



Fáilte Ireland

National Tourism Development Authority

Market & Product Support Scheme 2011

Guidelines

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INTRODUCTION

Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority, was established under the National Tourism Development Authority Act, 2003. We provide strategic and practical support to develop and sustain Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourist destination. In this context, our mission is broadly:

“To increase the contribution of tourism to the economy by facilitating the development of a competitive and profitable tourism industry.”

Our key role is to support and help the industry to meet the challenges facing the entire global tourism market and to sustain, or increase, the level of activity in the sector. Our emphasis is on strategic partnership, with all the interests in Irish tourism at national, regional and local levels working together towards a common goal.

Our strategic objectives for the coming years are:

- To guide and support the development and promotion of world class sustainable tourism products and services.
- To foster an internationally competitive tourism enterprise base.
- To promote a public policy environment conducive to tourism growth.

More specifically, our marketing support strategy is to encourage a greater range of marketing activity, primarily undertaken on a partnership or co-operative approach with a strategic focus.

2. PURPOSE OF THE MARKET & PRODUCT SUPPORT SCHEME

The Market & Product Support Scheme is administered by Fáilte Ireland’s Leisure Tourism and Business Tourism Divisions and the Food and Hospitality Division with the intention of providing marketing and product support to the Irish special interest tourism product sector. It is intended to increase the exposure of defined areas of the tourism industry to potential new customers and/or target markets in line with the Fáilte Ireland product strategies.

3. CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING APPLICATIONS

The proposals for funding should focus on projects / initiatives with concrete deliverables. The following factors will be important in assessing your application.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate:

- How the proposal fits with Fáilte Ireland Regional and Product Strategies.
- A strategic marketing approach and plan with realistic goals and objectives.
- The relative strategic importance of the product to tourism and / or the sector.
- The expected benefits of the activity programme (number of visitors, €'s generated etc.).
- Value for money for each activity proposed.
- How the activity programme enhances regional and/or seasonal spread of tourism in Ireland.
- Innovation of activity programme.
- How the activity programme plans to grow existing markets/segments and/or target new markets.
- That the activity is carrying out a role that Fáilte Ireland or Tourism Ireland are not currently undertaking.
- Strategies to reduce the dependence on Fáilte Ireland funding for year-on-year activities.
- Promoters track record and proven ability to deliver the activity programme.
- Previous results achieved.

4. SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Support in general will be provided up to a range of between 25% and 75% of total eligible costs.

5. SCHEME ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply?

The Scheme is open to all organisations and co-operatives forming a marketing group^{1,2}. In the absence of an effective marketing group within a product area applications will be considered, on an exceptional basis, from individual operators where it can be shown the proposed activity will benefit the product sector as a whole and not just an individual operator. Applications will also be considered on a pilot basis from co-operatives participating in the Fáilte Ireland Hubs Initiative.

The application for funds will only be accepted in the context of the following activities:

- Angling
- Spa & Wellness
- Culture & Heritage including Gardens & Genealogy
- Learning English in Ireland
- Outdoor Pursuits
- Walking
- Cycling
- Equestrian Activities
- Water-based Activities
- Accommodation and Food & Drink Tourism
- Business Tourism
- Other appropriate product related activities

¹Qualifying marketing groups must be open for membership to all applicable providers.

²Members of qualifying organisations must meet that organisation's approval / registration rules as well as any Fáilte Ireland approval criteria

6. METHOD OF CALLING FOR & PROCESSING GRANT APPLICATIONS

This section outlines the procedure for grant applications from application to grant decision.

- Applications will be sought by open invitation (see www.failteireland.ie).
- Applications must be submitted in soft copy format only on the prescribed application form through the online application system.
- Incomplete applications and applications received after the closing date will not be considered for grant assistance.
- Applications must initially demonstrate they satisfy all of the appraisal criteria above. A Project Summary Report will be prepared for each application.
- The Project Summary Report will be presented to The Market & Product Support Scheme Assessment Committee.
- Following the decision of the Assessment Committee correspondence will issue from Fáilte Ireland.
- Assessment Process.

Timetable

Closing date for submission of applications
Closing date for submission of claim*

Date

8th April 2011
30th November 2011

*We recognise that in certain circumstances the activities funded are not conducted until the month of December. If this arises we require that you forward the relevant Product Manager your best estimate of the costs that will be incurred (by 30th November). The actual claim for December must be sent to Fáilte Ireland no later than 31st January the following year. If you were granted funding in the previous year but haven't submitted your final claim by 31st January this year you will not be considered for funding.

7. CONDITIONS ATTACHING TO A GRANT OFFER

This section outlines the various other requirements that applicants should be aware of.

Grant offer letter

Successful applicants will receive a grant offer letter. The grant offer letter will form the contract between Fáilte Ireland and applicant/grantee. The grant offer letter will cover the various requirements including:

- Purpose – the purpose of the funding including Key Performance Indicators to be achieved
- Activity schedule including detailed activity costs and timelines
- Grant drawdown requirements
- Public procurement
- Freedom of information
- Publicity
- Access to market research
- Retention of records
- De minimis funding

Purpose – This section outlines the purpose of the funding including Key Performance Indicators to be achieved

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide measurable and appropriate Key Performance Indicators. These indicators will be used to assess the likely and actual effect of the grant assisted activity and are a key determinant used in the evaluation of the submission. As way of guidance the following key performance indicators might be used where appropriate:

Attendance at Trade Fairs

- No. of bookings due to funded activities
- Queries logged at trade shows/exhibitions
- No. of hosted media/trade/tour operators/ travel agents
- No. of packaged offers sold due to activity
- Feedback report on trade show to evaluate and inform other tourism providers of its potential

E-Marketing Management

- No. of bookings taken through your website
- Visitor numbers (specify domestic/overseas)
- No. of visitors to your dedicated internet site
- If portal site; the no of visitors 'click thru's' to individual member sites.
- Customer satisfaction surveys

Advertisement & Promotions

- Circulation of magazine where advert was placed
- Ratings for radio/TV advertising
- No. of bookings generated by the advertising campaign
- Customer satisfaction surveys

Product Support

- Increased sales
- Measurable improvements to quality
- Customer satisfaction surveys

Grant drawdown requirements

- Detailed schedule including a breakdown of costs and timelines will be agreed prior to grant approval.
- Payment will be made on receipt of completed grant claim form in the prescribed format incorporating independent auditors' certificate (for amounts less than €20,000 an auditors' certificate is not required), vouched expenditure, post activity report (see below) and supporting documentation.
- The grant will be released by way of **reimbursement of paid eligible expenditure**, subject to Fáilte Ireland being in receipt of sufficient funds to meet the claim. In the event of any delays in payment there is no liability on the part of Fáilte Ireland or the exchequer to make good any shortfall. **Advance payment will not be available under this Scheme.**
- The need for a tax clearance certificate applies to all grants awarded under this Scheme. Successful applicants will be required to submit a tax clearance certificate in advance of receiving payments.
- Where a grantee is not VAT registered, a statement from the Revenue Commissioners confirming this must be supplied.

- Grant payments will only be made to the body specified as the grantee. Expenditure paid by a third party will not be grant aided.
- Invoices must be paid by company cheque/company credit card or bank transfer.

Post Activity Report

Once the Programme of Activity is complete, a Post Activity Report needs to be submitted with your grant claim. We require the Post Activity Report because the information can:

- Determine future emphasis for funding support
- Provide input for future funding support seeking decisions
- Determine if intended target customers were reached
- Understand factors that promote or limit success

In the Post Activity Report we require that you outline not only the tangible and financial impacts of each activity (such as number of visitors, bookings, revenue generated, visitors to website etc.) but also outcomes (intangible benefits to the sector as a whole).

The Post Activity Report needs to be submitted with your final submission on 30th November 2011 (except where activity is scheduled for December, in which case final date for report is 31st January the following year).

Public procurement

Please note that EU public procurement procedures must be followed where applicable.

Freedom of information

Fáilte Ireland wishes to advise applicants that, under the Freedom of Information Act (which came into force on 21st April 1998), the information supplied in the application form may be made available on request, subject to Fáilte Ireland's obligations under law.

Publicity

Where any of the following are produced in relation to the activities undertaken the Fáilte Ireland logo must appear on same;

- Website
- Newspaper advertisements
- Literature/brochures
- Posters
- Databases and audio-visual material

Access to market research

To ensure that we can provide an effective service to the industry we are continuing to strive to collate and leverage all sources of market intelligence in the marketplace.

Therefore, we require that as a condition of funding you will provide us with a copy of any relevant market research data that you have collected or have access to.

Retention of records

Grantees must comply with all conditions in relation to the retention of records. All relevant records must be made available on request for examination by authorised officials of Fáilte Ireland, the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport, other relevant Government Departments and the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. The statutory period for retaining records of account under Irish law is generally 6 years.

De Minimis funding

Please note that the Market & Product Support Scheme grants are classed as de minimis state aid. There is a ceiling of €200,000 for all de minimis aid, regardless of the source, given to any one enterprise (including groups) over a 3 year period.

Market & Product Support Scheme grants are made on the understanding that the grant combined with any other de minimis aid received by you in the last 3 years does not exceed the ceiling of €200,000 for all de minimis aid.

If you are unsure if you have previously received any de minimis funding you should check the letter you received when the funding was awarded as all funding bodies are required to highlight this. In order for us to maintain our de minimis records, we ask that you complete a de minimis declaration which is included within the Application Form.

8. Eligible/Ineligible Expenditure

Eligible expenses for grant assistance:

Eligible costs must have clearly identifiable benefits. The following overseas marketing costs are eligible for funding:

- Attendance at Overseas Trade Fairs – including trade shows, consumer shows, media events, launches (entrance fees & flights only).
- E-Marketing Management – this would include new web or emarketing development (please note maintenance of existing websites will not be funded, existing websites should go through webcheck where available).
- Advertisement & Promotions – this would include Print Media (including newspaper, magazine and billboard, excluding guides or directories) and broadcast/electronic media (including radio, television, web based media).

Ineligible Expenses for funding

The following costs are ineligible for funding (please note this is not an exhaustive list):

- Overhead/Administrative Expenses: salaries, rent, phone, supplies, postage, photocopying, membership fees or other overheads associated with the ongoing normal administrative functions of any organisation. Unless it can be shown that the costs are additional and would not have been incurred but for the grant aided project.
- Membership Fees
- Domestic activity related to Business Tourism related activity/activity programmes
- Items for resale
- Commissions
- Mileage
- Taxis
- Meals
- Maintenance of existing Websites
- Activities which have been or are being grant aided by other sources
- Activities that duplicate what Fáilte Ireland or Tourism Ireland is currently undertaking (in a particular market, region).
- Unpaid expenditure
- Recoverable VAT
- In-kind contributions
- Expenditure paid for by a person other than the grantee
- Fines, penalty payments, legal costs, audit fees, financial consultancy fees