



Rural Payments  
Agency



Rural Development Programme for England  
(2014 - 2020)

## **GUIDANCE NOTES**

### **FOR APPLICANTS COMPLETING AN OUTLINE APPLICATION FORM**

This document provides specific advice about how to complete an Outline Application Form for LEADER funding. You will also need to refer to the Wash Fens Applicant Handbook to confirm that your project is eligible for funding. If you have any difficulties completing your Outline Application or would like to discuss your proposal with us before filling out the form please contact us:

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



# Guide to Completing the Outline Application Form

The outline application form is used to provide a summary of the applicant's proposed project.

Applicants should clearly explain:

- the location of the proposed project
- what the project will do
- how it will be delivered
- how much it will cost
- who will benefit from it
- how it will create jobs and increase business turnover

Provide enough information in the outline application form to clearly explain the project. This will help the programme staff and assessors to understand and review the application, and it will be more likely to succeed.

## How the information is used

The information provided in the form is used to check that the applicant, project and costs are eligible. It's also used to assess the application against the criteria set out in the Applicant Handbook and against local priorities of the LAG

Applicants should:

- read all of this Applicant Handbook very carefully
- explain things clearly – assume that the reader is not familiar with the proposed project
- explain any acronyms
- ensure the proposed project meets the conditions in the Applicant's Handbook and the local priorities of the LAG
- fill in the form correctly and answer all the questions

Be clear about what the project can achieve. A full application may be rejected if it's found that a project cannot achieve the targets described in the outline application.

## Supporting information

No supporting documents are required at this stage.

However, where appropriate, applications should refer to:

- economic data and reports
- government or industry guidance
- independent verification

If an outline application is endorsed, these details will be needed for the full application.

It is not acceptable to simply state, “The project will be delivered in accordance with the LEADER Programme requirements,” as a response to any part of this application form. Applicants should clearly describe how they will meet these requirements.

## **Before making an outline application**

Applicants should read:

- Wash Fens Local Development Strategy and Applicant Handbook
- information about the submission deadline

## **Register with Rural Payments**

Applicants do not need to be registered with Rural Payments to submit an outline application. However, if they are invited to submit a Full Application they will be required to register before submitting their Full Application at:

<http://www.ruralpayments.service.gov.uk/> (if they haven't already done so).

### **Important checks to make before submitting an application – or your application will not be accepted**

- Complete every box on the form.
- Submit your application in the right format.

Send your application form to the correct email address.

## **How to fill out the outline application form**

This application form is an excel spreadsheet. There are 2 sections to this form, on 2 different tabs. Please complete all the questions on both tabs in full. Please use sentence case, not block capitals.

### **Tab 1 – Applicant and project details**

#### **Section 1 – Applicant and business/organisation details**

**A1 & A2** Please provide the title, first name, surname and gender of the main contact in the applicant business. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) will use this for all future correspondence. This must not be the agent.

**A3** For the main contact in the applicant business, please provide their job title or details of their role/position in the organisation.

**A4** Give the full name of the business/ organisation who will be receiving the grant. Where this is a registered company, this will be the full registered name of the business and will be the name in the annual accounts for the business. This must be the business name that is or will be registered with Rural Payments and linked to the reference number in A6 (if applicable). We will use this for all future correspondence.

**A5** Please provide the full postal address of the applicant business. This should be the main postal address for the applicant business. If the business has multiple addresses, it should be the address that all postal correspondence, such as the grant funding agreement, should be sent. This must be the address that is linked to

the reference number in A6 (or will be registered with Rural Payments for the business (if the Full Application is successful).

Please provide the postcode of the applicant business in the following format: XX00 0XX

Telephone number: For the main contact in the applicant business, please provide the landline telephone number.

Mobile number: For the main contact in the applicant business, please provide the mobile telephone number. It is helpful for us to have both landline and mobile telephone numbers.

Email address: For the main contact in the applicant business, please provide the email address. This will be the email address we will use to contact the applicant to discuss a project. This should be an email account that is regularly used and monitored.

#### **A6 – Single Business Identifier number**

Please enter the Single Business Identifier (SBI) number here if you already have it.

Some applicants already have an SBI number. Other applicants will get their SBI number when they register with the online Rural Payments service: <https://www.gov.uk/claim-rural-payments> which they must do if they are successful in being asked to complete a full application.

**A7** Choose the appropriate option from the list which describes the legal status of the applicant business named in A4.

#### **A8 Business/organisation size classification**

This depends on the number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees and the financial performance of the applicant's business.

Choose the appropriate option.

#### **Check the size of a business**

Some grants are only available to certain sizes of business. Use the table to find out how a business size is defined for these grants. The size of the business depends on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees and its financial performance. All businesses must meet the FTE employee limits as well as either the turnover or balance sheet totals. Use the table to check the size of a business.

<b>Company category</b>	<b>Number of FTE employees</b>		<b>Turnover</b>		<b>Balance sheet total</b>
Micro	Under 10	AND	€2m (about £1.4 million) or less	OR	€2m (about £1.4 million) or less
Small	Under 50		€10m (about £7.0 million) or less		€10m (about £7.0 million) or less
Medium-	Under 250		€50 million (about		€43 million

sized			£35 million) or less		(about £30 million) or less
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### What is an FTE employee?

Anyone who works a minimum of 30 hours per week counts as 1FTE employee. A person working 30 hours a week for 3 months of the year would be 0.25FTE employee. FTEs include business partners and directors.

If any person, including a business partner or director, works more than 30 hours per week they still count as 1FTE employee.

**A9** Applicants should enter the number of employees of their business, as a full time equivalent.

**A10** a) Applicants should choose the most appropriate option from the dropdown list to describe their business activities and b) provide a brief description of the activities of the business/organisation

**A11** If the answer is 'yes', please provide full details of employee numbers, turnover and net assets.

### Definition of linked businesses

A business will be treated as one business if it is linked to one or more enterprises. The applicant therefore needs to consider the FTE employees and financial information of any other businesses to which they are formally connected. Enterprises are linked where any of the following is true:

- one enterprise holds a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another
- one enterprise is entitled to appoint or remove a majority of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another
- a contract between the enterprises, or a provision in the memorandum or articles of association of one of the enterprises, enables one to exercise a dominant influence over the other
- one enterprise is able, by agreement, to exercise sole control over a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in another.

For full details see this SME definition:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/sme\\_definition/sme\\_user\\_guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/sme_definition/sme_user_guide_en.pdf)

Applicants need to provide this information for all linked enterprises:

- number of employees;
- turnover; and
- balance sheet information.

Please note that the number of employees, turnover or balance sheet total of linked businesses may make an application ineligible.

**A12** Producers of fresh fruit and vegetables may be part of the RPA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Aid Scheme and defined as a Producer Organisation – see: <https://www.gov.uk/funding-for-fruit-and-vegetable-sellers#producer-organisations-on-the-fresh-fruit-and-vegetables-aid-scheme>. If the applicant's business is part of this scheme, please provide the name of the Producer Organisation and details of any funding that has been received through this scheme.

If applicants have already had (or can get) funding for their proposed project through the RPA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Aid scheme, they can't also apply for a LEADER grant.

**A13** If the applicant answers 'yes' to this question, they need to provide details of any previous public funding that they or their business have received since 2007. Applicants must tell us if they have received any European funding, including but not limited to:

- European Social Fund (ESF)
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
- European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund Structural Funds (EAGGF)
- Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)
- England Rural Development Programme (ERDP)
- Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF)
- Forestry Commission
- LEADER

Applicants should also tell us if they have received any public sector funding from organisations or funds including but not limited to:

- a local authority
- Big Lottery Fund
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Regional Growth Fund
- Arts Council
- Sports Council
- a Regional Development Agency (RDA)
- Business Link
- Objective 1

## **Section 2 – Agent Details**

**A14- A17** While it is not a requirement to do so, applicants may wish to work with an agent, consultant, or business manager on their application. If an agent / consultant / business manager is completing the form on behalf of an applicant, their full details must be provided.

## **Section 3 – Project details**

**A18** Please provide the name of the project that will be included in correspondence and on publicity information. This should be concise and clear.

Most applications will be for projects with a fixed address. Some projects might span more than one LAG area and if this is the case it should be indicated here.

**A19** Provide a brief and concise description / summary of the project beginning with the words, 'This project will...' Use no more than 100 words.

**A20** Provide details of how you intend to deliver the project and the key individuals and roles of those people delivering the project

**A21** Provide details of the current state of the project. Has the work started, have quotes been obtained?

**A22** Please provide details of the number of new jobs that will be created as a result of this project, the working hours (as FTE – See page 5) and the type of job (e.g. managerial, administration and type of jobs that will be created.

**A23** Provide details of how the LEADER investment would improve the productivity of the business. Explain how turnover will be increased or costs reduced for example.

**A24** Provide details of how your project will affect the wider community and business community. For example; how many other businesses will benefit from increased productivity as a result of the LEADER investment? Please explain why.

Projects cannot have a negative impact on other existing businesses offering the same services. If there are other similar businesses operating in the area you must explain how your project complements these existing businesses.

**A25** Location/address for the project.

a) Please answer if the project will be located at a specific location, with a postcode, by selecting 'yes' or 'no' from the dropdown box options. If the answer is 'no' please explain the reason why. All capital / construction projects will be located at a specific location.

b) If you have answered 'yes', please answer whether the project will be at the same location as specified in question A5 by selecting 'yes' or 'no' from the dropdown box options. If the answer is 'No', provide the full postal address and postcode of where the project will be located.

**A26** The figures in the table will be automatically calculated and entered when the financial table in tab 2 – 'Project Costs and Financials' is completed. Please do not try to type answers into these boxes. Please check the figures are correct when all the details in tab 2 – 'Project Costs and Financials' are complete.

**A27** If the applicant's business is registered for VAT purposes, this should be 0. This section shows the amount of VAT that applicants wish to include in their grant application, due to their business not being able to recover VAT. The figure here is automatically calculated and entered when applicants complete the financial table in tab 2 – 'Project Costs and Financials'. Please do not try to type an answer into this box. Please check the figure is correct when all the details in tab 2 – 'Project Costs and Financials' are complete.

**A28** Please state:

- The proposed start date – the date that applicants intend to start work on their project and start incurring eligible costs. Applicants must please be aware that they cannot start any works (or commit to any costs) until their Full Application has been approved and they have received a grant funding agreement with the project start date.
- The proposed project completion date – applicants should state the date when they will have completed the project works, incurred the costs and paid all project invoices.

**A29** Please detail all the permissions (such as planning), consents and licences that will be required for the proposed project. Documents such as an Environmental Impact Assessment may need to be produced before work can start. Applicants need to understand the timescales for these and tell us whether the permissions and consents have been applied for, when they are expected, or if they have already been obtained.

**A30** Outputs are the direct and measurable products of a project as a consequence of project activities e.g. new jobs created

The outputs should be:

- appropriate to the size of the project and the project description
- logical, that is, there should be a clear logic chain linking outputs to inputs
- achievable – applicants should be able to deliver what they say they can deliver here

The outputs should link with the project's activity and objectives. Applicants should explain their methodology for forecasting the outputs here. Applicants may also be able to provide brief details of the baseline starting position for the outputs to be achieved.

## **Section 4 – Fit with Local Priorities**

**A31** Projects must meet

- the objectives of the LEADER Programme (read the LEADER Programme guidance and Applicant Handbook)

For this question, explain how the project proposal meets the objectives of the LEADER Programme.

**A32** Provide details of how your project will increase the local economy. For example how will local residents benefit, how many business will benefit from your project.

**A33** Briefly set out how your project will address environmental sustainability.

All projects should seek to ensure that their activity does not have adverse effects on the environment and applicants need to demonstrate that they have thought about



how the project is likely to impact, positively and negatively, on the area in which it will be sited.

Positive environmental impacts could include:

- improvements in energy efficiency
- reduction of carbon emissions
- using renewable energy
- enhancing natural habitats
- reducing waste generation
- using recycled materials

Negative environmental impacts could include:

- visual impact
- significant increases in traffic
- pollution (including noise and dust)
- impacts on wildlife habitats – these might be short-term impacts (for example, whilst the project is being constructed), or longer-term impacts from the ongoing presence and use of a facility

**A34** Briefly explain how the project will take account of equality, diversity and the social impact it will have in the local area. What steps have applicants taken to understand the potential impact, both positive and negative, of the project on different equality groups and communities including race, gender, age and disability?

## Tab 2 – Project costs and financials

**Enter data/information in the white cells only. DO NOT enter anything in the grey cells - they will automatically calculate figures.**

**B1** Please complete the financial table with details of the project costs.

In the first column please identify the item or type of cost.

Then state the grant / intervention rate that you wish to apply for. Use the rates that are given in the Applicant's Handbook that are applicable to your project. Please note that these rates are subject to change by the programme staff.

The next section is broken down between financial years. Enter in the relevant column the net cost of the item (excluding VAT), according to when this cost will be incurred.

Once these fields have been completed, the others will be filled out automatically.

If applicable, please record the irrecoverable VAT applicable to the project costs. If applicants are not VAT registered and are unable to reclaim VAT, and then enter the VAT figure into the irrecoverable VAT section. If the business is VAT-registered, then this section should show £0.00.

If there are any costs that are integral to the project, but the applicants does not intend to include these in their grant application, enter the details of the item and costs in the table, but enter a 0% grant intervention rate.

Once applicants have completed this table, don't forget to check that the totals have correctly been transferred into the table at question A26.

In the "Proposed Project Funding" table please enter details of the match funding you will be using in each year of the project into the row 62 titled Total Match Funding Available . The figures in the row titled Total Match Funding Required (row 63) are automatically calculated from the data provided in the project costs data.

**B2** Please state how much grant funding is needed for the project to precede. Describe here what would happen to the project if you did not receive funding for your project. For example, would it result in the project not going ahead at all? Would the project still go ahead, but at a reduced scale or with a reduced area of benefit? Would the outputs be delayed or reduced, or not achieved? Provide reasoning for your answer.

**B3.** Applicants will normally be expected to provide a proportion of the project costs themselves. If some other organisation(s) (including banks) is / are providing the balance of funds, applicants need to state here who this organisation is. They should tell us whether the private match funding is confirmed and, if not, when it will be confirmed. If it is not confirmed, please explain the implications for the project if the match funding is refused, and any alternative options available.

**B4** Please explain if the budget includes VAT that cannot be recovered from HMRC and explain why the VAT is non-recoverable.

## **Submitting an outline application**

Once fully completed, outline applications should be submitted by email from the applicant email address entered in section A5.

OR

If applicants are using a consultant or agent to help with an application or a business manager is completing the application, they may submit the outline application from their email address, but the applicant email address entered in A5 must be copied into the email. This is to demonstrate that the applicant consents to the submission of the outline application.

**If the applicant email address is not copied into the email we cannot accept the application.**

## **Deadlines**

If a deadline has been given, outline applications must be received electronically by the deadline date and time specified in the email accompanying the Outline Application. Any application that is received after the deadline date and time will be rejected immediately. The date and time that the outline application is received will be checked using the details that are shown on the email received into the LAG email account.

## **What format to send the form in**

Outline application must be submitted electronically as a Microsoft Excel attachment to an email. We will not be able to open application forms saved in formats that are not compatible with the version of Microsoft Excel used for the application forms. If we can't open the application form, the application will be rejected.

We cannot accept any other format of electronic application submission, including PDF documents or scanned documents. We cannot accept any other format, for example but not exclusively, hard copy printed applications or hand-written applications.

### **Using Open Office software**

If using Open Office Software to complete and save the application form, please note that it will be necessary to ensure that the document is saved using the Microsoft Excel (.xls) format to ensure that it is compatible with the systems the LAG uses.

To do this, select 'Save As' when saving the application form. The 'Save As' box will open, allowing the location for the document to be saved to be selected.

Then select the format for the document in the 'Save as type' box. Select the format type – Microsoft Excel 97/2000/XP/2003 (.xls), if this has not been automatically selected, then click 'Save'.

A dialog box may open asking the applicant to 'Confirm File Format'. If this happens, confirm that the intention is to save the document using the Microsoft Excel file format.