

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

NATIONAL FESTIVALS AND PARTICIPATIVE EVENTS PROGRAMME 2015



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The National Festivals and Participative Events Programme is a competitive grant process. There is no guarantee of funding for events which achieve the minimum eligibility conditions. The fund is limited and all eligible applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis against the criteria set out in this document.

1. The Role of Fáilte Ireland

Fáilte Ireland is the National Tourism Development Authority of Ireland. Our role is to support the tourism industry and work to sustain Ireland as a high-quality and competitive tourism destination. We provide a range of practical business supports to help tourism businesses better manage and sell their products and services.

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.

2. What is the National Festivals and Participative Events Programme 2015?

Festivals and Events have been identified as being an important component of the Irish tourism product offering. Festivals provide opportunities to showcase culture, people and places, thereby greatly improving the visitor experience of Ireland. They also help improve the distribution of tourism revenue around the country. Consequently, Fáilte Ireland provides considerable support to festivals, investing approximately €4 million in 210 festivals around Ireland in 2014.

The programme aims to enhance the growth, quality, competitiveness and sustainability of tourism in Ireland by improving the visitor experience. Support is provided by way of current funding.

3. Who is the Programme aimed at?

The programme is aimed at large festivals and participative events who attract additional overseas tourists to Ireland and generate economic benefits for the host locality while also appealing to our best prospect visitor segments.

What should successful applicants do well?

- Animate the identified programme areas within Ireland in line with Fáilte Ireland's strategy. Specifically, the Wild Atlantic Way, Dublin and the East, South & Midlands.
- Build on Irish tourism's key strengths.
- Provide tourists with compelling experiences.
- Generate motivating on-line content which can be used for future tourism promotion.

The following categories of festivals and events are ineligible for this programme.

- a) Domestic festivals: festivals that attract domestic audiences only and/or have previously applied for funding to Fáilte Ireland's Regional Festival Fund.
- b) Large spectator-based sporting events.
- c) Agricultural shows and countryside fairs.
- d) Purely commercial events with limited tourism appeal.



4. What's different about this year's programme?

Research shows that recent performance on overseas markets has been very encouraging. In 2013 overseas visitors delivered a twelve percent growth in value and a six percent growth in volume. As we look towards the future it is important that we build upon recent momentum to drive further growth internationally. Now is the time to sharpen our focus on best prospects and to step up our game in terms of targeting, reaching, influencing and winning high value international customers.

From a strategic perspective one of Fáilte Ireland's key objectives is to build sustainable international sales, driving accelerated growth from key overseas markets where high value customers stay longer and spend more. To address these objectives a new approach to identifying and defining best prospects for growth has been put in place. This has resulted in:

- (a) new customer segmentation models,
- (b) a greater focus on visitor experiences,
- (c) more clearly defined programme area propositions.

A. Overseas Visitor Segmentation

In the overseas markets, the following priority market segments have been identified:

- **Culturally Curious:** Who tend to be slightly older, are very independent minded and are interested in places of historic and cultural appeal.
- **Social Energisers:** Who tend to be young, looking for new experiences and excitement.
- **Great Escapers:** Who are all about getting away from it all, renewing family bonds and spending time together in a beautiful place.

[FURTHER INFORMATION HERE](#) 

B. Tourism Experiences

For today's international tourist, holidays are less about 'doing' something and more about feeling that they are truly immersed in the place and/or an activity. A tourism experience is multi-faceted. It comes from the combination of the place, its attractions and activities, the people and stories that are shared.

Research has shown that five different Irish holiday experiences are highly motivating for overseas tourists, these are:

- **Vibe of the City:** fresh, exciting and stimulating experiences and attractions in a lively atmosphere.
- **Living Historical Stories:** interesting and informative experiences and attractions in urban and rural areas.
- **Connecting with the People of Ireland:** immersing themselves in Irish culture.
- **Awakening the Senses:** stimulating and profound experiences within natural and unspoiled landscapes.
- **Getting Active in Nature:** revitalising and energising experiences and activities in the spectacular outdoors.

C. Programme Area Propositions

In a competitive market place, Ireland can best achieve a higher profile (and incremental growth) by putting tourism propositions of scale and singularity in front of would-be visitors. Hence, a programme area approach has been adopted in presenting Ireland to overseas tourists.

Three key geographically based, thematic propositions have been identified. These are:

- **Dublin:** The city, and its hinterland, needs to differentiate itself as a 'must-visit' destination for anyone visiting Ireland or contemplating a city-based trip in Europe. Substantial work has been done by the Grow Dublin Taskforce on this.

[FURTHER INFORMATION HERE](#) 

- **Wild Atlantic Way:** A new strategic tourism initiative developed by Fáilte Ireland to present the West Coast of Ireland as a tourism product of scale and singularity, designed to encourage incremental overseas visitors to the West Coast of Ireland. This has been achieved through the development of a long distance coastal touring route stretching from the Inishowen Peninsula in Donegal to Kinsale in West Cork.

[FURTHER INFORMATION HERE](#) >

- **East, South & Midlands:** The proposition for this geographic area is currently being developed. Once it is completed details will be made available on www.failteireland.ie/festivals. You are encouraged to check this site regularly.

All festivals and events securing funding must be able to clearly state how their offering (a) meets the needs of one or more of the priority markets segments, (b) creates memorable tourism experiences and (c) fits with the host programme area's tourism proposition.



5. What are the programme's qualifying conditions (or minimum eligibility thresholds)?

To be considered for funding, festivals must clearly demonstrate the following:

- Festivals must generate a minimum of 3,000 bednights, of which a significant proportion must be overseas visitor bednights. In the absence of valid accommodation surveys or audience surveys, the number of bednights arising will be estimated by Fáilte Ireland based, in part, on data provided by the applicant.
- Participative sporting events must generate a minimum of 4,000 bednights, of which a significant proportion must be overseas visitor bednights. The bednights arising will be estimated by Fáilte Ireland based, in part, on data provided by the applicant.
- Festivals and events must raise a minimum of €50,000 in private sector funding, e.g., ticket sales, sponsorship, merchandise, etc.

There is no guarantee of funding for events which achieve the minimum eligibility conditions. The fund is limited and all eligible applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis against the criteria set out.

It is important to note that applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis. Only those applications that meeting the minimum eligibility conditions highlighted in section 5 will be assessed against the full set of evaluation criteria.



6. What are the evaluation criteria?

Applications for funding will be assessed under the following criteria:

1.	Visitor experience
2.	Fitness for purpose
3.	Sales and Marketing
4.	Digital capability
5.	Event management
6.	Finance and funding

The criteria are explained in more detail in the table on page five.

7. Who can apply?

All groups, companies and individuals who have a business address and a valid Tax Clearance Certificate in the Republic of Ireland.

8. How and when to apply?

All applications must be made online at www.failteireland.ie/festivals. Only application forms submitted online via the Fáilte Ireland website can be considered for funding.

For details of opening and closing dates for the programme see www.failteireland.ie/festivals

9. What can be funded?

Eligible Expenses

Only paid expenditure, which has been incurred by the Grantee, may be considered eligible for grant aid. Eligible costs must have clearly identifiable tourism benefits. The following costs are eligible for funding by Fáilte Ireland:

- **Marketing activity:** Up to 100% of the cost of selected marketing activities with an international, national and regional reach. This may include advertising, PR, e-marketing etc. Eligible costs may also include the cost of branding the location during the event. However, local marketing and activation is not eligible.
- **Programming:** Up to 100% of the cost of selected programming activity where the programme element has not received other grant aid and is considered to deliver significant benefits to tourism.

- **Development Activities:** Up to 100% of development activity, e.g., feasibility studies, training, branding consultancy may be covered once it is clearly of long-term benefit and/or raises the event's profile.
- **Cross Border Events:** Only that portion of the project taking place in the Republic of Ireland can be funded. In this regard, applicants will need to clearly demonstrate the benefit to tourism in the Republic of Ireland from the cross border event.

In certain circumstances Fáilte Ireland may at its own discretion, be willing to provide multi-annual funding to a limited number of festivals.

Ineligible Expenses

The following costs are ineligible for funding:

- Local marketing activity.
- Unpaid expenditure.
- Expenditure paid for by a person other than the grantee.
- Operational Costs/Overheads/Administrative Expenses - salaries, rent, phone, supplies, postage, photocopying, food, accommodation & subsistence.
- Events that promote unapproved accommodation.
- Capital costs.
- In general the cost of items for resale are ineligible except where it can be demonstrated that they will deliver significant tourism benefits and where they have been expressly allowed in the letter of offer.
- Activities which have been or are being grant aided by other public sources (except where this co-funding arrangement has been acknowledged and expressly allowed in the letter of offer).
- Travel and related costs unless expressly allowed in the letter of offer.
- Activities that duplicate what Fáilte Ireland is currently performing.
- Activities not specified in the letter of offer.
- Activities undertaken prior to grant approval or outside the dates as specified in the grant offer letter.
- Recoverable VAT.
- In-kind contributions.
- Fines, penalty payments, legal cost, audit fees, financial consultancy fees.
- Cash expenditure.

All applicants should be aware that the documentation required for any grant awarded, including Tax Clearance Certificates, bank statements and claim documentation must be in the name of the grantee.

Detailed breakdown of the evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Objective/Purpose of the criterion	Applicant must establish that...
1. Visitor Experience	To determine the festival's ability to create memorable experiences for target priority market segments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The festival's programme is motivating for one or more of the target priority overseas market segments. An outline programme must be submitted; where programme content is not confirmed an outline of the proposed content or festival theme is required. The festival builds memorable visitor experiences and responds to a clearly identified and defined overseas visitor need.
2. Fitness for Purpose	To assess the festival's ability to incrementally grow visitor numbers and make a positive contribution to the local area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timing of the festival is such that it brings extra overseas tourists to the area (rather than just providing something for tourists already in the area to see and do). The festival is overseas visitor-centric and supports the host area's tourism proposition. The festival has potential for sustainable local gains and legacy benefits, e.g., increased economic activity and improved profile.
3. Sales and Marketing	To establish that the festival can generate overseas interest and sales for the festival and/or tourism businesses in the host area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive tourism marketing plan for the event has been developed and submitted. <p style="text-align: center;">FURTHER INFORMATION HERE ></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A detailed overseas sales plan has been developed and submitted. This includes online activities, tour operator channels and other tactical sales initiatives (as appropriate). <p style="text-align: center;">FURTHER INFORMATION HERE ></p>
4. Digital Capability	To determine the festival's ability to develop an on-line community and to create motivating digital content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The festival has an on-line presence and utilises social media channels to generate interest among overseas tourists. The event optimises opportunities to create and share motivating digital content.
5. Event Management	To ensure that the festival will be well managed and well delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The experience and ability of the organisers is appropriate to manage the proposed festival. Appropriate structures and arrangements are in place to deliver a high quality festival which will appeal to an overseas audience.
6. Finance & Funding	To clarify the festival's financial sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive, well structured, fact based business plan and a full budget for the event has been developed and submitted. Your business plan is an opportunity to demonstrate your business strategies for the festival/event. <p style="text-align: center;">FURTHER INFORMATION HERE ></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An appropriate level of private sector funding has been sourced for the event (minimum €50,000).

10. What else do you need to know?

This section outlines other points that applicants should be aware of.

- **Grant Letter of Offer:** Successful applicants will receive a grant letter of offer. The grant offer letter will form the contract between Fáilte Ireland and the applicants. Any possible grant offer can only be made to the party identified and named in the application form.
- **Grant Drawdown Requirements:**
 - Grant payments will only be made to the body specified as the grantee. Expenditure paid by a third party, unless reimbursed by the grantee, will not be grant aided.
 - Up to 50% of the grant may be paid once the signed acceptance of the letter of offer has been received. Fáilte Ireland reserves the right to withhold this pre-event payment in certain circumstances.
 - Any remaining amounts will be paid after the festival/event has taken place and when the grant claim (for the full grant amount) has been audited and verified by Fáilte Ireland.
- In the event of any delays in payment of the grant there is no liability on the part of Fáilte Ireland or the exchequer to make good any shortfall. The grant will be released subject to Fáilte Ireland being in receipt of sufficient funds.
- **Tax Clearance Certificate:** The need for a current 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 payment under this scheme.
- **Public procurement:** Please note that EU public procurement procedures must be followed where applicable. For further information please refer to: <http://etenders.gov.ie/general-procurement-guidance>.
- **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.

Should you require any further Information
please email: events@failteireland.ie

