



Monaghan Local Action Group

Monaghan LEADER
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LEADER Application Guidance Notes

In support of APPLICATION for grant-aid under the
Rural Development Programme 2014–2020 (LEADER)

Monaghan Local Action Group (LAG) is delivering the LEADER RDP 2014-2020 in County Monaghan. The County Monaghan Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) is operating as the LAG for the County. Monaghan Integrated Development CLG the Local Development Company for County Monaghan is the implementation partner and Monaghan County Council is the lead financial partner.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas

Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development

About this Guidance Note

This guidance note is intended to assist you, the applicant, complete the LEADER grant application form.

The application form seeks to capture information about your proposal in terms of:

- its rationale,
- proposed activities, and
- costs.

We will use your completed application form to help us to decide if we can award LEADER programme funding to your project or not. We also use it to evaluate and monitor the actual delivery of the project if your project is granted funding. It is very important that you complete your application form correctly and that we receive it on time.

Facts are important

The content of your application should be factual and informative. Please try and avoid giving your opinion and making unsupported generalisations. The length of your application will depend on the scale and complexity of your project.

What you need to do

Before completing the full application form, you should read this guidance carefully. You should also familiarise yourself with:

- the General Guidance for Applicants (available on our website at www.midl.ie)
- the call for applications from Monaghan Local Action Group (LAG) - applicable to time limited calls only (available on www.midl.ie)
- information provided at the mandatory Pre-Application Workshop
- the Monaghan Local Development Strategy (LDS) priorities/strategic actions for LEADER funding (available on www.midl.ie)

Please note that activities that do not contribute to the Monaghan LDS priorities/strategic actions will not be considered for programme grant support.

Answer all questions

Please answer all questions even if a question does not apply to you. If a question does not apply, write 'Not Applicable' as your answer with a brief explanation as to why this is the case. Do not leave any questions unanswered as this will delay your application and make our decision more difficult.

Cross check all information

Cross check all your information before you send it to us. We ask that you pay particular attention to cross checking the costings on which your funding request is based.

Unsure?

If you have any questions, please discuss with your LEADER Development Officer whose name is provided in your letter of invitation to full application.

LEADER Project Appraisal Process

Projects will be assessed competitively due to the limited amount of funds available. In evaluating projects for aid, particular emphasis will be placed on the following:

- Contribution to the objectives of the Monaghan Local Development Strategy (LDS)
- Applicants background and expertise
- Innovativeness of the project
- Viability of the project
- Markets/Users for the product/service/need for the service/facility
- Non – displacement of existing enterprises
- Value for money
- Potential for job creation
- Benefits to the local area
- Deadweight
- Environmental Sustainability
- Climate Change

Where you have submitted a fully complete application inclusive of all necessary documentation, you can expect a decision within 12 weeks of lodging the application. Delays will occur if applications have not been fully completed or have not attached all the requested supporting documentation.

When will I know if my application has been successful?

Final decisions on all projects will be made by Monaghan Local Action Group (LAG): Monaghan Local Community Development Committee. Decisions are communicated to applicants by letter, usually 10 days following a meeting of Monaghan LAG. If your application is successful, your letter is accompanied by the contract/schedule of conditions. The letter will set out the time limit permitted for completion of your project. Only in exceptional circumstances will extensions in time limits be allowed. A valid commitment of grant aid exists only when Monaghan LAG's decision has been communicated to you in writing and you have accepted the offer by signing and returning the contract.

Monaghan Integrated Development CLG will issue a letter to you acknowledging receipt of the signed contract. Only project activity from this date forward will be eligible for grant aid. No works on any project should commence before the signed contract has been returned and acknowledged by Monaghan Integrated Development.

The Right of Appeal exists in respect of all grant decisions by Monaghan Local Action Group (LAG). If your application is unsuccessful and you wish to appeal, Monaghan LAG will inform you of the appeals procedure.

Monaghan LEADER Grant Rates

The minimum grant rate payable is €2,500 and therefore the lowest amount that can be sought under Monaghan LEADER. The rates outlined below are the maximum rates of aid. Monaghan LAG may offer lower percentage rates of aid where it considers it appropriate. Therefore, when making your application, you should consider that your project may be awarded funding, but not at the level requested. Particular attention should be paid to the upper budget limits available in **'time-limited calls'** and overall budgets allocated per Strategic Action in the Monaghan Local Development Strategy (available from www.midl.ie).

You should consider contingency plans if the funding offer is lower than expected or there is a delay in funding. There are limited funds and we would like to make maximum use of these LEADER funds.

The percentage rates of grant aid that can be paid by the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 LEADER

Summary of Funding Ceilings and Support Rates			
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

In exceptional circumstances and with prior Departmental Approval, grant aid up to €500,000 at a rate of 75% for non-commercial community projects may be awarded.

LEADER Grant Rates of Aid – Community Applicants

Higher maximum rates of aid may be applied for community-based projects where there is **NO** commercial basis for the project as follows below.

The higher rate of aid can only be considered, when the community applicant is –

- 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. (For example, local business people coming together in a private capacity as a ‘community body’ to apply for funding to bring tourists into an area are not considered secondary economic beneficiaries.)

Note for Community Applicants. Any equipment, activities or infrastructure funded must be available and accessible to all age and social groups in the community concerned. All facilities must be open to the public free of charge. If you are a community applicant, you may have to prepare a social inclusion policy which will clearly set out inclusive actions to make the service/facility available to all sectors of the community. A nominal charge can be applied to cover costs associated with the provision of associated services, e.g. for lighting and heating, but no net revenue shall be generated by the activity.

Ineligible items under LEADER RDP 2014-2020

Aid shall not be awarded or paid in respect of the following areas:

- 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 applicants/applicants;
- 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 fees;
- 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.

LEADER RDP 2014-2020 is governed by the national LEADER operating rules, which are available here: <http://www.ahrrga.gov.ie/rural/rural-development/leader/>

Eligible items under LEADER RDP 2014-2020

The following Capital Investment Operations are eligible for funding:

- a) construction, acquisition or improvement of immovable property;
- b) purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset;
- c) general costs linked to expenditure referred to in points (a) and (b), such as architect, engineer and consultation fees, fees relating to advice on environmental and economic sustainability, including feasibility studies. Feasibility studies shall remain eligible expenditure even where, based on their results, no expenditure under points (a) and (b) is made;
- d) professional costs, such as the fees of architects, archaeologists, engineers and consultants, shall be eligible for funding up to a ceiling of 12% of the capital costs of such projects. This ceiling is the cumulative limit for all professional fees associated with a project and the percentage should vary depending on the level of work completed. You are encouraged, where feasible, to tender separately for professional costs rather than including as part of the overall works contract. Professional fees associated with a capital project e.g. an architect preparing plans for planning permission, are not eligible as a standalone project. The 12% limit on professional costs does not apply to heritage and environment projects which require significant support to adhere to conservation/protection of a protected structure or a sensitive habitat. Further clarification should be sought from your assigned LEADER Development Officer.
- e) professional costs are not permitted as a stand-alone project unless they come under the definition of analysis and development;
- f) intangible investments such as the acquisition or development of computer software and acquisitions of patents, licenses, copyrights, trademarks.

How to fill in the LEADER application form

Step-by-Step guide to complete the LEADER application form.

Section A: Promoter and Project Details

1. Applicant (Promoter) Information (page 2)

Project title/name. This should be the name by which your project will be commonly known. Titles should be concise and precise, descriptive of the project, unique and suitable to be continued as the permanent project name.

Provide details of the applicant and contact details. Complete all sections (where applicable).

Please note: It is the applicant who must sign this form and they must have the authority of your organisation to do so. Should you be successful in your application, then the applicant will be the person required to sign all claim forms.

All applicant organisations need to be tax compliant and this is confirmed by providing your Tax Reference number and eTax clearance access number. The Revenue Commissioners have introduced electronic Tax Clearance (eTC). This is the new online application and verification process for tax clearance. Applicants must register for the revenue online system (ROS) to utilise the online verification system. Once set up on ROS, the applicant applies for an eTC via the online

system and gets a tax clearance access number (TCAN). You must print the confirmation page which has the access number and submit with your Application for LEADER funding. For more information on the eTC process, please visit www.revenue.ie/en/online/etax-clearance-faqs.html.

Tax Clearance must be provided for all project elements that exceed €10,000 (including VAT). The threshold is €650 for construction operations. All applicants must obtain evidence of valid and current Tax Clearance from all relevant suppliers and contractors. The same eTax procedure should be followed by you, the applicant, and any potential suppliers/contractors.

The request for tender (RFT) should include a request for eTax clearance for each project element/cost in accordance with the thresholds.

Non-resident suppliers/contractors must also provide an Irish Tax Clearance Certificate. Further guidance on Tax Clearance for non-residents is available on the Revenue website at <http://www.revenue.ie/en/business/running/tax-clearance.html>.

2. Classification of Promoter (page 2)

Tick the relevant heading which is the legal status of your organisation and provide supporting governing documents with this application form.

Confirm (if appropriate) that your group is a non-profit distributing group, separate from the State and that the group pursues the common interest of the community. If applicable, a copy of any social inclusion policy should be provided.

If **applying as a farmer** and in receipt or have made an application under the Single Payment Scheme (SPS), provide the relevant information and supporting documentation with your application. If a relative or partner of the farmer is the applicant, the farm owner must sign confirming that the applicant is actively involved with the farm and have the permission to develop/operate the project. See for more information on Single Payment Scheme:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmerschemespayments/>

3. VAT Registration (page 3)

Provide your VAT registration number, and if you are NOT VAT registered provide a recent letter from Revenue confirming this status. Please note: grant support is not provided on VAT, and the default position is that all applicants are considered exclusive of VAT unless a letter from Revenue is provided.

4(a). Promoter Qualifications, Training, Skills etc. to deliver the project (page 3)

In the case of community or business applicants, it is important to provide detail of the previous experience of the community group or business board, members and/or employees directly involved with this project. Ideally, identify experience in drawing down funds from loan institutions/funding agencies/own financial resources to implement a previous project which required capital investment.

Set out what staff/voluntary resources will be put in place to maintain and operate the project over the years to come. Refer to other supporting community/business plans where applicable.

Briefly describe and explain what your community group/business does and who uses the facilities/services that you provide, e.g. cleaning, grading and packing vegetables for local organic

box scheme & retail sector in Ireland, or operate a community centre, which organises youth club activities and once weekly provides activities/meals for the elderly of the community.

4(b) Do you require training or new skills to help you deliver your project?

Let us know if you require assistance with training or skills development. This may be useful for applicants undertaking a pilot project, or seeking support with an analysis and development project.

5. What Type of Assistance do you need? (page 3)

Please discuss with your Development Officer.

6. Project Description (page 3)

The aim is to describe the project concisely but accurately to enable the appraiser to understand quickly the nature of the project. Please explain how your project fits in with your overall community/business and meets the current needs of your community/clients. This question provides you the opportunity to explain why your project should receive LEADER funding. You can also explain:

- How the project will benefit your community/business? List the beneficiaries/target market of this project and how they will learn about your facility/activity/service/product. Outline how this project fits in with the overall development of your community/business.
- List the core cost elements of your proposed project (e.g. building contractor, architect, web-design, develop a community/business plan, purchase equipment, etc.) and where necessary the work that will be undertaken.
- The systems that will be put in place to ensure that this project will operate after the funded project is completed. How will it be maintained/managed?

The Local Action Group (LAG) will need clarity that your proposal fits with the strategic actions identified in the Monaghan Local Development Strategy (LDS). However, do not try to make your proposal fit with the strategy to obtain grant support, as such projects fail to deliver what either the applicant or the LAG really want to achieve.

Projects must also comply with LEADER programme Operating Rules, and (if applicable) criteria relating to time-limited calls.

7. Basic Services Infrastructure (page 4)

If your project is providing basic services infrastructure, what group(s) will benefit from this project.

8. Areas of Innovation (page 4)

What will make your project stand out from others in terms of innovation? Innovative approaches may be used in the design of your project, how it is built or developed, how it will be delivered. Highlight what is unique about your facility or service that is not currently provided locally.

9. What specific need/requirement will the project meet? (page 4)

Supporting documentation could include information on recent research and/or copies of letters of support.

10. If your project does not get a grant, would the project go ahead? (page 4)

This question aims to ascertain whether your proposed project would proceed without grant aid. You are required to provide a brief rationale for your answer. Please note that a project will not be eligible for funding if it can proceed without grant aid. (This is known as deadweight.)

11. Is the proposed project likely to compete with a similar local facility/enterprise/activity?

Identify a list of projects delivering a similar service/facility to that proposed in this application (if applicable) in County Monaghan or indeed anywhere on the island of Ireland. If there is nothing of a similar nature in the area, then explain further how unique your project is. A project cannot receive funding support where another project/enterprise is displaced to the extent that it may result in displacement e.g. closure or loss of business elsewhere. If it is likely that displacement occurs, provide a rationale how any displacement will be minimised through the development of your project. Explain the differences that your project will offer compared to the products/services/facilities provided by other businesses/projects in the area.

12. Marketing and Promotion Strategy (page 4)

For economic projects, this will be included in your business plan. Other projects might consider a social media strategy to target your audience, or the use of local or parish newsletters, or networking/membership of groups such as Monaghan Public Participation Network, etc.

13. Environmental and Climate Change Impacts (page 5)

The importance of the environment and climate change is integral to the Monaghan Local Development Strategy. Your project may have impacts on the environment and/or climate change and it is important that you consider how your project can positively contribute to environmental sustainability. All projects should seek to ensure that their activity does not have adverse impacts on the environment and negative impacts are minimised.

Positive environmental impacts could include improvements in energy efficiency and reduction of carbon emissions, enhancement of natural habitats, eco-systems and biodiversity or investments to help reduce loss of biodiversity, reduction in waste generation, use of recycled materials or consideration of sustainable transport.

Negative environmental impacts could include visual impact, significant increases in traffic, pollution (including noise & dust) and impacts on wildlife habitats and biodiversity. These can be either short-term (when facility is being built) or from the ongoing presence of the project facility.

If it is likely that your project may have negative effects on the environment, these possible effects should be assessed, and plans put in place to mitigate, avoid or reduce the impact. Explain the steps that have been taken to ensure project sustainability and minimise the projects negative impact on the environment, including its carbon footprint.

14. Project Timeline (page 5)

How many months will it take to complete your project and submit your claim for payment? Please insert your proposed start date and finish date. Consider the time it takes to collate all the relevant claim documentation and certificates of completion (if applicable) when any works have been completed on a site.

15. Phased Payments (page 5)

Phased payments are possible for projects with a total cost in excess of €10,000 and each claim must be for a minimum of 20% of the total eligible cost for each claim. Phased claims are useful particularly for the larger spend projects to assist with cash flow in developing the project. **Note:** It is expected that any claim will take a minimum of eight weeks to process, subject to all claim documentation being in order. If a project is not completed, any processed phased claims would have to be repaid.

16. Impact of Proposed Project on Structures, Places or Sites of Heritage Interest (page 5)

If your proposed project would have an impact on Structures, Places or Sites of Heritage Interest, please discuss this with your Development Officer. There are specific LEADER Guidelines for heritage related projects.

Section B: Capital Works**17. Do you need planning permission for the proposed works? (page 6)**

All capital build projects must provide evidence that planning permission has been applied for, and if it is the case that planning is NOT required then a letter of exemption from planning permission must be provided.

18. Have you legal entitlement to the land/buildings in question? (page 6)

Ownership of a project location is vital to the veracity of a project application. Provide documentary evidence that the applicant has ownership/lease of the project location. Include a recently certified and stamped copy (certified by solicitor to be a true copy) of the folio/stamped deed of conveyance/indenture and certified and stamped copy of folio map showing the promoter as the owner. At time of application, it is expected that any lease would be for a minimum of 7 years.

In addition, if the proposed activity involves investments in immovable assets on leased/rented property, you must also ensure that you have the landlord's permission to make the improvements prior to submitting the application. This will be required in the form of a letter from the landlord agreeing to the works.

19. Second-Hand Equipment (page 6)

Funding for the purchase of second-hand equipment may be considered where:

- the seller provides a written declaration confirming the equipment's origin and that the equipment was not purchased with national or EU funds in the previous seven-year period; and
- the price of the equipment does not exceed its market value and is less than the cost of similar new equipment (provide evidence of quotes for similar new equipment); and
- the equipment meets the technical specification required for the project and meets applicable norms and standards.

Section C: Job Creation

Questions 20-24 (pages 6 and 7)

Provide some detail on how your project will **sustain any current employment and what new employment will be created.**

1 FTE is a minimum of 35 hours per week. For example, a person working 35 hours a week for three months would be a .25FTE. FTE's include business partners and directors to the business. Where any 1 employee works more than 35 hours per week, these should be recorded as 1 FTE.

Section D: Enterprise Projects Only

This section must be completed by all project applicants under RDP Theme Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation which includes the following sub-theme: Rural Tourism, Enterprise Development, Rural Towns and Broadband.

25. Enterprise Type (page 7). This question should be answered in relation to those businesses that already exist. Business size classification depends on the number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees you have and your financial performance.

1 FTE is a minimum of 35 hours per week. For example, a person working 35 hours a week for three months would be a .25FTE. FTE's include business partners and directors to the business. Where any 1 employee works more than 35 hours per week, these should be recorded as 1 FTE.

Company Category	Number of FTE's	AND	Turnover
Large	Over 250		Over €50 million
Medium sized	Under 250		€50 million or less
Small	Under 50		€10 million or less
Micro	Under 10		€2 million or less

Choose the appropriate option, which defines your business/organisation.

26. Financial Sustainability (page 7). Provide some detail on how your project will **sustain any current employment** and your expectations how any **additional revenue** (if any) will assist the development and growth of your business (e.g. include your business plan, projected income and expenditure)

27. Accounts for Previous Three Years & Linked Companies (page 7).

Please provide signed accounts for the last three years.

Is your company is linked or partnered with any other businesses (or is a subsidiary of a larger organisation? You will be treated as one business if you have two or more enterprises that are linked. Enterprises are linked where any of the following is true:

- One enterprise holds the majority of the shareholders or members voting rights in another.
- One enterprise is entitled to appoint or remove a majority of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another.
- A contract between enterprises, or a provision in the memorandum or articles of association of one of the enterprises enables one to exercise a dominant influence over the other.
- One enterprise is able, by agreement, to exercise sole control over a majority of shareholders or members voting rights in another.

Read more about what a 'formal connection' is in the guidance published by the European Commission: 'the new SME definition – user guide and model declaration' here

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en

28. Financial Projections (page 8)

All Applicants are required to submit **financial projections** for your business for the following **five years**. This can be based on projections already included in a business plan or based on a group's annual turnover and/or based on the LEADER project application being successful.

Section E: Training Projects Only

Questions 29 to 37 (page 8). Provide specific details regarding the training course for which you are seeking LEADER funding support. Provide supporting documentation detailing the training course content and method of delivery. Include information about what you hope to achieve for the participants of the training and how this will help your business/community. **Note:** Courses of instruction or training which form the part of normal education programmes or systems at secondary or higher levels are ineligible.

Section F: Analysis & Development Projects Only

Questions 38 to 40 (page 9). Outline the objective for the study/research/plan that you wish to undertake. Describe what you want to achieve when the study/research/plan is complete. If similar research/studies have been previously completed, reference the past work and confirm whether you have access to these documents. Terms of reference for the research/study/plan must be attached to this application.

A copy of the completed study/research report will be provided to Monaghan LAG and a copy of the report may be made available to the LEADER network in Ireland (where appropriate). Seek clarification from your LEADER Development Officer if you are seeking assistance for a project of this nature.

Section G: Marketing / Promotion Projects Only

Questions 41-43 (page 9)

To be completed for projects with a marketing/promotion element. Any project application seeking support for marketing/promotion should include a Marketing Plan or Business Plan.

Section H: Financial

44 (a). Project Costs: Full Approval vs Approval in Principle (Provisional Approval) (page 10). Community applicants only may avail of Approval in Principle (Provisional Approval) for capital works projects which are above the national public procurement threshold (currently **€50,000**). All other applicants must seek full approval.

Note for Community Applicants: Approval in Principle (Provisional Approval) allows you the opportunity to submit your application without going through the public procurement process (eTenders) initially. You may submit your full LEADER application for consideration based on specification drawings along with a Quantity Surveyor's (QS)/qualified professional report detailing the estimated costs for your capital works project. **All** other relevant sections of the LEADER application form and supporting documentation **MUST** be completed/submitted in order for your project to be assessed. This approval will be subject to subsequent completion of the public procurement process, as detailed in the conditions following approval by Monaghan LAG/LCDC.

The following must be adhered to:

- Provisional approval will be subject to a **6 month sunset clause**, i.e. where the tendering process is not concluded within 6 months of the provisional approval the promoter must resubmit their application for funding. The new application must include the completed procurement process. The sunset clause of 6 months may not be extended.
- Where the tendering process results in a higher price than the original estimate, the applicant will be responsible for meeting the additional costs above 110% of the original estimate.
- Where procurement results in a lower price than the original estimate, the grant aid approval will be calculated on the tendered price. The difference in value between the tendered amount and the original estimate **cannot** be reallocated to new project elements.
- Subsequent to completion of the procurement process, projects will be presented to Monaghan LAG/LCDC for final approval.

Examples of variances in estimated costs

Example A - Above original estimate:

Estimated Project Cost = €100,000

Provisional Approval @ 75% = €75,000

Tendered Cost = €120,000 (20% above estimate)

Maximum Eligible Cost = €110,000 (Estimate x 110%)

Maximum Final Approval @ 75% = €82,500

Example B – Below original estimate:

Estimated Project Cost = €100,000

Provisional Approval @ 75% = €75,000

Tendered Cost = €80,000

Tendered cost @ 75% = €60,000

Maximum Final Approval = €60,000

44 (b) Procurement (page 10)

The National Procurement Guidelines **apply** where public funding sought from LEADER and public matching funds is **51% or more of the project costs** (see **Category A** below). Applicants seeking **50% LEADER support or less** are not required to meet National Public Procurement Guidelines, but must follow the LEADER specific procurement guidelines outlined (see **Category B** below).

In all cases, each application must contain documentary evidence in support of the process of seeking and selecting preferred quotations/tenders for each element of the project application. This will be provided in the form of a **procurement (tender/quotation) report**, which is outlined below. Each element for which funding is sought is subject to National LEADER Operating Rules and National and/or EU public procurement thresholds which stipulate the required procurement approach. The table below indicates the relevant thresholds for the different sectors and the type of procurement approach that is required.

Community applicants only may avail of **provisional approval** for capital works projects over the public procurement threshold of €50,000. See section 44(a) above for process criteria.

Category A – Applicants Seeking 51% or more Monaghan LEADER Support the following national procurement guidelines apply

National Procurement Thresholds		
Contract Type	Amount (excl. VAT)	Procedure
Supplies & Services	Less than €5,000	Seek verbal quotations from one or more interested and competent suppliers/service providers - these can be sought verbally but responses must be obtained in writing. (Best Practice – Seek a minimum of 3 written quotes; a record of verbal requests must be placed on file).
Supplies & Services	€5,000 - €25,000	Seek written quotations from a minimum of 3 suppliers on the basis of responses to written specifications.
Supplies & Services	€25,000 EU Threshold* (currently €221,000)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders www.etenders.gov.ie – Open Procedure
Works Related Services	Less than €50,000	Seek written quotations from at least 5 firms on the basis of responses to written specifications, or follow the eTenders process – Open Procedure
	€50,000 EU Threshold* (currently €221,000)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders www.etenders.gov.ie – Open Procedure
Works	Less than €50,000	Seek written quotations from at least 5 firms on the basis of responses to written specifications, or follow the eTenders process – Open Procedure

	€50,000 – €250,000	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders www.etenders.gov.ie – Open Procedure
	€250,000 EU Threshold* (currently €5,548,000)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders www.etenders.gov.ie – Open or Restricted Procedure

**Where a project application exceeds the EU thresholds contact your LEADER Development Officer to seek agreement of the approach used for procurement in that case (thresholds valid until 31Dec2019)*

All quotations/tenders (except where email quotations are permitted) must be signed and dated by the tenderer.

Applicants may obtain legal or specialist advice and to pay particular attention to the following tendering requirements:

- Projects involving construction works must adhere to the requirements of the Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF), which is published under the Construction Procurement Reform website <http://constructionprocurement.gov.ie/> The CWMF is a suite of template tender and contract documents for the procurement of public works and works-related service contracts.
- Applicants should consider the nature, scale and complexity of the particular project and consult with the guidance material published under the CWMF before determining which procurement and contracting strategy to follow.
- For works and works related services above €50,000, the applicant **must** use the prequalification document circulated by the Department (**Works Declaration LEADER (WDL)**).
- Applicants are advised to use the following suite of tender documents as being most suited to LEADER funded works projects:
 - Tender & Schedule for Works FTS6
 - Instruction to Tenderers (ITT W4 or ITT W5)
 - Short Public Works Contract (PW-CF6)
- Applicants may use alternative documents from the CWMF, however the Short Public Works Contract (PW-CF6) should be suitable for the majority of LEADER works projects given the nature of these investments. Where using the PW-CF6, the winning tender must be selected solely based on the lowest price tendered. For more technically complex works projects, and where the promoter wishes to select on the basis of MEAT, applicants are advised to use PW-CF5 (Minor works form of contract).
- Applicants should be aware of the National Health and Safety requirements that apply for Works, which are referenced in the pre-qualification document (WDL).
- The correct Common Procurement Vocabulary must be assigned.
- In the case of **works contracts**, applicants **MUST** select the winning tender solely based on the lowest price tendered.

- In the case of **works-related services**, applicants **MUST** select the winning tender solely based on the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT).
- In the case of **supplies and services**, applicants may select the winning tender based on the lowest price tendered **or** the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT).
- Where MEAT is used, the applicant must ensure that the following conditions are met:
 - the award criteria are related and proportional to the subject matter of the contract;
 - the award criteria and their weightings must be included in the contract and/or advertisement notice;
 - tender responses must be assessed in accordance with the award criteria and their weightings;
 - the award criteria may not be changed after the tenders have been received.
- Where a tender amount is considered abnormally low in relation to the pre-tender estimate or with respect to the extent of works, services or supply required, written evidence must be sought from the tendering contractor to demonstrate that the price is sustainable.
- A minimum of 21 days must be allowed for responses following the date of publication of the advertising notice.
- Email responses to requests for quotations are acceptable where accompanied by clearly identifiable date and source information.
- Successful and Unsuccessful tenderer(s) must be notified in writing of the outcome of the competition and copy of communication (letter or emails) submitted with your application.
- Post-tender negotiations are not permitted i.e. any dialogue that could be construed as "*post tender negotiation*" on price or that might result in significant changes to the published tender request.

Public procurement guidelines are available on the e-Tenders website www.etenders.gov.ie and www.ogp.gov.ie

If you require assistance in relation to public procurement, contact the Office of Government Procurement at: www.procurement.ie/contact-us

Tel: 076 100 8000

OGP Support (supplies and general services) E-mail: support@ogp.gov.ie

Construction (works and works related services) E-mail: construction@per.gov.ie

Category B - Applicants seeking **50% LEADER support or less** are not required to meet National Public Procurement Guidelines

LEADER Specific Tendering Thresholds		
Contract Type	Amount (ex VAT)	Procedure
Supplies & Services	Less than €10,000	Seek verbal quotations from one or more interested and competent suppliers/service providers - these can be sought verbally but responses must be obtained in writing. (Best Practice – Seek a minimum of 3 written quotes; a record of verbal requests must be placed on file).
	€10,000 - €50,000	Seek written quotations from at least 3 suppliers on the basis of responses to written specifications.
	Above €50,000	Seek written quotations from at least 5 suppliers on the basis of responses to written specifications and place notice on local or National Newspaper. Alternatively publish Contract Notice on eTenders.
Works & Works Related Services		
Works & Works Related Services	Less than €10,000	Seek written quotations from at least 2 firms (these can be sought verbally but responses must be obtained in writing).
	€10,000 - €100,000	Seek written quotations from at least 3 firms on the basis of responses to written specifications.
	Above €100,000	Seek written quotations from at least 5 firms on the basis of responses to written specifications and place notice in local or National Newspaper. Alternatively, publish Contract Notice on eTenders.

All quotations (except where email quotations are permitted) must be signed and dated by the tenderer. Email responses are acceptable where accompanied by clearly identifiable date and source information.

Applicants should obtain legal **or** specialist advice and to pay particular attention to the following LEADER tendering requirements:

- For all contracts (supplies & services, works or works related services), the winning tender may be selected on the basis of lowest price tendered or the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT); however the following is advised:
 - Works Contracts - project promoters should select the winning tender on the basis of the lowest price tendered.
 - Works-Related Services Contracts - project promoters should select the winning tender on the basis of MEAT.
- For works and works related services above €10,000, the applicant **must** use the prequalification document circulated by the Department (**Works Declaration LEADER (WDL)**).
- Applicants are advised (although not required) to use the following suite of tender documents as being most suited to LEADER funded works projects:
 - Tender & Schedule for Works FTS6
 - Instruction to Tenderers (ITT W4 or ITT W5)
 - Short Public Works Contract (PW-CF6)
- Where a notice is required to be placed in a local **or** national newspaper, it should refer to the essential details of the contract together with an invitation to contact the applicant.
- The same response date must apply to quotations/tenders obtained by either direct invitation **and/or** advertisement through local or national newspapers. It is recommended that a reasonable period (e.g. 21 days) be afforded to respondents.
- Applicants should be aware of the National Health and Safety, requirements that apply for Works, which are referenced in the pre-qualification document (WDL).
- Successful and Unsuccessful tenderer(s) must be notified in writing of the outcome of the competition and copy of communication (letter or emails) submitted with your application.

Additional quotation/tender information for both Category A and Category B applicants

All applicants are advised that LEADER does not provide grant support for professional fees incurred in preparing a LEADER application (architect, quantity surveyor, consultant etc). Quotations/Tenders may be submitted for costs to oversee a works contract during the building phase through to sign-off and completion.

A **Tender/Quotation Report** is required for **each cost element** of a project application. This report should include (as appropriate) the following -

- Request for tender (RFT). The RFT should inform the tenderer/supplier that you are seeking 'LEADER funding support' for the project. Outline drawings/plans for any proposed development must be attached with this application in hard copy and sent digitally to your designated MID LEADER staff contact.
- Evidence of publication (as applicable: copy of e-Tenders advert **and/or** original of newspaper advert on full page where it appeared **and/or** copy of email sent to potential suppliers inviting a quotation). Note: where email is used, a copy of all email communications should be printed between both parties.
- Responses to those tender requests (quotations or tenders).
- Tender scoring sheets used and evidence to back up the reason for selecting the successful tender (where MEAT – Most Economically Advantageous Tender criteria has been used).

- Notification of intention to award a preferred tender bidder/supplier (any notification to award **MUST** state '*subject to approval of LEADER funding*').
- Copies of letters notifying unsuccessful tenderers of the result of the tender process.
- Copy of letter notifying the successful tender. Letter should inform the successful supplier/contractor that all invoices **must** include '**LEADER funded project**' in payment description.
- The tender report should detail the tender process used, dates (advert placed, emails/letters sent, number of responses, number who received tender documents, who was present when tenders were opened/scored, score sheets – if applicable and/or rationale for selection of preferred tender)

Where a project element is advertised on e-Tenders website, a printout from the e-Tenders website of the various actions and activities during this period must be provided (this is also referred to as **Audit Trail Report** on e-tenders)

It may not always be possible to obtain the requisite number of quotes. In such circumstances, evidence (correspondence between you and the supplier/contractor) that the requisite number of quotes were sought must be retained on file, **i.e.** formal written requests for quotations from you to prospective suppliers/contractors. When seeking quotations from suppliers/contractors, there should be a reasonable prospect that the supplier/contractor will submit a quotation. If you cannot obtain the required number of quotations/tenders you should contact your assigned Development Officer. **The thresholds relate to each item of expenditure grant aided.**

Failure to adhere to the procurement process may result in an element (or all) of your project application being disallowed. If an irregularity with procurement has been found after project claims have been paid, the project applicant will have to repay that grant element (or the entire grant) and further penalties may apply.

The following documents are enclosed with your LEADER application pack and should be used as directed previously:

- Works Declaration LEADER (WDL) - **for both Category A & Category B applicants for works contracts**
- FTS6 Tender and Schedule for Works
- Instructions to Tenderers (ITT W4 or ITT W5)
- Short Public Works Contract (PW-CF6)

Further supporting procurement documentation will be provided at the **Monaghan LEADER pre-Application workshop**. If you need further assistance, contact the assigned LEADER Development Officer as indicated in your letter inviting you to the full application stage.

You may seek to engage **external expertise** to assist with the procurement process. Applicants must ensure that the external expert has the necessary procurement qualification skills and experience to assist with procurement. The onus is on the applicant to ensure that the procurement process meets the necessary standard.

The projected costs for your project need to be entered based on the **preferred quotation/tender** submitted for each element of the project. Attach the supporting documentation to the application that will verify the process by which you selected the preferred quotation/tender. The attached **Schedule of Tenders/Quotations** should be completed for **each element** of your project application.

45. Sources of Funding (page 11)

In the case of all project applicants, the section on **Sources of Match Funding** asks you to confirm what match funding you have and that it is in place. You need to provide evidence of your match funding through either a letter from the bank or other financial institution supplying a loan/bridging finance and/or a bank statement evidencing that you have sufficient overdraft facilities. Copies of previous 3 months' bank statements **must** be submitted with all applications.

Private matching funding is all funding that is not obtained from public sources. Private match funding includes:

- Cash contributions to the project by the applicant – at least 5% of the total project cost must be met by a private matching cash contribution (wherever sourced by the applicant), other than for training projects that can be funded up to 100% rate; and
- Benefits-in-kind – eligible for community-led projects only, with the exception of farm diversification projects where labour may be accepted as a benefit in kind.

Public matching funding is funding from all public sources other than EU funds. Matching funding from other public funded sources (e.g. Fáilte Ireland, local authorities, Waterways Ireland, etc.) is permitted providing it does not derive from an EU fund. Public matching funds includes:

- Cash contributions from non-EU funded sources; and
- Benefits-in-kind – eligible for community-led projects only.

Voluntary labour or **Donation of land** may be acceptable as a source of match funding for some community and some farm diversification projects **only**. Project administration and management costs are not eligible as voluntary labour. **Donation of land can only be considered** where the following criteria have been met; the applicant makes no more than a nominal fee of **€1 per annum** and that the value of the 'donated lease' must be certified by an independent qualified expert with this application. Contact your LEADER Development Officer who will supply you with a 'Voluntary Labour Schedule' and can provide you with further information and guidance.

46. Previous Public Funding (page 12)

All applicants are required to declare **funding which has been received in the last three calendar years** at the time of application. This should include all EU and national public funding which has been already spent, and funding which has been approved but not spent. Copies of letters of offer/contract and letters confirming final payment from the respective funding bodies must be attached with this application.

Some applicants (economic entities) may be subject to De Minimis and State Aid rules. **De Minimis and State Aid** in the simplest terms defines that no one entity can gain a competitive advantage over another where any goods or services are offered and an income is generated. In order to manage this, the European Commission has determined that €200,000 is the maximum which one single entity can draw down within a 3-year period.

This **rule applies** to all organisations which generate an income and this can include community and voluntary organisations in some instances, irrespective of its legal form. Essentially, any activity that offers goods or services on a market is an economic activity.

47. Current Funding or Applications Pending Approval (page 12)

If you have applied to another funding body for this project or an element of it, please attach copies of the relevant correspondence. In some instance applicants may have applied for assistance for a particular project in the past which did not proceed or was unsuccessful. Details regarding any previous applications for funding for this project must be provided.

48. Eligibility of Applicant (page 12)

All applicants must complete Question 48.

Section I: Declarations and Assurances

49(a), 49(b), 49(c) and 49(d) – pages 13 and 14. Please read the declarations that you will be signing on behalf of yourself/community group/business. Take time to ensure all sections of the application form have been completed, that you are satisfied with the responses you have provided, and confirm that all details supplied in this application are true and correct.

Two authorised members [i.e. Chairperson and Secretary or Treasurer] **MUST** sign application forms from community groups. In the case of Limited Companies or Companies Limited by Guarantee, two Executive Directors **MUST** sign application forms. Both parties must also sign joint/Partnership applications.

The completed, dated and signed application form, together with **all relevant supporting documentation**, should be sent to:

Monaghan LEADER
 Monaghan Integrated Development CLG,
 Monaghan Road,
 Castleblayney,
 County Monaghan. A75 NA02
 Email: LEADER@midl.ie Website: www.midl.ie Telephone: **042 9749500**

Monaghan Integrated Development CLG (MID) is the implementation partner to deliver the LEADER Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 in County Monaghan on behalf of Monaghan Local Community Development Committee (LCDC). Monaghan County Council is the financial partner in the delivery of the LEADER Programme.

Monaghan Local Action Group (LAG) will issue an acknowledgement on receipt of your application. The acknowledgement should not be taken as an indication that the project is eligible or that it will receive grant aid.

Appendix A Checklist of Information required (pages 15 & 16 of application form)

No application will be processed/reviewed until all required documentation has been submitted. Review the checklist provided and ensure that you have submitted all required supporting documentation for your application. Some items requested on the checklist may not be detailed in main body of the application form. This section must be completed by the applicant.

