

Brexit Adjustment Reserve

Brexit Fish Processor Transition Scheme

Guidelines for Applicants



Funded by the
European Union



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Document Control

Version	Main changes	Approver	Approval/Effective Date (Initials & Date)
1.0	Initial draft	Director Corporate Services	FH 7 th Nov 23
2.0	Updated definition of Turnover to match the Scheme Declaration	Director Corporate Services	FH 13 th Nov 23
3.0	Submission deadline extended; "Information you will be asked to provide" updated in line with clarifications issued regarding the scheme	Director Corporate Services	

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 online grants portal.

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Introduction

These Guidelines for Applicants for the Brexit Fish Processor Transition Scheme provide guidance on the application and assessment process for the scheme. The document is laid out as follows:

1. The application and approval process
2. Things to note before starting your application
3. How BIM evaluates applications
4. What happens after you receive a Letter of Offer, or a rejection

Applicants should also read the following two documents which can be found on the scheme page of www.bim.ie:

- The Scheme Description which lays out the background to the scheme, who can apply, what is funded and the amounts granted.
- The Letter of Offer for grantees which sets out the conditions of the awarding of grant aid and the obligations for successful applicants in accepting the award.

Submission Deadline

The deadline for submission is 13th December 2023. All applications are to be made through BIM's online grant portal.

Claim Deadline

There is no claim form associated with this grant scheme. Payments will be made once all pre-payment conditions have been met.

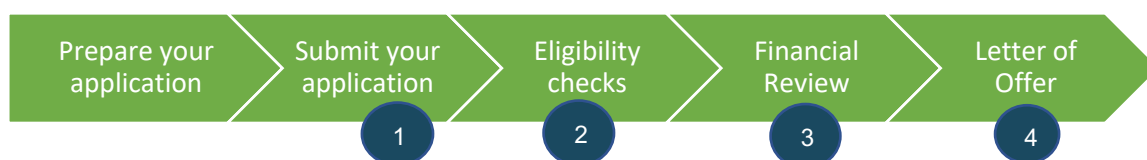
Application and Approval Process

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



- Prepare your application by gathering all the required information and entering it in BIM's online grants portal. The online portal allows you to edit the form over time and add additional information as you gather it.
- When you have completed the form, 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.
- Your application then goes through a financial review.
- All eligible applications are approved by BIM.
- If BIM approves your application for funding, a Letter of Offer will be issued.

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.
2. There are two reasons you *might* hear from us at this stage:
 - a. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure a full and complete application is submitted. Incomplete applications may be deemed ineligible. 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) and you will be asked to resubmit a full and complete application within a certain deadline. BIM will endeavour to return your application just once with all the issues noted. Given the tight timeline for processing grant applications, if a grant application form is returned to an applicant for correction(s) to be

made to it, applicants will be given no more than 3 working days to make the corrections and re-submit their grant application.

- b. If our checks show that you are not eligible for the scheme, your application will be rejected, and the reason provided.
3. The review panel may have queries for you if something in your application requires clarification or further explanation. If this happens, as above, your application will be returned to you, noting the information required, and you will be given a deadline by which you should resubmit.
4. And finally, you will be informed of BIM's decision. If you have been approved for funding, you will receive a Letter of Offer. If you have not, you will receive a rejection letter, which will state the reasons for rejection.

As you can see, 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

- Applications may be submitted in English or Irish.
- Applicants are advised to check that their application includes all the relevant information, as it will be evaluated based on the submitted content.

Currency

All grant payments will be made in euro.

Multiple Applications

Only one grant application may be submitted per applicant.

Information you will be asked to provide

You will be asked to provide the following information and documents with your application form. This list is provided to help you gather all required information.

Page 1 – Applicant & Processor Details

- Authorisation for contacts other than yourself to manage your application. If an Agent will complete the form on your behalf, a Grant Application Third Party Process Authorisation Document must be downloaded, signed and uploaded. This form can be downloaded from the grant application.
- Contact details for you and your organisation.
- Your SFPA number (FFPP/PP format).

Page 2 – Financial Information

Statutory Declaration: this document contains two appendices which must be completed separately. The template document can be downloaded from the grant application form, or can be accessed on the BIM website.

- An Applicant must complete the declaration at Appendix 1 (Declaration). The Declarant must be authorised to act for the Applicant and must make the Declaration in the presence of a practising solicitor (who should not be related to or employed by the Declarant and/or the Applicant). The practising solicitor must sign and witness the declaration and identify themselves clearly in so doing.
- Once completed, a copy of Appendix 1 (Declaration) must be given to an Independent External Accountant, this person must not be an employee of or related to the Declarant and/or the Applicant.
- An Applicant must arrange for an Independent External Accountant to be provided with the following documentation in order to enable the Independent External Accountant to complete Appendix 2 (Independent External Accountant's Statement):
 - A copy of the completed Appendix 1 (Declaration).
 - Sales ledgers for EITHER calendar years OR accounting years ending 2018, 2019, 2020, and sales ledgers for calendar year 2021 to include sufficiently detailed turnover records (as defined for the Scheme), to validate the breakdown of turnover figures supplied in Appendix 2.

- Any other financial documentation necessary to complete Appendix 2.

For clarity, the sales ledger must be at the level of detail required to back up the figures provided in the statutory declaration. Some examples:

- If you are applying on the basis of total turnover, the sales ledger data provided can be a monthly summary of turnover for each year.
- If you are applying on the basis of one or more TCA quota stocks, the level of detail will depend on your individual circumstances. If your accounting system tracks species, a monthly summary for the species you are claiming for will suffice. If your accounting system does not track species you may need to provide a detailed invoice listing, or indeed even invoice lines, if that is what is required to isolate the species turnover.

If summary data is provided, BIM reserves the right to request further information should that be required.

The list of TCA quota stocks can be found in Annex FISH.1 of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement which has been made available on the BIM website.

https://bim.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/EU-UK_Trade_and_Cooperation_Agreement_24.12.2020.pdf

Qualifying Periods

The qualifying periods for this scheme are 2018-2020 and 1st January 2021 – 31st December 2021.

- Applicants are now permitted to submit the appropriate turnover for 2018-2020 EITHER for calendar years OR for financial years.
- The comparative year of 2021 **must** be based on turnover in the **calendar** year in all cases i.e. January to December 2021.

If your financial year end is December, this clarification does not impact you. If, however, your financial year end is any other month you can now choose whether to provide turnover figures for 2018-2020 based on calendar year or financial year. When using financial year you need to use those three years which immediately preceded the reduction in turnover in 2021.

Example:

Your financial year ends in March, and you wish to apply on this basis.

Your turnover must be provided for the financial years ending March 2018, March 2019 and March 2020, and for the **calendar** year 2021.

Definitions for terms used in the Statutory Declaration:

- **Director:** means the director of a Registered Company.
- **Independent External Accountant:** means an accredited practising external accountant who is not employed by or related to the Applicant.
- **Owner:** means the owner of a business acting as a Sole Trader.
- **Partner:** means a partner of a partnership.
- **Partnership:** means two or more persons carrying on business in common with a view to making a profit.
- **Reference Period:** means the years between 2018 to 2020.
- **Registered Company:** means a company incorporated under company legislation.
- **Sole Trader:** means a person engaging in a business as a sole or single trader.
- **TCA:** means the EU -UK Trade and Co-Operation Agreement.
- **Turnover:** for the purposes of the Scheme shall be calculated by reference to the Applicant's turnover of one or more seafood stocks of species directly impacted by

TCA quota cuts in the relevant periods OR by reference to the total turnover of the Applicant for the relevant periods if specific breakdowns are not available.

Page 3 – Bank Details and Tax Clearance

- Tax Reference Number
- Tax Clearance Access Number
- Bank details, for a bank account in the name of the applicant, along with a bank statement for that account.

Page 4 – BIM Declarations

This page has a number of declarations which you confirm by clicking a checkbox. These declarations include commitments to complete a Bord Bia training module, which is a pre-condition of payment, and to complete the DCF (Data Collection Framework) survey before 1st March 2024. Further information on these can be found below.

How BIM Checks Eligibility

BIM carries out a series of eligibility checks on each grant application. These checks are as follows:

- **Applicant Contact Details.** BIM ensures that all fields are completed.
- **Authorised Contact Details (if applicable):** BIM checks if additional contact persons, or agents, have been authorised by the applicant, and ensures they are included in further communications.
- **SFPA Number:** BIM checks that the approval number provided is associated with one of the following codes – FFPP or PP.
- **SFPA Enterprise Name:** BIM checks that the SFPA enterprise name matches the name of the enterprise applying for the grant.
- **Tax Clearance Details:** BIM carries out a Revenue Good Standing Check, on www.ros.ie using the Tax Reference Number and Tax Clearance Access Number.
- **Bank Details:** The bank account details provided must be in the name of the applicant. BIM checks on the BIC and IBAN details provided using www.ibancalculator.com. BIM also checks that the applicant's bank details provided in the grant application form match the bank statement provided.
- **Declarations:** BIM checks that all declarations have been checked off by the applicant, including the EMFAF Article 11 compliance. BIM also checks that the statutory declaration has been fully and correctly completed.
- **SFPA Data Check:** BIM will ask the SFPA to confirm the following via sales notes data:
 - that these purchases represent in cumulative value more than 55% of the total value of seafood purchases for the company's fish trading activity.
- **Documentation Provided:** BIM checks that the applicant has uploaded all required documentation in the application.
- **Financial Review:** The financial review round verifies the 15% reduction in turnover.

What happens after a Letter of Offer

Applicants must acknowledge receipt of the letter of offer, and acceptance of the conditions attached to the award. This is done through the BIM online grants portal. In accepting the award, applicants agree to the scheme's Terms and Conditions.

Under this scheme applicants will have **three working days** to accept a Letter of Offer. Acceptance outside this time period is at BIM's discretion. Please be aware that late acceptance will jeopardise funding and/or payment.

BIM will check that the following pre-payment conditions have been met:

- The applicant has accepted the Letter of Offer.
- The applicant continues to meet the admissibility requirements of Article 11 EMFAF.
- The applicant meets all tax clearance requirements.
- All relevant documentation has been provided.
- The applicant has completed the Supporting Irish Seafood to Success training module.

Once these conditions have been met, payment will be made. If any of the above conditions are not met before the end of December 2023, this will jeopardise funding and/or payment.

Information about the Training Module

It is a condition of payment that grantees must complete the "Supporting Irish Seafood to Success" training module.

We would encourage all applicants to complete the training after they submit an application, even in advance of receiving a Letter of Offer. Completing the training does not guarantee an offer, but it will speed up payment should you receive an offer. The steps below describe how to access the training and provide confirmation to BIM that you have completed it.

The training module can be accessed as follows:

1. Follow this link: <https://ecv.microsoft.com/jpQgxkRYht>
2. Page 1: provide the following information:
 - a. Applicant Business Name
 - b. Email Address
 - c. Application Reference Number (grant application number which starts with BFPTS).
3. Page 2: the video can be accessed on this page.
4. Page 3:
 - a. Declaration: to confirm you have watched the video.
 - b. Click on the submit button to submit the form. BIM will record that you have completed the training.

Information about the DCF Survey

In accordance with one of the declarations in the application form, accepting an offer of grant aid means you are committing to completing the DCF (Data Collection Framework) survey

before 1st March 2024. Once you accept your Letter of Offer, BIM will issue a link to the survey by email. You will be asked to provide turnover, wages, energy costs, raw material costs and other operational costs for 2020, 2021 and 2022. You will also be asked to provide employment data for 2022, showing full-time, part-time and casual employees, split by male/female. The data can be provided for either calendar year or financial year. Completion of the survey will be verified by BIM, and any non-compliance with this requirement may affect payment of future grants.

Data Protection

All personal data that will be included in the applications submitted online 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 webpage or log on to our grants portal for any updates that may occur by the deadline for submission of their proposals.

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.

CONTACT DETAILS
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