

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

REGIONAL FESTIVALS & PARTICIPATIVE EVENTS SCHEME FOR COUNTY SLIGO 2019



APPLICANT GUIDELINES



Closing Date for completed applications is 4.00pm, Monday, 18th February, 2019

1. BACKGROUND

In 2018, a new funding arrangement was put in place between Fáilte Ireland and Local Authorities to drive the implementation of tourism focused festivals and participative events. This saw local authorities administering the funding for Regional Festivals and Participative Events on behalf of Fáilte Ireland. Sligo County Council will administer this funding programme in Sligo for 2019.

2. WHAT IS THE REGIONAL FESTIVALS AND PARTICIPATIVE EVENTS SCHEME 2019?

This Scheme is aimed at supporting events which drive tourism and help to improve the visitor experience by animating destinations. Under this programme a budget is made by Fáilte Ireland to support festivals and participative events in Sligo to achieve these aims. Grants awarded in 2019 will be subject to available funding, the number of applications received and the quality and appropriateness of the applications in accordance with this scheme. Applicants should note the fund is competitive in nature and approval does not guarantee future funding.

3. WHAT ARE THE QUALIFYING CONDITIONS & MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY THRESHOLDS FOR THE SCHEME?

To be considered for funding, applicants need to demonstrate the following:

- The event must generate a minimum of **500** visitor or tourist bed nights in paid accommodation.
- Provide information on reaching targets as part of your post event form.
- The event must have a minimum expenditure of €10,000.
- For events that take place before 30th June, 2019 final claims must be submitted by the festival promoter by **Friday, 12th July, 2019.**
- For events that take place after the 1st July, 2019 claims must be submitted by the festival promoter by **Friday, 22th November, 2019.**

4. WHAT MUST SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS DEMONSTRATE?

The proposed event should:

- have the ability to generate an economic impact in the county.
- help to build memorable visitor experiences in the locality, by adding vibrancy and colour to the area.
- be comprehensive, professionally designed, organised and delivered.
- demonstrate the use of digital technology to widen reach and impact.

- Organisers of events must be available to brief Fáilte Ireland Tourist Information Offices and Sligo Tourism Ltd in advance about the event so that information can be shared with visitors.
- A clear business plan should be prepared to include a full income and expenditure budget for the event, and a comprehensive marketing and promotions plan.

5. WHAT EVENTS DOES THE SCHEME AIM TO PROMOTE?

The Scheme is aimed at events that fit into one of the following categories:

- General festivals (i.e. literary, historic, traditional culture or family focused)
- Arts, Music & Theatre
- Food & Drink
- Sports & Outdoors
- Business & Education
- Other

Applications can be accepted by groups and companies who have a business address and a current Tax Clearance Access Number in the Republic of Ireland. Only those applications that meet the programme's minimum eligibility criteria will be assessed for funding. It is important to note that applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis – there is no guarantee of grant assistance even if the qualifying conditions are met. Applications will not be accepted from individuals.

The following categories of festival and participative events are **ineligible** for this programme, due to their limited tourist appeal:

- Purely commercial events with limited tourism appeal
- Agricultural shows and countryside fairs with limited tourism appeal
- Spectator-based sporting events
- Circuses and carnivals
- Christmas fairs and markets

6. WHAT IS THE EVALUATION CRITERIA?

Applications that meet the Scheme's qualifying conditions will be assessed under four evaluation criteria:

I. Visitor Experience, Brand Fit and Quality of the Event

- a) Applicants should demonstrate that their event is aligned with the Wild Atlantic Way brand.
- b) There should be a synergy between the event and host area’s tourism strengths where the event is located.
- c) It is very important to show linkages to the County Sligo Tourism Strategy 2018-2023 as strategic objective of which is to develop a tactical approach towards the growth and development of events and festivals as drivers of visitation. Furthermore “for the first 2 years of the strategy, support will be geared towards 6-7 larger events that demonstrate a uniqueness and ability to attract bed nights (overseas preferable) and grow business at off-peak times)”. Furthermore Strategic Priority 1 sets out a number of initiatives, one of which is to facilitate the delivery of a planned and coordinated event and festival series that attracts overnight stays and events that support the differentiating features of the County Sligo story. The County Sligo Tourism Strategy can be consulted at <http://www.sligococo.ie/tourism/>
- d) The festival/participative event should build memorable visitor experiences and respond to visitor needs.

Note: Applicants should be aware that Sligo County Council supports the development of a balanced calendar of events throughout the year.

II. Marketing (including Digital Marketing)

How is the event going to be marketed to generate interest for it, and possibly sold to tourists? We will also evaluate how the festival/participative event will be presented online and utilise digital marketing channels to generate interest amongst tourists and how the festival/participative event creates and shares motivating digital content and builds digital communities.

III. Tourism Impact

This is the event’s ability to draw, entertain and retain tourists and grow visitor numbers to the host area by extending the season and dispersing tourists outside of the core location. The metrics used to establish the scale of the event is provided in the application form.

IV. Delivery Team

The experience and ability of the organisers will be evaluated to ensure the event is effectively managed and delivered. The participation of volunteers is encouraged in organising the event. The festival/participative event’s financial sustainability will also be reviewed.

7. HOW & WHEN TO APPLY?

Completed application forms with supporting documentation must be clearly marked **REGIONAL FESTIVALS & PARTICIPATIVE EVENTS SCHEME FOR COUNTY SLIGO 2019** and submitted via email to festivalgrants@sligococo.ie or by post to the Regional Festivals Administrator, Community & Economic Development, Sligo County Council, City Hall, Quay Street, Sligo not later than **4.00pm on Monday 18th February, 2019.**

Note: If emailing please ensure to scan signed original documents.

Incomplete applications and applications received after the closing date will not be considered for grant assistance

8. WHAT CAN AND CANNOT BE FUNDED UNDER THIS SCHEME?

Eligible Expenses:

The following costs are eligible expenses and may be funded under the Scheme:

- **Marketing Activity:** The cost of marketing activities with a regional and national reach. This may include advertising, public relations, digital marketing and similar activities. Eligible costs may also include the cost of site-branding the location during the event. Local marketing is not eligible.
- **Programming of Events/Activities associated with the Festival/Participative Event:** Expenditure incurred on elements which has not received grant aid from other public bodies (e.g. Arts Council) and is considered to have potential to deliver significant benefits to tourism.
- **Development Activities:** For example, feasibility studies, training and branding consultancy activities may be covered once it is clearly of long-term benefit and or/raises the festival or participative event's profile. If a grantee intends claiming for Development Activity it must be agreed in advance and noted in the Letter of Offer.
- **Cross-Border Festival/Participative 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 festival/participative event.

Ineligible Expenses

The following costs are ineligible expenses and cannot be funded under the Scheme:

- ❖ Local Marketing Activity: Local Promotional activities i.e. flyers for local distribution, local

paper advertising and paid advertising on local radio.

- ❖ Unpaid expenditure i.e. retrospective debt
- ❖ Hospitality costs including spend on food, alcoholic beverages and overnight accommodation
- ❖ Expenditure paid for by a person/group other than the grantee.
- ❖ Operational costs/overheads/administrative expenses, for example: salaries, insurances rent, phone, office supplies, postage, photocopying and subsistence for the festival delivery team.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Costs 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 and).
- ❖ Travel and related costs unless expressly allowed in the letter of offer.
- ❖ Activities that duplicate activities that Fáilte Ireland is already undertaking.
- ❖ Activities not specifically related to and required for the festival/participative event.
- ❖ Activities undertaken outside the dates as specified in the Letter of Offer.
- ❖ Recoverable VAT.
- ❖ In-kind contributions.
- ❖ Fines, penalty payments, legal costs, audit fees, financial consultancy fees.
- ❖ Trade Association membership fees or equivalent.
- ❖ Cash expenditure.

A full list will be issued with your letter of offer should you be successful.

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

9. WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

- ❖ **Ineligible Applications:** If an application form is from an ineligible category or fails the minimum eligibility thresholds it will not be evaluated, and the applicant will be notified of this.
- ❖ **Unsuccessful Applicants:** Applicants will be notified if their application is evaluated but there is no recommendation for funding.
- ❖ **Grant Letter of Offer:** Successful applicants will receive a grant offer letter. The grant letter of offer will form the contract between Sligo County Council and the applicant and will detail all conditions and requirements attached to the grant. Any possible grant offer can only be made to the party identified and named in the application form.

All conditions of funding outlined in Grant Letter of Offer must be strictly adhered to.

- ❖ **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.

In order to receive payment, the successful applicant must complete a short Post Event Evaluation Report Form (this will be provided with our Letter of Offer) and will detail the request of information such as:

- Original receipts for the full costs.
- Details of number of attendees and their origin (local, domestic, overseas).
- Evidence that the event has taken place (e.g. photographic evidence, press clippings).
- Evidence that logos of the sponsors have been used on promotional material and websites/social media.

Successful applicants must hold a dedicated bank/credit union account. Payment will only be made after the event has taken place and funding not claimed by the agreed deadline will be cancelled.

In the event of any delays in payment of the grant there is no liability on the part of Sligo County Council or the exchequer to make good any shortfall. The grant will be released subject to Sligo County Council being in receipt of sufficient funds.

- ❖ **Tax Clearance:** The need for a current Tax Clearance Access Number applies to all grants awarded under this scheme. Successful applicants will be required to submit these details in advance of receiving payment under this scheme.