



Oifig
Fiontair
Áitiúil

Local
Enterprise
Office

Application Form for Business Expansion Grant



Freedom of Information

The Local Enterprise Office will not release any information received as part of this application unless it is required by law, including the Freedom of Information Act 2014. If we receive a Freedom of Information request, we will tell you so that you have reasonable time if you want to contest a disclosure.

Data Protection

The Local Enterprise Office is committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. Our Data Protection Notice tells you about your privacy rights and sets out how we, as a Controller, collect, use, process and disclose your personal data relating to your interactions with us. Please refer to www.localenterprise.ie/legal for copies of our privacy notices.

Note:

If you receive grant aid, you will be included in the list of beneficiaries under Art. 115 (2) of Regulation [EU] No 1303/2013 [Common Provisions Regulation]. This list will be updated every six months and can be accessed on the Regional Assembly websites.

...Let's talk business

How do Local Enterprise Offices help businesses financially?

Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) can help to establish and develop new and existing enterprises provided that the enterprise is capable of becoming commercially viable. There are also other criteria to be met and these are listed in the bullet points below.

The enterprise must:

- not employ more than 10 people;
- be established, registered, and operate within the area of the Local Enterprise Office;
- operate in the commercial field;
- show there is a market for the product or service;
- have the potential for growth in domestic or export markets; and
- have potential for job creation without affecting existing local business.

Within the above criteria, there are certain priorities and restrictions.

For example, priority will be given to:

- only enterprises in the manufacturing or internationally traded services sector which, over time, can develop into strong export entities and graduate to Enterprise Ireland.
- unique tourism services enterprises that target generating revenue from overseas visitors; these tourism services should not displace business from other existing players in the market or give rise to deadweight (where projects would have proceeded anyway). Such unique tourism services may be offered **salary supports**.

With regard to **restrictions**, retail enterprises, personal services, professional services or construction and local building services **are not eligible** for grant aid.

What is a Business Expansion Grant?

A Business Expansion Grant is designed to assist the business in its growth phase after the initial 18 month start-up period.

Who can apply for a Business Expansion Grant?

Micro enterprises (Limited Companies, Designated Activity Companies, sole traders, co-operatives and partnerships) can apply for a Business Expansion Grant to help them to expand the business after the first 18 months of trading. The maximum Business Expansion Grant that can be paid is 50% of the investment or €150,000 whichever is less.

Grants between €80,000 and €150,000 **are the exception**. Only enterprises that clearly demonstrate a potential to graduate to Enterprise Ireland can be awarded grants of this size. In all other cases, the maximum grant is 50% of the investment or €80,000 – whichever is less.

Business Expansion Grants

If a business received a Priming Grant (start-up grant), **it cannot apply** for a Business Expansion Grant **until 12 months after** the date of approval of the Priming Grant. An **exception** to this might be made in cases of exceptional merit where less than the maximum Priming Grant was drawn down and provided the rules of 'De Minimis aid' are respected. De Minimis aid is small amounts of State aid granted to enterprises. (Please see page 3 on De Minimis aid.)

What does the Business Expansion Grant cover?

A Business Expansion Grant may be paid to buy new equipment, help with direct business costs such as salary, rental costs, utilities, marketing and consultancy costs. Grant assistance is not payable to buy a building, land or mobile assets.

Grant expenditure may be considered under the following headings:

- **Capital Items** – including fit out of workspace, office equipment, machinery, fixed technology costs, and so on. (Note that the cost of buying or construction of a building and the cost of land and mobile assets including laptops, tablets and smart phones are excluded from grant aid.)
- **Salary Costs** – for the first year of employment. This money is paid in two instalments. The first instalment is at the start of employment; and the second after six months of employment. The level of grant support will reflect the salary scale proposed for the job being generated. Jobs attracting salaries of more than €40,000 will be eligible for the maximum €15,000 grant support. Lower-paid positions will receive a lower grant. Please note that approved grants are to be used for their intended purposes. If salaries are being supported by the LEO, the detailed job description and contracts for the role need to be forwarded to the LEO before the funds can be drawn down.
- **Consultancy, Innovation, Marketing Costs** – these may include packaging, brochures, business cards, trade fairs, website development, consultancy fees and other marketing initiatives.

- **General Overhead Costs** – these include, for example:
 - **Utility Costs** – these include installation costs for fixed line telephone, broadband and three-phase power [electrical supply with a voltage suitable for businesses].
 - **Rental or Accommodation Costs** – for the first year of the enterprise. [Note that if rental space is already subsidised by an investment of public funds, grant support will only make up the difference between the subsidy and the market rate.] Rental costs may be paid up front subject to supplying the LEO with a signed lease or rental agreement.

The Business Expansion Grant includes a condition that 30% of the grant is Refundable [grant money that you have to pay back].

How do I apply for the grant?

If you want to apply for a Business Expansion Grant, you need to contact your local LEO. They will assess your eligibility. Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis and the level of funding will be decided after the assessment. The assessment will examine:

- the merits of providing grant support to your proposal;
- your need for financial support;
- any previous funding you have received;
- the availability of funding;
- the potential for employment and sales growth.

Any individual or business who wishes to apply must submit a completed signed Business Expansion Grant application form along with the following:

- quotations for the key costs,
- 3 quotes for any item of expenditure over €5,000. [For any expenditure item costing less than €5,000, one verbal quote is required.]; and
- the most recent set of certified accounts [in the case of existing businesses].

Please make sure your application form is completed in full.

After you send in your application

Your LEO will write to **acknowledge** your application, and an executive from the LEO will meet with you to discuss the application. You may be asked to provide additional information.

When the LEO receives all the information they need, your application will be **evaluated** at the next available meeting of the LEO's Evaluation and Approvals Committee. You will then be informed in writing of the decision.

Please note that **you cannot use your grant to pay for any expenditure incurred before** you make the application. Also note that your submission of an application or the official acknowledgement of your application is not an indication that the application is eligible or will be awarded grant aid. The final decision on grant assistance is with the Evaluation and Approvals Committee of the Local Enterprise Office.

For more information on financial supports available from the LEO including information on eligibility, please see www.localenterprise.ie

When can I access the grant funds?

If your application is approved, you can draw down your funding after you submit evidence of the expenditure detailed in your **letter of offer**. Also, any funding approved must be claimed within the time period on the letter of offer.

To claim any financial assistance approved, you must submit the following:

- a signed acceptance of offer
- original invoices
- evidence of payment
- an accountants Certificate [if required]
- a claim form
- evidence of Tax compliance
- any other documents as set out in the letter of offer

Please note that you **cannot use your grant to pay for any expenditure incurred before** you make the application.

What is 'De Minimis' aid?

Business Expansion grants are provided under the European Commission Regulation on 'De Minimis' aid. De Minimis aid is limited amounts of State aid – up to €200,000 in any three-year period to any one enterprise. De Minimis aid is regarded as too small to significantly affect trade or competition in the common market. The amounts of grants are regarded as falling outside the category of State aid which is banned by the EC Treaty and, therefore, they can be awarded without reference to the European Commission.

However, a Member State must track De Minimis aid and make sure that combined aid payments from all sources to one enterprise in any three-year period respect the €200,000 ceiling.

Therefore, you need to **provide details of all other grant aid that has been awarded to you or your company within the past three years**. Please note that a false declaration to show a figure under the threshold of €200,000 could later mean that you would have to pay back the grant aid with interest.

Application checklist

Application form completed
Application signed and dated
Three quotations for equipment for which grant aid is sought (for any spend expected to be greater than €5,000)
Latest set of Certified Accounts
Financial Projections Spreadsheet (This is provided by your LEO)
Certificate of Incorporation, CRO Number or Certificate of Registration of Business Name if available
Evidence of the availability of matching funding from own resources, from an investor/s and or from loan finance
Your Business Experience Profile / Background
Confirmation of grant aid sought from other agencies
Evidence of Tax compliance

Remember – if we get all the information we need, we can process your application more quickly. Incomplete information will result in delays.

1. Contact details

Contact details of main applicant

Name/s:				
Business name: [Limited Company or trading as]				
Registered business address				
Address for Correspondence if different to above				
Business telephone numbers	Mobile:		Landline:	
Business email address				
Website				
Facebook				
Twitter				
Other social media platforms [Please specify]				

Current status of applicant/s: Please tick relevant box

Name/s	Self employed	Employed	Unemployed	Training/education

2. Company details

Number of years trading: _____

Business type:

Tick relevant column and provide Business Registration or /CRO Number if applicable

Sole Trader/Individual	
Partnership	
Limited Company	
Other (please state)	

If the applicant is a Limited Company, please complete section below

In the case of a Limited Company, list all directors and percentage of shareholding	Director name [1] [2] [3]	Percentage shareholding
Company Tax Number		
CRO Number		

Location of business premises:

Business operating Address		
Is the premises?	Owned	Leased
If the premises are leased, please indicate the term and the time remaining on the lease:		

3. Promoters background/qualifications and experience

Give the relevant experience and qualifications of each of the promoters involved in the business.

[Feel free to use bullet point format.]

Include school / college education, other training, work history, and self-employment history [if applicable].

Education/training

Relevant business experience: [minimum 150 words]

4. Business details

Please describe your existing business:

[Please give as much detail as possible under the headings provided]

1. Describe product/service:

2. Unique features of product/service:

3. Benefits to your customers:



4. Pricing:

5. Patent claims or intellectual property:

6. Supplier information [Raw materials]:

7. Details of proposed expansion:

8. Detail any investment costs to date:

5. Market research and the market

5.1 Describe the market research carried out to support expansion plans:

[Min. 150 words]

5.2 Detail what you know about the size of your target market:

[Include trends, if any, and outline why they are changing, how spending is changing in the market, and so on.]

[Min. 150 words]

5.3 Customers:

[Describe your customer base. For example, do you have existing customers? What type of customers you are targeting? Have you identified any individual customers?]

[Min. 150 words]

5.4 Details of any new forward orders to support expansion:

5.5 Marketing strategy:

[Where and how will you sell your product/service? How will it be distributed and/or promoted to potential customers?]

[Mention website, online sales and social media proposed, min. 150 words]

5.6 Competitors:

[Who are your competitors? Where are they located? How will you compete? Why will people buy from you?]

[Min. 150 words]

6. Expenditure and Funding

Please list and give the expected cost of items to be purchased and other expenditure in Year 1

See guidance notes at the front of this form, or the financial supports section on www.localenterprise.ie which outlines eligibility for grant aid, limits on support available, and conditions of grant aid.

[Note: For expenditure less than €5,000, one verbal quote is needed; for expenditure greater than €5,000, three written quotations for each item is needed.]

Expected salary costs [a]:

Job title	Expenditure cost € [Annual salary amount]	Grant sought € [Eligible costs max. €15,000 per job]
Total salary costs [a]		

Other expenditure expected [b]:

Item description	Expenditure cost € (Ex. VAT)	Grant sought € (Eligible costs max.50% of Expenditure costs Ex. VAT)
Capital items		
Total capital		
Consultancy/innovation/marketing costs	Expenditure cost € (Ex. VAT)	Grant sought € (Eligible costs max.50% of Expenditure costs Ex. VAT)
Total consultancy/innovation/marketing costs		
General overhead costs – for example, utility, rental	Expenditure cost € (Ex. VAT)	Grant sought € (Eligible costs max.50% of Expenditure costs Ex. VAT)
Total general overhead costs		
Total other expenditure costs [b]		



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Total expenditure cost and grant sought:

Transfer totals from above tables	Expenditure cost €	Grant sought €
Total salary costs [a]		
Total other expenditure costs [b]		
Total expenditure cost and grant sought		

Please complete accompanying Financial Projections Spreadsheet

[This spreadsheet is provided by your LEO and is submitted as part of this application].

Match funding sources for total grant sought amount:

	Match Funding €
Investment in enterprise from own resources [Proposed]*	
Investment in enterprise financed by borrowing [Proposed]*	
Investment in the enterprise from other sources [Proposed]*	
Total:	

* Please provide evidence of the availability of match funding from own resources, other sources and or loan finance.

[Please note that grant assistance if approved can only be claimed based on vouched expenditure.]

Please outline why your business needs LEO support and the impact that the assistance will have, and explain the effect of not receiving assistance.

7. Employment details

Estimated job potential [Including the applicants]:

	Total Employment			
	Number of staff at time of application (including owner)	Total staff by end of Year 1	Total staff by end of Year 2	Total staff by end of Year 3
Full time [Female]				
Full time [Male]				
Part time [Female]				
Part time [Male]				
Total				



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8. Grant history

De Minimis Declaration – previous State support (if any)

Has the business or any of its promoters previously received any other State supports or EU supports from any other agencies?

Yes

No

If you answered **Yes** above, please give details including the date, amount and the purpose of the support:

De Minimis Aid	Agency	Amount €	Date
Type of aid approved [for example, training / innovation voucher / seed capital / feasibility / capital / employment / Trading Online Voucher Grant / Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur Investment funding or other grants]			
Total:			

De Minimis Aid is small amounts of State Aid given to an enterprise which cannot exceed €200,000 over any three fiscal years to any business regardless of size or location.

De Minimis Aid can come from any State body, agency or department. If a company is part of a group, then the €200,000 limit applies to the group.

Please note that a false declaration to show a figure under the threshold of €200,000 could later mean that you would have to pay back the grant aid with interest.

9. Additional Information

- a) Are you in receipt of, or will you be an applicant for any Social Welfare support for your own or your employee's employment?

Yes

No

- b) The Local Enterprise Office is committed to its transparency obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Our data protection notice for personal data that is supplied to us by our clients is available at www.localenterprise.ie/legal. This notice contains important information about how we process personal data that is supplied to us by clients. We request that you read the notice carefully and that you ensure that it is made available to any data subjects (e.g. your employees) whose personal data you provide to us.

By ticking "I agree", you confirm that: [a] you have complied with your own data protection obligations in respect of the personal data that you supply to us and that you are entitled to disclose such personal data to us; and [b] you will ensure that a copy of our data protection notice is sent to data subjects (e.g. your employees) whose personal data you provide to us.

I agree

- c) This application will have to be referred to others (on a confidential basis) as part of the Local Enterprise Offices' processing procedure. Do you agree to this?

Yes

No

- d) Do you agree to receive Local Enterprise Office information on an ongoing basis?

Yes

No

- e) Are you (or the company) registered for VAT?

Yes

No



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f) Please give details of the following:*

Bankers	
Accountant	
Solicitor	
Insurers	

* Beneficiaries of grant aid should note any capital items grant aided must be insured. You must provide evidence **before** you can draw down the grant.

10. Signature

I declare that the details given in this application, together with any supplementary information supplied are true and accurate.

Sign here: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Please sign and return this Application Form to the Local Enterprise Office.

See www.localenterprise.ie for contact details

For Internal Use Only

File Reference _____

Date Application Received _____

Sector _____

NACE Code _____

GMIS Code _____

Executive _____

Contact details

localenterprise.ie