

RDP 2023-2027

Information
Session

October 3rd 2024



LEADER
funding





Introduction to LEADER

Operating in Ireland for over 30 years
(5 successive programming periods)

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural
Development (EAFRD) is the funding pillar
which supports the LEADER Programme.

Focuses on Community Led Local Development
(CLLD) involving local communities in
developing responses to economic,
environmental and social challenges

LEADER in Practice

- ▶ Delivered through Local Action Groups (LAGs)
- ▶ Limerick LCDC prepared a Local Development Strategy (LDS) and was selected to deliver LEADER across all of County Limerick for LEADER 2023-2027. They are final decision makers
- ▶ West Limerick Resources is the implementing partner for the whole of County Limerick - day to day contact
- ▶ Limerick County Council are the Financial Partner - will be making the grant payments



LEADER 2023-2027 Programme Structure

Economic Development & Job Creation

The Green Economy

Agricultural
Diversification

Rural Tourism &
Recreation

Enterprise Development

Rural Food Production

Social, Community &
Cooperative Enterprises

Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion

Rural Infrastructure

Accessible Services

Optimising Digital
Connectivity

Rural Youth

Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment & Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption

Sustainable Development
of the Rural Environment

Climate Change Capacity
Building

Climate Change
Mitigation and
Adaptation

Focus within LEADER 2023-2027

Support for areas which have not benefitted from LEADER financial support in the past

Rural youth - look at areas outside of sports

Enterprise - increased focus on female entrepreneurs

Focus on marginalised and socially excluded groups benefitting from the programme

Emphasis on Smart Communities Planning and Initiatives

Sustainable development, climate change mitigation and adaptation to be considered in all LEADER interventions

LEADER Budgets

- ▶ Budget Significantly reduced over the last three programmes
- ▶ LEADER 2023-2027: €5.2m (Project Budget Limerick)
- ▶ No separate cooperation budget or food budget



LEADER 2023-2027 Project Budget for County Limerick

Theme 1	Economic Development and Job Creation	€	Total
1a	The Green Economy	258,750	
1b	Agricultural Diversification	258,750	
1c	Rural Tourism & Recreation	362,250	
1d	Enterprise Development	310,500	
1e	Rural Food Production	310,500	
1f	Social Community & Co-operative Enterprises	310,500	
			1,811,250
Theme 2	Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion		
2a	Rural Infrastructure	517,500	
2b	Accessible Services	517,500	
2c	Optimising Digital Connectivity	258,750	
2d	Rural Youth	517,500	
			1,811,250
Theme 3	Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation		
3a	Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment	776,250	
3b	Climate Change Capacity Building	258,750	
3c	Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	517,500	
			1,552,500
	Programme Total		5,175,000

The Green Economy

Maximize the opportunities presented by the circular and bio economy



- ▶ **Circular Economy:** A model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended.
- ▶ **Bioeconomy:** Using renewable biological resources from land and sea, like crops, forests, fish, animals and micro-organisms to produce food, materials and energy.



Agricultural Diversification

- ▶ Focus on diversification opportunities for farm families.
- ▶ Entrepreneurial use of farm resources for non-agricultural purposes
- ▶ Opportunities for diversification are in areas including: Tourism, Food, Renewable Energy, Green Economy, Farm Shops, Direct to Market and Social Farming.



Tourism and Recreation

Focus on Sustainable Tourism

- ▶ Provision of amenity and leisure facilities, which can support adventure/eco-based tourism.
- ▶ Historic and heritage-based tourism
- ▶ Festivals and other events (must run over a minimum of 2 days. Funding cap of €50,000 and restriction on items that will be funded)
- ▶ Tourism Accommodation (€50,000 per unit up to a maximum of €200k per applicant)
- ▶ Feasibility studies to explore the tourism potential of an area
- ▶ Marketing initiatives
- ▶ Creation of tourism hubs to facilitate a multi-sectoral approach
- ▶ LEADER supported tourism projects must comply with relevant Fáilte Ireland and/or other sectoral standards

Enterprise Development

- ▶ LEADER can support micro, small and medium enterprises (up to 250 employees, annual turnover >€50m; balance sheet >€43m)
- ▶ Types of Enterprises supported include:
 - ▶ Innovative Rural Enterprise
 - ▶ Manufacturing/Engineering
 - ▶ Creative Industries
 - ▶ Renewable Energy
 - ▶ Sector-specific training programmes
- ▶ Increased focus to supporting female entrepreneurs in rural communities

Rural Food Production

- ▶ Investment in artisan and micro, small and medium food producers
 - ▶ Development and expansion of rural food production
 - ▶ Skills development
 - ▶ Marketing.



Social, Community & Cooperative Enterprises

- ▶ Social Enterprises are enterprises whose objective is to achieve a social, societal or environmental impact rather than maximizing profits for their owners
- ▶ New opportunities are emerging for social enterprises, for instance,
 - ▶ In the green economy in areas including re-use, upcycling and the circular economy,
 - ▶ In responding to needs for services and shops that have been lost from rural communities with economic and social change.



Rural Infrastructure



- ▶ Aim to provide an opportunity for more people to live and work in their rural communities
 - ▶ community buildings,
 - ▶ community recreational and social amenities - enhancement of parks, playgrounds, outdoor space
 - ▶ Strategic upgrades and developments that enhance social inclusion and engagement with social diversity
 - ▶ Improving energy efficiency
 - ▶ Tidy Towns type enhancement works
- ▶ Community Infrastructure Projects must have at least one environmentally friendly component



Accessible Services

- ▶ Improving access to basic services for people living in rural and remote areas and groups who are at risk of social exclusion, including hard to reach and new communities.
- ▶ Introduction of a new service or the re-introduction of a previously withdrawn service under the following categories:
 - ▶ community
 - ▶ training
 - ▶ social/cultural
 - ▶ recreation
- ▶ SMART Communities Initiatives
- ▶ Community socio-economic plans (Capped at €7,500)

Optimising Digital Connectivity

- ▶ IT infrastructure and connectivity
- ▶ Support the development of digital skills and digital literacy
- ▶ Skills development for installing broadband
- ▶ Feasibility studies in relation to community broadband.
- ▶ Local actions that complement national initiatives aimed at developing a comprehensive rural broadband infrastructure.
- ▶ This sub-theme does not cover most broadband infrastructure, as this is covered under the National Broadband Plan.

Note: Cap of 75% of costs to a max of €10,000 for certain infrastructure such as small-scale equipment; Mobile phone repeaters and cabling infrastructure



Rural Youth (15-40)

- ▶ Sports/recreation activities but increased emphasis on the development of activities outside of sport.
- ▶ Provision of youth clubs/cafés
- ▶ Improved access to ICT
- ▶ Arts-based projects
- ▶ Youth development programmes



Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment

- ▶ Protection and sustainable use of water resources
 - ▶ Raising general awareness on water conservation issues
 - ▶ Development of local water conservation plans and feasibility studies
 - ▶ Capacity building on the technical aspects of water recycling schemes
 - ▶ Initiatives that conserve water
 - ▶ Catchment Management Initiatives
- ▶ Protection and improvement of local biodiversity
 - ▶ Awareness raising and practical guidance on how to protect biodiversity domestically
 - ▶ Feasibility studies and action plans in respect of larger scale projects that enhance and protect particular aspects of biodiversity
 - ▶ Local initiatives that support biodiversity and environmental improvements, for example, the upgrading of parks and river walks, establishment of nature corridors, habitat creation and planting of native species.



Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment (continued)

- ▶ Development of renewable energy
 - ▶ General awareness raising on environmental issues and feasibility studies relating to green technologies
 - ▶ Capacity building actions focusing on the installation and use of renewable energy technologies
 - ▶ Local projects involving technologies that deliver sustainable energy alternatives, for example, biomass heating, solar power, community wind farms and community-based heating systems

Climate Change Capacity Building

- ▶ Actions to foster the development of a greater range of local responses to climate change.
- ▶ Skills Development and Awareness Raising



Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Providing support that encourages and complements climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives.

- ▶ Uptake of renewable energy
- ▶ Reduction in energy consumption
- ▶ Reduction in the generation of waste across all sectors and from further back the production cycle
- ▶ Advancing the circular economy
- ▶ Finding nature-based solutions to climate change.



Eligible Costs

Capital Projects:

- Construction or improvement of immovable property;
- Purchase of new or second- hand machinery and equipment,
- Architect, engineer and consultation fees, fees relating to advice on environmental and economic sustainability,
- Intangible investments such as the acquisition or development of computer software and acquisitions of patents, licences, copyrights, trademarks.

Analysis and Development

- ▶ Feasibility studies;
- ▶ Development plans;
- ▶ Development of prototype products and services;
- ▶ Assessments, surveys and other reports required for the purposes of securing planning permission, and/or fulfilling other statutory obligations for projects under the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Theme, and heritage projects.

Training (subject to eligibility criteria)

Ineligible Activities (including but not limited to):

- Primary Agriculture, Horticulture and Fisheries
- Conventional retail operations
- Mainstream Education
- Loans, Working Capital and Operational Costs including insurance
- Costs associated with meeting a legislative or statutory requirement
- Planning application fee and other measures required for compliance
- Reclaimable VAT
- Improvements/refurbishment of private residential property including B&Bs that are part of a private residence
- Conventional Motor Vehicles
- Childcare
- Health Care and Healthcare Equipment (unless in exceptional cases where approved by the Department)
- Nursing Homes and Housing
- Race and sport horse industries with the exception of ancillary activities for the provision of services to those industries
- Greyhound Industry and activities that involve greyhounds
- Core activities of mainstream sporting (GAA, FAI, IRFU)
- Land Purchase
- Books

Rates of Aid

Summary of Current Funding Ceilings and Support Rates			
Type of Project	Applicant	Maximum Rate of Aid	Maximum Funding
Community Project not involving Economic Activity	Community	Up to a Maximum of 75%	€200,000
Community Project involving Economic Activity	Community	Up to a Maximum of 75%	€200,000
Investment & Other Supports	Private	Up to a Maximum of 75%	€200,000
	Community	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 Grant €5000

Matching Funding



At least 5% of the total project cost must be met by a private matching cash contribution (wherever sourced by the applicant)



Public matching funds are only allowable for applications submitted by community bodies. They relate to a cash contribution and does not relate to scenarios where another fund such as Sports Capital Grant does not provide a cash contribution



Funding from other EU sources cannot be used to match-fund LEADER projects.

Overview of Application Stages



Stage 1: Expression of Interest *(Only those EOI's deemed eligible at Stage 1 will be able to proceed to Stage 2 Full Application)*



Stage 2: Full Application



Stage 3: Pre-Assessment (internal)



Stage 4: Evaluation



Stage 5: LAG Approval



Stage 6: Letter of Offer

How the Programme Operates

Rolling Call	Targeted Call
<p>Where the LAG may accept applications on a “first come, first served” basis</p>	<p>Where the LAG will issue targeted periodic Calls for applications to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding is targeted where it most delivers value,• Is awarded based on comparative assessment• Secures equal opportunities for potential applicants.

Programme will open with a targeted call only

Targeted Call 2024

Targeted Call	Key Dates
EOI Opening	4 th October 2024
EOI Closing	16 th December 2024
Application Closing date	30 th April 2025

Evaluation and approval of projects to follow closing date of call.

These to be scheduled following close of call, as will be determined by the volume of applications submitted which will require time to process.

Funding Available Under Targeted Call 2024

Targeted Call	Sub-theme	Budget Breakdown
2024	The Green Economy	181,125
	Agricultural Diversification	181,125
	Rural Tourism & Recreation	253,575
	Enterprise Development	217,350
	Rural Food Production	217,350
	Social Community and Cooperative Enterprise	217,350
	Rural Infrastructure	362,250
	Accessible Services	362,250
	Optimising Digital Connectivity	181,125
	Rural Youth	362,250
Total Call Budget: €3,622,500	Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment	543,375
	Climate Change Capacity Building	181,125
	Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	362,250

Call Document:

LEADER 2023 TO 2027 LIMERICK TARGETED CALL 2024

KEY DATES

Call Opening:	Friday 4th October 2024
Deadline for Submission of Expression of Interest (EOI):	Monday 30 th December 2024
Deadline for Submission of Full Application:	Wednesday 30 th April 2025

Evaluation and approval of projects to follow closing date of call. These to be scheduled following close of call, as will be determined by the volume of applications submitted.

OVERVIEW

LEADER operates a two-step application process.

- Stage 1 - Expression of Interest – this is used to determine project eligibility in principle. Those successful at EOI stage will be eligible to submit a full application.
- Stage 2 - Application Submission - the application will be subject to an independent evaluation prior to submission to Local Action Group (LAG) for final decision. Full application guidelines are contained in West Limerick Resources Application Handbook available on request.

The purpose of targeted calls for EOI's, and the subsequent application, is to allow Local Action Groups (LAGs) to target funding at areas where it can deliver the most value, and where a comparative assessment is considered appropriate.

CALL THEMES AND BUDGETS

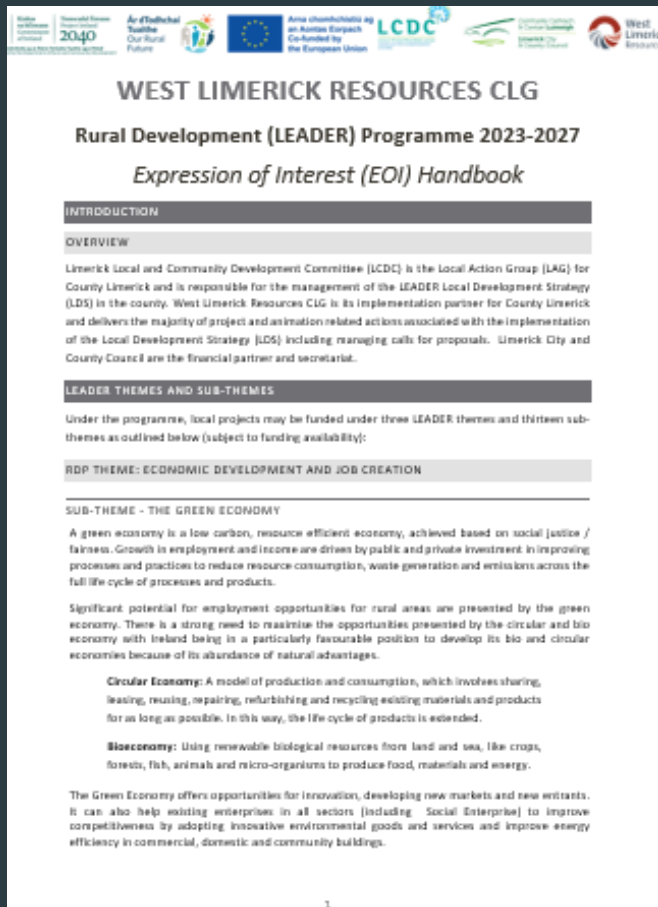
All programme sub-themes are included under this targeted call as outlined below.

Targeted Call	Sub-theme	Budget Breakdown
2024 Total Call Budget: €3,622,250	The Green Economy	€ 181,125
	Agricultural Diversification	€ 181,125
	Rural Tourism & Recreation	€ 253,275
	Enterprise Development	€ 217,250
	Rural Food Production	€ 217,250
	social Community and Cooperative Enterprise	€ 217,250
	Rural Infrastructure	€ 362,250
	Accessible Services	€ 362,250
	Optimising Digital Connectivity	€ 181,125
	Rural Youth	€ 362,250
	Sustainable Development of the Rural Environment	€ 543,375
	Climate Change Capacity Building	€ 181,125
	Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	€362,250

Includes:

- Key Dates
- Proposed Allocation
- Details of what sub-themes are covered under call
- Additional Requirements
- Overview of Evaluation Criteria
- Key Contact Information
- Available to download from www.wlr.ie

Expression of Interest Handbook



Includes:

- Overview of Themes and Sub-themes
- Eligible/Ineligible Activities
- Rates of Aid and Funding Ceilings
- Details on Key Requirements
- Key Contact Information
- Document available to download from www.wlr.ie

Expression of Interest Form:

Sections:

- ▶ Applicant Information
- ▶ Project Information including estimate of costs
- ▶ Data Protection Act & Consent Form
- ▶ Declaration and Signature
- ▶ Office Use Only

IRELAND'S CAP Strategic Plan - 2023 - 2027

LEADER Expression of Interest (EOI) Form

West Limerick Resources, St Mary's Rd., Newcastle West, Co Limerick.
Web: www.wlr.ie; Email: rdp@wlr.ie

LEADER is a www.wlr.ie application process.

Step 1: Expression of Interest: The EOI is the first step of a two-step LEADER application process. Please note this is an Expression of Interest form (EOI) and NOT an [Application](http://www.wlr.ie) form. Fully Completed EOIs will be assessed for eligibility under the Rural Development (LEADER) Programme 2023-2027 and approved by the Limerick LCDC. Following eligibility assessment of your EOI, you will be informed of the outcome. If your project is eligible in [submitable](http://www.wlr.ie) you will be invited to make a formal application for funding under Step 2.

Step 2: Full Application You will be invited to engage and participate in the West Limerick Resources LEADER application support activities before completing and returning your Application to West Limerick Resources in line with the requirements and timeframes as set out in each particular LEADER Funding Call and the LEADER Operation Rules.

This Expression of Interest (EOI) Form may be completed by a potential Project Promoter as a precursor to an application form proper for funding under the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027 LEADER Programme. Failure to complete this form completely will result in a delay in dealing with your Expression of Interest and any further processing of any subsequent application arising.

Completion Guidance notes:

- Please review the relevant Call document which details the types of projects eligible before completing the Expression of Interest Form. If you have any queries, please contact the relevant project officer prior to submitting your EOI.
- A separate Expression of Interest Form must be completed for each project for which your group/organisation intends to apply.
- The Expression of Interest Form should be completed by a duly authorized person who is agreed as the primary point of contact for the duration of the application process.
- Please complete this form in full. All fields are mandatory.
- This form can be downloaded or printed from the following website: www.WLR.ie and forwarded to West Limerick Resources CLG with any additional information you feel may be of relevance to your Expression of Interest.
- It can also be completed electronically and emailed to West Limerick Resources CLG
- A hardcopy of this form can be obtained from West Limerick Resources CLG
- A Rural Development Officer from West Limerick Resources CLG will contact you when your Expression of Interest Form has been reviewed.

Supporting Documentation Required	
Applicant Type	Documents Required (Signed Copy)

Completing the Expression of Interest:

Should be completed by a duly authorised person who is agreed as the primary point of contact for the duration of the application process.

Ensure correct legal name of entity is used

Must be completed in full, failure to do so will result in a delay in processing your EOI.

Completed forms should be sent to rdp@wlr.ie or directly to development officer you have been in contact with

Confirmation on eligibility will be provided quickly.

Key Documentation Required at Full Application Stage

- Completed Application Form
- Governing Documents
- Three-year Business Plan or Project Plan (if applicable)
- Proof of Matching Funding
- Evidence of title/lease/agreement to lease (for capital projects)
- Copy of accounts (existing business) / or Income and Expenditure (Community Groups) for past 3 years
- Copy of all bank statements relating to the business (previous 3 months)
- Proof of Tax Clearance
- Evidence of Procurement Process including Original and signed Quotations/Tenders
- Confirmation of VAT exemption (if applicable)
- Evidence of planning /other permissions (if applicable)



Planning and Procurement

Where relevant:

Full Planning Permission

And

Procurement

Must be in place at time of application
(April 30th 2025)

No provisional approvals

A blue ballpoint pen with a silver tip is positioned diagonally across the left side of the slide. The background behind the pen is a document with a blue bar chart. The right side of the slide is white with green geometric shapes at the top and bottom.

Evaluation Criteria

- ▶ Projects are scored against objective criteria which will be provided to those proceeding to full application
- ▶ Must score a minimum of 65% to be recommended for approval
- ▶ Projects submitted under this targeted call will be evaluated against other projects seeking funding under the same sub-theme and ranked in order of highest to lowest as per the scoring record and funding distributed according to this ranking.

Golden Rules

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.

Grant-aid will not be awarded to projects that

- Are capable of proceeding without LEADER funding
- 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 Limerick or a neighbouring area.

Grants are paid on completion of the project or a phased basis on completion of an agreed phase

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

Next Steps

- ▶ LEADER applications take time
- ▶ Development Officers are available to discuss project ideas and advise throughout the process
- ▶ Book at slot at an upcoming LEADER Clinic

Date	Location
Tuesday 8 th 1.30 - 4 pm	Limerick City and County Council, County Hall, Dooradoyle
Thursday 10 th 2 - 4.30pm	Cappamore Community Centre
Thursday 10 th 7 - 9pm	Croom Family Resource Centre
Tuesday 15 th 1.30 - 4pm	Kilmallock Municipal Building
Thursday 17 th 2 - 4pm	Askeaton Community Centre
Thursday 17 th 7 - 9pm	West Limerick Resources Main Office, Newcastle West
Tuesday 22 nd 1 - 3pm	St. Ita's Hall, Abbeyfeale
Tuesday 22 nd 7 - 9pm	Kilmeedy Roots Cafe
Thursday 24 th 1.30 - 4pm	Urban Coop, Ballysimon
Thursday 24 th 7 - 9pm	Hospital Family Resource Centre

Contact Details

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Thank you
for listening.

Any Questions?