

Guide for Applying for EU Just Transition Fund Investment Grant-Aid Scheme for Private & Community SMEs

Now that your Expression of Interest has been approved by Fáilte Ireland, please complete the application form for the Priority One project as per your Expression of Interest. Should you wish to apply for any other categories of funding, you will be required to complete a separate application form for each category selected and in order of priority as outlined in your Expression of Interest.

It is important that you read this guide before commencing the application.

Step by Step Process

1. Click on the link to the Application within the E-mail received from Fáilte Ireland.
2. Log in to Trade Portal, click on Funding followed by Create a new Application.
3. Select EU JTF Investment Grant-Aid Scheme for Private & Community SMEs by clicking on the name followed by Next.
4. Complete all sections of the form and all supporting documents and files required have been uploaded.
5. Submit your application.
6. If you are applying for more than one Category of funding, follow the steps outlined above and complete a new application for each Category of funding indicated within your Expression of Interest.

How do I access the application form?

The application form is available on the Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal and can be accessed via the link in your e-mail. You can access the Trade Portal using the same username and password that you used to access the Expression of Interest form.

Can I use the PDF application form?

No, the PDF application form is solely for reference so you can see what type of information you will need to gather. You will need to fill in the online application form via the Trade Portal. PDF applications will not be accepted.

What if I am applying for funding under more than one category?

Where an applicant has indicated they wish to apply for funding under more than one category for categories 1, 2 or 3, those applications will be treated separately insofar as possible and they will be assessed in order of priority, as indicated by the applicant. You must complete a separate application form for each of these categories.

The application form must be completed in order of priority as outlined in your Expression of Interest form.

The form must be completed in full and submitted to Fáilte Ireland via the Trade Portal before you start to complete your next application form for your next priority project.

To note, all projects funded under the EU JTF Investment Grant-Aid Scheme for Private & Community SMEs must be completed by the end of August 2026, therefore we are requesting that you prioritise your projects as per your Expression of Interest.

You do not need to fill out an application form for Categories 4 or 5 at this time.

How many business plans do I need to complete?

You will need to complete only one business plan using the template provided even if you are applying for multiple categories of projects.

The one business plan should reflect all applications you intend to make.

If you are applying for an investment grant under €10,000 you do not need to complete an application form or business plan.

Which business plan template do I use?

It depends on the **amount of Fáilte Ireland investment grant funding you are applying for in total (all applications combined)**, rather than the total project expenditure (investment grant and matched funding combined).

You need to understand how much investment grant funding may be available to you, as set out in these guidelines, before selecting a template.

There are 3 templates available based on total amount of investment **grant** funding.

1. Template A = €200,000 or less

2. Template B = €200,000 or less than €500,000.
3. Template C = €500,000 or more

How much investment grant funding is available for my project?

A. Maximum Match Funding Levels

Investment grant funding of up to 80% of total project expenditure is available for

- Category 1 (Development or Enhancement of Sustainable Visitor Experiences),
- Category 2 (Development of Sustainable/Low Carbon Tourist Accommodation) and
- Category 3 (Capital Project Planning & Design)
- Category 5 (Accessibility enhancements to provide a more inclusive visitor experience)

Up to the maximum funding levels specified below.

Investment grant funding of up to 100% of total project expenditure is available for Category 4 (Digital Transformation)

B. Maximum Funding Levels

Category 2 and Category 3 are subject to de minimis limits, which is currently €200,000.

C. De Minimis Maximum Funding Levels

Any previous de minimis funding provided to the applicant company in the past three years will be deducted from the maximum grant available.

Funding for Category 1, 3, 4 and 5 projects, where they fall under the General Block Exemption, may be available in addition to the €200,000 available for other categories, provided it is not being used for the same expenditure items and subject to State Aid Rules.

The below examples are for illustrative purposes to calculate the **maximum** investment grant which **may** be available to an applicant. **Important:** A State Aid test will be undertaken on a project-by-project basis, as per Appendix 10 of the Fáilte Ireland State Aid handbook and if the project is considered an undertaking, the relevant State Aid rules will apply. The actual investment grant will be calculated based on information provided in the application and will factor in overall eligibility, eligibility of individual items of expenditure, scheme rules and State Aid rules. **Any investment grant offered may therefore be lower than the maximum de minimis ceiling and/or General Block Exemption Regulation limits.**

Example 1

An SME is seeking funding for an accommodation (Category 2) project with a total investment of €400,000. No de minimis Funding was received by the SME in the past three years.

Step 1 - Maximum Match Funding Level: The maximum grant intensity is 80% of the eligible project cost but is limited by the maximum funding level below.

Step 2 - Maximum Funding Level: Category 2 projects are subject to de minimis limits, which allows an enterprise to receive up to €200,000 in a three year rolling period. As the applicant has not

received de minimis funding in the past three years, they may be eligible for up to the maximum of €200,000.

Step 3 - Maximum Investment Grant Available: The maximum investment grant available is up to €200,000, subject to scheme rules, State Aid rules and Fáilte Ireland evaluation criteria, with the business to provide the remaining funding.

Example 2

An SME is seeking funding for an accommodation (Category 2) project with a total investment of €400,000. Two years ago the SME received €20,000 in de minimis funding from their Local Enterprise Office.

Step 1 - Maximum Match Funding Level: The investment grant available is 80% of this cost but is limited by the maximum funding level below.

Step 2 - Maximum Funding Level: Category 2 projects are subject to de minimis limits, which allows an enterprise to receive up to €200,000 in a three year rolling period. As the applicant received €20,000 in de minimis funding in the past three years, they may be eligible for a maximum of up to €180,000 of de minimis funding.

Step 3 - Maximum Investment Grant Available: The maximum investment grant available is up to €180,000, subject to scheme rules, State Aid rules and Fáilte Ireland evaluation criteria, with the business to provide the remaining funding.

Example 3

An SME is seeking funding for an accommodation (Category 2) project with a total investment of €160,000, and funding for €120,000 for the design of a new accommodation space which is not eligible under the General Block Exemption Regulation (Category 3). No de minimis Funding was received by the SME in the past three years.

Step 1 - Maximum Match Funding Level: The investment grant available is up to 80% of the cost of the Category 2 project (€128,000) and up to 80% of the Category 3 project (€96,000) but is limited by the maximum funding level below.

Step 2 - Maximum Funding Level: Category 2 and Category 3 projects are both subject to de minimis limits, which allows an enterprise to receive up to €200,000 in a three year rolling period. As the applicant has not received de minimis funding in the past three years, they may be eligible for up to the maximum of €200,000.

Step 3 - Maximum Investment Grant Available: The maximum investment grant available is up to €200,000, subject to scheme rules, State Aid rules and Fáilte Ireland evaluation criteria, with the business to provide the remaining funding.

Example 4

An SME is seeking funding for an accommodation (Category 2) project with a total investment of €300,000, and a visitor experience (Category 1) project which falls under the General Block Exemption Regulation criteria and has a total investment of €400,000.

Step 1 - Maximum Match Funding Level: The investment grant available for the accommodation project is 80% of the cost but is limited by the maximum funding level below. The investment grant available for the visitor experience project (category 1) is up to 80% of the cost which equals €320,000.

Step 2 - Maximum Funding Level: As de minimis limits apply to Category 2, the maximum investment grant available for the accommodation element is up to €200,000. As the particular Category 1 project falls under the General Block Exemption Regulation and de minimis limits do not apply, the maximum investment grant available for the visitor experience is up to the full €320,000.

Step 3 - Maximum Investment Grant Available: The maximum total investment grant available is therefore €520,000, subject to scheme rules, State Aid rules and Fáilte Ireland evaluation criteria, with the business to provide the remaining funding.

What should I check before submitting my application?

Before you submit your application, please ensure that:

- a) All sections of the form have been fully completed.
- b) You have uploaded the completed appropriate business plan template and all other required supporting documents and files. There is a checklist in the application form to assist you with this.

Incomplete applications will not be considered for assessment.

Will I be entitled to the full amount of funding I submit in my application?

Submitting an application does not guarantee that funding will be approved. Funding is at the absolute discretion of Fáilte Ireland.

A State Aid test will be completed on each application and each application will be evaluated on a project-by-project basis. This will determine the eligibility of a project for funding and the amount of funding which can be granted.

If successful in my application, will I receive the investment grant up front?

No, there are no advance payments of investment grants. Successful applicants will only receive payments for phases/ elements of the project which have been completed. It is therefore important that applicants have sufficient finance available to fund these phases/ elements of the project until investment grant payments can be made.