



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



The European
Agricultural Fund
for Rural
Development:
Europe investing in
rural areas

2014 to 2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme

**Call for Applications to support investments in
visitor attractions, events and small scale
infrastructure**

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

Managing Authority	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Local Enterprise Partnership Area	Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (Cumbria LEP)
Call Reference	07RD15TO0002
Deadline for the submission of applications	Friday 27 November 2015 at 1700 hours

Read the [Growth Programme](#) guidance. This explains what applicants must do to apply for a grant, how grant applications are assessed and how to meet the terms of a grant funding agreement if an application is successful.

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1. Call Context

1.1. Background

A single European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Growth Programme has been set up to combine three separate European Funds. These are:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- European Social Fund (ESF)
- part of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

The Growth Programme provides funding to help projects in England that create jobs and economic growth. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has responsibility for managing EAFRD. Rural Payments Agency (RPA) manages these grants on behalf of Defra.

Government has allocated £177 million of rural development funding from EAFRD for grants in the Growth Programme. These grants are available for:

- funding and developing micro, small and medium-sized rural businesses including food processing
- funding for small scale tourism infrastructure and tourism co-operation

1.2 Local Enterprise Partnerships

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are private sector-led partnerships between local authorities and businesses. Each LEP has set out in its ESIF strategy the local priorities for this funding the aim of which is to achieve economic growth in its area. There are 39 LEPs covering England, 37 have an allocation of rural development funding. To apply for this funding the project must be located in a rural area in England.

1.3 Other Rural Development Funding

Other rural development support for agricultural and forestry businesses will be available through LEADER Local Action Groups (LAGs), the Countryside Productivity Scheme and Countryside Stewardship.

1.4 Local Context

This call invites applications for investments that improve and expand the tourism offer in rural areas of Cumbria. The objective of this call is to attract more visitors from overseas to stay for longer.

[Cumbria LEP's ESIF Strategy](#) identifies tourism as an important sector for rural growth. Over 41 million people visited Cumbria in 2014, bringing in £2.4 billion

to the local economy. It is one of the largest sectors in the area's rural economy providing the equivalent of 34,000 full time jobs. Many of these are part time or seasonal.

Tourism revenue in Cumbria is subject to seasonal variations, with over 62% of revenue generated between April and September. There is a need to extend the visitor season outside of these months and develop visitor attractions that don't depend on the weather.

One of the objectives of Cumbria's ESIF Strategy is to attract more visitors from overseas. Of the 5.7 million visitors that stay in Cumbria overnight, only 8% are from overseas. Overseas visitors are worth £68 per person per night compared with £54 for a domestic visitor (Cumbria Visitor Survey 2012).

The [Destination Plan](#) for Cumbria identifies the need to improve the quality and range of visitor attractions, events and festivals and small scale tourism infrastructure. The Plan says that these investments must attract more overseas visitors to stay for longer. Cumbria's ESIF strategy identifies the Lake District National Park, bidding to become a World Heritage Site (WHS), and Hadrian's Wall WHS as places for people from overseas to visit.

This call is for applications that will improve and expand the tourism offer in rural Cumbria.

2. Call Overview

2.1 Purpose of the Call

Theme – Supporting tourism in rural areas

This call seeks applications that support investments in the tourism sector in rural areas.

The rural tourism sector offers a significant opportunity for growth in developing the all year round destination offer and improving the quality of tourism products. This can benefit the wider economy of rural areas through high spend on rural attractions and accommodation as well as an increase in tourism based enterprises and job opportunities.

Cumbria LEP aims to support the creation of distinctive and high quality destinations based on what each individual destination can offer. This call provides support for:

- rural businesses and communities seeking to invest in recreational and small scale rural tourism infrastructure

2.2 Support Available

This call seeks applications from:

- new and existing tourism businesses in rural areas
- farmers seeking to diversify into tourism
- rural landowners
- communities in rural areas

Grants are available to develop new and existing visitor attractions, events and festivals and small scale infrastructure.

The aim of this call is to attract more overseas visitors to stay in Cumbria for longer and spend more in the local economy. Applicants must show how their project will attract more overseas visitors and create new jobs. For every £25,000 of grant, applicants must be able to create at least 1 new full-time equivalent job.

Applications from businesses located in the Lake District National Park or Hadrian's Wall WHS will be a priority for support. The call encourages applications that create wider benefits for the local economy and don't displace existing attractions, events and festivals. Projects can demonstrate how they create wider benefits for the local economy through:

- the introduction of new low carbon sources of energy
- providing links to the natural environment of Cumbria
- participation in sustainable transport initiatives to encourage more visitors to use public transport
- the use of local suppliers particularly for food and drink

Examples of support include:

- developing new and existing visitor attractions, giving priority to those that will attract visitors between October and March and those that don't depend on the weather
- developing access infrastructure such as paths and cycle ways
- supporting new sustainable events and festivals that attract overnight as well as day visitors and don't displace activity
- supporting the development of innovative new products and services

2.3 Size of grants available

Grants will be available from £50,000 up to €200,000 (approximately £140,000). State aid rules will apply which may affect the amount of grant offered. Further details on state aid rules are available from gov.uk.

Applicants for commercial projects can apply for a grant to cover up to 40% of the project's total eligible costs. The minimum total eligible cost of these projects would therefore be £125,000. Projects that have some income but are not expected to make a profit (semi-commercial projects) can apply for a grant to cover up to 80% of the project's total eligible costs. The minimum total eligible cost of these projects would therefore be £62,500. Projects that have no income (tourism enhancing projects) can apply for a grant to cover up to 100% of the project's total eligible costs. The minimum total eligible cost of these projects would therefore be £50,000.

Applicants must pay for any costs not covered by the grant with private funding, such as savings or a bank loan, not other public funds. If private funding isn't used, RPA may ask the applicant to repay any grant money already paid and may cancel any future payments.

2.4 Total Funding Available

The total grant funding available for this call is **£1,000,000**. Funding will be offered to a maximum of 20 projects, but the actual number of projects supported may be lower, dependent upon the scale and range of the projects coming forward. All applications are competitive and RPA will assess applications after the close of the deadline.

3. Outputs to be delivered

Applicants need to show how their project will contribute to the achievement of the following total outputs for the call:

- 40 new full-time equivalent jobs created
- a maximum of 20 visitor attractions, events and festivals or small scale infrastructure projects supported
- increase the number of day visitors. The aim is to increase the number of day visitors by 1 million by 2020. Applicants will need to show how their application will contribute to this.
- increase the number of overnight visitors from overseas. The aim is to increase the total number of overnight visitors from overseas to at least 15% of the total number of staying visitors by 2020. Applicants will need to show how their application will contribute to this.
- increase the number of visitors from overseas. The aim is to increase the number of visitors from overseas by 10% of the total number of visitors. Applicants will need to show how their application will contribute to this.

Applicants will need to be able to demonstrate how they will deliver the outputs, committed to within the proposal along with any methodology used. Further details

on the evidence requirements for each output will be available at full application stage.

Applicants will also need to ensure robust project management systems are in place that will capture and record the outputs. A detailed description of the systems will need to be provided at full application stage. All projects will be required to collect evidence to show that outputs have been achieved and report progress with each claim.

4. How to apply

There are two stages to the application process. Applications will be assessed at both stages and only the strongest will be successful. The 2 stages are:

- Stage 1: an outline application
- Stage 2: a full application

Further details on how to apply for a grant and an outline application form are available from gov.uk. The applicant will only be invited to submit a full application if their outline application is successful.

Work must not start on any part of a proposed project before the applicant has received and signed a grant funding agreement from the RPA. This includes ordering or paying a deposit on materials or equipment.

5. Information to consider before making an application

5.1 Eligibility

There will be standard eligibility requirements for each type of grant offered. Applicants will need to refer to gov.uk for further information on each of the types of grants available.

5.2 Register with Rural Payments

Before applicants can submit an application for a grant from the Growth Programme, they will need to register on [Rural Payments](#). If the applicant is already registered on Rural Payments, they will not need to do this again.

5.3 Cross Cutting Themes

All applications received under this call must demonstrate how the Cross Cutting Themes have been addressed in the project design and development. The cross cutting themes for all projects are sustainable development and equality and diversity. Further details on these can be found in the Outline Application form.

5.4 Quotes

Applicants must ensure that they obtain best value for money when buying goods or services. Important information on the number and format of the quotes required to demonstrate best value are available from gov.uk. Applicants will be required to submit these if invited to develop a full application.

5.5 Publicising the Grant

When a project is successful in obtaining rural development funding through Growth Programme, the grant beneficiary will be required to publicise the grant. The RPA will provide beneficiaries with further information with the grant funding agreement but they may expect beneficiaries to:

- mention it in any press releases or when communicating with customers, for example in newsletters and on their website (if applicable); and
- display a poster, plaque, or billboard, including EU logos, depending on the amount of funding received and the type of investment.

If the applicant does not do this, the RPA may apply a penalty by deducting payment from the grant.

6. Support

Guidance on how to apply for a Growth Programme grant is available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/growth-programme-grants-for-the-rural-economy. Applicants can call the Rural Payments helpline on 03000 200 301 or Email GPEnquiries@rpa.gsi.gov.uk for further support if required.

7. Submitting applications

Send the completed outline application form to growthapps@rpa.gsi.gov.uk. The RPA will email to confirm that they've received it.

