BIM Ireland's Seafood Development Agency

Fisheries Local Action Groups
Grupaí Gníomhaíochta Iascaigh Áitiúla

European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)

FLAG Coastal Communities Development Scheme

Guidelines for Applicants

Arna chomhchistiú ag an Aontas Eorpach

Co-Funded by the European Union

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1.0	Initial draft	11th November 2026

Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to assist applicants as they prepare an application to this grant-aid scheme. The focus in this document is on describing the full process to applicants, and to help them prepare a quality application. Detailed guidance on how to complete each question is contained within the application form itself, on BIM's grants management system.

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Call Basis

The scheme will be open for applications from **midday on 18th November 2026 until 5pm on 17th February 2027** with all projects to be completed and claims submitted in line with specific grantee timelines as detailed in the Letter of Offer.

The call is competitive, meaning that all eligible applications will be scored and ranked and, in the case that the scheme is oversubscribed, funding will be allocated based on ranking.

Applications are assessed on the basis of the information provided, so it is critical that applicants take the time to understand eligibility and evaluation criteria and provide the required information and evidence to support their application in line with these criteria. The selection process is designed with multiple review points by differing parties to check that due process was followed.

Applicable Geographic Areas

This scheme is intended to support development in coastal communities, therefore only projects located within 10km of the coast (high water mark) are eligible for funding under this scheme.
In exceptional circumstances enterprises or initiatives located further inland that have a direct impact on the coast may also be supported. If projects are more than 10km from the coast, the applicant must provide information and/or evidence of a direct link to the FLAG area. The information provided will be used to assess eligibility of the project.

The Local Development Strategy (LDS) for each FLAG applies to a specific geographic area, details of these areas are available online: Check that your project is within 10km of the Coast – Fisheries Local Action Groups
Each FLAG may only consider applications from within the area covered by its LDS.

Eligible Beneficiaries - Who can apply for this Scheme

Subject to Article 11 of the EMFAF Regulation, the following classes of beneficiary may be eligible to apply for support under this scheme.

- Individuals (Training)

- Small Cale Coastal Fishing (SSCF) vessel owners
- Blue Economy Enterprises, micro or small, specifically:
    - Seafood enterprises (including algae and sea minerals)
    - Niche Blue Economy coastal tourism enterprises
    - Marine sport and leisure enterprises
    - Marine enterprises and ancillary service providers
    - If you are a sole trader and do not have a CRO number, you must provide your valid Irish Tax Reference Number (TRN) / PPSN, as registered with Revenue.
- Charities (with a gross income under €500,000)
- Fisheries co-operatives or collectives
- Community organisations

The FLAG Board may restrict calls for applications to categories of beneficiary.
All applicants must have a bank account in the applicant's name registered on BIM's grants management system (to be clear, this refers to the applicant organisation and not the applicant contact person). Payments will only be made to a bank account in the name of the applicant organisation.
All applicants who receive an offer of grant aid must provide tax clearance when claiming their grant.

Amounts Grant Aided

Eligible Grant Aid Caps by FLAG Region

Grant rates and caps have been set by each FLAG Region, based on their local priorities.

FLAG North

Beneficiary Type	Grant aid Rate	Grant Cap	Total Project Value
Individuals (Training)	50%	€50,000.00	€100,000.00
Blue Economy Enterprises	50%	€50,000.00	€100,000.00
SSCF vessel owners	80%	€50,000.00	€62,500.00
Fisheries Co-operatives or Collectives	60%	€50,000.00	€83,333.00
Community Organisations or Charities, Public good projects	80%	€50,000.00	€62,500.00
Community Organisations or Charities, Private projects	50%	€50,000.00	€100,000.00

- FLAG North has ringfenced 30% of its budget for projects seeking grant aid of up to €10,000 GRANT AID. Should FLAG North not receive applications to the value of 30% of its budget at this level, the remainder will then fund all other project values.
- There is a cap on feasibility studies of €20,000 grant aid. In addition, FLAG North will limit the total grant aid allocated to feasibility study projects in their region to €60,000.

FLAG Northeast

Beneficiary Type	Grant aid Rate	Grant Cap	Total Project Value
Individuals (Training)	50%	€300,000.00	€600,000.00
Blue Economy Enterprises	50%	€300,000.00	€600,000.00
SSCF vessel owners	80%	€300,000.00	€375,000.00
Fisheries Co-operatives or Collectives	60%	€300,000.00	€500,000.00

Community Organisations or Charities, Public good projects	80%	€300,000.00	€300,000.00
Community Organisations or Charities, Private projects	50%	€300,000.00	€600,000.00

- Any application for a project which includes a diesel engine or generator must provide evidence that it can run on HVO

FLAG Northwest

Beneficiary Type	Grant aid Rate	Grant Cap	Total Project Value
Individuals (Training)	50%	€100,000.00	€200,000.00
Blue Economy Enterprises	50%	€100,000.00	€200,000.00
SSCF vessel owners	80%	€100,000.00	€125,000.00
Fisheries Co-operatives or Collectives	60%	€100,000.00	€166,666.67
Community Organisations or Charities, Public good projects	80%	€100,000.00	€125,000.00
Community Organisations or Charities, Private projects	50%	€100,000.00	€200,000.00

- FLAG Northwest recommends ringfencing one third of its annual budget to be used on Project Applications under €10,000 of EXPENDITURE
- Cap on glamping pods/ glamping unit is €15,000 grant aid
- Any application for Mobile food operations/Mobile Saunas/Mobile hot tubs which use diesel generators must show that the generator can use HVO

FLAG West

Beneficiary Type	Grant aid Rate	Grant Cap	Total Project Value
Individuals (Training)	50%	€5,000.00	€10,000.00
Blue Economy Enterprises	50%	€75,000.00	€150,000.00
SSCF vessel owners	80%	€75,000.00	€93.750.00
Fisheries Co-operatives or Collectives	60%	€75,000.00	€125,000.00

Community Organisations or Charities, Public good projects	80%	€75,000.00	€93,750.00
Community Organisations or Charities, Private projects	50%	€75,000.00	€150,000.00

- Applications for Capital items for use in one off events/festivals are capped at €10,000 of GRANT AID
- Applications for Capital expenditure on Community centres/halls is capped at €20,000 of GRANT AID
- Generators are capped at €5,000 grant aid for all beneficiary types
- For investments related to the use of seaweed the following requirements apply If the project involves seaweed gathering the applicant must provide a Seaweed Harvesting Plan
- If the project involves the regular purchase of seaweed from third party suppliers, the applicant must provide evidence that this is sustainably harvested/ sources by those suppliers.
- Blue Economy Enterprise applicants are restricted to 1 application per call under the Scheme

FLAG Southwest

Beneficiary	**Grant aid Rate**	**Grant Cap**	**Total Project Value**
Community Organisations or Charities, Public good projects	80%	€75,000.00	€93,750.00
Community Organisations or Charities, Private projects	50%	€75,000.00	€150,000.00
SSCF vessel owners	80%	€100,000.00	€125,000.00
Fisheries Co-Operatives or Collectives	60%	€100,000.00	€166,666.00
Blue Economy Enterprises	50%	€100,000.00	€200,000.00
Individuals	50%	€5,000.00	€10,000.00

- Marine or maritime sporting organisations who are not eligible for funding under the Sports Capital Programmes, Community Sport Facilities Fund, may be considered under the FLAG programme. Evidence of non-eligibility to the Sports Capital Programme will need to be provided at application stage. https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-culture-communications-and-sport/services/sports-capital/
- Additionally, Sail Training Clubs and Rowing Clubs apply to FLAG are required to demonstrate a wider outreach and education of maritime/ fisheries/ marine biodiversity. The applicant will be required to provide evidence at application stage of their plan to host two public events in the coming year.

FLAG South

Beneficiary	Grant aid Rate	Grant Cap	Total Project Value
Community Organisations or Charities, Public good projects	80%	€60,000.00	€75,000.00
Community Organisations or Charities, Private projects	50%	€60,000.00	€120,000.00
SSCF vessel owners	80%	€80,000.00	€100,000.00
Fisheries Co-Operatives or Collectives	60%	€60,000.00	€100,000.00
Individuals	50%	€5,000.00	€10,000.00
Blue Economy Enterprises	50%	€100,000.00	€200,000.00

- Any sporting organisation who is not eligible for funding under the Sports Capital Programmes, Community Sport Facilities Fund, may be considered under the FLAG programme. Evidence of non-eligibility to the Sports Capital Programme will need to be provided at application stage. https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-culture-communications-and-sport/services/sports-capital/
- A maximum of 20% of South FLAG allocated budget for this call, will be available to blue economy vessel re-engining projects. This is limited to established businesses or vessels which can demonstrate a minimum of 5 years trading activity.

FLAG Southeast

Beneficiary	Grant aid Rate	Grant Cap	Total Project Value
Community Organisations or Charities, Public good projects	80%	€50,000.00	€62,500.00
Community Organisations or Charities, Private projects	50%	€50,000.00	€100,000.00
SSCF vessel owners	80%	€80,000.00	€100,000.00
Fisheries Co-Operatives or Collectives	60%	€60,000.00	€100,000.00
Individuals	50%	€5,000.00	€10,000.00
Blue Economy Enterprises	50%	€75,000.00	€150,000.00

- No minimum threshold for grant aid applies and projects of all sizes, within the caps defined above, will be considered.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenditure

When an application is submitted, an email is sent to acknowledge receipt of the application. Any expenditure incurred before the email is issued will be ineligible. **Any expenditure incurred *after* the date of this email but *before* a Letter of Offer would be considered eligible in any claim, but such expenditure is entirely at the applicant's risk since an offer of grant aid may not be made.** It is expected that this scheme will be oversubscribed (meaning that the applications received are likely to exceed the budget available), so even applications that are deemed eligible and that exceed the minimum score may not receive funding.

Eligible expenditure

Each FLAG has developed a Local Development Strategy (LDS) specific to their regional needs. They will consider any investments in capital items and supports that are consistent with their LDS and align with the Scheme Objectives in fisheries, aquaculture and coastal communities. The following list provides types of expenditure which may be eligible:

- Job Creation,
- Innovation & Diversification
- Social well-being and cultural heritage
- Added Value
- Lifelong Learning
- Environmental assets and mitigation of climate change,
- Projects consistent with LDSs, Article 30 of the EMFAF and this Scheme
- Expenditure on capital equipment
- Expenditure on capital infrastructure
- Accredited training
- Cooperation activities involving FLAGs*

Projects must be located within 10km of the coast to be eligible for funding. If projects are more than 10km from the coast, the applicant must provide information and/or evidence of a direct link to the FLAG area. The information provided will be used to assess eligibility of the project.

Ineligible Expenditure by FLAG Region

Projects not aligned to the objectives of the LDS are not eligible.

Some FLAG Regions have defined specific exclusions, based on their local priorities, as follows.

FLAG Region	Ineligible expenditure
Northwest	• Log cabins, AIRBNB, guesthouses, B&B's, hotels (Glamping and camping accommodation is eligible) •
Northeast	• Marine Tourism new build vessels
West	• Accommodation projects • Investments by field sports organisations at any level • Playgrounds • Carparks • E-bikes
Southwest	• Marine tourism re-engining • Marine Tourism new build vessels (other than where consideration may be given to active commercial fishing vessel owners for diversification projects) • Kayaks • Trailers, other than specific purpose boat trailers or refrigerated seafood trailers • Jet skis • Vans of any type • Saunas
South	• Playgrounds • Outboard engines, for any vessel or organisation • Food trucks

	• Any applicant who has previously received grant aid for specific capital expenditure items may not receive repeat grant aid for more of those same items. For example (but not limited to) kayaks, food trucks, ribs, lifejackets, wetsuits, etc.

Ineligible Expenditure All Regions

- Any expenditure incurred prior to date of acknowledgement of an application is ineligible.
- Article 13 of the EMFAF Regulation sets out clearly certain measures/costs that are not eligible for funding, therefore this scheme may not provide funding for the following:
    - Operations that increase the fishing capacity of a fishing vessel
    - The acquisition of equipment that increases the ability of a fishing vessel to find fish
    - The construction, acquisition or importation of fishing vessels
    - The transfer or reflagging of fishing vessels to third countries, including through the creation of joint ventures with partners of third countries
    - The temporary or permanent cessation of fishing activities
    - Exploratory fishing
    - The transfer of ownership of a business
    - Direct restocking, except explicitly provided for as a reintroduction measure or other conservation measures in a Union legal act or in the case of experimental restocking
    - The construction of new ports or new auction halls, with the exception of new landing sites
    - Market intervention mechanisms aiming to temporarily or permanently withdraw fishery or aquaculture products from the market with a view to reducing supply in order to prevent price decline or to drive prices up
    - Investments on board fishing vessels necessary to comply with the requirements under Union law in force at the time of submission of the application for support, including requirements under the Union's obligations in the context of RFMOs
    - Investments on board fishing vessels that have carried out fishing activities for less than 60 days in the two calendar years preceding the year of submission of the application for support
    - The replacement or modernisation of a main or ancillary engine of a fishing vessel
- In addition, the Managing Authority has further determined that the following costs are also ineligible for funding under this scheme:
    - Projects which are eligible for funding under other schemes implemented under the Seafood Development Programme may not be funded under this scheme
    - Applications by LEADER/Local Development Companies acting on behalf of a third party.
    - Applications where LEADER/Local Development Companies have a beneficial interest or a governing/ managing / operational role.
    - Applications to co fund a project where there is no separation of expenditure item or no stand-alone project.
    - Compensation for loss of income or additional costs

- Rental of machinery from another establishment
- Activities considered business operational costs
- The cost of existing product, stock or raw material used as part of the project
- Energy, maintenance and operational costs
- Industry standard costs such e.g. BRC
- Travel and subsistence costs (except for FLAGs and for capacity building projects).
- Second hand items
- Land costs
- Leasing costs
- VAT is not eligible for any applicant or Beneficiary to this Scheme, except where explicitly provided for
- Projects for which any statutory consent is required, where that consent has not been obtained

- These items are ineligible under EMFAF
  - Intangible costs, such as the cost of pre-financing and of arranging loans and interest, administrative costs, patents, invitations to tender etc.
  - Repair and maintenance work.
  - Like-for-like replacement of equipment.
  - Under no circumstances will grant aid be provided to replace any given item grant aided within the previous five years.
  - Any expenditure incurred before the date of acknowledgement of receipt of the grant application is ineligible.
  - Interest on debt, except in the form of an interest rate subsidy or guarantee fee subsidy.
  - Landscaping and other embellishment works, except those specifically required as a condition of planning & recreational equipment costs
  - Vehicles for passenger transport.
  - Vehicles required for market distribution.
  - Materials which are normally written off within a year, including consumables.
  - Office equipment, including desktop computers, laptops and tablets.
  - Consultancy costs not directly related to the planning, preparation and execution of the project including costs of management consultancy

Submission Deadline

The scheme will be open for applications from **midday on 18h November 2026 until 5pm on 27th February 2027.**

All applications are to be made through BIM's grants management system.

Claim Deadline

Claims submitted in line with specific grantee timelines as detailed in the Letter of Offer.

Application and Approval Process

This flow shows the steps involved in getting from application preparation to receiving a Letter of Offer.



- Register on BIM's grants management system.
- Prepare your application by gathering all the required information and entering it in BIM's grants management system. The system allows you to edit the form over time, and to add additional information as you gather it. When you have completed the form, you submit it to BIM through the system. After the submission of your application, changes or additions are no longer possible unless the administrator requires you to make edits to the application form.
- BIM carries out a series of eligibility checks, to ensure that everything you have provided us with is compliant with scheme rules.
- All eligible applications are evaluated by sub-committees of FLAG Boards (TEIC) and assigned a score.
- All applications meeting the minimum score are reviewed by the FLAG Board and either approved or rejected for funding.
- Letters of Offer will be issued by BIM to the highest-ranking projects approved by the FLAG Boards until the budget is fully utilised.

When will you hear from us



1. When you submit your application, you will receive an automated email acknowledging receipt. If you do not receive this email, it is because the application has not been successfully submitted. Please check your spam folder in case the acknowledgement of receipt has been directed there. *Please note that an acknowledgement of receipt email is not a confirmation of grant aid. At this point the application is being processed only.* Your application will be assigned a unique reference number, and you will be notified of this in the acknowledgement email. The unique reference number should be used in any subsequent correspondence or enquiry with BIM.
   Any expenditure incurred *after* the date of this email <u>but</u> *before* a Letter of Offer would be considered eligible in any claim, but such expenditure is entirely at the applicant's risk since an offer of grant aid may not be made.

2. Some applicants may hear from us at the end of this stage, but some applicants may have their form returned if it is incorrect/incomplete:

   You will hear from us if there is an issue with your application or your application is deemed ineligible.

   It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure a full and complete application is submitted. If, during eligibility checking, it is discovered that information is missing, or is incorrect your application may, if time allows, be returned to you describing the issue(s). Given the tight timeline for processing grant applications in a competitive call, if a grant application form is returned to an applicant for correction(s) to be made to it, applicants will be given a deadline to make the corrections and resubmit their grant application. If it is still incorrect or incomplete on resubmission it will be deemed ineligible.

3. Following evaluation by the FLAG Boards, BIM will inform you of the FLAG Board's decision.
   a. The highest ranked projects which have been approved for funding will receive a Letter of Offer, until the budget allocation for 2027 has been utilised.
   b. Those applications which have not been approved for funding will be notified, explaining the FLAG Board's reason for not approving the project for funding.
   c. Applications which have been approved for funding, but which did not score highly enough to receive an offer based on available budget will be temporarily held on file. Should additional budget become available (e.g. if an offer is not accepted), the next highest-

ranking projects will receive an offer. When it is clear that all available budget has been utilised, the remaining applications will receive a letter of rejection.

The more complete your application is when first submitted, the more likely it is to proceed smoothly through all stages with minimum delays. We encourage all applicants to take the time to fully understand the application form, and the evaluation criteria so that they submit a quality application.
Things to note before starting your application

General guidance

- Applicants are advised to check that their application includes all the relevant information, as it will be evaluated based on the submitted content.
- The primary communication method used in the administration of this scheme is email. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that BIM is on their safe list of contacts, and that they regularly check their email for any updates or deadline requirements.
- All applications must be made in euro.
- All Projects which align with the scheme objectives and with the FLAG region's Local Development Strategy (LDS)
- All applicants must have a bank account in the applicant's name registered on BIM's grants management system (to be clear, this refers to the applicant *organisation* and not the applicant contact person). Payments will only be made to a bank account in the name of the applicant organisation.
- All applicants who receive an offer of grant aid must provide tax clearance when claiming their grant.

Specific requirements per Beneficiary Type

Individual

- Notes:
  - The only project type individuals may apply for is training.
  - Must be living or working within 10km of the coast, validated by proof of home/work address
  - The application must be submitted before the training starts, and before any course fees are paid.
  - Evidence of accreditation must be available by 31st December 2027.
  - Travel and subsistence costs are not eligible for funding.
- Documentation required:
  - Course quotes
  - Proof of home address (a bank statement header or a utility bill such as electricity, gas, telephone, mobile phone, internet or TV in your name, showing your eircode, and dated within the last 6 months) or proof of employment address (a letter from your employer on headed paper, dated within the last 6 months, providing confirmation of the eircode of your usual place of employment, and specifically naming you as a current employee).

SSCF Vessel Owner

- Notes:
  - A higher grant rate is reserved for SSCF vessel owners, but only for SSCF projects related to the catch, product (value added) or vessel.
  - A separate SSCF Scheme which is a dedicated scheme for SSCF vessels is currently available under the EMFAF and administered by BIM at https://bim.ie/funding/small-scale-coastal-fisheries-scheme/ . Applicants are advised to review this scheme in the first instance. In addition, BIM runs a Fleet Safety Scheme https://bim.ie/fisheries/funding/fleet-safety-scheme/. Any expenditure items listed in those schemes will not be available for funding via FLAG's.
  - To be eligible for the SSCF grant rate the vessel owner must not have a beneficial interest in any non-SSCF category vessel or enterprise.
  - The vessel must be actively fishing, and this will be validated by data held by the SFPA:
    - Vessels less than 10m LOA: vessel has registered sales notes of at least €1,000 in each of the last two calendar years preceding the date of this application, Dates that will be checked for Fishing Activity 1-Jan-2024 and 31-Dec-2025 inclusive.
    - Vessels between 10m and 12m LOA must show logbook fishing activity for at least 60 days across the two calendar years preceding the date of this application, Dates that will be checked for Fishing Activity 1-Jan-2024 and 31-Dec-2025 inclusive.
    - It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all SFPA records are up to date. (There will be no facility to recheck Fishing Activity).

- If an SSCF vessel owner does not meet the applicant or project criteria for the higher SSCF grant rate, they may still apply under this scheme, but as a Blue Economy Enterprise.

- Documentation required:
  - Supplier quotes for all expenditure items made out to the applicant enterprise. Click here for full BIM Quote Guidelines
  - Evidence of matched funding clearly indicating how you plan to finance this project
  - Proof of project address: Please provide a bank statement header or utility bill such as electricity, gas, telephone, mobile phone, internet, or TV in your organisations name **dated within the last 6 months** as proof of the project address. In the case of projects such as food truck, surfing school, etc. where utility bills may not be available other proofs such as website, brochure or social media accounts showing applicant presence in the area may suffice.
  - Fishing vessel licence
  - If the vessel is in joint ownership, a Joint Vessel Owner Authorisation form must be completed

Blue Economy Enterprise

- Notes:

- The applicant must be a Micro or Small enterprise, as per the EU SME Definition:
  - Turnover and/or balance sheet <€10m
  - <50 FTE employees
  - Autonomous enterprise
  - The organisation must be registered with the Companies Registration Office.
  - The applicant must be active in one of the following areas of the blue economy:
    - Seafood enterprise (including algae and sea minerals) – note that if your operation requires SFPA approval with FFPP or PP activity codes, any investment in core processing activities will not be eligible under this scheme. You should instead apply under the Seafood Processing Capital Investment Scheme.
    - Niche Blue Economy coastal tourism
    - Marine sport and leisure
    - Marine industry and ancillary service providers
  - If the application is in support of a fishing vessel's operations, the vessel must be actively fishing, and this will be validated by data held by the SFPA:
    - Vessels less than 10m LOA: vessel has registered sales notes of at least €1,000 in each of the last two calendar years preceding the date of this application, Dates that will be checked for Fishing Activity 1-Jan-2024 and 31-Dec-2025 inclusive
    - Vessels 10m LOA or over must show logbook fishing activity for at least 60 days across the two calendar years preceding the date of this application, Dates that will be checked for Fishing Activity 1-Jan-2024 and 31-Dec-2025 inclusive
    - It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all SFPA records are up to date. (There will be no facility to recheck Fishing Activity)
- Documentation required:
  - Supplier quotes for all expenditure items made out to the applicant enterprise. Click here for full BIM Quote Guidelines

- Evidence of matched funding clearly indicating how you plan to finance this project
- Proof of project address: Please provide a bank statement header or utility bill such as electricity, gas, telephone, mobile phone, internet, or TV in your organisations name **dated within the last 6 months** as proof of the project address. In the case of projects such as food truck, surfing school, etc. where utility bills may not be available other proofs such as website, brochure or social media accounts showing applicant presence in the area may suffice.
- If the project is in support of a fishing vessel's operations:
  - Fishing vessel licence
  - If the vessel is in joint ownership, a Joint Vessel Owner Authorisation form must be completed

Charity

- Notes:
  - The Charity must be registered with the Irish Charities Regulator.
  - The Charity must have gross income of less than €500,000 (i.e. Tier 1 per Charities SORP 2026). This will be checked based on the most recent return to the Register of Charities.
  - The organisation must be registered with the Companies Registration Office.
  - As part of the application, you will need to indicate if the project is for the public good or if it is income generating, and this will determine the grant rate which might apply.
- Documentation required:
  - Supplier quotes for all expenditure items made out to the applicant enterprise. Click here for full BIM Quote Guidelines
  - Evidence of matched funding clearly indicating how you plan to finance this project
  - Proof of project address: Please provide a bank statement header or utility bill such as electricity, gas, telephone, mobile phone, internet, or TV in your organisations name **dated within the last 6 months** as proof of the project address. In the case of projects such as food truck, surfing school, etc. where utility bills may not be available other proofs such as website, brochure or social media accounts showing applicant presence in the area may suffice.

Fisheries Co-operative or Collective

- Notes:
  - A fisheries co-operative or collective means a formally constituted group which is recognised by the Implementing Authority (BIM).
  - Must be registered with the Companies Registrations Office.
- Documentation required:
  - Supplier quotes for all expenditure items made out to the applicant enterprise. Click here for full BIM Quote Guidelines
  - Evidence of matched funding clearly indicating how you plan to finance this project
  - Proof of project address: Please provide a bank statement header or utility bill such as electricity, gas, telephone, mobile phone, internet, or TV in your organisations name **dated within the last 6 months** as proof of the project address. In the case of projects such as food truck, surfing school, etc. where utility bills may not be available other proofs such as website, brochure or social media accounts showing applicant presence in the area may suffice.

Community Organisation

- Notes:
  - Must be legal entities registered with the Companies Registrations Office
- Documentation required:
  - Supplier quotes for all expenditure items made out to the applicant enterprise. Click here for full BIM Quote Guidelines
  - Evidence of matched funding clearly indicating how you plan to finance this project
  - Proof of project address: Please provide a bank statement header or utility bill such as electricity, gas, telephone, mobile phone, internet, or TV in your organisations name **dated within the last 6 months** as proof of the project address. In the case of projects such as food truck, surfing school, etc. where utility bills may not be available other proofs such as website, brochure or social media accounts showing applicant presence in the area may suffice.
  - Evidence of VAT irrecoverability: It is recognised that some Community Organisations may not be allowed to recover VAT. In such instances, if a letter can be provided from Revenue confirming your VAT status (i.e. exempt or not registered), the grant aid amounts can include VAT. Note that only a letter from Revenue will suffice – no other form of evidence will be accepted.

Standard Eligibility Checks

BIM will check the evidence provided by the applicant to ensure that all eligibility criteria set out are met, and that all required documentation has been provided.

FLAG Board Evaluation Scoring Criteria

Each application which passes eligibility is scored against 4 evaluation criteria.

- The maximum score on each criterion is 50, giving a total maximum score of 200.
- The pass score for each criterion is 30. If an application scores less than 30 points on any criterion it will not be recommended for funding, regardless of how high the scoring is on any other criterion.
- The overall pass score for an application is 120. If an application receives a total score of less than 120, it will not be recommended for funding.
- Each of the four scoring criteria has a related section on the application form.
- Each criteria has 3 sub-criteria, and you will see related questions on the application form.
- The answers you provide on the application form are what will be used to assign a score to each sub-criteria. It is important therefore that you take the time to understand the criteria laid out below, and your answers to the related questions.

Scoring Criterion 1: Compatibility with and contribution to the Local Development Strategy (LDS)
Max 50 points, made up of the following 3 sub-criteria.

Evaluation Criteria	Description	Evaluation Guidance	Score Range (Points)	Max Score
Need for the project	Does the project target a specific need or address a specific gap in the market as identified in the LDS (Analysis of Development	Poor demonstration of link to the LDS analysis	0-5	16
		Moderate demonstration of link to LDS analysis	6-11	
		Clear demonstration of link to LDS analysis	12-16	

	Needs and SWOT analysis in section 2 of LDS)			
Fit with Local Development Strategy	Does the project fit with the FLAG Region's Goals and Objectives (section 3 of LDS)	Poor link to the LDS actions	0-5	16
		Moderate link to the LDS actions	6-11	
		Clear link to the LDS actions	12-16	
Evidence of contribution to objectives, actions and targets in the LDS	Does this project maintain or create employment within 10km of the coastline, OR help an individual to obtain or maintain their job in the case of a training application	No/low level of job creation/maintenance for the level of investment sought	0-6	18
		Moderate level of job creation/maintenance for the level of investment sought	7-12	
		High level of job creation/maintenance for the level of investment sought	13-18	

Scoring Criterion 2: Robustness of the proposed project, timeframe to complete, and potential displacement
Max 50 points, made up of the following 3 sub-criteria

Evaluation Criteria	**Description**	**Evaluation Guidance**	**Score Range (Points)**	**Max Score**
Likelihood of success in delivering outcomes and outputs	Does the organisation's history, financials and management team provide confidence that the project can be successfully executed? For Individuals applying for training, does their education and career history provide confidence that the training can be successfully completed?	No/low level of confidence	0-5	16
		Moderate level of confidence	6-11	
		High level of confidence	12-16	
Likelihood of completing the project with the timeframe	Is there evidence that the required statutory consents are in place to deliver the project and is the proposed timeline achievable?	No/little evidence of robust project planning	0-6	18
		Moderate evidence of robust project planning	7-12	
		Clear evidence of robust project planning	13-18	
Is there sufficient evidence that displacement will not occur?	Does the evidence provided show that the proposed project will provide product/service for which there is	No/poor quality market research provided	0-5	16
			6-11	

*This is not relevant for Individuals applying for training. 10 marks will be given to all such applicants.	sufficient demand that is not being met by existing suppliers. Displacement occurs when FLAG funding allows an organisation to enter a market where demand is already being met by existing enterprises or where funding to existing enterprises gives them an unfair advantage.	Moderate market research provided		
		Clear evidence of sufficient demand provided	12-16	

Scoring Criterion 3: Sustainability
Max 50 points, made up of the following 3 sub-criteria

Evaluation Criteria	**Description**	**Evaluation Guidance**	**Score Range (Points)**	**Max Score**
Economic sustainability	Can the enterprise/service continue to operate into the future without further funding. Durability; Will the equipment applied for last for the control period (5 years from drawdown)	No/little evidence of long term planning	0-5	16
		Moderate evidence of long term planning	6-11	
		Clear evidence of long term planning	12-16	
Social sustainability *This is not relevant for Individuals applying for training. 10 marks will be given to all such applicants.	What impact (positive or negative) does this project have on shared use of resources on any sector or socioeconomic community?	No/low evidence of stakeholder engagement	0-5	16
		Moderate evidence of stakeholder engagement	6-11	
		Clear evidence of stakeholder engagement	12-16	
Environmental sustainability *This is not relevant for Individuals applying for training. 10 marks will be given to all such applicants.	Has the applicant demonstrated an understanding of organisational responsibilities in achieving Climate Action Targets and any impact this may have on their project?	No/Poor demonstration of understanding of Climate Action Plan targets	0-6	18
		Moderate demonstration of understanding of Climate Action Plan targets	7-12	
		Clear demonstration of understanding of Climate Action Plan targets	13-18	

Scoring Criterion 4: Appropriateness of finance, cost effectiveness and value for money
Max 50 points, made up of the following 3 sub-criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Description	Evaluation Guidance	Score Range (Points)	Max Score
Finance	Has the applicant clearly indicated that finance is in place to complete this project if approval is awarded	Low level of confidence in the evidence of financing plans provided	0-8	16
		High level of confidence in the evidence of financing plans provided	9-16	
Funding and scale of project	Does the project demonstrate cost effectiveness? Are all the items requested necessary and could the project be completed with less funding?	No/Poor evidence of the necessity of level of expenditure to achieve the project outcome	0-5	16
		Moderate evidence of the necessity of level of expenditure to achieve the project outcome	6-11	
		Clear evidence of the necessity of level of expenditure to achieve the project outcome	12-16	
Allocation of FLAG resources and value for money	Is the scale of the investment appropriate to the issues to be addressed. This criteria assesses the project from the point of view of "is this project the best use of FLAG funding to achieve the strategic priority the project addresses?"	No/Poor corelation between the level of funding and the issues addressed	0-6	18
		Moderate corelation between the level of funding and the issues addressed	7-12	
		Clear corelation between the level of funding and the issues addressed	13-18	

Offers/Rejections

Once the TEICs have scored all projects, the FLAG Boards meet and decide whether to approve or reject each application for funding. All approved applications will receive a ranking. Following the FLAG Boards' determination BIM will issue Letters of Rejection to all those rejected, and Letters of Offer to the highest ranking applications until all budget is utilised. Any remaining applications will temporarily be held on file until all offers are accepted. Should any offers not be accepted, the next highest ranking application(s) will receive an offer. When it is clear that all budget has been utilised, Letters of Rejection will be sent to the remaining applicants.

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Appeals

Appeals are allowed in line with BIM's standard Appeals Policy. However, the applicant is given 14 days to appeal, rather than 28, since this is a competitive call. In the case of the scheme being oversubscribed, a percentage of the budget will be retained for potential appeals. It is therefore important, in the interest of fairness to all applicants, that appeals are received in a timely manner so that the budget can be allocated/released as required.
Click here to view the BIM Appeals Policy

Further Information/Clarifications

Requests for further information/clarifications should be addressed, by email, to the contact details below. Where appropriate, responses to requests for further information/clarifications will be made available to all interested parties via grantshelpdesk@bim.ie

A dedicated feedback email address has been established to collect input from applicants on their experience of the grant's application process, and we would very much welcome your feedback, please contact us grantsfeedback@bim.ie