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Local
Enterprise
Office

Application Form for Feasibility Study Grant



...Let's talk business

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.

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 businesses.

What is a Feasibility Study Grant?

The aim of a Feasibility Study Grant is to help start-up companies or individual entrepreneurs with the cost of researching their proposed business or new business idea to see if it could be viable and sustainable. The study should help the promoter to reach firm conclusions about their business idea and give them the information they need to draw up a full business plan. Local Enterprise Offices will consider making feasibility study grants to applicants whose potential new business or service may be eligible to apply for further grant assistance from the LEO if the business goes ahead.

Who can apply for a Feasibility Study Grant?

Only businesses or individuals intending to explore the feasibility of a manufacturing or internationally traded service sector business may apply.

What does the Feasibility Study Grant cover?

Feasibility Study Grants are designed to assist the promoter with researching market demand for a product or service and to examine the sustainability of that product or service. The grant helps with innovation costs including specific consultancy requirements, hiring expertise from third-level colleges, private specialists, design, patent costs and prototype development.

Grant expenditure may be considered under the following headings:

- **Market Research Costs** – to develop the business proposition
- **Consultancy Costs** – to include design fees, architect fees and legal fees
- **Technical Development/Prototype/Innovation** – to include prototype development, innovative design, research costs and third-level college consultancy
- **Salary/Own Labour Research** – costs include own labour involved in carrying out the Feasibility Study. The maximum amount chargeable is €400 a week subject to the overall maximum not exceeding 20% of the overall grant drawdown.
- **Miscellaneous Costs** – include telephone costs, mileage costs at €0.26 per kilometre, subsistence and overnight costs, air travel, and so on. Costs in this category relate specifically to Feasibility Grants. The maximum amount for these costs should not exceed 20% of the overall grant level.

How do I apply for the grant?

If you want to apply for a Feasibility Study Grant, you need to contact your local LEO. They will assess your eligibility. When applying for this grant, you should show that:

- you have done enough preliminary research to suggest that a full feasibility study is worthwhile; and
- there is a reasonable possibility that any business idea arising from the study would have real job creation potential.

Applications are considered on a case by case basis.

Any individual or business who wishes to apply must submit a completed signed Feasibility Study 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.

What happens when your application is received?

Your LEO will write to **acknowledge** your application, and an executive from the LEO will meet with you to discuss it. 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 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. Any funding approved must be claimed within 12 months of date of approval.

The maximum Feasibility Study Grant payable is 50%/60% of your eligible expenditure or €15,000 whichever is less. Please note that the grant is 60% in the 'BMW' region [Border, Midlands, West] but 50% in all other regions.

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

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

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

What is 'De Minimis' aid?

Feasibility Study Grants are provided under the European Commission Regulation on 'De Minimis' aid. De Minimis aid is limited amounts of State aid – up to €300,000 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 €300,000 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 €300,000 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 [if already in business] |
| 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] | | | | |
| 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 [if applicable]

| | |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Pre-Start Up | Start up - less than 18 months ago |
|--------------|------------------------------------|

If already in business, starting date of 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 | | |



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3. Applicant's 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 (if applicable)

If you run an existing business, please give details – for example, location, products supplied and services offered, markets served, key customers, number of employees, and so on.



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5. Project sector details

What type of business are you involved in or hope to be involved in?*

[Please tick all that apply and give details in the box below this list.]

| | |
|--|--|
| Services provided to other businesses | |
| Design and manufacture of clothing/fashion | |
| Digital media, wireless communications, broadband, animation, e-Learning, media and entertainment. | |
| Services provided to other consumers or general public | |
| Manufacture of craft products | |
| Manufacture of components/sub supply | |
| Manufacture aerospace, agricultural machinery, automotive, tanks and vessels, tool making and plastics | |
| Manufacturing and delivery of environmental services/products and green technologies | |
| Manufacture and processing of food | |
| Manufacture of light consumer products | |
| Manufacture of medical devices | |
| Other manufacture not classified above | |
| Packaging manufacture | |
| Development and delivery of software and IT services. | |
| e-Commerce | |

Please describe the business idea that you are researching through the feasibility study.

6. Information gathered to date

Give information here about what you have done to date. What have you found out about market size, growth, trends, competitors, market strategy, and so on.

7. Details of proposal – scope of study

Describe the product or service you are researching and state why you want to examine it as a business idea.

8. Proposed programme of work and timescale

Give details of the tasks and activities to be undertaken as part of the study. State also your expected start date, methodology and overall timeframe for the work:

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

9. Estimated job potential if the project went ahead

| | Current Employment (if existing business) | |
|--------|---|-----------|
| | Full-time | Part-Time |
| Male | | |
| Female | | |
| Total | | |

| | Potential Year 1 if the project go ahead | |
|-------|--|-----------|
| | Full-time | Part-Time |
| Total | | |

10. Critical success factors

What factors need to be addressed? For example, technology; licensing; market; finance; quality standards; skills; intellectual property; branding; prototype development/design and so on.

11. Who will carry out the work?

State the relevant qualifications and experience of the researcher[s]. Provide copy proposals from providers setting out scope of work to be undertaken and the intended methodology.

12. Investment costs*

Grant Details

| Estimated expenditure – outline below | € ex. VAT |
|---|-----------|
| Market research Include costs incurred in order to validate the business proposition - these are third party costs | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Consultancy costs [May include product/service design fees] | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Technical development/prototype/ innovation costs Include costs for prototype development and innovation design costs | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Salary/own labour These are own labour costs directly related to the project. The maximum is €400 per week. Maximum that can allocated for this category is 20% of the total approved or drawdown, whichever is less. | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Miscellaneous costs These may include telephone, motor travel at maximum 26c per km, air travel costs, overnight subsistence at a maximum of €50 per night. The maximum that can be allocated to this category is 20% of the total approved or drawdown, whichever is less. | |
| | |
| Total estimated cost of feasibility study | |

Note: if any of the above individual costs are more than €5,000, please provide three quotations for each such item.

How do you propose to fund the study? * Please complete the breakdown presented here.

| | |
|--|---|
| Investment in project from own resources** | |
| Other sources – please outline | |
| Amount of grant assistance sought (max. 60% in BMW region; 50% elsewhere)* Maximum grant available is €15,000 | |
| Total estimated cost of study/project (including your own investment) | € |

* Please see guidance notes or Financial Supports section on www.localenterprise.ie/ which outlines eligibility for grant aid, limits on support available, and conditions of grant aid and so on.

** Please provide evidence of the availability of matching funding from own resources and/or loan finance.

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

13. Other relevant information

- a) Give any other information here that you believe might strengthen your application. For example, job creation, economic benefits in terms of Research & Development, export potential, reduced imports, value added, and so on.

- b) Cost incurred to date, if any:

- c) Have you discussed this proposal with any other agency? If you have, give details, including the other agency's response. [For example, have you considered applying for an Innovation Voucher from Enterprise Ireland for the same work?]

14. Grant history

a) Will this project proceed as proposed without grant assistance?

Yes

No

b) **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 €300,000 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 €300,000 limit applies to the group.

Please note that a false declaration to show a figure under the threshold of €300,000 could later mean that you would have to pay back the grant aid with interest.

15. 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

16. 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