

## Priority 3 – Support for rural tourism

### What the grants are for

The aim of this funding priority is to support projects that will encourage more tourists to come, to stay longer and to spend more money in rural areas.

### Who can apply

These grants can fund a wide range of projects that provide products and services to tourists. Who can apply depends on whether or not the project is profit-making and commercially run.

Type of project	Examples (these are illustrations only)	Who can apply
Commercial, profit-making project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourist attractions</li><li>• Accommodation</li><li>• Retail outlets</li><li>• Food and drink outlets</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small and micro businesses, including social enterprises</li><li>• Farmers wanting to diversify into tourism</li><li>• Charities</li></ul>
Makes some income to offset costs but is not intended to make a profit	Museum or cultural space, festivals promoting local food or crafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rural businesses, including social enterprises</li><li>• Farmers</li><li>• Land-owners</li><li>• People or groups representing rural communities</li><li>• Charities</li><li>• Public bodies</li></ul>
Generates no income	Free tourist attractions, for example local landmarks, trails and signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rural businesses, including social enterprises</li><li>• Farmers</li><li>• Land-owners</li><li>• People or groups representing rural communities</li><li>• Charities</li><li>• Public bodies</li></ul>

## How much funding is available

The amount of funding you can get depends on whether or not the project is commercially run and intended to make a profit. The minimum grant is £2,500 and the maximum grant that Making it Local LAG will offer is £150,000. ( Making it Local have made a local decision that they will not fund accommodation projects over £35,000.

Type of project	Maximum percentage
Commercial, profit-making project (such as a tourist attraction)	up to 40%
Makes some income to offset costs but is not intended to make a profit (such as small buildings for tourist information; festivals)	up to 80%
Generates no income (such as a new cycle path)	up to 100%

**\*Industrial de minimis state aid regulations** mean that a maximum of €200,000 (currently around £170,000) of public funds is available to an undertaking in any rolling period of 3 financial years. If you have had other public funding this may count towards the industrial de minimis aid amount and reduce the amount of money you can apply for from LEADER. Any industrial de minimis state aid received by linked businesses will count towards the industrial de minimis amount.

Basic Payment Scheme and Countryside Stewardship payments do NOT count towards the industrial de minimis limit.

## Grant funding can help pay for:

- Tourist attractions and activities including
  - developing events and festivals promoting local products
  - developing culture, leisure, heritage, visitor activities or attractions and the marketing and signposting of these
  - supporting niche products linked to quality local food, culture, sport heritage and rural crafts
- Developing tourism infrastructure including
  - access infrastructure to help people connect to the natural environment such as paths and cycle-ways
  - small buildings for tourist information centres, visitor centres, shelters and signage and interpretation boards.

- developing innovative technology that enhances collaboration between businesses and provides information to attract visitors.
- Developing quality accommodation if there are clear wider benefits to the local tourism economy and if activities do not displace existing accommodation
- Providing benefits to the wider tourism economy in the rural area for example supporting shops, catering services, restaurants and cafes

### **Costs could include:**

- constructing and/or improving buildings
- buying new and second hand equipment and machinery

The following costs are also eligible, if they form part of a larger project being funded:

- architect, engineer or consultant fees related to the project (as long as these don't add up to more than 15% of the project's total eligible costs)
- buying or developing a dedicated piece of computer software (but not an off-the-shelf piece of software like Microsoft Office)
- patents, licences, copyrights or trademarks
- landscaping, when it is 'making good' as part of a larger construction project
- development of marketing materials, but not their production or distribution
- capital costs involved in supporting events and festivals
- short term salaries associated with project development

Purchasing of buildings for community use where the project is not intended to make a profit **may** be eligible. Please talk to the LAG before submitting an EOI if your project involves the purchase of a building for community use.

### **What isn't covered**

In addition to the [general list of costs which can't be claimed](#), salaries and office overheads of staff employed to run events and festivals are not eligible under this priority.