

Brexit Adjustment Reserve Community Led Local Development

Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Please note that this Guide helps you to prepare your proposal. This Guide does not supersede the rules laid down in the Scheme Document



1

# Version Control

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Change description** |
| 1.0 | 27th May 2022 | Initial version |
| 2.0 | 14th June 2022 | * Clarification provided on expenditure types * Pg 9, Eligible expenditure, Seafood, bullet points 11 & 12:   included the words “Third Party”   * Pg 9, Eligible expenditure, Seafood, bullet point 3, in parentheses: Definition & clarification of “Non-Passenger Vehicle for Marketing of Seafood” |
| 3.0 | 28th July | * Amendment to Section 6.2 Financial Statements clarifying the financial statements required and removing the need for financial statements for projects with a grant value less than €50k. |
| 4,0 | 17th November 2022 | * Amendment to Section 2.5 Outlining the additional information required in the Business Plan for grant amounts of €50,000 and over & for Start-up Businesses * Amendment to section 6.2, note for Start-ups to include their financial projections in appendix A of the declaration |

**INTRODUCTION**

These Guidelines for Applicants for the **Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme a Brexit Adjustment Reserve, Community Led Local Development** fund provide guidance on the investment types, eligibility, assessment criteria and the application process for this scheme.

Applicants should also read the **Conditions of Offer** for grantees which set out the conditions for the awarding of grant-aid and the obligations for successful applicants in accepting the award. These are available to download from the Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme page of [www.bim.ie.](http://www.bim.ie/)

At all stages, where a document is required to be completed and uploaded and where diagrams and images may be included where appropriate, video files are not permitted.

### Any grant claims that are outstanding after the 30th of September 2023 will be terminated.

These guidelines are divided into six sections:

1. Application Preparation
2. Scheme Description and Legal Basis
3. Completing the Electronic Grant Application Form
   1. Project Type 1 – Capital Investment
   2. Project Type 2 – Business Mentoring and Capacity Development
   3. Project Type 3 – Upskilling and Training
4. Evaluation and Award Process
5. Claim Process
6. Further Information
7. **Application Preparation**

### Submission Deadline

The deadline for submission is 15th August 2023. All applications will be made online through <https://bim.flexigrant.com/> This Grant Electronic Management System (GEMS) enables you to edit / update the application at any time during the application draft stage.

After the submission of your application, changes or additions are no longer possible.

### Acknowledgement of Receipt

The date and time of submission of the application will be automatically recorded and an acknowledgement of receipt email will be sent to the applicant email given on the application. If you do not receive an email with the acknowledgement of receipt, it is because the application has not been submitted. GEMS will carry out basic verification checks for completeness of the proposal, internal data consistency, virus infection file types and size limitations.

Note that when you receive your acknowledgement of receipt email, no eligibility checks have yet been carried out.

### Rejection of Applications

You should upload the correct documents (in PDF format) under the corresponding category. Errors in this process that result in an incomplete proposal may jeopardize your entire application as it could be classified as inadmissible. Before closing the application procedure or logging-off double-check that the content of your PDF documents matches the given categories in the online submission tool. Once the proposal is submitted, the applicant will not hear from BIM until the application has been evaluated, unless BIM needs to contact the applicant to clarify matters such as eligibility or to request additional information.

### Project Duration

It is a condition of this grant that all projects must be fully completed with all appropriate invoices and evidence of payment presented to BIM by 30th of September 2023 to provide adequate time for BIM to undertake an asset verification and site visit and to process grant claim before the legal deadline of the end of the Brexit Adjustment Reserve of the 31st of December 2023. Any grant claims that are outstanding after the 30th of September 2023 will be terminated.

### Languages

Applications may be submitted in English or Irish.

### Data Protection

All personal data that will be included in the applications submitted to GEMS will be processed by BIM under the Data Protection Regulations and according to the procedure announced with the relevant notifications submitted to BIM’s Data Protection Officer. A privacy statement informs all data subjects whose data are to be processed in the context of the application evaluation and ensuing grant agreement preparation, implementation and follow up. Applicants are invited to check BIM’s Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme webpage or log on to GEMS for any updates that may occur by the deadline for submission of their proposals.

### Eligibility

***Who May Apply?***

This funding mechanism is targeted at Micro and Small enterprises active in the Blue Economy.

For the purposes of this scheme, applicants for **Type 1 and Type 2** projects **must** meet the following criteria:

* + - Initiatives proposed must be located within 10km of the coastline\*, excluding metropolitan electoral districts
    - Be an entrepreneurial initiative
    - Be a micro or small enterprise
    - Applications must have a demonstrable connection to the blue economy and must be within one of the blue economy sectors as follows
      * Small Non-Commercial Harbour/Pier Activities
      * Boat Building and Repair
      * Coastal Tourism
      * Marine Leisure and Sport
      * Seafood
      * Renewable Energy Initiatives supporting the Blue Economy

For **Type 3 Projects**

* + - Applicants are not required, where the training facilitates entry into the blue economy, to demonstrate an existing link to the blue economy as above.
    - Applicants must reside or work within 10km of the coastline\*.

\* The Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) definition of the coastline has been used, being the high-water mark. OSI mapping tools have been used to define the 10km boundary from the high-water mark and only projects strictly within these boundaries will be considered for funding. Note that metropolitan electoral districts are excluded, even if they fall within the 10km boundary.

The responsibility is on the applicant to ensure that they correctly categorise themselves when applying for funding. Applicants are strongly advised to seek professional advice to determine whether they qualify as a micro or small enterprise. Applicants who apply to this programme as a micro or small enterprise and are subsequently determined not to be, will be required to refund the grant to BIM.

**Table 1:** Enterprise Definition

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| **Category** | **No. of**  **Employees** | **Annual Turnover (or annual**  **balance sheet total)** |
| Micro enterprise | < 10 | ≤ €2 million (≤€2 million) |
| Small firms | < 50 | ≤ €10 million (≤€10 million) |

Independent enterprises conform to the criterion of autonomy as defined in the European

Commission’s User Guide to the SME Definition.

### Intellectual Property

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure procedures for managing intellectual property are maintained and appropriately applied. BIM does not hold any IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) for Industry-Led Awards under Brexit Adjustment Reserve Schemes. IPR arising is held by the Grantee.

### Multiple Applications and Project Phases

The applicant may submit more than one application under each investment type and may be awarded more than one grant under each investment type.

As such larger projects may be divided into phases where appropriate. Each phase should comprise an investment that is capable of being fully commissioned and operating autonomously – i.e. it is not reliant on any other phases to operate as intended.

### Currency

All applications must be made in Euro. Where the expenditure that is the subject of the application is being quoted for and purchased in a non-Euro currency, the rate at the day of the application as quoted on the currency conversion website OANDA should be used.

The Letter of Offer from BIM will reference this figure as the maximum grant amount regardless of currency fluctuations between application and grant drawn down.

Bank fees and charges in making the foreign currency transaction are not eligible expenses and may not be claimed.

### General guidance before drafting your application

Applicants are advised to consider the following aspects before submitting an application:

Relevance: Check that your application addresses each of the criteria. Applications that do not meet the threshold of 60% of the total points available will not be funded.

Completeness: Check that your application includes all the relevant information, as it will be evaluated only on the basis of the submitted content. Follow closely the format of the template of Part B and ensure that all the requested information is uploaded. Good proposals are clear and are easy to understand to follow; they are precise and concise, focusing on substance.

Management quality: Clearly indicate the resources allocated to the implementation of the grant. Good financial and project management is a key component and adequacy between activities and requested budget is important.

### How do I know if I have a fisheries De Minimis project?

Projects that relate to catching, processing or marketing of fisheries or aquaculture products are subject to fisheries De Minimis which has a grant aid cap of €30,000. Under this scheme, these projects will fall under the category of “Seafood”. Where this is the case (e.g. capital items for seaweed processing or non-passenger vehicle for marketing of seafood) this means that the maximum grant aid allowable under Fisheries De Minimis is €30,000 over a rolling 3-year period.

### How do I know if I can avail of the 80% rate?

Small scale coastal fishers (SSCF) fishers can apply under two expenditure categories (non-passenger vehicle for marketing of seafood and seafood live holding equipment to develop markets for retail/wholesale) at a grant aid of 80% with a grant aid cap of €30,000. SSCF fishers are those fishers who hold a Sea Fishing Boat License. All other applicants can apply for these two expenditure categories at 50% with a grant aid cap of €30,000 for the non-passenger vehicle for marketing of seafood and a grant aid cap of €200,000 for seafood live holding equipment.

# Section 2. Scheme Description and Legal Basis

### Legal Basis and State Aid

Expenditure under this scheme will be under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve.

This Scheme is primarily a De Minimis scheme implemented under Regulation 1407/2013. However, projects in the fisheries and aquaculture sector may be aided under Regulation 717/2014 (fisheries De Minimis) or Regulation 1388/2014 (fisheries Block Exemption).

Under the De Minimis Regulation (1407/2013) the total amount of De Minimis aid to a single undertaking shall not exceed €200,000 over any period of 3 calendar years. Under the Fisheries De Minimis Regulation (717/2014) the total amount of De Minimis aid to a single undertaking in the fishery and aquaculture sector shall not exceed €30,000 over any period of 3 calendar years.

Applicants must declare to BIM any De Minimis aid received by them from any public body in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022. All projects will be checked for De Minimis applicability, and this may result in applications being ineligible for grant aid under this Scheme.

### Scheme Objectives

This scheme aims to counter the adverse economic and social consequences of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union on businesses operating in the blue economy and located in communities within 10km of the coastline.

The scheme aims to achieve this objective by developing a targeted Community Led Local Development scheme, delivered through the existing Fisheries Local Action Group structure that will promote innovative approaches that provide the impetus to reinvigorate coastal communities by allowing them to restructure, reconfigure, retrain, and diversify post-Brexit via:

* + - Supporting diversification and entrepreneurial initiatives in the blue economy by fostering start-up businesses and facilitating existing business to diversify, add-value and grow employment in communities that are within 10km of the coastline
    - Providing business mentoring and capacity development to businesses engaged with or are intent in operating within the blue economy
    - Supporting upskilling and training to exploit economic opportunities that complement existing or new activities within the blue economy
    - Fostering partnerships that develop innovative solutions that deliver for coastal livelihoods
    - Promoting sustainable solutions within the scope of the blue economy that empower and enable the development and delivery of activities and services to improve sustainability and adapt to climate change

### Scheme Description

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| **Project Category** | **Maximum Eligible**  **Support** | **Available Grant**  **Aid Rate** |
| Project Type 1 Capital Investment If a Fisheries *De Minimis* project | €200,000  €30,000 | 50%  50% |
| Project Type 1 Capital Investment SSCF Related Activity | €30,000 | 80% |
| Project Type 2 Business Mentoring and Capacity Development | €10,000 per application | 50% |
| Project Type 3 Upskilling and Training | €10,000 per application | 50% |

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| **Total All Categories Combined** | **€200,000** |  |

Each of these is laid out in more detail in the tables below.

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| **Project Type 1: Capital Investment – all applicants** |
| Projects that support capital investment by enterprises that are engaged in the blue economy. These investments will enable innovation, diversification, value-adding, and will allow enterprises to increase employment and support the evolution of enterprises through scaling-up. The Scheme will prioritise enterprises that are directly involved in inshore fisheries and/or are classified as micro businesses. The scheme will also prioritise those that are purchasing equipment that supports entrepreneurial  initiatives that build economic, social, and environmental sustainability within coastal communities. |
| **Eligible Expenditure** |
| * Capital investment projects from entities operating in or seeking to enter the blue economy and that promote entrepreneurial initiatives such as value adding or increasing employment opportunities in coastal areas. These are categorised under blue economy areas as follows:   + Small Non-Commercial Harbour/Pier Activities     - Facilities that will increase economic activity e.g. ticketing offices; waiting area/reception; facilities     - Website trading platform or booking portal   + Boat Building and Repair     - Runways to improve manufacturing/mending capabilities     - Website trading platform or booking portal     - Capital items that will enable boat building and repair business to increase economic activity e.g. cradle, crane, ship lift   + Coastal Tourism     - Capital items for marine education initiatives e.g., Commercial education/experiential vehicle; aquarium; museum; interpretative centre     - Upgrade of marine education initiative capital items e.g. Exhibit display cases; interpretative devices; furniture; minor building works     - New visitor centre e.g. Tasting centre; interpretive centre for a blue economy business; new visitor centre attaching to a seafood business     - Visitor centre upgrade e.g. Exhibit display cases; interpretative devices; furniture; minor building works     - Seafood tourism projects e.g. New experiential seafood visitor initiatives     - Website trading platform or booking portal     - Glamping and campsite facilities upgrade e.g. Upgrade of communal areas; toilets; showers; reception; other facilities     - Glamping and campsite accommodation e.g. Tents or other accommodation units     - Purchase of new non-fishing vessel e.g. Whale watching vessel; coastal sightseeing tour vessel     - Qualifying vessel fit out or re-fit for non-fishing activities     - Audio interpretation for coastal cruises e.g. multi-language/pre-recorded interpretation   + Marine Leisure and Sport     - Angling vessel e.g. charter vessel for paying angling guests; must not be a sea fishing registered vessel     - Marine tourism vessel e.g. dive vessel |

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| * Qualifying vessel fit out e.g. holder for tanks * Rigid Inflatable Boat e.g. safety vessel; dive vessel; tourism vessel; coastal sightseeing tour vessel * Marine sport and leisure equipment e.g. surf boards; dinghies; kayaks; SUP’s * Marine sport and leisure accessories e.g. Dive equipment; tanks; wetsuits; paddles; buoyancy aids * Marine sport or leisure facilities upgrade e.g. changing rooms * Seaweed leisure facilities e.g. mobile seaweed baths; upgrade of seaweed baths * Gangways that can be stowed on a vessel * Website trading platform or booking portal * Aquapark e.g. new, upgrade or additions to an existing aquapark * Seafood   + Seafood food truck – must be predominantly seafood (>50% of menu) with a seafood theme   + Seafood retail trailer e.g. mobile fishmonger   + Non-passenger vehicle for marketing of seafood e.g. commercial refrigerated van   + Seafood retail facilities fit-out or upgrade e.g. counter; display units; signage; seating   + Website trading platform or booking portal   + Seafood live holding equipment to develop markets for retail/ wholesale   + Restaurant Fish Display e.g. fish counter   + Shellfish live holding facility e.g. live shellfish display tank in restaurant/shop   + Capital items for seaweed processing e.g. dryer; processing equipment   + Seafood food truck furniture e.g. tables, chairs, awning   + Third party aquaculture service vessels   + Capital equipment for third party aquaculture service vessels e.g. hydrolicer; thermolicer; net washer   + Seafood retail furniture e.g. tables, seats, awnings for fishmongers * Renewable Energy Initiatives supporting the Blue Economy   + Hybrid/electric engines for qualifying non fishing vessels   + Solar photovoltaic panels   + Solar thermal collector   + Wind turbine   + Combined heat and power plant   + Biomass system with a combined heat and power plant   + Geothermal and ground source heat pumps   + Lighting retrofit   + Lighting controls upgrade   + Heating set point regulation and controls upgrade   + Refrigeration temperature control upgrade   + Refrigeration pipe insulation   + Free cooling ventilation and air conditioning   + Variable speed drives (VSD) in electrical motors, drives and pumps   + Wind farm service vessel   + Capital equipment for windfarm service vessels   + Energy efficient compressed air replacement |

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| **Ineligible Expenditure** |
| * Value added tax * Operational costs including the direct employment of staff and overheads etc. * Expenditure for the purchase of land and/or buildings and related expenditure. * Intangible costs (such as cost of pre-financing and of arranging loans and interest, administrative costs, patents, invitations to tender and costs relating to the purchase of a concession to operate fish farming). * Second-hand buildings, plant, machinery, equipment, boats, etc. and any associated installation costs. * Cost of Housing. * Repair and maintenance work * The like for like replacement of existing equipment and machinery, except where the replacement involves a demonstrably substantial enhancement in terms of efficiency, productivity, or environmental performance. * Provisional work not directly linked to the implementation of a project except where it makes possible a reduction in overall project cost. * Landscaping, other embellishment works, except those specifically required as a condition of planning and recreational equipment costs. * Purchase of vehicles for passenger transport is ineligible as are vehicles required for market distribution. * Office equipment and furniture. * The purchase of material which is normally written off within a year. * Goods purchased under Hire Purchase agreements. * Goods purchased under leasing agreements. * Consultancy costs not directly related to the planning, preparation, and execution of the project, including costs of management consultancy. * Statutory fees and charges * Commissioning costs for the above equipment up to maximum of 15% of the equipment costs by the equipment supplier or their approved agents.   Specific ineligible activities for each area of the blue economy are:   * Small Non-Commercial Harbour/Pier Activities   + Purchase or lease of warehousing   + Harbour Infrastructure   + Purchase or lease of a building   + Purchase or lease of land   + Electricity grid connection costs   + Services (e.g. water or electricity) * Boat Building and Repair   + Purchase or rental of fishing vessels   + Fishing nets   + Fishing tackle   + Fishing gear   + Repair and maintenance of vessels   + Fit out of fishing vessels   + Safety equipment   + Vessel painting |

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| * Equipment for installation on individual vessels * Second-hand vessels * Coastal Tourism   + Festivals   + Non-capital items such as consumables; menu's; guidebooks or maps   + Purchase or lease of warehousing   + Purchase or lease of a building   + Purchase or lease of land   + Landscaping   + Passenger vehicles   + Office equipment and furniture   + Quad Bikes   + Jet Skis   + Segway's/Bicycles/Mopeds/Scooters   + Aquarium animals   + Non-Campsite Accommodation Capital Projects   + Hotel, guesthouse, and B&B non-accommodation projects * Marine Leisure and Sport   + Fishing vessel   + Passenger vehicles   + Office equipment and furniture   + Safety equipment for qualifying vessels   + Shop fit-out; shop furniture   + Hotel, guesthouse and B&B leisure activities or facilities   + Outboard engines * Seafood   + Purchase of vehicles for passenger transport   + Office equipment and furniture   + Purchase or lease of a building * Renewable Energy Initiatives supporting the Blue Economy   + Accommodation with the exception of glamping and camping sites   + Equipment grant aided by SEAI or other sources   + Equipment required to meet building regulation   + Electric charging points for vehicles   + Fishing Vessels |
| **Maximum Eligible Support** |
| €200,000 or €30,000 if a fisheries De Minimis project |
| **Grant Rate** |
| * 50% |

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| **Project Type 1: Capital Investment – SSCF related activity** |
| This scheme contains a provision for applications relating to SSCF (Small Scale Coastal Fisheries) to receive a higher grant aid rate of 80% for projects related directly to their SSCF activities.  This 80% rate is covered under the State Aid rules for “Fisheries De Minimis”  Specifically, this means that: |

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| 1. The maximum grant aid allowable under Fisheries De Minimis is €30,000 over a rolling 3- year period 2. Only projects that relate to “**Catching, Processing or Marketing**” of the SSCF catch may qualify for the 80% Grant Aid under the state aid rules (Please Note that this scheme cannot fund investments onboard fishing vessels) 3. Any amount Grant Aided under Fisheries De Minimis rules in this scheme may impact your ability to apply for aid under other schemes governed by those rules. For Example, the BIM Fleet Safety Scheme   Any SSCF Fisher wishing to apply to this scheme for activities other than those described above may do so at the standard 50% grant aid rate for a maximum grant of €200,000. Projects that qualify at this rate do not impact fisheries De-Minimis schemes such as the Fleet Safety Scheme |
| **Eligible Expenditure** |
| * Non-passenger vehicle for the marketing of seafood * Seafood live holding equipment to develop markets for retail/wholesale |
| **Maximum Eligible Support** |
| €30,000 |
| **Grant Rate** |
| * 80% |

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| **Project Type 2: Business Mentoring and Capacity Development** |
| Business mentoring and capacity development projects will support businesses or individuals engaged in the blue economy to develop their businesses and allow them to maximise current and future opportunities as well as allowing them to adapt to the new market realities and opportunities post-Brexit. |
| **Eligible Expenditure** |
| * Participation in recognised business mentoring (consultancy) and capacity building scheme that meets the eligibility criteria with maximum grant aid of €10,000 or 50% of the cost, whichever is lower * Projects must not have commenced before submission of an application for support and its acknowledgment by BIM. Projects must be completed by 30th September 2023. * Business mentoring/consultancy includes services in any of the following categories:   + product/process development;   + business model development;   + service delivery and customer experience improvement;   + new service development;   + business planning or strategy development   + financial planning   + marketing & promotion   + mentoring in respect of website planning   + export and distribution   Business mentoring/consultancy service providers must be a registered mentoring/advisory business, unconnected to the applicant. |
| **Ineligible Expenditure** |
| * Value added Tax * Statutory fees and charges * Training courses |

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| * Software purchases and software development * Design and production of advertising material or branding * Sales activities * The physical development of a website or its content * Market research and market surveys * Digital marketing activities * Legal or taxation advice * Operations identified as ineligible under article 11 of Regulation 505/2014. |
| **Maximum Eligible Support** |
| €10,000 per application |
| **Grant Rate** |
| * 50% |

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| **Project Type 3: Upskilling and Training** |
| With the projected loss of employment from the fishing industry arising from the TCA (Trade and Cooperation Agreement), upskilling and training will support individuals to make use of their existing skills and knowledge gained through a lifetime spent in the marine sector. Upskilling and training will allow them to develop new skills that will enable them to exploit complementary economic opportunities in the blue economy. Upskilling and training will also cover digital literacy giving businesses or individuals the skills and ability to connect with and exploit the opportunities of the increasingly digital-first world. |
| **Eligible Expenditure** |
| * Participation in formal, accredited training that will enable participants to seek employment, upskill or develop a career in the blue economy with maximum grant aid of €10,000 or 50% of the cost, whichever is lower. * Projects must not have commenced before submission of an application for support and its acknowledgment by BIM. * Courses must be completed by 30th September 2023. * Accredited training to develop or enhance the applicant’s skills in one of the blue economy   sectors:   * + Small Non-Commercial Harbour/Pier Activities   + Boat building and Repair   + Coastal Tourism   + Marine Leisure and Sport   + Seafood   + Renewable Energy Initiatives supporting the Blue Economy * Accredited courses can include business skills, technical skills, or digital literacy * Funding under Type 3 will be prioritised for former crew, skippers, and owners of decommissioned fishing vessels. |
| **Ineligible Expenditure** |
| * Value added Tax * Training courses currently delivered by BIM through the Fisheries Training Colleges and Coastal Training Units where the applicant is eligible under BIMs Seafood Training Scheme * Informal or non-accredited training * Training not relevant to the blue economy |

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| * Statutory fees and charges * Travel and Subsistence * Operations identified as ineligible under article 11 of Regulation 505/2014 |
| **Maximum Eligible Support** |
| €10,000 per application |
| **Grant Rate** |
| * 50% |

* 1. Project Assessment

Applications must meet a total minimum score of 60/100.

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| **Evaluation Criteria** | **Project**  **Type 1** | **Project**  **Type 2** | **Project**  **Type 3** |
| 1. Applications must be in respect of projects within 10km  of the coastline, excluding metropolitan electoral districts | Pass/Fail | | |
| 2. Applications must be in respect of projects in one of the  sectors of the blue economy | Pass/Fail | | |
| 3. Applications must be in respect of an entrepreneurial  initiative | Pass/Fail | Not Applicable | |
| 4. Evidence that the applicant was not bankrupt in the previous three fiscal years.  Evidence that the applicant is trading as a going concern. Evidence of required match funding cashflow with robust financial projections. |
| 5. Record of the satisfactory execution of any grants  awarded from a state or public body in the last 7 years. |
| 6. Evidence that the applicant has the capacity to deliver the project with detailed project delivery timelines demonstrating that the project can be delivered within  the required timescale. | 30 |
| 7. Expected environmental performance/ impact of the  project | 20 |
| 8. Quality of application; well defined project with appropriate costings and quotations. Evidence that the proposed capital item provides value for money and cost  effectiveness | 50 |
| **Total Score** | **100** |  | |

Where criteria are Pass/Fail applicants who fail will be eliminated.

# COMPLETING THE ELECTRONIC GRANT APPLICATION FORM

* 1. **PROJECT TYPE 1 – CAPITAL INVESTMENT**

## APPLICANT DETAILS

### Grant Scheme Check

This series of questions will let you know if you are applying to the correct scheme. If funding can be granted through an alternative BIM scheme, you will be ineligible to proceed with this scheme.

### Authorised Contacts

This information is required for us to process your information in line with Data Protection regulations.

### Applicant Organisation Contact Details

This should be the same name as the applicant. Applicants should use a single name consistently throughout the application process. This should be the registered name of the applicants and should NOT be the company trading name. Quotes, invoices, and other supporting documentation must be the in name of the applicant only. Documents that are not in the correct name will not be considered as part of the application and may result in an application being rejected.

### Project Details

If your project location is different to your organisation contact details, record the details in this section. If you complete details here, it is this address which will be used to verify that the project is within 10km of the coastline.

### Application Type

If you are a commercial fishing licenced vessel owner of less than 12m using non-towed gear, you are classified as a Small-Scale Coastal Fisher (SSCF). If you select this option:

* + - you are required to provide a self-declaration that you are an SSCF vessel owner;
    - you must enter your vessel registration number;
    - your vessel must have been on the Irish Fleet Register per 1st May 2022; and
    - you must provide details of your sea-fishing boat licence.

All other applicants are classified as “Other”.

### Enterprise Declaration

This scheme is targeted at Micro and Small enterprises only. If you do not fit into this category, you are not eligible to proceed with application. This is also required as a legal declaration prior to the application being submitted.

### Proof of Project Address

Only projects within 10km of the coastline will be considered for funding. The Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) definition of the coastline has been used, being the high-water mark. OSI mapping tools have been used to define the 10km boundary from the high-water mark and only projects strictly within these boundaries will be considered for funding. Note that metropolitan electoral districts are excluded, even if they fall within the 10km boundary. If you would like to check this using BIM’s online mapping tools, please to go [FLAG Area Mapping Tools.](http://fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie/check-that-your-project-is-within-10km-of-the-coast/)

Provide proof of your project’s address by uploading a bank statement header or utility bill. For a mobile project please provide social media links to enterprise activity and/or a website booking platform showing where your project is located.

### Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) Area Location

Please confirm your FLAG area. For further details on FLAG areas please go to [www.fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie](http://www.fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie/)

## PROJECT DETAILS

### Details within this section of the application are scored Quality of Application 50/100

* 1. **Project Name**

Enter the name that most appropriately describes your project.

### Blue Economy Sector

You can tick more than one sector here if your project aligns with more than one sector. Note that this is a Pass/Fail criterion i.e. to be considered for funding, you must tick at least one.

### Entrepreneurial Initiative

Briefly describe how your project is an entrepreneurial initiative. Note this is a Pass/Fail criterion i.e. to be considered for funding, your project must be of an entrepreneurial nature.

### Project Alignment with Scheme Objective(s)

This scheme aims to counter the adverse economic and social consequences of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union on businesses operating in the blue economy and located in communities within 10km of the coastline.

The scheme aims to promote innovative approaches that provide the impetus to reinvigorate coastal communities by allowing them to restructure, reconfigure, retrain, and diversify post-Brexit.

Your project must align with at least one scheme objective.

Fill in the required fields and indicate how your project activity and scheme objective align. Maximum 2000 words.

* + - Supporting diversification and entrepreneurial initiatives in the blue economy by fostering start-up businesses and facilitating existing business to diversify, add-value and grow employment in communities that are within 10km of the coastline
    - Fostering partnerships that develop innovative solutions that deliver for coastal livelihoods
    - Promoting sustainable solutions within the scope of the blue economy that empower and enable the development and delivery of activities and services to improve sustainability and adapt to climate change

### Examples – these are illustrative only

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| **Scheme Objective** | **Example** |
| Supporting diversification and entrepreneurial initiatives in the blue economy by fostering start-up businesses and facilitating existing business to diversify, add-value and grow employment in communities that are within 10km of the  coastline | A coastal fisher who buys a second vessel for whale watching tours that will allow them to supplement their income  A restaurant that wants to serve locally caught shellfish and both maintain and display them through a live holding tank |
| Fostering partnerships that develop innovative solutions that deliver for coastal livelihoods | A group of fishers coming together to form a cooperative or partnership to direct sell their catch to their coastal community or tourists through a seafood truck.  A glamping business that sets up a seafood barbeque experience for guests using locally caught  seafood. |
| Promoting sustainable solutions within the scope of the blue economy that empower and enable the development and delivery of activities and services to improve  sustainability and adapt to climate change | A fishmonger putting photo-voltaic units on the roof of the business to supply power |

* 1. **Business Plan**

The Business Plan template provided must be completed:

* For Grant Aid of up to €49,999 sections 1, 2 & 3,
* For Grant amounts of €50,000 or more, please complete all sections AND complete the “Financial Projections” Excel template
* For Start-up businesses at all grant aid amounts please complete all sections of the Business plan template AND complete the “Financial Projections” Excel template

Your business plan should give any further relevant detail not already outlined in this application. If you are a start-up business or a relatively new enterprise, please give as much detail as possible that will best describe your business outcomes to date and plans for growth and development. Your business plan is key document in demonstrating the credibility of the proposal and how this fits into your overall business plan. Do not overload with irrelevant data.

### FTE Employment

Indicate the number of FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) jobs which will be created and maintained as a direct result of your project.

### Planning Permission/Regulatory Compliance

Provide details of any form of regulatory compliance or consent that your project requires, along with its status. This will be used to assess project readiness. Should any required consent not yet be in place, include the achievement of same as a milestone under section 3.1 below.

### Natura 2000 Area

If your project is located in or adjacent to or likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 area the completed Appropriate Assessment must be uploaded in order for your project to be eligible for funding. The application form in GEMS has links to provide additional information regarding Natura 2000 sites.

## CAPACITY TO DELIVER

### Details within this section of the application are scored Capacity to deliver 30/100

* 1. **Project Management**

Under this section the evaluators will assess:

* + - Are appropriate milestones identified and time allocations realistic?

Larger projects should be divided into phases where appropriate. Each phase should comprise an investment that is capable of being fully commissioned and operating autonomously – i.e. it is not reliant on any other phases to operate as intended.

Appropriate timelines should be provided for all stages of the project including procurement that allows the appropriate time for tenders and tender evaluation. Your project must conclude with sending the grant claim to BIM on or before the 30th September 2023. The milestones provided must work within this timeline and must build in appropriate contingencies for delays.

### Milestone

Each step in the phase should be set out and care should be taken to ensure that activities that are dependent on one another have appropriate timelines. There is no limit to the number of activities that can be included, and more lines can be added if necessary. There are no maximum number of phases that should be included. The larger the project is in scope, complexity or cost, the more milestones the project should be broken into.

Applicants should list the milestones that will complete each quarter which will show the project is progressing to plan (minimum 1 per quarter). The minimum milestones that should be addressed are:

* Procurement
* Delivery and Installation
* Final Payment
* Grant Reporting

### Form of Evidence

A document or documents that can be submitted to BIM as evidence that the milestone has been met should be included here. An example of what should be included in set out in Table 1 below.

### Quarter of Completion

The quarter that each milestone will be met should be set out, commencing with Q3 of 2022 and ending with Q3 of 2023. Milestones outside of these dates will not be accepted and will result in the application being rejected.

**Table 1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Milestone** | **Evidence** |
| **List the milestones that will *complete* each**  **quarter which will show your project is progressing to plan (minimum 1 per quarter)** | **How will you evidence that these are complete?** |
| Procurement completed and contractor appointed | Signed contract |
| Revised quotes submitted to BIM | Updated GEMS application |
| Delivery of capital item | Delivery docket |
| Installation | Engineer's report |
| Commissioning | Sign off on commissioning |
| Final payment | Bank statement |
| Grant claim |  |

Grantees will be required to report quarterly on progress of the grant. This will be compared to the milestones and timelines provided under this criterion to determine whether the project is on-track or off-track and whether is remains feasible to deliver the project and process payment prior to the scheme closure date of 31st December 2023.

### Qualifications and Experience

Qualifications, experience, and suitability of the proposed team who are delivering the project

should be entered directly into BIM’s Grant Electronic Management System (GEMS).

**Person Role** – enter the title or role that the person will be performing as part of this grant, e.g. project manager/technical expert/finance manager/grant co-ordination/administration. The team can include contractors and does not need to be confined to existing staff.

Responses to this section should include:

* + - A project owner who will be responsible for general management of the project and will be the primary contact for BIM. This person must have experience in the successful delivery of a similar project
    - The person(s) who will be responsible for the finance and procurement of the project
    - Any technical specialists who are intended to be engaged on the project
    - Any other relevant staff who will be engaged on the project

**Person Name** – enter the name of the employee or contractor against each role.

**CV/Biography Upload (if applicable)** – this requires a short statement of the skills and experience of a team member. This can take the form of a CV, a summary of a CV (known as a biography) OR a link to a **LinkedIn profile**. It is possible that several or all of these roles may be undertaken by one person. It must include the qualifications and/or experience of each person to provide evidence that they have the appropriate skills to deliver the project.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

### Details within this section of the application are scored Environmental Performance 20/100

* 1. **Expected Environmental Performance**

**Environmental Initiative** - responses under this section must include one or more of the environmental initiatives:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Environmental Initiative** | **Expected Impact** |
| Energy efficiency | The energy rating of any **new** equipment proposed under this grant should be set out here. |
| Other environmental initiatives | Any **other environmental initiatives** the applicant is undertaking in respect of this investment should be set out here |
| None of the above |  |

**Expected Impact –** maximum 100 words should be included against each environmental initiative selected. The text should set out how the initiative will deliver benefits to the applicant and how this will be measured.

## PROJECT COSTINGS AND SUPPLIER QUOTES

### Supplier Quotes

Applicants are advised to carefully review the list of ineligible expenditure as set out above to ensure that application is in respect of eligible expenditure only.

The number of quotes/tenders to be uploaded are indicated in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Spend Type** | **Eligible Expenditure (ex VAT)** | **Grant Aid Rates** | |
| **Grant Aid**  **0% to 50%** | **Grant Aid**  **>50%** |
| Supplies and Services  (incl. Equipment and Machinery) | <€5,000 | 1 Quote | 2 Quotes |
| €5,000 to €24,999 | 3 Quotes | 3 Quotes |
| €25,000 to €214,000 | 3 Quotes | Government E-tender |
| > €214,000 | 3 Quotes | Government E-tender AND OJEU |
| Works –  (Buildings only) | <€50,000 | 3 Quotes | 5 Quotes or Government E- Tender |
| €50,000 to €5,350,000 | 3 Quotes | Government E-tender |
| **≥** €5,350,000 | 3 Quotes | Government E-tender AND OJEU |

Amounts in the table above are exclusive of VAT.

Quotes should be in writing or by email. The quotes must:

* Be formal quotes on the suppliers headed paper / electronic format.
* Contain only the item being applied for in the grant application (one quote /one item)
* Clearly state the item, specification, and price of the item
* Each be comparable i.e. all quotes must be for the same item and specification
* Clearly indicate the VAT portion of the cost
* Equipment and Machinery is included in ‘Supplies and Services’ therefore the €214,000 threshold applies in such cases. ‘Works’ refers to buildings only.

### Summary of the Planned Work Add Expenditure Item

Add one item at a time, completing all fields for each item. Applicants should be consistent in the references used to describe items through the application form and on the quotes to ensure that item referred to in the application can be tracked through the quotes and invoices.

### Class of Equipment

Choose one of the blue economy areas from the drop-down bar.

Where seafood/capital items for seaweed processing is selected, this is subject to fisheries De

Minimis which has a grant aid cap of €30,000. The fisheries De Minimis cap of €30,000 will also apply to grants in respect of the catching, processing or marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products.

### Item Name (per quote) x Quantity

Insert the name of the item(s) that grant aid is being sought for. Each line item must be entered separately. Each line item must match a line item on a price quotation. If an item name entered does not match the price quotation it will be rejected at eligibility stage.

It is recommended that applicants use a simple naming convention to name their documents – e.g. Quote 1 – Supplier X; Quote 2 – Supplier Y.

### Suppliers, Quotes and Value, Preferred Supplier First

Input the required number of quotes as per the procurement table requirements under 5.1 above. Input the preferred quote first.

Applicants are required to set out how the proposed investment represents value for money. This should be addressed in up to 500 words of text which should provide a justification for the model/option chosen.

**Expenditure details Total Item Cost (ex VAT)**

This is an automatic calculation.

**Grant sought**

This is an automatic calculation that will multiply the total cost by the applicable grant rate and provide a grant rate figure.

### Non-Lowest Quote

The applicant will normally select the least expensive quote as the ‘preferred quote’. In that case, this section can be left blank.

If the preferred quote is not the least expensive, the reason for this must be stated in this section on a line-by-line basis, with a justification provided for each item. BIM reserves the right to accept/reject any such reason.

Under this section the evaluators will assess:

* + - Whether the appropriate number of quotes been provided
    - Whether the total cost been set out and if it is feasible
    - That a robust and appropriate justification been entered into the grant application system where the least expensive option is not the preferred quote.

## FINANCIAL ROBUSTNESS

This section is a pass/fail section. Any applicants who do not meet all of the requirements of this section will be eliminated and the application will not be assessed further.

### Declaration

Applicants are required to provide a declaration on the form attached from a solicitor, notary, commissioner of oaths or qualified accountant that the applicant company is trading as a going concern of the time of the grant application and that the applicant was not bankrupt in the previous three fiscal years. This must align with the Bankruptcy Register Online maintained by the Office of the Examiner of the High Court which will be checked by BIM as part of the review process. Applicants are also required to confirm that they are a micro or small enterprise in line with EU guidelines.

The documents referred to in the declaration, specifically Appendix A (financial statements) and Appendix B (letter from the accountants) should all be uploaded with the Declaration, and this needs to be verified in 6.2 and 6.3 below.

### Financial Statements

The latest financial statements must be provided which should be dated no later than 24 months prior to the grant application date and as certified as **Appendix A** of the declaration.

Financial statements comprise all the following:

1. Statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves
2. Statement of comprehensive income
3. Statement of financial position
4. Statement of cash flows

For applications made by Start-Up enterprises, please complete the “Financial Projections” excel template and include these as **Appendix A** of the declaration

### Going Concern Letter from Applicant’s Accountants

The test that is to be applied is that the company is able to pay a debt of €10,000 within 21 days of written demand for payment, or the value of the grant aid, whichever is the lesser. Where the company is not solvent based on this criterion, an explanation must be provided that would provide reassurance that this is a temporary situation and setting out when and how the company will return to being solvent. A letter stating that the applicant is a going concern is required as certified as **Appendix B** of the declaration.

### Cost of Work

This is automatically populated from section 5.2.

### Financing Plan for the Project

Applicants are required to describe how the match funding will be provided. No third-party evidence is required.

The following fields are to be completed:

* + - Contribution of the Grantee – own funds/Issued Share Capital
    - Contribution of the Grantee – loans from a lending institution
    - Potential BIM Grant (*this application*)
    - Other Financial Contributions
    - Total Financing (Note: this figure should equal the “Grand Total Cost of Project” in section

6.4)

## BASELINE SURVEY

This section is for statistical purposes only and will not be evaluated. The evaluators will not have access to this information. It will be used on an aggregate and anonymised basis only to help inform the development of future schemes in terms of the needs of clients and to measure cumulative changes from one scheme to the next.

## DECLARATION

Applicants are required to check each of these declarations in order to submit the application. If the applicant cannot or is unwilling to check a box, the application will not be accepted.

# PROJECT TYPE 2 – BUSINESS MENTORING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

## APPLICANT DETAILS

### Authorised Contacts

This information is required for us to process your information in line with Data Protection regulations.

### Organisation Details

This should be the same name as the applicant. Applicants should use a single name consistently throughout the application process. Quotes, invoices, and other supporting documentation must be the in name of the applicant only. Documents that are not in the correct name will not be considered as part of the application and may result in an application being rejected.

### Enterprise Declaration

This scheme is targeted at Micro and Small enterprises only. If you do not fit into this category, you are not eligible to proceed with application. This is also required as a legal declaration prior to the application being submitted.

### Proof of Address

Only organisations located within 10km of the coastline will be considered for funding for business mentoring and capacity development. The Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) definition of the coastline has been used, being the high-water mark. OSI mapping tools have been used to define the 10km boundary from the high-water mark and only projects strictly within these boundaries will be considered for funding. Note that metropolitan electoral districts are excluded, even if they fall within the 10km boundary. If you would like to check this using BIM’s online mapping tools, please go to [FLAG Area Mapping Tools.](http://fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie/check-that-your-project-is-within-10km-of-the-coast/)

Provide proof of address by uploading a bank statement header or utility bill.

### Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) Area Location

Please confirm your FLAG area. For further details on FLAG areas please go to [www.fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie](http://www.fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie/)

## BUSINESS MENTORING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Note that should you wish to partake in a number of programmes, a separate application will be required for each.

### Applicant declaration

Please confirm that the programme provider is unconnected to you.

### Business Mentoring and Capacity Development Programme

Provide the programme title and provider and select the category from the drop-down list.

### Programme Provider Details

Provide **all** the following details for the programme provider:

* + - Business name
    - Business address
    - CV
    - Tax Reference Number (of the programme provider)
    - Tax Clearance Access Number (of the programme provider)
    - Website link OR LinkedIn profile of the programme provider – **note**: one of these must be provided or the application will be ineligible.

### Start Date

Enter the date the programme starts, noting that your application must be submitted *before* the start date of the programme.

### End Date

Enter the date the programme ends, noting that it must complete by 30th September 2023.

### Blue Economy

Select the sector of the blue economy that the mentoring relates to and demonstrate how the programme will assist you in developing your business and adapting to the new market realities and opportunities post-Brexit (maximum 500 words).

## GRANT APPLICATION

### Programme Provider Quotes

The number of quotes to be uploaded are based on the cost of the programme:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Less than or equal to €5,000** | **Greater than €5,000** |
| 1 Quote | 3 Quotes |

Amounts in the table above are exclusive of VAT.

Quotes should be in writing or by email. The quotes must:

* + - be formal quotes on the suppliers headed paper / electronic format;
    - clearly indicate the VAT portion of the cost; and
    - clearly indicate the day rate and number of days mentorship being provided.

Should the daily rate or total cost be considered excessive your application may be declined.

### Grant Aid Calculation Add Expenditure Item

Add one item at a time, completing all fields for each item.

### Expenditure Type

Select Business Mentoring or Capacity Building from the drop-down bar.

### Item Name (per quote) x Quantity

Insert the name of the programme.

It is recommended that applicants use a simple naming convention to name their documents – e.g. Quote 1 – Supplier X; Quote 2 – Supplier Y.

### Suppliers, Quotes and Value, Preferred Supplier First

Input the required number of quotes as per the procurement table requirements under 3.1 above. Input the preferred quote first.

### Expenditure Details

Enter the programme cost excluding VAT. Note that, due to the grant-aid cap of €10,000, the maximum amount you will be permitted to enter in the “Total Item Cost” field is €20,000. Should your programme cost more than this just enter €20,000 in the “Total Item Cost” field but upload the quote for the total cost. The “Grant sought” is automatically populated.

Click Save.

### Required Number of Quotes

Where the applicant is unable, despite his or her best endeavours, to obtain the required number of quotes for reasons outside of their control, this must be explained in writing by the applicant. Such exceptional situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the BIM officer assessing the application and where accepted, will be recorded on the BIM project file. Where the explanation is unsatisfactory, the application will not be accepted until the correct number of quotes has been supplied.

### Non-Lowest Quote

The applicant will normally select the least expensive quote as the ‘preferred quote’. In that case, this section can be left blank.

If the preferred quote is not the least expensive, the reason for this must be stated in this section. BIM reserves the right to accept/reject any such reason.

## BASELINE SURVEY

This section is for statistical purposes only and will not be evaluated. The evaluators will not have access to this information. It will be used on an aggregate and anonymised basis only to help inform the development of future schemes in terms of the needs of clients and to measure cumulative changes from one scheme to the next.

## DECLARATION

Applicants are required to check each of these declarations in order to submit the application. If the applicant cannot or is unwilling to check a box, the application will not be accepted.

# PROJECT TYPE 3 – UPSKILLING AND TRAINING

## APPLICANT DETAILS

### Seafood Industry

Training offered by BIM to those already working in the seafood industry is not eligible for grant aid under this scheme. These questions check eligibility and guide you to the correct scheme.

### Authorised Contacts

This information is required for us to process your information in line with Data Protection regulations.

### Application Type

Those living and/or working within 10km of the coastline are eligible to apply for support for upskilling and training.

### Applicant Contact Details (Home)

This should be the same name as the applicant. Applicants should use a single name consistently throughout the application process. Quotes, invoices, and other supporting documentation must be the in name of the applicant only. Documents that are not in the correct name will not be considered as part of the application and may result in an application being rejected.

### Applicant Contact Details (Work)

If you work, but do not live, within 10km of the coastline you will be asked to provide your work contact details.

### 1.5 Proof of Address

If you live within 10km of the coastline, you can upload a utility bill or bank statement header as proof of address.

If you work, but do not live, within 10km of the coastline, you will need to provide proof of your work address, either in the form of a letter from your employer on company headed paper verifying your employment, or the header of a recent payslip.

The Ordnance Survey of Ireland (OSI) definition of the coastline has been used, being the high-water mark. OSI mapping tools have been used to define the 10km boundary from the high-water mark and only projects strictly within these boundaries will be considered for funding. Note that metropolitan electoral districts are excluded, even if they fall within the 10km boundary. If you would like to check this using BIM’s online mapping tools, please go to [FLAG Area Mapping Tools](http://fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie/check-that-your-project-is-within-10km-of-the-coast/).

### 1.7 Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) Area Location

Please confirm your FLAG area. For further details on FLAG areas please go to [www.fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie](http://www.fisherieslocalactiongroups.ie/)

## UPSKILLING AND TRAINING

### Course Title and Provider

Provide the course title, provider, accreditation and QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) number if applicable.

### Irish Register of Qualifications

A link is provided to the [Irish Register of Qualifications](https://irq.ie/) (IRQ). Click the link and search for the course you wish to attend. If the course is on the IRQ, copy the link (URL) of the page with the course details and paste it into the box provided.

If your course is *not* on the IRQ you will need to upload evidence of the course information in the form of a course brochure, a screen shot of the course website, or a letter from the course provider on headed paper.

### Start Date

Enter the date the course starts, noting that your application must be submitted *before* the start date of the course.

### End Date

Enter the date the course ends, noting that this is considered to be the last day of class attendance, last exam date or submission date for final assignments, whichever is the latest.

### Blue Economy

Select the sector of the blue economy that the training relates to and demonstrate how the course will assist you in seeking employment, upskilling, or developing a career within the blue economy (maximum 500 words).

## GRANT APPLICATION

### Training Course Provider Quotes

The number of quotes to be uploaded are based on the cost of the training:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Less than or equal to €5,000** | **Greater than €5,000** |
| 1 Quote | 3 Quotes |

Amounts in the table above are exclusive of VAT.

Quotes should be in writing or by email. The quotes must:

* + - Be formal quotes on the suppliers headed paper / electronic format.
    - Clearly indicate the VAT portion of the cost

### Grant Aid Calculation Add Expenditure Item

Add one item at a time, completing all fields for each item.

### Expenditure Type

Select Course Fee from the drop-down bar.

### Item Name (per quote) x Quantity

Insert the name of the training course.

It is recommended that applicants use a simple naming convention to name their documents – e.g. Quote 1 – Supplier X; Quote 2 – Supplier Y.

### Suppliers, Quotes and Value, Preferred Supplier First

Input the required number of quotes as per the procurement table requirements under 3.1 above. Input the preferred quote first.

### Expenditure Details

Enter the course cost excluding VAT. Note that, due to the grant-aid cap of €10,000, the maximum amount you will be permitted to enter in the “Total Item Cost” field is €20,000. Should your course cost more than this just enter €20,000 in the “Total Item Cost” field but upload the quote for the total cost. The “Grant sought” is automatically populated.

Click Save.

If exam fees are charged separately, you can add a second line by clicking the “Add expenditure item” button again.

### Required Number of Quotes

Where the applicant is unable, despite his or her best endeavours, to obtain the required number of quotes for reasons outside of their control, this must be explained in writing by the applicant. Such exceptional situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the BIM officer assessing the application and where accepted, will be recorded on the BIM project file. Where the explanation is unsatisfactory, the application will not be accepted until the correct number of quotes has been supplied.

### Non-Lowest Quote

The applicant will normally select the least expensive quote as the ‘preferred quote’. In that case, this section can be left blank.

If the preferred quote is not the least expensive, the reason for this must be stated in this section. BIM reserves the right to accept/reject any such reason.

## BASELINE SURVEY

This section is for statistical purposes only and will not be evaluated. The evaluators will not have access to this information. It will be used on an aggregate and anonymised basis only to help inform the development of future schemes in terms of the needs of clients and to measure cumulative changes from one scheme to the next.

## DECLARATION

Applicants are required to check each of these declarations in order to submit the application. If the applicant cannot or is unwilling to check a box, the application will not be accepted.

# EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

Proposals for funding received by the notified submission date are checked for compliance with the eligibility criteria. Proposals considered to be ineligible are returned to the applicant with a note explaining why they were considered to be ineligible. Proposals meeting the eligibility criteria will be allocated a unique reference number and a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the applicant. The unique reference number should be used in any subsequent correspondence or enquiry with BIM. A panel established by BIM will screen eligible proposals and will forward all applications which pass the pass/fail criteria and meet the minimum of 60 marks to the relevant FLAG Board.

Projects will be selected for funding as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Step** | **Description** | **Carried out by** |
| Call for Applications | Applications invited | BIM |
| Eligibility Check | To ensure compliance and assess validity | BIM |
| Screening | To filter out applications failing the pass/fail checks and scoring less than 60 marks | BIM |
| Project Selection | To select projects for funding and decide amounts | FLAG Boards |
| Grant Offer | Issue of letters of offer awarding funding | BIM |

Projects will be appraised having regard to the objectives of the scheme, the quality of the proposal, whether they will displace an existing business and the alignment with the local development objectives as set by the FLAG Board.

In accepting and evaluating proposals BIM does not commit funding to any project or guarantee that funds will be made available to proposals submitted under this scheme.

Successful applicants may be asked to make minor changes to their proposals during the grant aid negotiation phase to accommodate the comments of the evaluators

All applicants will be notified in writing of the results of the FLAG Board. The letter will outline the contractual obligations and conditions that apply to the award. Applicants must acknowledge receipt of the award letter and acceptance of the conditions attached to the award. In accepting the award, applicants agree to carry out the work according to the work programme in the project proposal (taking into account modifications arising from the evaluators’ recommendations) and the agreed budget.

# CLAIM PROCESS

Grant claims must be submitted in the appropriate format via GEMS. Invoices and proof of payment must be uploaded for each individual item being claimed.

### Invoices

As part of the grants ‘Claim’ process applicants are required to submit Invoices and proof of payment relating to each of the preferred quotes approved in the letter of offer.

Each invoice must clearly:

* Relate to the preferred quote for the approved item
* Specify the item and specification of the item being invoiced. Invoices must match the item and specification on the preferred quote. Where this information cannot be clearly included then the invoice should be attached to an additional document on the suppliers headed paper listing the reference no. of the invoice and detailing the item and specification as required.

### Proof of Payment

Proof of payment must be:

* Submitted along with the invoice as part of the claim process.
* Clearly traceable to the invoice and preferred quote.
* In the form of either:
  + A bank statement in the name of the applicant / beneficiary and highlighting the financial transaction(s) related to the invoice OR
  + A returned bank-stamped cheque in the name of the beneficiary and made out to the supplier named on the invoice / preferred quote.
* Cash payments, bank drafts and postal orders will not be accepted as part of a grant claim

Payment transactions should relate to a single grant aided item and match the relevant invoice. Each invoice must be matched by an equivalent payment. Invoices and payments should not include items other than those approved for grant aid.

Exceptionally, where this is not possible, applicants must provide and submit a clear breakdown of the payment transaction and how it relates to the preferred quote / invoice. This must include:

* A summary sheet listing the components of the payment and what items they relate to.
* Documentary evidence invoices / payments in support of all items listed on the summary sheet.

Where information is not provided to the point where the different components of the invoice or payment are clear and traceable beyond doubt, the transaction may be deemed ineligible for payment.

# FURTHER INFORMATION

### Further Information/Clarifications

Requests for further information/clarifications should be addressed, preferably 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 [www.bim.ie](http://www.bim.ie/). It is the responsibility of all applicants to ensure that they keep informed of any responses to clarifications prior to submitting an application.

### Information Seminars

Information seminars will be held regarding this scheme. These seminars will provide clarifications to potential applicants, and other interested parties on the grant process.

Please see our website, [www.bim.ie,](http://www.bim.ie/) for further information.

|  |
| --- |
| **CONTACT DETAILS** |
| Bord Iascaigh Mhara Dun Laoghaire  Co. Dublin [blueeconomy@bim.ie](mailto:blueeconomy@bim.ie) |