

Who can benefit from LEADER funding?

- **Individuals** or a group of promoters who have a viable rural enterprise idea
- **Rural Businesses** looking to expand or diversify, or start a brand new business
- **Farm Families** looking to diversify into non-agricultural activities to supplement their farm income
- **Community Groups** promoting community enterprises, local amenity projects or community services
- **Voluntary Organisations** or special interest groups promoting social, cultural or environmental projects
- **Partnerships** promoting projects in collaboration with other organisations, including other Local Action Groups

Project Eligibility

It should be noted that applications can only be considered for enterprises and activities that will not cause displacement elsewhere. For this reason, many conventional business sectors and activities are precluded from receiving LEADER funding. It is best to speak to one of our Development Officers if you are unsure whether your proposal will qualify. Assistance will be provided in completing the Expression of Interest in order to establish project eligibility under the RDP.

Please also note that all projects must comply with National Procurement Guidelines.

In general terms the following activities are eligible for funding:

(please note that this is not an exhaustive list and many factors must be considered when determining the eligibility of your proposal)

- a) construction, acquisition or improvement of immovable property; *(evidence of title / leasehold required for this activity,*
- b) purchase of new machinery and equipment up to the market value of the asset; *(second hand equipment is eligible under certain conditions)*
- 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. 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. *(Note: Professional fees associated with a capital project e.g. an architect preparing plans for planning permission, are not eligible as a standalone project.)*
- d) intangible investments such as the acquisition or development of computer software and acquisitions of patents, licenses, copyrights, trademarks.
- e) Training programmes that relate to the RDP themes and that are not available elsewhere or as part of a mainstream educational programme
- f) The donation of buildings, equipment or services free of charge or at a nominal cost as part of the project may be considered as an eligible cost in some circumstances for **community groups** only and are subject to a minimum cash contribution of 5% of the overall project **(see section 5)**

The following activities are **not** eligible for RDP funding under any circumstances:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 Rural Development diploma and degree.• Loans• Working capital (including stock)• Insurance for project promoters• Horticultural (including bee-keeping)• Payments for gifts and donations or personal entertainments (including alcohol)• Statutory fines and penalties, criminal fines and damages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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; and• Race and sport horse industries.• Legal expenses in respect of litigation
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Funding Limits & Rates of Grant Aid:

LEADER funding is not intended for large scale projects and a ceiling of € 200,000 will apply. In most cases, however the finite nature of the funding and the focus of the local development strategy will mean that the average grant is likely to be much lower than the maximum figure.

In general, private projects carry a maximum grant rate of 50% for capital projects and 75% for analysis and development, subject to the ceilings below. Corresponding community based projects may receive up to 75% and 90% rates respectively. Training projects can receive up to 100% funding.

Fig 1.2 – Rates of Grant Aid

Type of Project	Applicant	Max. Rate of Aid	Max Funding
Capital & 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%	
	Community under basic services targeted at hard to reach communities sub-theme	Up to a maximum of 90%	
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