

TOP 10 TIPS FOR APPLYING FOR LEADER FUNDING:

Before you start: Be clear in your own mind what you want to do and why you want to do it. You should carefully think about the need and demand for your project and the impact it will have on your business, the wider benefits to your area and the effect it will have on your competitors. Be clear in your own mind what you are trying to do

Jobs + growth + rural: The main aim of the LEADER funding is to create jobs and growth in the rural economy. Tell us how your project will help do this. Show us that your project is good value for money.

Sell us your idea: Explain really clearly what your project does and how it will benefit the economy. It's hard for us to justify giving you a grant if we don't understand your project. Assume the reader knows nothing about what you want to do.

Read all the guidance carefully: Applications can be rejected as they either do not meet the criteria for LEADER; required information is missing; consents required to complete the project are not in place; some sections of the form are simply not completed (do not leave any boxes blank) and remember to provide all supporting documents requested.

Allow time. Plan ahead: Do not rush your application or chase deadlines. Work out a reasonable timeframe within which to complete your project. The application process can take on average up to 12 weeks to complete. Factor in other deadlines that will be crucial to delivering your project e.g. planning permission, obtaining quotes etc.

You will need three detailed quotes for all items of expenditure: Please read the applicants handbook very carefully to make sure you meet all the quote requirements. It is better to apply for a grant for a few larger items rather than many small ones.

LEADER grants are paid in arrears: Make sure you can bank roll the project until the grant is paid and can evidence the resources to do this, as well as clearly demonstrating how you will source the match funding

Do the market research: You have to show that there is real demand for what you want to do, and that you will not be displacing other businesses or you are unlikely to get a grant.

Do not assume: LEADER Programme staff are there to help you and if you have any queries just ask.

Do not commit to purchasing any equipment or carrying out any work on your project until a LEADER Grant funding agreement has been approved and signed.