



**Southern  
Dorset**  
LOCAL ACTION GROUP

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## Call for Projects 2016

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# Innovative Competitive Exemplary

Call 3: Celebrate Rural Dorset:  
up to £40,000 for one project

**Deadline for Outline Applications 6 January 2017**

To discuss this call and for an Outline Application Form contact the Dorset LEADER Programme Team 01305 225525 or email [dorsetleader@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:dorsetleader@dorsetcc.gov.uk) and state which call you are applying for: Call 1, 2 or 3



The European  
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## **Southern Dorset Local Action Group**

The Local Action Group (LAG) is open to receive at any time, applications for grants within the scope of its Local Development Strategy. The LAG decides which projects should receive grant funding by assessing each application.

The Local Action Group has also identified several areas for specific support in its strategy and launched a **competitive** 'challenge' for **innovative** and **exemplary** projects which will help it meet three of these objectives.

1. Local Food & Drink Innovation
2. Community Places, Community Hubs
3. Celebrate Rural Dorset

This Call for Projects focuses on the third of these objectives and provides an outline of why we are launching it and what we expect from potential proposers. The LAG will use these criteria to assess each application.

We warmly hope that this Call will stimulate communities, voluntary organisations and enterprises – acting alone or together with others – to bring forward an imaginative proposal to develop, research and deliver appropriate visitor interpretation in the rural areas of southern Dorset.

Applications are considered within two stages:

- Outline Application; this is not a grant application but will be used to assess the desirability your project proposal and invite you to
- Full Application

### **Timescale**

The deadline for Outline Applications is: 6 January 2017. The decision making meeting will be held on 9 February 2017. This is a competitive process and applications will be considered by the LAG against each other.

The project doesn't have to be fully worked up at this stage. If invited to make a full application you will allocated a project sponsor to help you develop the project further, with a deadline for submission of 20 April 2017.

If that application is complete then it could be approved at a decision making meeting on the 8 June 2017. Your project could start in late June 2017 and should be completed by 30 September 2018.

Check the area covered by the Local Action Group at: [Map of the LAG Area](#)

#### **The Project: Celebrate Rural Dorset;**

We are calling for a project to support rural communities to develop, research and deliver innovative and appropriate visitor interpretation in a consistent and accessible way. We expect the project to significantly influence quality and benefits across the whole wider tourism economy, not just within the communities that are directly involved.

The LAG sees considerable scope for adding value to the remarkable natural, historic and cultural heritage of southern Dorset. It is the LAG's priority to support projects which lengthen the tourist season and strengthen inland tourism as a complement to coastal tourism, turning low-paid, seasonal employment into full-time and higher paid jobs.

Many rural communities<sup>1</sup> in the LAG area have produced interpretation and information designed to attract visitors to their area. Many have yet to do so. The quality of such interpretation varies in quality and there is a call to review, rationalise and improve information in a consistent way, so that the needs of both the rural community and their audience are met.

We expect that an application will consider:

- support for rural communities to consider the most appropriate approach, medium and content to enhance their visitor and community offer, supporting research and development where relevant;
- consider the availability and appropriateness of existing interpretation and draw upon best practice to develop a high quality visitor offer in each location;
- involve and benefit local businesses, where appropriate;
- include the marketing and promotion of materials and consider how the material can be sustained beyond the lifetime of the project.

### **Outputs and Outcomes**

The proposal should show how the project will contribute to the LAG's Local Development Strategy objective to create 5 jobs in the tourism sector businesses and increase the number of overnight stays in the Local Action Group Area.

The proposal should also:

- support at least 5 rural communities to develop, research and deliver appropriate visitor interpretation;
- benefit local residents and businesses. In your application you should consider the number of residents/businesses who will benefit, how they will benefit and how you will measure and show this;
- be exemplary and replicable in other areas and by other communities. In your application you should consider how you will promote your project and support other organisations in learning from your experience;
- demonstrate how you will ensure the sustainability of the materials produced beyond the lifetime of the project.

**NB.** The following information should be read in conjunction with the Applicants Handbook.

### **Who can apply**

- new or existing micro or small businesses (this includes farm businesses diversifying into tourism activities);
- community groups;
- a group of rural tourist businesses working together to develop groups of activity;
- local authorities;
- charities;
- public-private partnerships;
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs);
- organisations in charge of tourist and recreational development, for example a destination organisation (that is, an organisation whose role is to promote tourism in a particular location or area).

### **Funding Available and grant limits**

<sup>1</sup> A 'rural community' could be defined by its geography or by a common interest.

## Up to £40,000 is available for this project.

The minimum grant is £5,000. The maximum grant rate and amounts will depend on whether or not the project is a commercial project which aims to generate an operating surplus, regardless of the type of applicant organisation. Grants limits are:

- up to 40% of the eligible project costs for commercial tourism projects and awarded under de-minimis state aid rules.
- up to 80% for non-profit making projects that have a benefit in terms of value added to the wider local tourist economy, (for example events and festivals) and where there is some income to offset costs. .
- up to 100% for projects that have a benefit in terms of value added to the wider local tourist economy where there is no income, such as paths, cycle paths, signage and interpretation boards for paths and trails, visitor information centres.

### State aid rules

\*[De minimis state aid regulations](#) mean that a maximum of €200,000 (currently around £145,000) of Public Funds is available to any one undertaking in any rolling period of 3 financial years. If an applicant has had other public funding this may count towards the de minimis aid amount and reduce the amount of money they can apply for from LEADER. Please note that Basic Payment Scheme and Countryside Stewardship payments do NOT count towards the de minimis limit. Please also note that any de minimis state aid received by linked businesses may also count towards the de minimis amount.

### Costs could include:

- construction, acquisition (including leasing) or improvement to buildings;
- the purchase or hire purchase of new and second hand machinery and equipment (please see further guidance on hire purchase and second-hand equipment in the Applicants Handbook);
- general costs such as architect, engineer and consultation fees (restricted to a maximum of 15% of total project costs);
- marketing and promotion (excluding printing) where these are part of a larger project;
- capital costs involved in supporting events and festivals (for example equipment hire, marquee hire, marketing development costs);
- intangible investments including, acquisition or development of computer software and acquisition of patents, licences, copyrights, trademarks;

This project could include short term salaries associated with project development and associated indirect staff costs. If you wish to include staff costs please speak to us. Restrictions apply to staff costs as follows:

- *Salary costs will be restricted to the minimum time necessary in order to establish the project or until the activity can be self-sustaining. This will be determined through the LAG Appraisal process and also through discussion with the Rural Payments Agency*
- *Associated indirect staff costs such as rent, overheads would be eligible and could use the simplified costs option of up to 15% flat rate applied to “**direct**”<sup>2</sup> salary costs to calculate the “**indirect**”<sup>3</sup> **staff costs***

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<sup>2</sup> Direct costs are those costs which are directly related to an individual activity of the entity, where the link with this individual activity can be demonstrated (for instance through direct time registration).

<sup>3</sup> Indirect costs are usually costs which are not or cannot be connected directly to an individual activity of the entity in question. Such costs would include administrative expenses, for which it is difficult to determine precisely the amount attributable to a specific activity (typical administrative/staff expenditure, such as: management costs, recruitment expenses, costs for the accountant or the cleaner, etc.; telephone, water or electricity expenses.)

- *Revenue funded projects must still contribute to the LDS and the LEADER priority of rural jobs and growth*
- *Revenue funding as part of a project proposal should seek to address market failure in rural economies. This is part of the full application appraisal in the 'need for public funds section'.*
- *Revenue funded posts in LEADER projects are not recorded as outputs themselves, even if the post continues after the funded period. Outputs can only be generated from a successfully delivered project.*
- *Revenue funding should be used to support multiple beneficiaries such as enabling collaborative action on a thematic basis in a given geographical area*
- *Revenue funding should only be used for a time-limited period until the initiatives it supports are either complete or self-sufficient.*
- *Revenue funding must not displace existing activity / work such as funding salaries for the provision of a service which is already commercially available.*

#### **What isn't covered**

See SDLAG Applicants Handbook for more information