



FÁILTE IRELAND

***FUNDING OPTIONS FOR
TOURISM BUSINESSES***

JULY 2023

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INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector encompasses a diverse range of stakeholders, from government and public sector agencies to companies, private sector associations and not for profit organisations.

Support for these tourism businesses and organisations comes in many shapes and forms. The tourism industry can benefit from EU funding programmes, either directly, via co-financing of projects, or indirectly, via studies or research, surveys, etc, carried out by the Commission through calls for tender specific to the tourism sector. In addition, tourism activities and projects can be funded under different EU financial instruments. This will depend on their focus and funding will be given on the condition that the objectives of the project match the different objectives and requirements specific to those financial programmes. Approximately 80% of EU funds are provided under “shared management” which involves national and regional authorities in the various member states.

In order to inform its own knowledge and in order to provide support and guidance to the tourism sector on what funding options may be available to it, Fáilte Ireland, engaged BDO to identify EU funding opportunities for tourism businesses, specifically Visitor attractions that may be applied for either directly or indirectly.

In addition, the research has sought to identify funding opportunities for tourism businesses that are available in Ireland.

This guide is intended to provide a practical guide for uses by the tourism sector, particularly Visitor attractions, to identify potential funding sources for their business.

The guide provides details, at a high level, of the various funding programmes, the purpose of each funding programme, the amounts available, projects that are eligible for funding and where and how to apply.

As outlined, it may be possible for individual businesses to apply directly to the EU for some funding and assistance. ***A red square is included in the report to identify those schemes/ programmes, which can be directly applied for.***

Limitations of the Research

It is important to note, that new funding options will become available on an on-going basis, and for this reason, this guide may not necessarily identify all options. For this reason, readers are advised to keep an eye on <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-search> where all EU funding and tender opportunities are advertised.

EU FUNDING FOR TOURISM

In November 2022, the Council and the European Parliament formally approved the EU budget for 2023. In total, the budget amounts to €186.6 billion, which represents an increase of 1.1% compared to the 2022.

Traditionally, the largest items in the budget relate to cohesion programmes for regional development at €62.9 billion and agricultural policy at €53.6 billion.

Tourism is a significant economic sector in the EU and is estimated to account for approximately 10% of EU GDP and 12% of the EU's total labour force.

The EU's tourism policy aims to maintain Europe's standing as a leading tourist destination, while maximising the industry's contribution to growth, employment and promoting cooperation between EU countries.

Tourism policy is primarily a Member State prerogative, with the EU complementing and supporting the actions of individual Member States. The EU's action broadly involves promoting the competitiveness and development of the undertaking in the sector and fostering cooperation between Member States.

The EU Treaty also allows for the establishment of specific legislative measures to complement the actions of Member States.

To this end the EU provides a range of financial support to tourism across national and regional operational programmes, mainly from the European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund, which allocated €6.4 billion to tourism projects in 2007-2013 and €4.3 billion in 2014 to 2020.

Despite the amounts allocated towards tourism, there is no dedicated budget for tourism in the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). Several EU initiatives and programmes can provide funding for tourism investments.

For the 2014-2020 period there were twelve programmes that could be used to finance actions in the tourism sector, both under direct and shared management.

For the 2021-2027 period this number rises to 14 such programmes, including those created to mitigate the impact of the COVID pandemic. Set out overleaf are details of the tourism-related programmes for 2021-2027, with more detail on each included within the body of this report.

EU FUNDING FOR TOURISM

Funding	Actions Supported	Can Be Directly Applied for by Tourism Businesses
Recovery and Resilience Facility	As defined in the National Recovery and Resilience Plans. The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) provides Member States with the possibility to finance investments and reforms, including in the tourism sector, as part of their national recovery and resilience plans (NRRPs). The available funding from the RRF must be committed up to the end of 2023.	No
European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund	ERDF: Investments to strengthen the environmental, socioeconomic sustainability and resilience of tourism in the long term, transforming the sector by learning from innovative solutions; CF: tourism-related investments in environment and in the trans-European transport networks, in particular in regions with an economy heavily dependent on tourism.	No
European Social Fund Plus (ESF)	Actions to support youth employment measures; accompanying the green and digital transitions by driving investment in jobs and skilling opportunities.	No
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)	Tourism-related investments included in the national Common Agricultural Policy strategic plans.	No
European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFF)	Tourism-related projects such as eco-tourism, pesca-tourism, local gastronomy (fish and seafood restaurants), accommodation, tourist trails, diving, as well as supporting local partnerships in coastal tourism.	Yes
LIFE Programme	Tourism-related environmentally sustainable projects, especially those mitigating CO2 emissions through energy efficiency or renewable energy; projects that “marry” climate adaptation measures with tourism.	Yes
Horizon Europe	The development of new approaches, concepts and practices for sustainable, accessible and inclusive cultural tourism (Cluster 2 research activities).	Yes
Creative Europe	European Capitals of Culture scheme; cooperation projects or platforms, including cultural events in the form of music or performing arts festivals; film festivals and markets; city branding through culture; development of the creative aspects of sustainable cultural tourism, the design and fashion sectors, and the promotion and representation of those sectors outside the EU.	Yes

EU FUNDING FOR TOURISM

Funding	Actions Supported	Can Be Directly Applied for by Tourism Businesses
Erasmus+	Projects covering mobility, developing competence and employability of young people in tourism, digital skills in cultural heritage, learning hospitality, and tourism research innovation.	No
Just Transition Fund	Tourism SMEs: investments in fixed capital or immaterial assets. Supporting diversification of economic activity, creating new business opportunities and helping people adapt to a changing labour market	No
Digital Europe Programme	Creation of data spaces: the European Common Data Space for Cultural Heritage - support to the digital transformation of Europe's cultural heritage sector; creation of data spaces: mobility - support to interoperability; Network of European Digital Innovation Hubs - support to tourism SMEs in digital transformation	Yes (But currently closed)
Single Market Programme	Improving the competitiveness of tourism sector enterprises, particularly SMEs, and supporting their access to markets.	Yes
Invest EU	Investments to strengthen tourism's competitiveness, sustainability, and value chains; sustainable, innovative and digital measures, which could help reduce the sector's climate and environmental footprint	No
Support by European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)	Inclusive Tourism Framework - investments in hotels and tourism operators; Integrated Cultural Heritage Framework - projects located near or within a cultural heritage site, enhancing commercialisation, sustainable management and operation, connectivity and accessibility, quality and availability of amenities, of municipal infrastructure, as well as projects achieving backward linkages; Advice for Small Business programme - support to tourism SMEs through the EBRD's network of advisers and consultants	Yes

EU FUNDING FOR TOURISM

Programme Name	Eligible Organisations						Programme Focus					Type of Funding/ Support		
	SMEs	Public Bodies	Academic Inst	Business (Non SME)	NGO	Private Individuals	Sustainable Tourism	Competitiveness, Research Innovation	Crisis Recovery	Smart/ Digital Tourism	Skills	Grants/ Subsidies	Financing - Loans/ Guarantees	Technical Assistance
Creative Europe Programme	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Erasmus+		x	x		x						x	x		
Just Transition Fund	x	x		x				x			x	x	x	
Digital Europe Programme	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x	x		
Single Market Programme	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x			
Invest EU	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Support by the European Investment Bank (EIB)	x	x		x			x	x	x	x	x		x	x

EU FUNDING FOR TOURISM

As outlined previously, the ERDF provides the bulk of the EU's financial support for investments directly related to tourism. The ERDFs allocations to tourism, for 2007-2013 and 2014 to 2020 are summarised in the following two tables.

ERDF Budget Allocations To Tourism (2007-2013)

Intervention Code	Description	Declared Amount (million euros)
55	Promotion of natural assets	884
56	Protection and development of natural heritage	765
57	Other assistance to improve tourism services	4,830
	TOTAL	6,439

ERDF Budget Allocations To Tourism (2014-2020)

Intervention Code	Description	Declared Amount (million euros)
74	Development and promotion of tourism assets	561
75	Development and promotion of tourism services in or for SMEs	1,140
91	Development and promotion of natural areas	1,180
92	Protection, development and promotion of tourism assets	830
93	Development and promotion of public tourism services	546
	TOTAL	4,257

The 2021-2027 European Regional Development (ERDF) legislative framework includes a specific policy objective related to sustainable tourism. Besides this specific objective, sustainable tourism can be supported through any other policy objective as long as the investments contribute to achieving the corresponding objective and comply with applicable enabling conditions or requirements.

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Fund Purpose	Amount Available	Eligible Projects	Where and How to Apply?
The ERDF aims to strengthen the environmental, socioeconomic social and territorial cohesion in the EU by correcting imbalances between its regions. In 2021-2027 it will enable investments in a smarter, greener, more connected Europe.	Ireland's ERDF investment strategy has a fund of €853m, of which €396m is financed by the EU. Various Grants available through Enterprise Ireland Schemes (see appendix)	Ireland's investment strategy focuses on three strategic outcomes: - developing smarter, more competitive regions through measures like building Research, Development and Innovation capacity and by strengthening regional innovation systems - supporting actions to scale up energy efficiency measures - supporting the sustainable regeneration of towns and urban centres	You should apply for regional funding to the authority managing the relevant regional programme. That body will evaluate your project and decide whether to grant funding.
Policy 1: A more competitive and smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation and regional ICT connectivity.		Development, testing and piloting of new digital services, products and solutions (E.g. digitisation of culture heritage), or the development of skills	In Ireland, the following authorities are currently charged with managing the various programmes, selecting the projects and monitoring implementation: Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Northern and Western Regional Assembly Southern Regional Assembly These funds are distributed via various grants available through Enterprise Ireland (see appendix) and the PeacePlus programme outlined overleaf.
Policy 2: A greener, low-carbon transition towards a net-zero carbon economy		Investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste management, circular economy, green infrastructure. Adaptation and mitigation of climate change. E.g. Rehabilitation of industrial sites or contaminated land, and the protection of natural heritage and biodiversity.	
Policy 3: A more connected Europe by enhancing mobility		Investments in transport infrastructure can contribute to sustainable tourism. E.G. investing in clean connectivity to and at tourist destinations.	
Policy 4: A more social and inclusive Europe by implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights		Provide more diversified services in tourism, seeking a positive impact on local communities - focus on integration of deprived communities and employment of people from vulnerable backgrounds.	
Policy 5: A Europe closer to citizens by fostering sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories		Reskilling and upskilling. Foster local development and cohesion through involvement of local stakeholders and participation of local communities in the projects.	
		Sustainable urban development	
		Funding under ERDF, can be applied for by public and private organisations.	

ERDF FUNDED PROJECTS

Revitalisation of a former industrial complex 'Rikard Benčić' into a cultural district

Description - With the help of ERDF investment, an abandoned industrial area in Rijeka, Croatia, is being transformed into a modern cultural and tourism district housing the city's museum, library, and a creative space for children. The investment forms part of the Rijeka 2020 European Capital of Culture project and is jointly funded by the ERDF, the city, and the national government. In line with changing urban needs and developments, the project promotes cooperation between 3 cultural entities and the institutions, in collaboration with Rijeka's citizens for any further planning and development of the cultural district.

EU Contribution: €15.8m

Sardinia Observatory for Tourism, Craft and Commerce

Description - The project uses the potential of digitalisation to encourage innovation, economic growth, B2B and market competitiveness for Tourism, Crafts and Commerce in the region of Sardinia. The Observatory's Tourist Movement Dashboard serves as an interactive system for analysing and displaying data on the movements of tourists in Sardinia, out of which annual trend reports are produced. The facilitated open data looks into tourist movements, broken down by reference markets, and on the capacity of accommodation facilities.

EU Contribution: €2.4m

ERDF Funding is available via Operational Programmes in each country, managed by national and regional authorities, as well as via cooperation programmes such as INTERREG. Interreg funding can be directly applied for in calls by the Interreg Programmes.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND +

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Amount Available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
European Social Fund+	Key financial instrument for investing in people.	€1bn for 2021-2027 in Ireland	<p>The ESF funds projects designed to help people improve their work skills and job prospects.</p> <p>To apply, public and private organisations should contact the ESF managing authorities in their country. The European Commission sets funding priorities but is not directly involved in selecting projects.</p> <p>Can be applied for by public and private organisations.</p>	<p>Fund runs from 2021-2027</p> <p>Assistance is channelled through Department of Education, Higher Education Authority and Skillnet in line with the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training Programme:</p> <p>https://ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/en</p>
	Contribution to employment, social, education and skills policies			
	<p>Further support youth employment:</p> <p>Tourism ecosystem employs a higher share of young people compared to overall economy. EU countries with a large number of people aged 15-29 not in employment, education or training should invest at least 12.5% of ESF resources in this area</p>			
<p>Accompany the green and digital transitions</p> <p>Drive investment in jobs and upskilling/reskilling opportunities so that workers can thrive in a climate-neutral, digital and inclusive society</p>				

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND + FUNDED PROJECTS

Digital Leadership Culture

Description - The pandemic has had a significant impact on Danish tourism. After the lockdown ended and restrictions were eased, visitors returned - but in far fewer numbers, and with new habits, needs and expectations. This project aims to strengthen the digital competences of managers and key employees in 420 Danish SMEs. With this new expertise, businesses will be better able to safeguard their long-term survival.

EU Contribution: €5.08m

Duaal Traject Grootkeuken & Catering / Dual learning industrial kitchen and catering

Description - This project fits into a larger framework of an experiment in dual learning development and could be implemented in various sectors. The main goal is to professionalise the hotel and food service sector, and strengthen cooperation between education and the hospitality sector.

EU Contribution: €60k

EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL FUND FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Amount Available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development	<p>Strengthen the socio-economic fabric of rural areas, particularly through job creation and generational renewal, promoting social inclusion, and the development of "Smart Villages" across the European Countryside.</p> <p>Renewal of villages, conservation of small-scale built heritage, construction and modernisation of tourism information centres, visitor information and other leisure, recreational and/or sporting activities.</p>	Various funds available through Rural Regeneration and Development Fund - Outlined below	Through financial instruments, the EAFRD acts as a source for loans, microcredit, guarantees and equities to recipients in agriculture, forestry and rural areas who are undertaking financially viable projects supporting the priorities of EAFRD.	<p>Fund runs from 2021-2027</p> <p>In Ireland, the funds are allocated through the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.</p> <p>Managing Authority:</p> <p>Rural Development Division Agriculture House Kildare Street Dublin 2</p> <p>RuralDevelopment@agriculture.gov.ie</p>

EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL FUND FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDED PROJECTS

Chevetogne - combining a wetland ecosystem observation area with social tourism

Description - This project for Chevetogne campsite involved rehabilitating and landscaping part of an old caravan park bordering the ponds. This area stretching over three hectares was restored into a wetland and accompanying nature observation area, along with a biodiversity lab. The restored area will accommodate some picnic facilities and two play areas for children. An additional development will extend the walking trail for people with reduced mobility.

EU Contribution: €387K

Historical Folklore Museum of Nikiti

Description - Nikiti is a village in Chalkidiki, Greece. Its economy is based on agriculture and tourism. The area is full of hotels and tourist accommodation but was lacking in cultural facilities such as museums and exhibition centres. In order to fill this gap and create tourist attractions, an old school building was transformed into a folklore museum. The grant helped to finance the renovation and also created jobs for the local community.

EU Contribution: €196K

RURAL REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Amount Available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Rural Regeneration and Development Fund	Sustainable economic and social development in rural areas within Ireland.	€1bn	<p>Lead partner of all projects must be a State funded body, collaboration with private sector is encouraged.</p> <p>Proposals may be made in respect of towns with populations of 10,000 or fewer.</p> <p>A maximum of 80% funding will be considered where community contributions form a significant element of the match-funding.</p> <p>Can be applied for by public and private organisations.</p>	<p>Runs until 2027</p> <p>Fourth call is now closed - announcement of future calls for applications will be released by mailing list by subscribing to rrdf@dcrd.gov.ie</p>

EUROPEAN MARITIME AND FISHERIES FUND

Direct

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Amount Available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund	<p>Support actions and investments that contribute to the protection of aquatic diversity and to sustainable fishing activities.</p> <p>Supports development of sustainable blue economies in coastal communities.</p> <p>Dealing with climate change adaptation and mitigation.</p> <p>Reduction of waste and promotion of circular economy.</p> <p>Support innovation through digital technology.</p> <p>Promote skillsets for those entering the industry</p> <p>Finances projects that create new jobs and improve quality of life along European coasts</p>	€142m	<p>To be eligible for funding projects must be focussed on the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of marine biodiversity Renewal of fishing sector Improvement of skills and working conditions Improve economic and social vitality of coastal towns Innovation in sustainable blue economy <p>Targeted at private sector organisations</p>	<p>EMFAF is delivered under both shared and direct management</p> <p>Bord Iascaigh Mhara is the intermediary body for administration of EMFF grants for businesses (see below):</p> <p>https://www.bim.ie/fisheries/funding/</p> <p>Direct calls from European Commission below:</p> <p>https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/find-calls-funding-topic/funding-opportunities-maritime-affairs-and-fisheries_en</p> <p>Managing authority:</p> <p>Marine Agencies and Programmes Division Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine National Seafood Centre Clonakilty Co. Cork</p> <p>sinead.mcsberry@agriculture.gov.ie</p>

EUROPEAN MARITIME AND FISHERIES FUNDED PROJECTS

Mar das IIIAS

Description - The project helps new start-up businesses that give fishers' earnings a boost, while also ensuring the continuity of traditional fishing practices and diversification into pesca-tourism. Mar das Illas also tried to increase the visibility and local awareness of the natural environment and its conservation.

EU Contribution: €85k

North East Meltmi

Description - Meltemi is a project financed under the 'Nautical Routes for Europe' call. The objective of the MELTEMI project was to bring together Greek and Turkish Aegean coastlines that were less known or less accessible. To help local economies, the project strived to promote those islands, their communities of artisans, their gastronomical tradition, unique cultures and beaches created for sailing, surfing and kiteboarding. MELTEMI also organised beach clean-ups and published recommendations on how to adapt sailing tours for people with disabilities to make sure historical and natural treasure are accessible to all.

EU Contribution: €1.3m

LIFE PROGRAMME

Direct

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Amount Available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
LIFE	<p>Grants provided to fund projects in environment and climate action.</p> <p>Funded in Ireland before - Burren tourism for Conservation</p> <p>https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=4379</p>	60%/75%/90% depending on project type and topic	<p>The applicant must be a legal entity, independent from government and other public authorities and registered in the EU focusing on one of the following objectives:</p> <p>Projects that support biodiversity objectives</p> <p>Projects that implement environmental or climate strategies</p> <p>The applicant must also be operating with a structure and activities covering at least three different eligible countries.</p> <p>Can be applied for by public and private organisations.</p>	<p>Calls posted 18 April. Submissions of reports and amendments are exclusively completed via the Funding & Tender Portal:</p> <p>https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life/life-calls-proposals_en</p>

Grant Name	Grant Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Standard Action Projects	Projects that pursue the specific objectives of the LIFE programme	Circular economy, quality of life, nature and biodiversity. Climate change mitigation.	€611m available	Public/Private entity registered in the EU - each call will have specific criteria to complete projects. Applicants must have the financial and operational capacity to complete projects.	European Commission Funding & Tender Opportunities Open from 18 April-21 September 2023
Strategic Nature Projects	Projects that support the achievement of Union nature and biodiversity objectives by implementing coherent programmes of action in Member States				
Strategic Integrated Projects	Projects that implement environmental or climate strategies, coordinated with at least one other national or private funding source				Open from 18 April - 5 March 2024
Technical Assistance Projects	Projects that support the capacity for participation in standard action projects, the preparation of strategic nature projects and strategic integrated projects of the preparation for accessing other Union financial instruments				Open from 18 April - 7 September 2023
Other Action Grants	Actions needed for the purpose of achieving the general objective of the LIFE programme, including co-ordination aimed at capacity building, dissemination of information and awareness raising to support the transition to renewable energy/increased energy efficiency	Clean Energy Transition			Open from 11 May-16 November 2023
Operating Grants	Grants that support the functioning of non-profit entities which are involved in the development, implementation and enforcement of Union legislation and policy				Open from Mid April to 21st September 2023

LIFE PROGRAMME FUNDED PROJECTS

The Burren Tourism for Conservation

Description - The Burren Tourism for Conservation project (also called the GeoparkLIFE project) aimed to reconcile tourism development with conserving biodiversity and cultural heritage. Reducing the impact of tourism on the Burren was a way to increase its carrying capacity. Pilot actions included a resource management programme for about 100 enterprises and improving 4 monuments and 3 natural sites. These lessons were shared, notably through tool kits, offering a valuable 'tourism for conservation' methodology to local communities in Europe.

EU Contribution: €1.1m

The Sustainable Cruise

Description - Led by Costa Crociere, one of the largest cruise companies, this project aimed to demonstrate the potential for waste prevention, recovery and recycling on cruise ships.

It assessed the environmental impacts of three waste streams (packaging, biodegradable waste and paper) and the technical/economic viability of large-scale waste management solutions. It also suggested a standardised approach to waste management onboard. Finally, it provided guidelines for an advanced certification scheme and assessed the possibility of converting CO2 emission reductions into tradable carbon credits.

EU Contribution: €1.3m

HORIZON EUROPE

Direct

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Horizon Europe	<p>Supports research relating to societal challenges and reinforces industrial capacity through industry clusters.</p> <p>Safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage. Development of new approaches, concepts and practices for sustainable, accessible and inclusive cultural tourism.</p>	Various Grants through Enterprise Ireland & directly from European Commission	<p>Legal entities from the EU and associated countries can participate.</p> <p>Specific calls/tenders will request for certain eligibility criteria. Grants through Enterprise Ireland tend to be open to researchers employed in higher education or publicly funded institutions.</p> <p>Applicants must have stable and sufficient financial capacity to complete projects. Applicants must also have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the tasks in the project.</p> <p>Horizon Europe works with researchers, innovators and entrepreneurs to help them compete for and win funding to advance their research and innovation ambitions.</p>	<p>Funding programme runs until 2027</p> <p>Applications in Ireland are made through Mariculture Enterprise Ireland.</p> <p>To submit an application, an account with Enterprise Ireland needs to be registered and the relevant application form should be completed.</p> <p>More information can be found below: https://horizoneurope.ie/</p> <p>Direct funding from European Commission below: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic</p>

HORIZON EUROPE FUNDED PROJECTS

SmartCulTour

Description - The EU-funded SmartCulTour project (Smart Cultural Tourism as a Driver of Sustainable Development of European Regions) intends to redefine the concept of cultural tourism. The objective is to provide European regions with strategies to engage stakeholders in co-creating smart cultural tourism practices.

Running from 2020 until 2023, the project will develop a decision support system to extensively monitor the target regions, combining traditional and non-traditional data sources. Inclusive desk research will determine which sustainable cultural tourism policies could have a positive impact. Proposals for local projects will then be made. Each project will then be tested in 6 living labs.

EU Contribution: €2.98m

TEXTOUR

Description - TExTOUR (social innovation and TEchnologies for sustainable growth through participative cultural TOURism) (brings together 18 experts, entrepreneurs and partners from business, civil society and government to co-design, validate and upscale policies and strategies to boost socio-economic territorial development through cultural tourism.

TExTOUR uses ICT and social innovation tools to work with 8 cultural tourism pilot projects in lesser known areas. They collaborate to design methodologies for developing cultural tourism (CT) strategies in these areas.

Each pilot sets up lab communities, composed of a wide range of stakeholders who bring their own skillset to help develop CT. Stakeholders are guided through in CT labs on how to implement, monitor and secure approval of ad hoc strategies for cultural tourism.

EU Contribution: €3.45m

CREATIVE EUROPE - CULTURAL STRAND

Direct

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Application
European Cooperation Projects	Improve access to European cultural and creative works. Promote innovation and creativity	<p>Audience: Increase cultural access to and participation both physically and digitally</p> <p>Social Inclusion: Promote societal resilience and enhance social inclusion</p> <p>Sustainability: Co-create, adopt and disseminate more environmentally-friendly practices through cultural activities</p> <p>Technology: Accelerate digital transition</p> <p>Book Sector Specific: reinforce capacity of sales of translation/adaptation rights with a view to increase circulation of European Literary Works.</p> <p>Music Sector Specific: assist music professionals with creation, promotion, distribution and monetisation cross-border.</p> <p>Architecture: communicate, co-create and mediate with citizens and relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Cultural Heritage: digitising material, sites and historical buildings using 3D and AI. Prevention and risk preparedness - climate change mitigation.</p>	<p>Small Scale Cooperation Projects - €200K representing 80% of total costs</p> <p>Medium Scale Cooperation Projects - €1m representing 70% of total costs</p> <p>Large Scale Cooperation Projects - €2m representing 60% of total costs</p>	<p>The Creative Europe programme is open to cultural and creative organisations from EU Member States, as well as non-EU countries.</p> <p>Small Scale Cooperation Projects - minimum 3 partners from 3 different countries.</p> <p>Medium Scale Cooperation Projects - minimum 5 partners from 5 different countries.</p> <p>Large Scale Cooperation Projects - minimum 10 partners from 10 different countries</p> <p>Entity must have had legal existence for 2 years prior to submitting application.</p> <p>Maximum project duration of 48 months</p>	<p>Creative Europe Programme runs from 2021-2027</p> <p>Open calls are posted on Creative Europe Ireland below:</p> <p>https://www.creativeeuropeireland.eu/funding-opportunities/culture</p>

Creative Europe is the EU's flagship programme providing specific support to the cultural and creative sectors. It seeks to develop all cultural sectors in Europe and protect Europe's shared cultural heritage, in particular by providing various funding opportunities aimed at co-creation, skills development, network and platform building, knowledge-sharing and mobility and distribution and promotion of content.

CREATIVE EUROPE - CULTURAL STRAND

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
European Networks of Cultural and Creative Organisations	Supports projects implemented by multi-country membership-based networks of organisations with a shared mission	<p>Audience engagement and development</p> <p>Contribute to EU Green Deal</p> <p>Assist with taking full advantage of new tech to enhance competitiveness.</p>	Max of €825K over 3 year duration. Limit to 80% of total eligible costs.	Existence for 2 years prior to application	<p>Creative Europe Programme runs from 2021-2027</p> <p>Open calls are posted on Creative Europe Ireland below:</p>
Circulation of European Literary Works	Translate, publish, distribute and promote works of fiction	<p>Strengthen the transnational circulation and diversity of European literary works.</p> <p>Reach new audiences.</p> <p>Encourage cooperation within the book value chain</p>	<p>Small Scale: €100K</p> <p>Medium Scale €200K</p> <p>Large Scale: €300K</p>	<p>Active in publishing and book sector.</p> <p>Fiction works by Irish nationals/residents</p> <p>Small Scale: 10 different books</p> <p>Medium Scale: 20 different books</p> <p>Large Scale: 21+ books</p>	<p>https://www.creativeeuropeireland.eu/funding-opportunities/culture</p>

ERASMUS+

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Erasmus+	Support education, training, youth and sport. No direct tourism component - tourism enterprises can benefit from the development of skills and training of young people	€26.2bn	<p>Each call for proposal will have specific eligibility criteria to determine whether an applicant can participate.</p> <p>The applicant must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain its activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out.</p> <p>Applicants must have the necessary professional competencies and qualifications to carry out the proposed project.</p>	<p>Fund runs from 2021-2027</p> <p>Funding opportunities are managed by either the European Education and Culture Executive Agency or by the Higher Education Authority in Ireland. Calls and application forms are published on the European Commission Funding & Tender Opportunities page:</p> <p>https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-search</p>

Erasmus+ is the EU's flagship programme for education. It addresses both formal and non-formal education and training, and also focuses on youth, sport, and culture.

ERASMUS + FUNDED PROJECTS

The Next Tourism Generation Alliance

Description - The Next Tourism Generation Alliance (NTG) is the first European partnership for improving a collaborative and productive relationship between education and industry. The aim is to develop a blueprint for sectoral cooperation on skills.

The NTG Alliance provides employees, employers, entrepreneurs, teachers, trainers and students with a set of core modules in digital, green and social skills. The NTG approach, modules and learning methods will be integrated into the current European vocational education and training (VET) system. This will provide a benchmark, tools and good practices for green and social skills to support sustainable development. Digital and technological innovation within 5 sub-sector operations will also be covered.

EU Contribution: €4m

European Master in Tourism Management

Description - The European Master in Tourism Management (EMTM) gives students advanced knowledge in contemporary tourism management. It provides a foundation for the following careers:

- international consultants
- innovative entrepreneurs
- government and public administration officials
- tourism business managers
- academic researchers

EU Contribution: €3.45m

JUST TRANSITION FUND

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Just Transition Fund	<p>The Just Transition Fund is a brand-new fund created under the 2021-2027 programming round with the single objective of supporting regions and communities in Europe that are most negatively affected by the transition to climate neutrality.</p> <p>Tourism SMEs can invest in fixed capital assets to assist with the Green transition.</p>	<p>R&D Clean energy tech Greenhouse gas emission reduction Digitalisation Regeneration of sites Circular Economy Upskilling & Reskilling of workers</p>	<p>€169m in Ireland. €68m of this has already been allocated to Failte Ireland and other initiatives.</p> <p>https://www.failteireland.ie/Utility/News-Library/Failte-Ireland-allocated-%E2%82%AC68million-EU-%E2%80%98Just-Trans.aspx</p>	<p>Specific to operations within Midlands in Ireland involved in the restoration of degraded peatlands and regeneration of industrial heritage assets</p>	<p>Fund runs from 2021-2027</p> <p>Eastern and Midlands Managing Authority.</p> <p>Formal launch of the Programme is planned for 2023</p> <p>https://emra.ie/</p>

SINGLE MARKET PROGRAMME

Direct

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Single Market Programme	<p>Help the single market reach its full potential and ensure Europe's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic</p> <p>The SMP focuses on the following main areas of action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the governance of the internal market • strengthen the competitiveness of EU industry especially SMEs • promote human, animal, plant health and animal welfare • establish the framework for European statistics 	€4.2bn over the period of 2021-2027	Different calls/tenders require specific criteria for projects. Applicants should have the financial and operational capacity to complete projects.	<p>Fund runs from 2021-2027</p> <p>Calls for proposals are accessed on the European Commission Funding and Tender Portal. Applicants must submit applications through the website and complete an online application form:</p> <p>https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic</p> <p>Calls for proposals will also be published on the European Innovation Council and SMEs Execution Agency:</p> <p>https://eisma.ec.europa.eu/funding-opportunities/calls-proposals_en</p>

The SMP aims to boost the competitiveness and sustainability of SMEs, including in the tourism sector. One important pillar of the SMP aims to foster the competitiveness, capacity building and sustainability of enterprises especially SMEs including those in the tourism sector.

SINGLE MARKET PROGRAMME FUNDED PROJECTS

FAMOUS Project - Movie Travel (Brand of the FAMOUS Project)

Description - Movie Travel aims to create itineraries and cultural experiences across UNESCO sites (European destinations) that have appeared in well-renowned movies or that host international film festivals. The FAMOUS project offers the opportunity to join an international network with great expansion possibilities in a sector that year after year improves its market share in the European economy. The project involves a consortium of 8 partners from Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain.

EU Contribution: €287K

TOURISME

Description - The project will assist companies covering different areas of tourism, including natural, coastal and cultural tourism, and will be linked to various public events. It will also cover hotels and other similar accommodation, short stay accommodation, travel agencies and booking services for travellers with related activities.

EU Contribution: €1.3m

INVEST EU

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Invest EU	<p>Brings several EU financial instruments under one roof.</p> <p>Aims to promote investments which can strengthen tourism's competitiveness, sustainability and its value chains.</p> <p>Advisory hub provides technical support and assistance for projects. Portal provides a database of investment opportunities available in the EU</p>	<p>Sustainable infrastructure - including cultural heritage & tourism</p> <p>Research, innovation and digitalisation</p> <p>Social investment - cultural activities with a social goal</p>	<p>Different amounts available through each intermediary.</p> <p>Takes place through equity participation and convertible loans.</p>	<p>The InvestEU fund provides support to final recipients that are deemed economically viable according to internationally accepted standards.</p> <p>InvestEU funding is available for all types of companies of any size and sector including entrepreneurs, start-ups, SMEs and larger businesses.</p> <p>SMEs should apply to local financial intermediaries who will inform them if a particular financing programme is covered by the InvestEU fund.</p>	<p>Fund runs from 2021-2027</p> <p>EIB provides direct and intermediated financing solutions for both private and public projects.</p> <p>SMEs should apply for business loans, microfinance, guarantees and venture capital through local financial institutions such as banks, venture capitalists or angel investors. Local intermediaries in Ireland are listed below:</p> <p>https://europa.eu/youreurope/business/finance-funding/getting-funding/access-finance/search/en/financial-intermediaries?shs_term_node_t_id_depth=708</p>

PEACE PLUS

Direct

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Peaceplus	Build peace and prosperity to ensure a lasting and tangible legacy across NI and border counties of Ireland. Take opportunities and address the needs arising from peace process to boost economic growth and social regeneration.	<p>Build respect for all cultural identities - increased levels of social inclusion and cross community integration. Incorporate sustained contact between those from different community, cultural and political backgrounds.</p> <p>Anti-sectarian initiatives.</p> <p>Celebration of cultural diversity which lead to mutual trust and respect</p> <p>Smart towns and villages.</p> <p>Development of green infrastructure to support tourism within rural areas.</p> <p>Recovery of protected habitats. Restoration of peatland/wetland.</p> <p>Sustainable cross-border transport</p>	€1.1bn	<p>NI & border counties - Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo.</p> <p>The PEACEPLUS Programme will invest directly in Local Authority Action Plans centred around building peaceful and thriving communities.</p> <p>SMEs can apply for grants and mentoring programmes to increase capacity in targeted projects.</p> <p>Applications for funding can be submitted by a range of organisations including local authorities, public sector bodies as well as voluntary and community organisations.</p>	<p>Funding calls open in Spring 2023</p> <p>Different funding calls will open at different times - a regularly updated list will be published on the SEUPB's website below. Prior to funding calls opening, the SEUPB will run pre-application support workshops.</p> <p>https://www.seupb.eu/funding/current-funding-opportunities</p>

PEACEPLUS FUNDED PROJECTS

Causeway Coast & Glens Local Authority Action Plan

Description - Programmes were put in place which facilitated the exploration of the Borough's rich cultural diversity focusing on language, heritage, history and ethnicity to facilitate meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between different communities. Initiatives included a series of workshops with students to design and create coastal themed artwork.

EU Contribution: €2m

Ulster Canal Greenway

Description - This project created a cross-border greenway connecting the counties of Monaghan and Armagh aiming to open up a new, sustainable travel route for both cyclists and pedestrians. The long-term vision is to build a greenway network connecting many of the main towns, villages and tourist attractions across the Mid-Ulster region - and help promote, protect and retain the cultural heritage along the canal.

EU Contribution: €7m

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR TOURISM BUSINESSES IN IRELAND

Access to financing is vital to promote entrepreneurship and SME development and to build a competitive and sustainable tourism sector.

The finance needs of a business will vary along its “business lifecycle”.

Start-up companies face challenges related to the lack of experience and established business record, and unproven business model.

New businesses may not be eligible or qualify for some bank financing instruments or may face higher financing costs or collateral requirements. Innovative SMEs often experience difficulties accessing seed capital and financing as they present a higher risk to banks. At the other end of the business lifecycle, entrepreneurs encounter difficulties realising the value of a business in the event of sale, liquidation or transfer.

Illustrated opposite are the four main sources of (SME) funding in Ireland which are grouped according to whether they are equity, debt, government or other sources of funding.

In the main, debt financing in the form of commercial loans and overdraft facilities tends to be the main source of external financing for tourism businesses.

Equity	Debt	Government	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs)/ Business Angel Finance •The 3 F’s •Enterprise Ireland/ LEOs •SURE •EII Scheme •Venture Capital •Development/ Growth Capital •Private equity and family funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Traditional Bank Debt/ Loan Finance •Working Capital •SBCI •Non-bank lenders •Credit Funds •Mezzanine Debt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Industry Specific Supports (Fáilte Ireland) •Enterprise Ireland •Local Enterprise Offices •Udaras na Gaeltachta •Intertrade Ireland •Credit Review Office •Ireland Strategic Investment Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Peer to Peer Lending •Crowd Funding

FUNDING OPTIONS FOR TOURISM BUSINESSES IN IRELAND

Over the following pages, we consider the range of grants and other supports available from government and non-governmental agencies to support businesses operating in the tourism sector.

Fáilte Ireland as Ireland's tourism development authority, would typically be a tourism business's first port of call, with the authority providing a range of industry specific business and financial supports to help tourism businesses.

In addition, other supports are available from state agencies and organisations, including, but not limited to-

- Enterprise Ireland and Local Enterprise Offices
- Udaras na Gaeltachta
- Intertrade Ireland
- Credit Review Office
- SME Credit Guarantee Scheme
- Ireland Strategic Investment Fund

Details of these organisations, and the funding available is described over the following pages.

In addition to these funds and schemes, another important source of support is the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

The SEAI provides a range of business grants and supports (not sector specific) that support businesses to cut down on their energy costs or meet energy saving targets.

SEAI Funding

Scheme	Purpose	Amount Available
Microgen	Funding towards the installation of solar PV.	€2,400
EXEED Grant	Funding for companies planning a major investment and planning in an energy efficient design project. It includes both the public and private sector, regardless of the project scale	30-70% of eligible costs (subject to limits)
Energy Audits	To support the cost of the conduct of a professional energy audit	€2,000
Energy Contracting	support the direct external consultancy and/or specialist advisory costs related to project appraisal and procurement of pay-for-performance energy contracts	Up to 75% of eligible costs, subject to a max limit of between €25k-€50k

BORD IASCAIGH MHARA

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Marine Tourism Safety Scheme	Help improve safety of marine tourism vessels	Purchase and installation of safety equipment	€30K over three year period. 40% of total costs.	<p>Owners of licensed marine tourism vessels less than or equal to 15 meters in registered length which operate in Irish Coastal Waters.</p> <p>Safety equipment which may be funded include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life rafts - Life jackets - Distress flares 	<p>https://bim.flexigrant.com/</p> <p>Assessed on a monthly basis</p>
Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme	Counter the adverse economic and social consequences of the withdrawal of the UK from EU on businesses operating in the Blue Economy	<p>Capital investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aquariums, museums etc - Visitor centres - Seafood tourism projects - Glamping/campsite accommodation - Purchase of coastal sightseeing tour vessel <p>Business mentoring and capacity development</p> <p>Upskilling and training</p>	80% of project costs up to €200k	<p>SME in coastal tourism/marine leisure and sport industry.</p> <p>Capital investment projects from entities that promote entrepreneurial initiatives such as value adding or increasing employment in coastal areas.</p> <p>Participation in recognised business mentoring and capacity building. Projects must be completed by 30th September 2023.</p> <p>Participation in formal, accredited training that will enable participants to seek employment, upskill or develop a career in the blue economy.</p>	<p>https://bim.flexigrant.com/</p> <p>Closes on 15 August 2023</p>

ARTS COUNCIL IRELAND

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Arts Grants Funding	<p>Ensure there is a breadth of high quality arts activity and programmes throughout the country.</p> <p>Generate high-quality experiences for the public to engage with the arts</p>	<p>Provision of arts experiences</p> <p>Cover the costs of activities taking place from 2024.</p>	Unlimited - average grants previously was €62K	<p>Demonstrate the proposal involves collaboration that include the delivery of public outcomes or outcomes that benefit other artists.</p> <p>Based resident in ROI</p>	<p>https://www.artscouncil.ie/Funds/Arts-Grant-Funding/</p> <p>Deadline - 11 May 2023</p>

TOURISM IRELAND

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Publicity Programming Fund	Assist content producers in making a submission to Tourism Ireland profiling the Island of Ireland and unique attractions for international audiences	The Island's landscape Heritage and Culture Food & Drink Sustainability	50% of global production budget up to €200k	Strong track record in producing high quality content for the international market	Closed 17th March 2023

STRATEGIC BANKING CORPORATION OF IRELAND

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Features of Scheme	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme	Support eligible SMEs to invest in energy efficiency of their enterprises	<p>Loan terms of 1-10 years</p> <p>Secured only by asset being funded</p>	€150k	<p>SME:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less than 250 employees - Annual turnover not exceeding €50m - Balance sheet not exceeding €43m <p>Asset to be financed must be listed on SEAI Triple E Register for Products</p>	<p>Submit an Eligibility Application Form to the SBCI - once approved apply through following lenders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AIB - BOI - Capitalflow - Fexco - Finance Ireland
Ukraine Credit Guarantee Scheme	Fund working capital and investments impacted by economic consequences of the conflict in Ukraine	<p>Repayment terms of between 3 months up to 6 years</p> <p>Loans less than €250k will be unsecured</p> <p>Interest rates will be discounted from standard rates</p>	€1m	<p>Costs increased by minimum of 10% on 2020 figures due to impact of conflict.</p> <p>Refinancing of existing loans is not permitted</p> <p>SMEs and Small Midcaps: - fewer than 500 employees</p> <p>Eligible financial products include term loans, working capital, asset finance and overdrafts</p>	<p>Register on SBCI hub and submit an online Eligibility Application Form</p>

MICROFINANCE

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Features of Scheme	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Cashflow Loan	Support cash flow and day to day running of business	Interest rate of 4.5% Free mentoring Terms of up to 3 years	€25k	Business must be operational for more than 18 months. Provide 6 months of bank statements if available. Cashflow forecast to be completed along with a credit report.	Application form via below https://microfinanceireland.ie/cashflow-loan-5-25k/
Expansion Loan	Capital expenditure relating to business development/expansion	Interest rate of 4.5% Free mentoring Terms of up to 5 years	€25k	Business must be operational for more than 18 months. Provide 6 months of bank statements if available. Cashflow forecast to be completed along with a credit report.	Application form via below https://microfinanceireland.ie/expansion-loan-5-25k/
Small Loan	Established businesses with low funding requirements	Interest rate of 4.5% Simpler process 5 year term	€5k	No specific requirements. To provide 6 months of up-to-date business account statements if applicable. Business plan to be submitted as part of application.	Application form via below https://microfinanceireland.ie/small-loan-2-5k/

HOTEL INVESTMENT FUND

Fund Name	Fund Purpose	Features of Fund	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Hotel Investment Fund	Support hotels in Ireland that have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic	<p>Funding provided by ISIF and managed by BVP Investments & Pembroke Hospitality</p> <p>Working Capital & cash flow funding</p> <p>Capex and investment funding</p> <p>Green and environmental sustainability funding</p>	€500k to €5m in the form of 3-year preference equity with a coupon that is rolled up until redemption.	<p>3 star hotel with 25+ bedrooms</p> <p>Positive cash flow generation before pandemic</p> <p>Viable business plan to repay loan</p>	<p>Submit enquiry form to admin@HIFireland.ie</p>

APPENDICES



EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Climate Action Voucher	Consultancy support to develop initial sustainability/decarbonisation/circular economy strategy & action plan	Develop a sustainability/decarbonisation action plan Develop a circular economy action plan	€1.8k grant	EI clients. Voucher covers either technical or advisory services from an approved services provider	https://secure.enterpriseireland.com/Xtranet/CredentialManagement/cmLogin.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fXtranet%2fDefault.aspx No closing date
GreenStart	Introduce environmental best practice systems and structures, achieve cost and resource reduction targets and lay a foundation for future environmental improvement projects	Environmental Management Systems Decarbonisation strategy Aligning environmental practices to UNSDGs Life cycle/circular economy assessment	€5k - up to 80% of eligible costs	EI clients. Eligible expenditure limited to cost of hiring an environmental consultant	No closing date
GreenPlus	Training projects to develop a high level of environmental management capability	Develop high level of environmental management capabilities Drive environmental efficiencies	€50K - up to 50% of eligible costs	EI clients. External advisory services by a suitable Service provider. Salary of up to 10 green project team members, subject to a max of 100 days	No closing date

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Strategic Consultancy	Assist large energy users to develop a carbon reduction roadmap	Develop an organisational carbon reduction roadmap	€35k - up to 50% of eligible costs	Manufacturing SME or Large company - over 250 people	Open all year
Capital Investment for Energy Monitoring & Tracking Systems	Put in place monitoring and targeting systems to begin accounting for the carbon footprint of activities	New hardware equipment for energy metering and tracking systems	€50K - up to 50% of eligible costs	Manufacturing clients of EI generating sales for at least 5 years. Ineligible costs are software platform costs, specifically for ongoing support and maintenance	Open to 1 October 2025, or until budget exhausted
Capital Investment for decarbonisation processes	Support investment in carbon reducing technologies in manufacturing combustion processes	Industrial heat pumps Electric steam boilers Heat recovery tech MVR evaporators Biomass boilers	€1m	Manufacturing client of EI with 10+ fulltime employees in Ireland and generating sales for at least 5 years. Project will deliver a defined and measurable reduction in carbon emissions	Open to 1 October 2025, or until budget exhausted
Innovation Vouchers	Assistance to explore a business opportunity with a registered knowledge provider in areas of sustainability and decarbonisation	Explore a business opportunity/problem with a registered knowledge provider	€5k per company	SMEs registered in Ireland. SMEs and non-commercial bodies in agricultural sector are excluded in line with state aid guidelines	No deadline noted

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Exploring Innovation	Support planning of research, development or innovation projects in the areas of sustainability and decarbonisation	<p>R&D review to determine the current status of scientific/technical knowledge in an area</p> <p>Investigation of solutions from 3rd sector</p> <p>Prototype development</p> <p>Commercial feasibility analysis</p>	€35k - up to 50% of eligible costs	Manufacturing & 10+ employees	Can apply all year
R&D	Support new or substantially improved products, services or processes in the areas of sustainability and decarbonisation	Resolve technical challenges	Dependent on project type/company size	Trading with a positive EBITDA	No deadline noted
Agile Innovation	Support new or substantially improved products, services or processes in the areas of sustainability and decarbonisation	<p>Develop new product/service</p> <p>Improve existing products/services</p> <p>Acquire new knowledge</p> <p>Prototype, testing and validation</p>	€150k - up to 50% of eligible costs	<p>Positive EBITDA</p> <p>Show adequate cash resources to implement proposed project</p>	No deadline noted

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Scheme Name	Scheme Purpose	Types of Projects	Amount available	Eligibility	Where and How to Apply?
Digital Discovery	Develop a digital strategy & roadmap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills assessment Opportunities for new value-added digital services or products Use of digital systems to measure and reduce energy, emissions and waste Review of cyber-security strategy 	€5k - up to 80% of eligible costs	Companies with 10 or more full time staff and are engaged either in manufacturing or international trade in an eligible services industry (includes entertainment & leisure services)	https://secure.enterprise-ireland.com/Xtranet/CredentialManagement/cmLogin.aspx
Digital Process Innovation	Implement new lean-digital processes in the business covering production, delivery or organisational methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intro of new/significantly enhanced digital or automation technology systems Intro of new/significantly enhanced digital experience for customers Implementation of new production methods for enhanced sustainability 	€150k, up to 50% of eligible costs	EI clients employing 10+ people able to show cash resources to implement proposed project	No deadline noted
Digital Marketing Capability	Training grant to develop in-house digital marketing capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic review of existing digital channels and development of future digital marketing strategy Understand international best practice, competitive landscape and effective tools Develop capabilities of senior management 	€35k - up to 50% of eligible costs	EI clients looking to develop marketing strategy and capability	No closing date
Operational Excellence	Process innovation, training in leadership and lean processes as well as capital support for production equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production line redesign Process restructure Supply chain management 	€150k, up to 50% of eligible costs	EI client 10+ employees 5 years of trading Revenues of €500k EBITDA positive	Applications may be completed at any time