice.

5. WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

The proposed total allocation for this Call is €450,000.

5.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The Local Environmental Sustainability Grant is open to applications from the private and community sectors based in the West Limerick area subject to the exclusion of ineligible sectors and activities specified in the LEADER Operating Rules which are set out in Appendix 1.

5.2 HOW MUCH FUNDING CAN I RECEIVE?

The maximum overall grant amount that a project may receive is €200,000. The rate of grant aid is governed by the type of applicant and will be based on eligible

costs specific to the project. Please note the community rate only applies where there is no commercial basis for the project.

Minimum Funding: €5,000 per project.

Type of Project	Applicant	Maximum Rate of Aid	Maximum Funding
Investment & Other Supports (including animation undertaken as part of the implementation of a project)	Private	Up to a maximum of 50%	€200,000
	Community	Up to a maximum of 75%	
Analysis and Development	Private	Up to a maximum of 75%	€30,000
	Community	Up to a maximum of 90%	
Training	Private or Community	Up to a maximum of 100%	€200,000

Funding cannot be awarded to public bodies.

IMPORTANT: Project activity undertaken or commenced, or the purchase of goods or services engaged by the project applicant prior to the date of contract signing, shall not be eligible for LEADER funding.

IMPORTANT: Applicants awarded funding will be required to repay all or part of the funding amount if the duration of the investment does not persist for a minimum of five years i.e. if a funded activity or enterprise closes, is sold, leased or substantially changed within five years of the final grant payment.

Grants are paid on completion of the project or a phased basis on completion of an agreed phase. In order to claim grant payment the promoter must provide the relevant documentary evidence required including, but not limited to, original invoices, receipts and copies of bank statements showing payment leaving the account.

Bridging Finance: Evidence that the applicant has access to adequate resources (or bridging finance) in place to deliver the project will be required at Stage 2 Application.

5.3 PROJECT MATCHING FUNDING

LEADER funding is a contribution to the cost of delivering a project and should be matched by non-Programme funds to meet the full cost of the project. “Matching funding” is required for all projects and can be sourced privately or from other public funds (other than EU funds).

Level of aid:

“Private Sector” applicants will be required to contribute a minimum of 50% of matching funding and “Community” applicants will be required to contribute a minimum of 25% matching funding, of which 5% must be in the form of a cash contribution.

Sources of matching funds:

Private matching funds include:

- Cash contribution to the project by the applicant – at least 5% of the total project must be met by a private matching cash contribution, other than for training projects that are funded at 100%; and
- Contributions-in-kind – eligible for community-led projects only, with the exception of farm diversification (*see section 5.4*)

Public matching funds:

- Cash contributions from non-EU funded sources; and
- Contributions-in-kind - eligible for community-led projects only, with the exception of farm diversification (*see section 5.4*)

Matching funding from other public funded sources (e.g. SEAI, Heritage Council etc.) is permitted for **community-led projects only** providing it does not derive from an EU fund.

5.4 CONTRIBUTION-IN-KIND

Contributions-in-kind may be accepted as a source of matching funds on community-led and farm diversification (farmer’s labour only) projects. Contributions-in-kind cannot constitute the full amount of match funding. There must be a minimum cash contribution of 5% of the total eligible project costs. For more information on Contribution-in-kind, please refer to Appendix 2.

5.5 STATE-AID AND DE-MINIMIS REQUIREMENTS

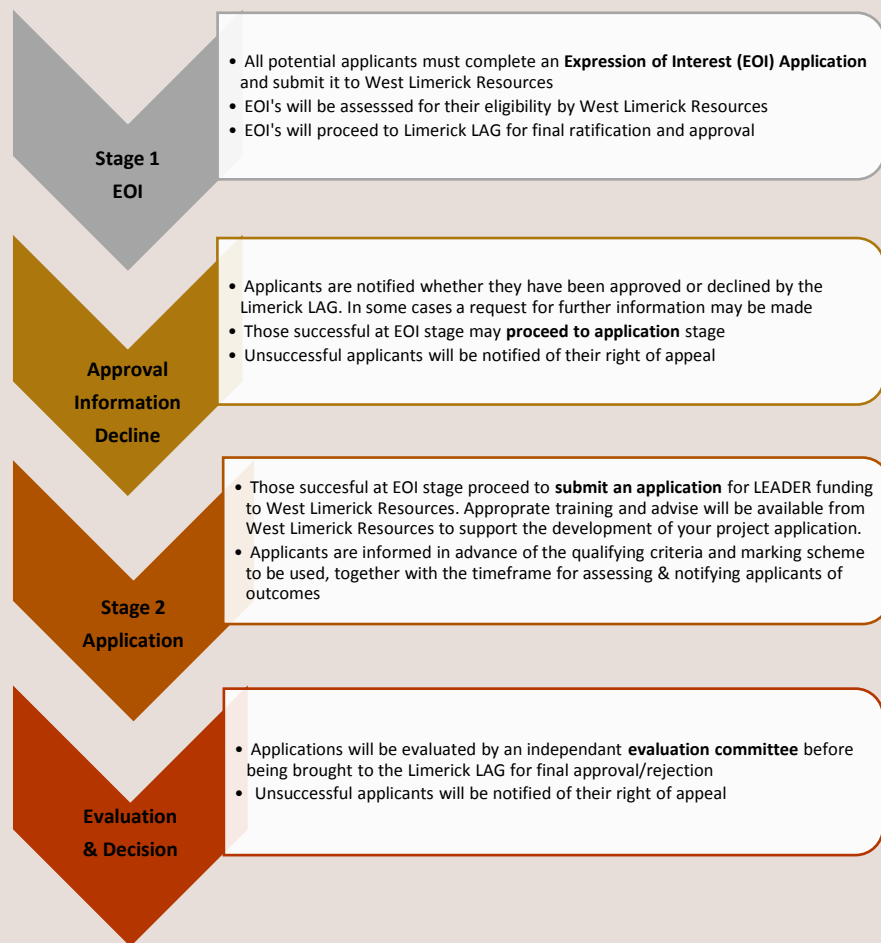
State aid rules apply to LEADER funding and determine what types of projects are eligible and what support can be provided. The state aid rule applies to project promoters involved in economic activity, irrespective of its legal form, how it is financed, or whether or not it has a for-profit orientation. Essentially, any activity that offers goods or services on a market is an economic activity.

To comply with State Aid (De Minimis) rules, applicants must declare at application stage whether or not they have received State aid, so as to determine that LEADER funding sought will not increase the total aid received by the applicant from all public sources during the previous three-year fiscal period above the €200,000 *de minimis* ceiling.

6. HOW TO APPLY FOR FUNDING

6.1 APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications under this grant will follow a two stage process as outlined in the following diagram.



IMPORTANT: Project activity undertaken or commenced, or the purchase of goods or services engaged by the project applicant prior to the date of contract signing, shall not be eligible for LEADER funding.

6.2 DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED

The following documentation must be provided at **Stage 1** of the Application Process:

- Completed Expression of Interest (EOI) Form
- Signed Data Protection Consent Form (contained within EOI form)
- Copy of Governing Document (e.g. Constitution)

The following documentation must be provided at **Stage 2** of the Application Process:

- Completed Application Form
- Proof of Matching Funding
- Proof of access to Bridging Finance
- Evidence of title/lease/agreement to lease (for capital projects)
- Signed Business Plan including 3 year cash flow projections or project plan (as appropriate)
- Copy of audited / management accounts or income and expenditure for past 3 years (as appropriate)
- Copy of all bank statements relating to the business (previous 3 months)
- Proof of Tax Clearance
- Original Quotations/Tenders
- Evidence of Procurement Process (where applicable)
- Confirmation of VAT exemption (if applicable)
- Evidence of planning /other permissions

- Building Plans (if applicable)
- Voluntary Labour Calculation (if applicable)

6.3 PROJECT PROCUREMENT

Quotations/Tenders must be obtained for each item of expenditure for which grant aid is sought. These must be signed and dated and show the VAT element separately.

Applicants must demonstrate compliance with EU Public Procurement law and national procurement guidelines where appropriate. Further information is available at www.etenders.gov.ie and www.procurement.ie

The relevant procurement procedures for contracting and non-contracting authorities are outlined in the following tables.

Procurement Procedure for Contracting Authorities*		
Services & Supplies	€0-25,000	Obtain a minimum of 3 written quotations. Emails are acceptable (covering email must be attached)
	Greater than €25,000	Advertise on e-tenders website for a minimum of 21 days
Works		
	€0-50,000	Obtain at least 5 written quotations or advertise on e-tenders website for a minimum of 21 days
	Greater than €50,000	Advertise on e-tenders website for a minimum of 21 days

*A state, regional or local authority or a body governed by public law

Procurement Procedure for Non-Contracting Authorities		
Services & Supplies	€0-25,000	Obtain a minimum of 3 written quotations. Emails are acceptable (covering email must be attached)
	Greater than €25,000	Advertise on e-tenders website for a minimum of 21 days
Works	€0-5,000	Obtain a minimum of 3 written quotations. Emails are acceptable (covering email must be attached)
	€5000-50,000	Obtain at least 5 written quotations or advertise on e-tenders website for a minimum of 21 days
	Greater than €50,000	Advertise on e-tenders website for a minimum of 21 days

Applicants are advised to verify that any external procurement expertise used has the necessary skills and experience.

Further details on project procurement will be made available to projects progressing to Stage 2 of the Application Process. The importance of following correct procurement procedures cannot be over emphasised for LEADER funding.

7. HOW WILL WE EVALUATE YOUR APPLICATION?

STAGE 1: Expressions of Interest will be reviewed by Limerick LCDC based on the following criteria:

Score Criteria	Weighting	Min Score
Meets the criteria set out in the local development strategy	Pass/Fail	Pass

Eligible under Programme Operating Rules	Pass/Fail	Pass
Eligible under Call Criteria	Pass/Fail	Pass

STAGE 2: An independent Evaluation Committee will assess and evaluate all applications that progress to Stage 2. They will complete a formal evaluation scoring record, based on objective criteria. The recommendation of the evaluation committee is submitted to the LAG for final decision.

A project must score a minimum of 70% of the total marks to be recommended for approval. Projects will be ranked in order of highest to lowest in terms of evaluation criteria. Where the total grant aid sought exceeds the amount available under the grant, funding will be allocated to those achieving the highest scores.

7.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA SCORING RECORD

The following figure outlines the evaluation criteria which will be used in assessing projects at Stage 2. Each evaluation criterion carries a weighting (in brackets).

Score Criteria	Weighting	Min Score
Meets the criteria set out in the local development strategy	Pass/Fail	Pass
Eligible under Programme Operating Rules	Pass/Fail	Pass
Eligible under Call Criteria	Pass/Fail	Pass
Deadweight – Is the project capable of proceeding without LEADER funding?	Pass/Fail	Pass
Displacement/Competition – Will the project be in direct competition with an existing local business and could it result in displacement of jobs or activities elsewhere?	Pass/Fail	Pass
Innovation of the proposal - Is the proposal innovative in its nature? Is there something new about the project?	15	70%

Experience of the applicant - Does the applicant have the training, skills, track record or experience to deliver the proposed project successfully?	20	70%
Financial viability of the project – – Has the applicant demonstrated the projects value for money and the projects financial viability from development though to operation?	15	70%
Sustainability of the project – Does the business/project plan demonstrate that the project is viable and sustainable in to the future?	15	70%
Requirement/Market - What evidence has been provided that the project is filling an identified need, market or demand?	15	70%
Project Impacts - Has the applicant demonstrated how the project will benefit the local community - socially, economically and environmentally?	10	70%
Specific Added Value to the Call – Does the project contribute to the sustainable development of the local area?	10	70%

This is a competitive process with a limited fund. Projects that score above the minimum score criteria of 70% will not be guaranteed funding. Subject to Departmental Approval, LEADER grant offers will be issued following the final decisions of approval by Limerick LCDC. There will be an appeals process for unsuccessful applicants.

APPENDIX 1: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

INELIGIBLE SECTORS AND ACTIVITIES FOR ALL LEADER FUNDING

The following table lists the ineligible sectors and activities for which LEADER funding shall not be awarded or paid. This list applies to all project applications under the LEADER programme and is not specific to this grant:

Ineligible Sectors and Activities
Agriculture
Fisheries
Conventional retail operations, excluding community based shops and farm shops selling locally produced produce
Courses of instruction or training which form the part of normal education programmes or systems at secondary or higher levels. Note: this includes the rural development diploma and degree
Loans
Working capital (including stock)
Insurance for project promoters
Horticulture (including bee-keeping)
Payments for gifts, donations or personal entertainments
Statutory fines and penalties, criminal fines and damages
Legal expenses in respect of litigation
Costs associated with meeting a legislative or statutory requirement
Planning application fee
Reclaimable VAT
Improvements/refurbishment of private residential property

Projects that already have other EU funding either directly or through a national programme

Conventional motor vehicles, including cars, industrial/farm/construction vehicles, vans and buses

General maintenance works of public bodies

Childcare

Health Care

Nursing homes

Housing

Race and sport horse industries

Greyhound Industry

Project activity undertaken or commenced, or the purchase of goods or services engaged by a project applicant or Local Action Group (as project promoter) prior to the date of the contract, shall not be eligible for LEADER funding.

COMMUNITY APPLICANTS

To be eligible as a “community” applicant, the applicant must be:

- A non-profit distributing group; and
- Institutionally separate from the State; and
- Coming together, or has come together, to pursue a common cause or interest for the good of their community; and
- Autonomous and engaged in voluntary activity; and
- Promoting the interests of the wider community rather than the commercial interests of its members; and

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 bring tourists into an area – business

people acting in a private capacity on a community body are not considered secondary economic beneficiaries.

APPENDIX 2: STANDARD CONDITIONS ATTACHING TO GRANT OFFER

GRANT OFFER & PROJECT COMMENCEMENT

A valid commitment of LEADER funding to a project applicant only exists when the LAG has made its decision and a letter of offer or contract, clearly stating the funded activity or items, has issued to the applicant and the offer or contract has been accepted in writing and returned by the applicant within the period prescribed by the LAG in the letter of offer, fifteen working days from the date of the offer is suggested.

The LAG will only offer funding in respect of specified costed investments for which the beneficiary has sought grant aid. The LAG may issue a funding offer subject to conditions.

Project activity undertaken or commenced, or the purchase of goods or services engaged by a project applicant prior to the date of the contract, shall not be eligible for LEADER funding.

If a beneficiary is found to have intentionally made a false declaration, the operation in question shall be excluded from support of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and any amounts already paid for that operation shall be recovered. Moreover, the beneficiary shall be excluded from receiving support under the same measure for the EAFRD year in question and for the following EAFRD year.

CONTRIBUTION IN KIND

Contributions-in-kind may be accepted as a source of matching funding on community-led and farm diversification (farmer's labour only) projects and can

include the donation of works, goods, services, land or real estate. There must be a minimum cash contribution of 5% of the total eligible project costs. The maximum rate allowed for Contribution-in-Kind in the form of voluntary labour is €14 per hour. The total to be claimed for Contribution in Kind must be included in the application and must be agreed before the project is approved.

Contributions-in-kind are eligible if:

- The LEADER funding does not exceed the final total eligible project cost, excluding contributions –in-kind and the 5% cash contribution; and
- 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
- The value and the provision of the contribution-in-kind has been independently assessed and verified. The LAG must obtain and retain documentary evidence to this effect.

EXPIRATION OF CONTRACTS

The LAG will impose a completion date for all funding commitments in the contract of funding offer. The progress of all projects will be monitored and reviewed by West Limerick Resources in their support role to funding applicants of the LEADER programme. Expenditure incurred outside the contract timeframe is ineligible.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Funding applicants will be required to provide information on their projects over the life time of the funding as and when required by the LAG or West Limerick Resources as it's implementing Partner. This may include qualitative elements, whereby progress, achievements and the associated learning will be described by the funding applicant.

All projects funded under LEADER are subject to administrative checks and audit. The LAG reserves the right to arrange for the inspection at all reasonable times of any land, premises, plant, equipment, receipts for purchased items and records of participants. Recipients of grant aid must permit the Minister, the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, the EU, their officers and agents to inspect all activities and records of the beneficiary, relating to the project.

APPEALS PROCESS

The right of appeal applies to all funding decisions by the LAG. An appeal template will be made available to project applicants if required. Full details of the appeals process are available on request.

PUBLICITY REQUIREMENTS

Recipients of grant aid must comply with the Programmes information and publicity requirements.

Public support exceeding €10,000: Where LEADER funding exceeds €10,000, promoters must erect at least one poster with information about the operation (minimum size A3), highlighting the LEADER funding received at a location readily visible to the public, such as the entrance area of a building.

Public support exceeding €50,000: Where LEADER funding exceeds €50,000, the promoter must place an explanatory plaque at the project site with information about the project and highlighting the financial support from LEADER.

Posters, plaques, publications (including reports) and webpages must carry a description of the funded project as well as the following logos

- The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas
- The European Emblem and LEADER logo

- The Departments Logo
- Limerick Local & Community Development Committee (LCDC)
- West Limerick Resources

Copies of the relevant logos are available on request.

Information must be bilingual and cover at least 23% of the poster, plaque or webpage. The cost associated with these may be included as an eligible project cost.

Details of beneficiaries will be published on the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine's Website. In addition the details of the project and project promoter may also be publicised on the Department, the LAG's and the Implementing Partners websites.

Recipients of grant aid may also be required to take part in publicity relating to the programme.

DATA PROTECTION

All information supplied will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003. Applicants will be required to complete a Form of Consent in relation to the processing of their Data. Under section 4 of the Data Protection Acts, on making a written request, an individual is entitled to a copy of their personal information on computer or in a relevant filing system.

APPENDIX 3: CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

To arrange a meeting to discuss this grant scheme in relation to your project or to request an Expression of Interest form, please contact Suzanne Rowley, West Limerick Resources' Economic Development Officer at srowley@wlr.ie

For further information regarding the LEADER Programme, please see <http://www.wlr.ie/rural-development-leader-programme-2014-2/>

Contact Information for West Limerick Resources:

West Limerick Resources

St Mary's Road

Newcastle West

Co Limerick

Tel: 069 62222

E-mail: info@wlr.ie

DISCLAIMER

Please note that this is a summary guide only and does not include full programme details and operating rules. Information is correct at time of printing but may be subject to change.