


The Shared Island Tourism
Brand Collaboration Project



The Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme 2024 Scheme Guidelines



Shared Island
Initiative





A Capital Investment Scheme for Improving Interpretation Provision and the Visitor Experience at Existing Operating Visitor Attractions and Experiences located along the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route.

The Scheme is targeted at eligible geographic areas on the Wild Atlantic Way comprising Counties Donegal, Sligo and parts of Leitrim, and on the Causeway Coastal Route comprising the Local Authority Areas of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council.

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1. Scheme Overview

1.1 The Shared Island Tourism Brand Collaboration Project

Supported through the Government of Ireland's Shared Island Fund, the Shared Island Tourism Brand Collaboration Project is a new all-island tourism collaboration and marketing project based on a proposal developed by Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, and Tourism Northern Ireland. Its vision is to enhance the visitor's journey by bringing together the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland and the Causeway Coastal Route in Northern Ireland, to develop and establish international stand-out tourism products and visitor experiences on an all-island basis, and to improve the performance and impact of tourism to the island of Ireland.

The Shared Island Tourism Project aims to create synergies between the two iconic touring routes and bring benefits to the areas located within the hinterlands of each by bringing new opportunities that create lasting tourism impact and economic benefit.

The Shared Island Tourism Project is aimed at increasing the profile of the island of Ireland in the international marketplace by increasing visitor numbers and their expenditure, whilst encouraging development that remains sensitive to the natural environment.

1.2 The Shared Island Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme 2024

The Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme 2024 (the "**Scheme**") aims to enhance a visitor's opportunity to travel and experience both routes together, whilst doing so in either direction, by providing capital investment funding to deliver enhanced interpretative experiences at **existing visitor attractions**. This will be delivered by creating opportunities to increase the impact and benefits of tourism to the regions within each jurisdiction that are connected by both routes, i.e., counties Donegal, Sligo and parts of Leitrim* in Ireland on the Wild Atlantic Way, and the Local Authority areas of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council in Northern Ireland on the Causeway Coastal Route.

Applicants should refer to the Location Map presented at Appendix 1 which sets out the Scheme's eligible target area.

**Applicants located in County Leitrim should note that the Scheme's eligible target area includes only those parts of the county highlighted on this map.*

The total budget for the Scheme is €3 million or £2.5 million. Of this total fund, €1.5 million is available to support eligible projects in Ireland, and £1.25 million is available to support eligible projects in Northern Ireland.

1. Scheme Overview (continued)

1.3 The Aims, Objectives and Priorities of the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme

The **aims** of the Coast-to-Coast Scheme are:

- To enhance the current offering at existing visitor attractions and experiences through capital investment in interpretative visitor experience provision,
- To bring together the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route to improve opportunities for visitors to explore each region and generate additional community and economic benefits, and
- To create outstanding international marketing opportunities for the island of Ireland.

The **objectives** and **priorities** of the Coast-to-Coast Scheme are:

Objectives	Priorities
To improve interpretation provision and the visitor experience at existing operating visitor attractions experience along the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greatly improved interpretation and storytelling• Immersive experiences• Product innovation• Revealing hidden gems
To provide the visitor with interpretation in the first language of your specific key target markets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foreign language provision (English plus two additional foreign languages at a minimum)
To increase the duration that visitors stay and their volume of expenditure whilst visiting the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route by enhancing our visitor attractions and experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase dwell time• Increase visitor expenditure
To improve our visitor attractions and experiences to encourage overseas visitors to stay beyond the traditional tourism season and to encourage them to stay longer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seasonal extension• Regional dispersion

2. The Tourism Agencies

2.1 Fáilte Ireland

Fáilte Ireland was established under the National Tourism Development Authority Act 2003. Its role is to guide and support sustainable growth in tourism earnings and employment in the Republic of Ireland (“Ireland”). Fáilte Ireland provides consumer and competitor insights, mentoring, investment, and trade supports across the business, event and leisure sectors, to help secure sales growth from targeted overseas and domestic market segments.

Working in partnership with tourism businesses, Local Government, State Agencies and Government Departments, Fáilte Ireland seeks to foster a competitive and innovative enterprise base, a sensitively managed natural and built environment within tourism communities, and a public policy environment to meet the needs of visitors. Fáilte Ireland is responsible for four regional experience brands, *Dublin, Ireland’s Ancient East, Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands, and the Wild Atlantic Way*.

2.2 Tourism Ireland

Tourism Ireland was established under the Good Friday Agreement and is the agency responsible for marketing the island of Ireland as a tourism destination overseas. It devises and implements world-class marketing programmes in more than twenty markets across the world and provides industry partners with opportunities to market their own products and services alongside it overseas. Tourism Ireland’s remit is to increase tourism to the island of Ireland and to support Northern Ireland to realise its tourism potential.

Tourism Ireland operates under the auspices of the North South Ministerial Council through the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in Ireland and the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland. Tourism Ireland works closely with Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland, and with partners in the tourism industry at home and abroad in delivering its remit.

2.3 Tourism Northern Ireland

Tourism Northern Ireland was established under the Development of Tourist Traffic Act (NI) 1948 and its constitution and continuation were affirmed by the Tourism (NI) Order 1992.

Tourism Northern Ireland is a non-departmental public body of the Department of the Economy and is responsible for the development of tourism product and experiences across Northern Ireland, supporting the tourism industry and for the marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination to domestic tourists, within the island of Ireland.

Tourism Northern Ireland works collaboratively with other tourism bodies, local authorities, Government Departments, and tourism businesses to help develop the visitor economy in Northern Ireland.

Tourism Northern Ireland’s consumer brand “Embrace a Giant Spirit” has been widely adopted and is playing an important role in creating stand out for Northern Ireland as a destination. The brand encapsulates the spirit of the people, warmth of the welcome and the authenticity of the visitor experience in Northern Ireland.

Further information on the Embrace a Giant Spirit consumer brand is available [here](#).

2.4 Collaboration between the Three Tourism Agencies

The three tourism agencies have collaborated to develop and deliver the Scheme to the tourism industry in eligible target areas in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Please refer to the map at Appendix 1 for further information on the eligible target areas.

In Ireland, the Scheme will be administered by Fáilte Ireland. In Northern Ireland, the Scheme will be administered by Tourism Ireland with advice from Tourism Northern Ireland. Tourism Ireland is the decision maker and budget holder for the Scheme in Northern Ireland.



3. The Iconic Touring Routes

3.1 The Wild Atlantic Way

The Wild Atlantic Way was launched in 2014 in response to a crippling global recession which left the tourism economy on the west coast of Ireland facing sustained challenges with declining coastal communities and a tourism season of no more than six weeks in many places. The brand was designed to create a product of scale that would re-imagine the west coast. It would unify it through a continuous, defined route and package it in a way that would motivate visitors to holiday there and provide an economic engine for the west. The clarity and authenticity of the brand resonated immediately with local communities, businesses, and visitors alike.

From the outset, a strong sense of ownership of the brand existed among local communities with positive brand adoption among the industry, which was supported by positive feedback from visitors on the overall experience. The most recent economic impact report¹ states that nearly two million more visitors visited the Wild Atlantic Way in 2023

compared with 2013. Tourism is now worth €3 billion per year on the Wild Atlantic Way, an increase of 59% on 2013, and this growth has contributed to the creation of an additional 35,000 jobs; tourism now supports 121,000 jobs across the region. The Wild Atlantic Way generates employment and revenue for businesses and communities from Malin Head to Kinsale and continues to be a key motivator for domestic and international visitors.

In many areas across the Wild Atlantic Way region, tourism is the largest employer accounting for up to one in four jobs. Nevertheless, the Wild Atlantic Way remains a “young” brand with significant opportunity for further economic growth, particularly in the northern half of the Wild Atlantic Way region. The brand continues to prove attractive to all consumer segments providing the platform for continued destination and experience development.

¹ 10 Years of the Wild Atlantic Way – A Decade of Transformational Tourism Impact on the West Coast of Ireland. Available to download from: www.failteireland.ie/wildatlanticway.aspx

3. The Iconic Touring Routes (continued)

3.2 The Causeway Coastal Route

The Causeway Coastal Route was developed as a Signature Project arising from Tourism Northern Ireland's Strategic Framework for Action 2004-2007 to give Northern Ireland international market stand-out. Tourism Northern Ireland led on the management and administration of funding for this initiative in partnership with Local Authorities and industry stakeholders. In 2012, the Causeway Coastal Route was officially launched.

The 120-mile (190 km) driving route stretches along the coast road (A2) from Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council to Derry City and Strabane District Council and includes a significant range of visitor attractions and experiences such as Coronation Garden, Carrickfergus Castle, the Gobbins Cliff Path, Carrick-A-Rede Rope Bridge, the Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle, Mussenden Temple and Downhill Demesne, and the Walled City of Derry. The route is unique and authentic and was, along with Belfast, declared to be the world's number one 'must see' destination in 2018 by the prestigious Lonely Planet.

The area that comprises the Causeway Coastal Route is well-positioned as a holiday destination to attract overseas visitors. With the Giant's Causeway as its most famous visitor attraction, the Causeway Coastal Route and its hinterland has long been enjoyed for its beaches, dramatic coastline, hills and glens, castles, and historic villages. Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, one of the primary local authorities located along the route, attracts one of the largest proportions of visitor expenditure annually in Northern Ireland. However, the route still has significant opportunities for investment and growth.

3.3 The Touring Routes and the Purpose of the Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme

As highlighted in Section 1, the Scheme aims to enhance a visitor's opportunity to travel and experience both routes together, whilst doing so in either direction, by providing capital investment funding to deliver enhanced interpretative experiences at **existing visitor attractions and experiences**.

It is intended that this will be delivered by creating opportunities to increase the impact and benefits of tourism to the regions within each jurisdiction that are connected by both routes, i.e., counties Donegal and Sligo and parts of Leitrim in Ireland on the Wild Atlantic Way, and the Local Authority areas of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council in Northern Ireland on the Causeway Coastal Route.

Shared Island Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme Toolkit

A toolkit has been prepared to accompany these Guidelines. The toolkit contains a seven-step guide to help you recognise gaps in your attraction's interpretation and experience and can assist you to identify the priority developments for your attraction. This is available to download from the following websites:

Fáilte Ireland: Coast to [Coast Capital Investment Scheme by DiscoverIreland - Issuu](#).

Tourism Northern Ireland: [Shared-Island-Toolkit.pdf \(tourismni.com\)](#)

4. Is This Scheme For You?

4.1 Who Can Apply?

Within the respective jurisdictions, the Scheme is a **competitive** capital investment scheme and is open to applicants from the public, private and community/voluntary sectors that meet the eligibility criteria set out in this section.

4.2 Eligible Applicant Types

Applications are invited from public, private and community/voluntary sector applicants, as summarised in the table below. *Eligible Project Types are presented at Section 4.3 which should be read in conjunction with Section 4.2.*

Important Note

1. Potential applicants/applicant projects that received capital investment funding from Fáilte Ireland or Tourism Northern Ireland under a previous capital investment scheme specifically administered by either agency, but where the funded project has not been operated to the satisfaction of the relevant funding agency, **are not** eligible to apply to this Scheme.

2. Applicants that are undertakings in difficulty **are not** eligible to apply. Please see the definition of an undertaking in difficulty in the Fáilte Ireland State Aid Handbook.

Public Sector	Private Sector	Community/Voluntary Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Authorities Semi-State Bodies Other public bodies established to operate facilities on behalf of the public sector including commercial and non-commercial entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Companies Private Individuals Other Legal Entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community/Voluntary Groups Charities

4.3 Eligible Project Types

The Scheme has been designed specifically for interpretative improvements at **existing visitor attractions and experiences** located in the eligible target areas in Ireland and Northern Ireland (please refer the Location Map presented at Appendix 1).

For the purposes of the Scheme, a visitor attraction/experience is defined as follows:

“A permanently established site, a primary purpose of which is to allow access for tourism, whether this occurs for the purpose of entertainment, interest, or education, rather than primarily a retail outlet or a venue for

sporting, film, or theatrical performance. It must be open to the public for published periods of the year and should be capable of attracting local, domestic, and overseas visitors.

It must be operated as a visitor attraction/experience, rather than merely being accessible to the public. Operation as a paid visitor attraction may include Guides based on-site (even if only seasonally); staffed visitor facilities including exhibition and interpretive spaces, ticket sales, and toilets. Interpretation panels on-site with no further visitor management is not sufficient to be considered a visitor attraction.”

4. Is This Scheme For You? (continued)

Applicant projects must therefore meet all of the following criteria:

4.3.1 An Existing Visitor Attraction/Experience

Applications are invited from existing visitor attractions and experiences as defined in 4.3, that meet the following three core criteria:

1. Have been operating (open to visitors) since 1st March 2023,
2. Open and operational to the public full time (five days per week, including weekends) for a minimum of five months of the year, and
3. Employ a minimum of two full-time employees, i.e., Full Time Equivalents.

Applicants should note that they will be required to provide supporting evidence to each criterion: please refer to Appendix 2 (for applicants located in Ireland) or Appendix 3 (for applicants located in Northern Ireland) for further information.

4.3.2 Project Proposal Types and Expenditure

Applicant project proposals must relate to the development of interpretation that **(1)** significantly enhances the visitor experience at the existing visitor attraction; **(2)** offers interpretation provision in a minimum of two foreign languages (in addition to English); and **(3)** contributes to the Scheme's aims, objectives, and priorities.

4.3.3 Project Location

Only applicant projects that are located within the Scheme's eligible target area as set out in the Location Map presented at Appendix 1, i.e., The Wild Atlantic Way Counties of Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim* in Ireland, and the Local Authority areas of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Mid and East

Antrim Borough Council, and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council in Northern Ireland along the Causeway Coastal Route are eligible to apply.

***Applicants located in County Leitrim are advised that the Scheme's eligible target area is limited to those parts of the county highlighted on the Location Map presented in Appendix 1.**

4.3.4 Planning Permission

Applicants should note that **only** project proposals that **do not** require planning permission, or which have already been granted planning permission, are eligible to apply to this Scheme. Evidence must be submitted at Stage 2 of the application process.

4.4 Project Completion

All projects that receive an award of investment funding must be fully delivered (i.e., all development, construction and fit-out works) by **30th April 2026**, to the satisfaction of the relevant agency in that jurisdiction.

Applicants are advised that it will not be possible to extend the delivery period. This deadline includes the drawdown of all investment grant payments.

4. Is This Scheme For You? (continued)

4.5 Right to Undertake the Project at the Project Site

Applicants must hold the legal Right to Undertake the Project at the Project Site. Should your Expression of Interest application proceed to Stage 2 of the Scheme's application process, you will be required to provide evidence to demonstrate the applicant's Right to Undertake the Project at the project Site (i.e., to build and operate) for the Scheme's requisite Operative Period of 5 years following the completion of the proposed project i.e., following completion of the construction works and fit-out programme.

This confirmation can take the form of evidence of either (a) site ownership or a lease agreement, and/or (b) a letter from a solicitor satisfactorily confirming that you have the legal right to undertake and operate the project at the site.

4.6 Match Funding

Applicants are required to have the necessary match funding to enable the development and delivery of the proposed project. Applicants should note that the maximum investment sum available to support eligible project costs is €300,000 if located in Ireland, or £250,000 if located in Northern Ireland.

The maximum investment grant rate for all applicants across the public, private and community/voluntary sectors **will not exceed 80% of eligible capital project expenditure**. Applicants should therefore note that all eligible project costs incurred above the maximum investment grant sum offered by Fáilte Ireland and/or Tourism Ireland (as appropriate) and all ineligible project costs, will be the responsibility of the Grantee. Match funding 'in kind' is not applicable. Applicants from Northern Ireland will be required to declare if their match funding is being sought from another source of Subsidy Control Aid, please refer to Appendix 3.

4.6.1 Evidence of Match Funding

Evidence of match funding at Stage 2 of the application process can be provided either by (a) a letter from the applicant's accountant/ auditor confirming that the applicant has sufficient match funding from own resources, or (b) a Bank Facility Letter i.e. evidence of the availability of borrowings, if relevant.

Applicants should note that Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland can only reimburse eligible expenditure that has been incurred and paid by the Grantee. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

4.6.2 Working Capital

Applicants will be required to have the necessary reserves/working capital to ensure that the proposed interpretative visitor experience project can be delivered in full in accordance with a Letter of Offer. Applicants should note that applications will not be processed and/or evaluated if this evidence is not provided/clearly demonstrated at Stage 2 of the application process.

4.6.3 Evidence of Working Capital

Evidence of working capital at Stage 2 of the application process can be provided either by (a) a letter from the applicant's accountant/ auditor confirming that the applicant has sufficient working capital from own resources, or (b) a Bank Facility Letter i.e. evidence of the availability of working capital, if relevant.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

As this Scheme will operate on a **competitive basis** within each jurisdiction and due to the limited funding available, applicants should note that only those project proposals that best meet the Scheme's requirements at each stage of the application process and the Scheme aims, objectives and priorities, will be considered for an investment grant. Therefore, even if an applicant's proposal meets the Scheme's requirements, aims, objectives and priorities and related criteria set out herein, an award of investment funding is not guaranteed.

4. Is This Scheme For You? (continued)

4.7 Accessible and Inclusive Tourism

Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland consider that all tourism businesses and enterprises should aim to be universally accessible and offer barrier-free tourism opportunities and visitor experiences. This means ensuring that tourist destinations and visitor products and services are accessible to all persons, regardless of their physical limitations, disabilities or age. Accessible and Inclusive tourism allows destinations to be enjoyed equally by everyone. The Scheme promotes the horizontal principles of accessibility, respectful of fundamental rights, equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

If applying from Ireland, applicant projects must consider the principles of Universal Design and be designed and implemented in accordance with and respectful of these principles which include design and development in accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

If applying from Northern Ireland, applicants will be required to demonstrate how the project will meet the differing needs of all the Section 75 groups in addition to ensuring that the visitor attraction/experience is fully accessible to all. Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland are committed to the fulfilment of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) in both the promotion of equality and of good relations through our overall thinking and decision-making processes. Obligations under this Act will be included in any Letter of Offer issued.

4.8 Sustainability and Climate Action

Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland seek project proposals that consider sustainability and environmental measures. All applicant projects under the Scheme must comply with relevant policies and best practice in sustainable development within the relevant jurisdiction. This must be demonstrated in applicant submissions at Stage 2 of the application process.

Applicants should note that in 2024, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland will launch an All-Island Sustainable Assurance Programme. This programme will provide clarity across different standards/certifications in the market and will help businesses decide on their best options to becoming certified.

Successful applicants located in Ireland will be required to sign-up to the Climate Action Programme to calculate their CO₂ emissions and put a plan in place to reduce them.

Successful applicants located in Northern Ireland specifically will be required to provide a copy of their Sustainability Policy/Statement and to sign up to the All-Island Sustainable Assurance Programme.



4. Is This Scheme For You? (continued)

4.9 Ineligible Project Types

The following project types are **ineligible** under this Scheme:

- Projects located outside of the geographical confines of the Scheme (see Location Map at Appendix 1)
- Accommodation and related facilities
- Driving routes
- Events or Festivals
- Stand-alone Food and Beverage facilities, e.g. cafés/tearooms/restaurants/public houses
- Motorised and non-motorised transport vehicles (including bikes, buses, boats etc). Exceptions may be made, at the discretion of the relevant agency, where a vehicle is integral to the interpretative experience and has a restricted transport range (e.g. transport museum items)
- Public realm, including public spaces, parks, soft play, children's playgrounds
- Walks/Trails: Capital development including greenways, outdoor heritage trails, trail heads, trail furniture
- Public service blocks, amenity areas and related facilities
- Stand-alone Retail facilities
- Theatres and cinemas
- Conference, spa and leisure facilities
- Golf courses (including professional, adventure and crazy golf courses)
- Leisure facilities (including escape rooms, bowling alleys, laser quest and trampolines)
- Semi-permanent structures, e.g. marquees/stretch tents/orangeries/similar structures
- Breweries and distilleries (with the exception of the visitor facing element, such as a visitor centre)

5. What Financial Support is Available?

5.1 What Investment Funding is Available?

The total budget for the Scheme is €3 million or approximately £2.5 million. Out of this total fund, €1.5 million is available to support eligible projects in Ireland, and £1.25 million is available to support eligible projects in Northern Ireland.

This Scheme will operate on a competitive basis within each jurisdiction and due to the limited funding available, applicants should note that only those project proposals that best meet the Scheme's requirements at each stage of the application process and the Scheme aims, objectives and priorities, will be considered for an award of investment funding. Therefore, even if an applicant's proposal meets the Scheme's requirements, aims, objectives and priorities and related criteria set out herein, an award of investment funding is not guaranteed.

There is a maximum investment ceiling of €300,000 in Ireland, or £250,000 in Northern Ireland for any one project under this Scheme. The minimum investment grant value is €50,000 in Ireland and £40,000 in Northern Ireland.

Applicants should note that these investment sums will remain constant for the lifespan of the Scheme, i.e., they will not be subject to exchange rate fluctuations.

The maximum investment grant rate for all applicant projects will not exceed 80% of eligible capital expenditure.

In addition, applicants should therefore note that all eligible project costs incurred above the maximum investment grant sum offered by Fáilte Ireland and/or Tourism Ireland (as relevant) and all ineligible project costs, will be the responsibility of the Grantee.

Important Note: Applicants should refer to Section 7 for further information on eligible and ineligible project costs and expenditure, and to Section 4.6 for further information on match funding contributions and working capital requirements.

5.2 Letters of Offer and Investment Grant Payment Administration

Applicants should note the following:

In Ireland, the agency that will administer Letters of Offer and investment grant payments to successful applicants is Fáilte Ireland.

In Northern Ireland, the agency that will administer Letters of Offer and investment grant payments to successful applicants is Tourism Ireland.

Applicants should note that the maximum investment grant rate will not exceed 80% of eligible capital project expenditure and the grant aid offered may be less than what is requested by the applicant: any/all investment funding awarded will be made at the absolute and sole discretion of Fáilte Ireland and/or Tourism Ireland.

5.3 Additional Business Supports

All successful applicants under this Scheme will be required to engage with the relevant tourism agency in a programme of business supports which will optimise opportunities for connectivity between the Wild Atlantic Way and the Causeway Coastal Route.

6. How to Apply

6.1 Introduction

This section sets out the Scheme's application process which involves two key Stages.

6.2 Stage 1: Expression of Interest (The Project Idea)

The purpose of this Stage and the Expression of Interest Form is to allow applicants to demonstrate that they meet the eligibility criteria (see Sections 4.2 and 4.3) to apply to the Scheme and that the proposed project is eligible and in accordance with the aims, objectives and priorities of the Scheme.

The Expression of Interest Form is the primary document that will be assessed to determine the proposed project's eligibility to progress to Stage 2 of the application process, i.e., the formal Application Form.

Please note that the receipt of an Expression of Interest Form does not in itself confer eligibility of the applicant and/or the proposed project. Depending on the information provided in the Expression of Interest Form, the applicant, project type, or proposed project idea, may still be deemed to be ineligible to progress to Stage 2 of the application process if the Scheme's eligibility criteria are not met.

Please also note that the Expression of Interest Form should be completed by applicants whether based in Ireland or Northern Ireland.

Submission of Your Stage 1 Expression of Interest Form

Applicants in Ireland: fully completed Expression of Interest Forms, must be submitted via the Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal (<https://services.failteireland.ie/>) by the due deadline as set out on the Scheme's website.

Where an applicant in Ireland does not meet the eligibility criteria to apply to the Scheme to the satisfaction of Fáilte Ireland, Fáilte Ireland at its absolute discretion, may decide not to approve the progression of the application to Stage 2 of the Scheme's application process. All such decisions will be final and there is no appeals process with regards to this stage of the Scheme's application process.

Applicants in Northern Ireland: the first Stage of the application process involves a two-step process. Step 1 requires completion of a mandatory self-assessment eligibility checklist, available on www.tourismni.com/SharedIsland. Upon successful completion of the self-assessment eligibility checklist, applicants will then be permitted to proceed to Step 2, which requires completion and submission of a Expression of Interest Form.

Fully completed Expression of Interest Forms must be submitted by the due deadline as set out on the Scheme's webpage.

Where an applicant in Northern Ireland does not meet the eligibility criteria to apply to the Scheme to the satisfaction of Tourism Ireland, Tourism Ireland at its absolute discretion, may decide not to approve the progression of the application to Stage 2 of the Scheme's application process. All such decisions will be final and there is no appeals process with regards to this stage of the Scheme's application process.

6. How to Apply (continued)

Important Note: The Resubmission of an Expression of Interest Form

Applicants are encouraged to submit their Expression of Interest Form as soon as possible during the Stage 1 submission period. Any errors or omissions will be notified to give applicants in both jurisdictions the option of amending and resubmitting their Expression of Interest Form, but only *one resubmission* will be accepted for the same project proposal. The decision of the relevant tourism agency thereafter is final. Applicants who are resubmitting should at all times be cognisant of the deadline for receipt of Expression of Interest Forms.

6.3 Stage 2: Application Form (The Project)

The second (and final) stage requires applicants' submission of a fully completed Application Form.

Should your Expression of Interest satisfy the Stage 1 (The Project Idea) requirements in full, you will be invited to progress to Stage 2 of the application process to submit a Stage 2 (The Project) Application Form.

Please note that as this is a competitive application process within each jurisdiction, the receipt of a Stage 2 Application Form does not in itself confer eligibility on the project or the applicant. Depending on the information provided in the Application Form, the project or applicant may still be deemed to be ineligible for investment funding.

In Ireland, applicants will be required to submit their Application Form (and all supporting materials) via the Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal (<https://services.failteireland.ie/>) by the due deadline as set out on the agency's website.

In Northern Ireland, applicants will be required to submit their Application Form (and all supporting materials) via Tourism Northern Ireland's Flexigrant System by the due deadline as set out on the agency's website. A link to the Flexigrant portal will be sent to applicants who successfully pass the Stage 1 (Expression of Interest) assessment.

Prior to submitting an application, **applicants in both jurisdictions** will be required to ensure that:

All sections of the form have been fully and accurately completed.

They have uploaded the correct supporting documents required. At this stage in the application process, the following documents will be required:

- Evidence of planning permission approval or written confirmation that such approval is not required
- Evidence of match-funding for the project (financial contribution only)
- Evidence of working capital to ensure that the proposed interpretative visitor experience project can be delivered in full
- Evidence of the right to undertake the project at the project site
- Evidence that the existing visitor attraction/experience has been operational since 1st March 2023
- Evidence that your visitor attraction/experience is open to the public full time (five days per week, including weekends) for a minimum of five months of the year
- Evidence that your visitor attraction currently employs a minimum of two full-time employees i.e., Full-Time Equivalents.

Important Note: Incomplete Application Forms and/or applications received after the closing date will not be considered for evaluation.

7. Eligible and Ineligible Project Expenditure

7.1 Introduction

This section sets out eligible and ineligible areas of capital expenditure that can be supported under the Scheme.

The below lists are not exhaustive and are provided for guidance and descriptive purposes only.

Should you have any questions or queries in relation to eligible and ineligible expenditure, please contact either Fáilte Ireland or Tourism Northern Ireland depending on where you are applying from.

7.2 Eligible Expenditure

Only approved eligible **capital expenditure elements** of projects can be grant-aided under the Scheme. Expenditure, to be eligible for investment funding assistance, must have the following general characteristics: **(1)** It must be relevant and appropriate to the project being grant-aided; **(2)** It must be additional, i.e. it would not have been incurred without the existence of the grant-aided project; and **(3)** It must be actually incurred and paid, and be evidenced by invoices, payment records, bank statement, and other appropriate documentation.

Areas of eligible expenditure include:

- Interpretation planning and delivery including hardware design, manufacture, and installation,
- Construction Costs directly attributable to the delivery of Interpretation, and
- External Consultants including Project Management for the delivery of the programme of works (salaried staff costs are excluded).

In addition, it is noted that expenditure on the development of retail and food and beverage facilities is considered as eligible where it is not the main part of the project being funded but rather, where it supports and underpins the overall viability and sustainability of the visitor attraction/experience. This may result in the eligible expenditure on retail and/or food and beverage facilities being capped. Applicants will also be required to demonstrate this will not result in displacement.

Note: Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland reserve the right to deem additional categories of expenditure as eligible project expenditure.



7. Eligible and Ineligible Project Expenditure (continued)

7.3 Ineligible Project Expenditure

Ineligible expenditure are costs that are not eligible under the Scheme and include, but are not limited to:

- Printed marketing collateral (brochures, leaflets, offers, etc)
- Visitor facilities (e.g., toilets, services, car parking, access improvements where the primary purpose is to enable a site to comply with regulations, etc)
- Expenditure incurred and /or paid before the date of approval of the investment.
- Expenditure incurred after the project completion date as stated in the Letter of Offer
- Financing costs (including bank interest and charges)
- Fines, penalty payments, legal costs, audit fees and insurance
- Depreciation
- Asset maintenance and repair costs
- Marketing activity, including start-up marketing and promotional activity
- Operational costs (e.g., licenses, warranties, cooking equipment such as crockery and cutlery, general walking equipment (non-safety), trailers)
- Recoverable Value Added Tax (VAT)
- Salaries and wages
- Training costs
- Contracts that have already been entered into prior to the applicant's acceptance of our Letter of Offer
- Business Start-Up activities
- Feasibility/technical studies
- Terms of reference and accreditation schemes
- Purchase of land
- Website/online booking platforms

8. Application Assessment, Appraisal & Evaluation

8.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of how applications will be appraised and evaluated.

For applicants in Ireland, the sole assessor and decision maker with respect to an application is Fáilte Ireland.

For applicants in Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland will assess and evaluate all applications as decision maker with advice from Tourism Northern Ireland.

8.2 Stage 1 Assessment

8.2.1 Stage 1: Expression of Interest (The Project Idea)

The Expression of Interest form will be assessed by the relevant agency to determine the applicant's and the proposed project's eligibility in accordance with the Scheme's qualifying criteria, i.e.:

1. Confirmation that the proposed project is located within the Scheme's eligible target area,
2. Confirmation of an existing visitor attraction/experience business,
3. Confirmation that the existing visitor attraction/experience has been operational since 1st March 2023,
4. Confirmation that the existing visitor attraction/experience is open to the public and operational for a minimum of five months per annum, for a minimum five days per week, including weekends,
5. Confirmation of a minimum of two full time employees, i.e., Full Time Equivalents.
6. Confirmation that planning permission approval is not required (or has already been approved),

7. Confirmation of match funding for the proposed project (financial contribution only),
8. Confirmation of working capital to ensure that the proposed interpretative visitor experience project can be delivered in full,
9. Confirmation of the right to undertake the project at the project site,
10. In addition, if applying from Ireland, confirmation of the award of De Minimis funding in any period of 36 months will be required, where relevant (please refer to Appendix 2 for further information).

8.2.2 The Stage 1 (Expression of Interest) Assessment Process

The appraisal/evaluation outcome arrived at will be a Pass or Fail at each criterion. Applicants are required to achieve a Pass at every criterion to qualify to progress to Stage 2 of the application process.

Expression of Interest Form submissions received in Ireland will be assessed by Fáilte Ireland and Expression of Interest Form submissions received in Northern Ireland will be assessed by Tourism Ireland with advice from Tourism Northern Ireland.

The Stage 1 (Expression of Interest) Outcomes Notification Process

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of the assessment of their Stage 1 Expression of Interest Form submission in each jurisdiction, respectively.

Applicants should note that all such Stage 1 outcome assessment decisions arrived at are final and are not subject to appeal.

8. Application Assessment, Appraisal & Evaluation (continued)

8.3 Stage 2 Appraisal and Evaluation

8.3.1 Stage 2: Application Form (The Project)

Eligible completed applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis within their respective jurisdiction, taking into account the aims, objectives and priorities of the Scheme, and in accordance with the ambition of the Shared Island Tourism Brand Collaboration Project.

Fáilte Ireland and/or Tourism Ireland will use their tourism industry and visitor attractions sectoral expertise and their evaluation methods and tools as required and relevant, to ensure a fair, equitable and robust assessment of the Stage 2 applications. Applications received in Ireland will be appraised and evaluated by Fáilte Ireland and applications received in Northern Ireland will be appraised and evaluated by Tourism Ireland as decision maker with advice from Tourism Northern Ireland.

Applicants should note that Fáilte Ireland and/or Tourism Ireland may utilise the services of independent consultants or other advisors, during the appraisal and evaluation process. Specifically, all project cost estimates will be reviewed by the relevant agency's appointed independent quantity surveyors/construction cost consultants.

Applicants should also note that the potential impact of the project on existing tourism businesses in the locality will be assessed. The relevant agency reserves the right to exercise their discretion not to award any investment funding, or to withdraw an award of investment funding at any stage in the process if, in its opinion, the project could significantly displace existing tourism businesses or operators.

8.4 The Stage 2 Approval Process

As the Scheme will operate on a competitive basis within the respective jurisdictions, only those proposed projects that meet the Scheme's aims, objective and priorities will be considered for an investment grant.

The relevant agency will determine, at its absolute discretion, the amount of the investment grant offered at this stage, which will be based on the indicative eligible expenditure provided in the Stage 2 Application Form. This will be subject to budget availability and State Aid rules in Ireland/Subsidy Control Act regulations in Northern Ireland.

At all times during this process, the relevant agency retains complete and absolute discretion not to award investment grants.

At all times during this process, the relevant agency reserves the right to restrict an offer of investment funding to certain elements of a project proposal only.

8.4.1 Conditional Notification of Appraisal and Evaluation Outcomes

Applicants will be notified on the outcome of their submission as soon as practicably possible; however, this period will depend on the volume of submissions received in each jurisdiction.

If a project proposal is approved for an award of investment funding, a conditional written confirmation of the proposed investment funding amount and any relevant conditions that may be attached to the offer will be issued to the applicant.

8.4.2 Official Notification of An Award of Investment Funding

Approved projects will receive a Letter of Offer. This will form the basis of the contract between the relevant tourism agency and the project promoter (as the "Grantee"), as relevant. The Letter of Offer will contain all terms and conditions related to the offer of investment funding.

8. Application Assessment, Appraisal & Evaluation (continued)

8.5 Post Approval

8.5.1 Step 1: Project Initiation and Tender Preparation

If your project is approved, you will be offered investment funding based on the indicative project costs presented in the Stage 2 Application Form. Applicants should note that all project cost estimates will be reviewed by independent advisors.

The first step will be to develop your Interpretation Plan. This will most likely involve engaging professional consultants (such costs are eligible under the Scheme). You will be required to consult with the relevant Shared Island Project Team when preparing tender documentation.

Applicants must follow the relevant public procurement guidelines and regulations when contracting service providers to deliver the grant aided project.

8.5.2 Step 2: Interpretation Plan and Design

You will also be required to consult closely with a member of the relevant Shared Island Project Team in Ireland or Northern Ireland as you develop the Interpretation Plan, and as you design your solution. This is required to ensure that it is in line with the Wild Atlantic Way/Causeway Coastal Route (Northern Ireland Embrace a Giant Spirit) brand proposition, as relevant. Prior approval for the Interpretation Plan is required before advancing to the next stage.

8.5.3 Step 3: Project Delivery Team

When your solution is developed and agreed, you will need to procure and appoint your Project Delivery Team (e.g. design, construction, fit-out, etc.) in accordance with the relevant public procurement regulations.

Applicants should note that Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland reserve the right to approve

and sign-off on the tender design brief for the procurement of the delivery team for your project.

8.5.4 Step 4: Implementation

The relevant agency will monitor the implementation and delivery of the project throughout the Delivery Phase, to ensure its delivery and completion in accordance with the agreed design.

If you already have an Implementation Plan developed for your proposed project, this plan will need to be reviewed and agreed before you commence the public procurement process.

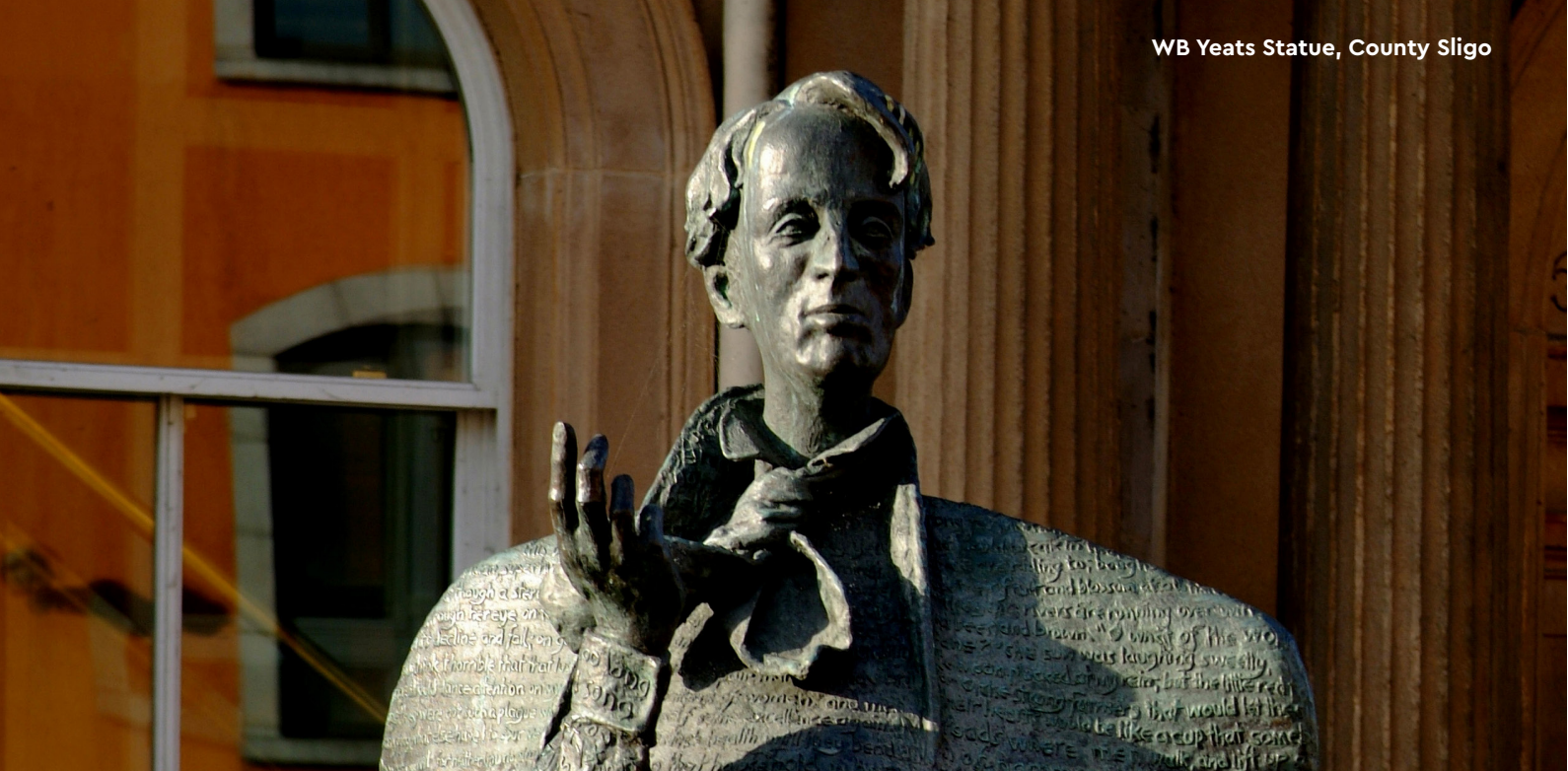
8.6 Project Completion

All projects that receive an award of investment funding must be fully delivered (i.e., all development, construction and fit-out works) by **30th April 2026**, to the satisfaction of the relevant agency in that jurisdiction. It will not be possible to extend the delivery period. This deadline includes the drawdown of all investment grant payments.

Applicants are therefore required to have the necessary reserves/working capital to ensure that the proposed project can be delivered in accordance with a Letter of Offer. Applicants are reminded that only eligible expenditure that has been incurred and paid by the Grantee will be reimbursed. There are no exceptions to this requirement.

8.7 Project Operative Period

The Operative Period of the grant-aided project is five years, and the project must operate as a visitor attraction/experience for this period. The Operative Period commences from the date of the opening of the new enhanced visitor attraction/experience. The relevant agency in the jurisdiction must be notified in writing of this opening date.



9. Investment Grant Claiming Process

Investment grant payments will only be made to the body specified as the Grantee and will be based on approved eligible expenditure incurred and paid by the Grantee.

Expenditure paid by a third party, unless reimbursed by the Grantee, will not be grant-aided.

If applying from Ireland, Grantees must have current tax clearance from the Revenue Commissioners at the time of any claim and payment. Verification checks will be carried out on the claim and on the project delivery before passing the claim for payment.

If applying from Northern Ireland, Grantees must provide evidence of tax registration with His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) at the time of any claim and payment. Verification checks will be carried out on the claim and on the project delivery before passing the claim for payment.

Grantees will be required, at time of grant claim, to certify that the project has not become eligible for additional grant-aid from any other source, or for accelerated capital allowances under any tax scheme (other than as previously notified to the relevant agency in the jurisdiction).

The timing of grant payments is subject to sufficient Irish Exchequer funding to meet the payments. In the event of any unavailability or delays in such funds, there will be no liability on the part of Fáilte Ireland, the Irish Exchequer or Tourism Ireland to make good any shortfall experienced. Tourism Northern Ireland and the Department for the Economy, who will act as advisors to Tourism Ireland on this scheme, will hold no liability.

10. Stage 2 Appeals Process

In certain circumstances an unsuccessful Stage 2 applicant may appeal to the relevant Agency.

In Ireland, the relevant agency who will adjudicate on an appeal is Fáilte Ireland.

In Northern Ireland, the relevant agency who will adjudicate on an appeal is Tourism Ireland.

Submitting an Appeal

Before formally entering the appeals process, unsuccessful applicants should engage with the relevant tourism agency to seek further information and clarification with regards to their application. The agency will use reasonable endeavours to provide relevant information by way of reply, subject to data protection, commercial confidentiality, and other legal requirements as relevant. It will, however, be sufficient in all circumstances for the agency to provide a high level summary of any reason or analysis.

If having discussed the outcome of an unsuccessful application with a member of staff from the relevant tourism agency, an applicant still wishes to appeal the decision, the applicant must write to the Appeals Officer within 15 working days from the date of the letter notifying the applicant that the application was unsuccessful.

The letter of appeal must state:

- The grounds on which the applicant believes the application was not properly dealt with or assessed, and
- Specific reasons or evidence the applicant may have to support the appeal.

Full details on how and where to submit an appeal will be notified to unsuccessful applicants at the end of the evaluation process.

Validity of Appeal

On receipt, the appeal will be checked to ensure it falls within the scope of this appeals process and that sufficient grounds for the appeal have been provided. The applicant will receive an acknowledgement from the Appeals Officer or from a person delegated to represent him/her in his/her absence noting the outcome of the validity check within 7 working days. Invalid appeals will be rejected at this stage of the process.

Appeal Review Process

The appeal will be considered by the Appeals Officer in the relevant agency. Applicants should note that Fáilte Ireland will be responsible for appeals arising from Ireland and Tourism Ireland will be responsible for appeals arising from Northern Ireland.

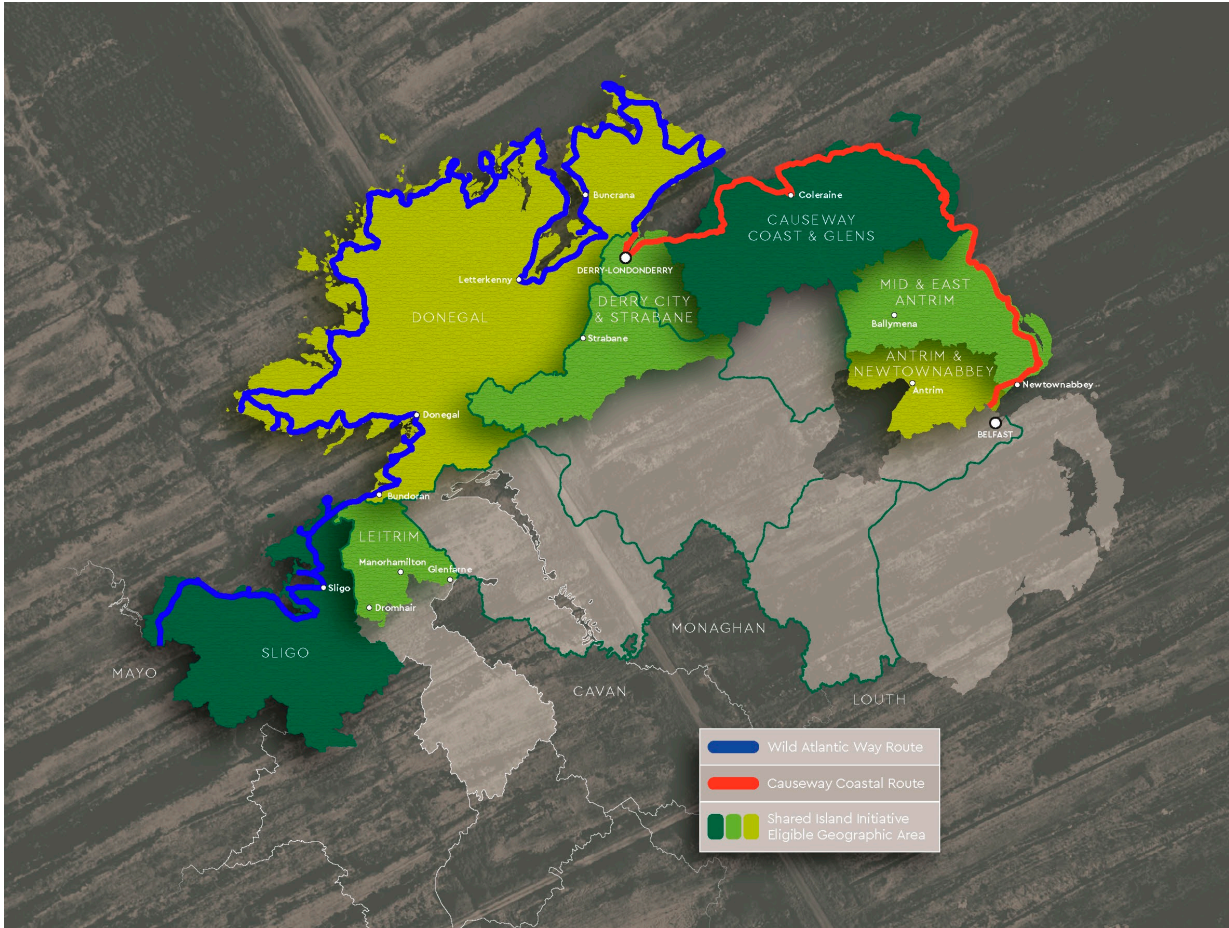
The decision of the Appeals Officer will be binding and will not be subject to any further appeals. Their conclusions and recommendations will be communicated to the applicant within 15 working days of the Appeals Officer's decision. Where any delay is anticipated, the applicant will be informed in writing of the extended timescale. All reasonable endeavours will be used to provide relevant information by way of reply, subject to data protection, commercial confidentiality, and other legal requirements, as relevant.

The following table sets out the timelines for an appeal:

Timeline for Submission of the Appeal	Timeline for an Acknowledgement on the Validity of the Appeal	Timeline for a Decision on the Appeal
Within 15 working days from the date of the correspondence notifying the applicant that the application was unsuccessful	Within 7 working days of receiving an email/letter of appeal	Within 15 working days of receiving a valid email/letter of appeal

APPENDIX 1

Targeted Eligible Areas – Location Map



APPENDIX 2

Legal Basis of the Scheme in Ireland

State Aid

Fáilte Ireland as a state agency and the National Tourism Development Authority of Ireland must comply with European Union (EU) State Aid rules. These rules apply to this investment grant scheme, and it informs and determines what types of projects are eligible, what support can be provided by Fáilte Ireland and sets out conditions that recipients of funding must comply with.

State Aid is the provision of state support on a selective basis which may give an undertaking an advantage over its competitors in the EU market. The term 'undertaking' refers to any entity (no matter what its legal form) that is engaged in economic activity.

State aid is generally prohibited unless it can be justified by reasons of general economic development and falls within the acceptable limits or exemptions as set by the European Commission, for example within the De Minimis Regulation or General Block Exemption. Breach of State Aid rules may result in funding claw-back.

A State Aid test will be undertaken on a project-by-project basis as set out in the [Fáilte Ireland State Aid Handbook](#).

This scheme is operating under both the De Minimis Regulation and the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER). Grants will be awarded under de Minimis or the GBER Exemptions, as appropriate.

De Minimis Aid

As small amounts of aid are unlikely to distort competition, a useful approved EU mechanism for State Aid is De Minimis Aid.

De Minimis Aid is any aid awarded to a single undertaking by any State agency or public body over any period of 36 months, up to a threshold of €300,000.

Applicants must declare to Fáilte Ireland any De Minimis aid received by them from any public body in the three years before funding is received from Fáilte Ireland (and any "in progress" applications for state funding). All projects will be checked for De Minimis applicability as part of the initial application and on submission of claims, and this may result in applications being ineligible for grant aid under this Scheme.

General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)

GBER is a European Union measure that provides exemptions from the State Aid rules in certain situations. To fall within the GBER, its provisions must be complied with in all cases and in all respects in so far as they apply to State aid for a particular project. These requirements will be reflected in any grant agreement and must be adhered to.

Applicants should refer to the [Fáilte Ireland State Aid Handbook](#) for further information.

APPENDIX 2

Legal Basis of the Scheme in Ireland (continued)

Terms and Conditions attaching to an Investment Grant Offer in Ireland

This section outlines the terms and conditions that a successful applicant will have to adhere to. Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Offer, which will form the basis of the contract between Fáilte Ireland and the Grantee. This will outline the terms and conditions of the grant and will cover various elements including but not limited to the following requirements:

- Purpose
- Commencement of work
- Drawdown of grant
- Monitoring
- Project planning
- State Aid compliance
- Public Procurement
- Retention of records
- Visitor use
- Repayment/Disposal
- Marketing
- Publicity
- Freedom of Information
- Data Protection
- Children First and all other relevant legislation including environmental, employment, equality, taxation as appropriate.

Completion of Work

The date by which work must be completed, the conditions in relation to industry standards and meeting with statutory and local authority requirements, will be specified in the grant agreement.

Displacement

The potential impact of the project on existing tourism businesses in the locality will be assessed. Fáilte Ireland reserves the right to exercise its discretion not to award a grant or to withdraw a grant at any stage in the process if, in the opinion of Fáilte Ireland, the project could significantly displace existing tourism businesses or operators.

Operative Period

The Operative Period of the grant-aided Project is five years. The project must operate as a visitor attraction/experience for this period, which commences from the opening of the new enhanced visitor attraction/experience.

Monitoring and Updates

The Grantee will provide monthly update reports on the progress of the project during the course of the Construction Period. The Grantee will file annual financial statements with Fáilte Ireland and, if requested, more frequent management accounts, visitor numbers, and facility usage details, etc. The Grantee must also co-operate with monitoring checks and reviews during the Operative Period. The grantee must comply with on-going requirements of Fáilte Ireland during the development of the project (Delivery Phase) and during the Operative Period (Operational Phase).

APPENDIX 2

Legal Basis of the Scheme in Ireland (continued)

Retention of Records

Grantees must comply with all conditions in relation to the retention of records, which extends also to Contractors and Sub-Contractors engaged in the development. All relevant records must be made available upon request for examination by authorised officials of Fáilte Ireland, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, other relevant Irish Government Departments and the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Visitor Use

During the Operative Period the Project must be open and operational to the public full time (five days per week, including weekend) for a minimum of five months of the year. Fáilte Ireland and/or their consultants must have access to the Project at all reasonable times, for the purposes of inspection, during the Operative Period.

Repayment/Disposal

The grant is repayable if the project ceases to be operated as agreed during the Operative Period. Fáilte Ireland will require the immediate repayment of the grant if any of the conditions of the grant offer are not complied with.

Marketing

It is essential that the capital development be supported by marketing activity for the project. The Shared Island logo, message and branding must be included on all marketing collateral including any promotional media and literature, any websites that the Grantee operates and on any external signage. Brand guidelines will be issued to approved projects prior to completion.

Public Procurement

In Ireland, the Grantee shall comply with EU and National public procurement law and associated procedures, the core principles of which are that procurement policy and practice should be accountable, competitive, fair and transparent, non-discriminatory, provide for equality of treatment and be conducted with probity and integrity. In particular, the Grantee must comply with the guidelines as published by the Office of Government Procurement, available at www.etenders.gov.ie and all other applicable law.

Freedom of Information

Applicants should note that under the Freedom of Information Act, 2014, information provided by them in their application may be liable to be disclosed. Applicants are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by them in their application should not be disclosed because of its confidentiality or commercial sensitivity. If applicants consider that certain information should not be disclosed due to confidentiality or commercial sensitivity, they must clearly identify such information and specify the reasons why it is confidential or commercially sensitive.

Any information not identified as confidential or commercially sensitive is liable to be released in response to a Freedom of Information request without further notice to the applicant. Fáilte Ireland will, where possible, consult with applicants about information identified as confidential or commercially sensitive information, before deciding on a request received under the Freedom of Information Act subject to compliance with its obligations under the Act.

APPENDIX 2

Legal Basis of the Scheme in Ireland (continued)

Data Protection

Fáilte Ireland confirms that any personal data provided as part of this application form will be processed only for the purposes of the Coast-to-Coast Scheme. In so far as Fáilte Ireland processes personal data for the purpose of this application it shall comply with its obligations as a “data controller” under GDPR. Please refer to [Fáilte Ireland’s Privacy Policy](#) for further information. The legal basis for processing is “Legislative Mandate”, as per Section 8 of the National Tourism Development Authority Act, 2003.

Information collected as part of this capital investment Scheme may be shared to the minimum extent necessary between Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland, for the sole purpose/s of administering the Scheme.

Children First Act

The project must be compliant with the requirements of the Children First Act, 2015.



Dunluce Castle, County Antrim

APPENDIX 3

Legal Basis of the Scheme in Northern Ireland

Subsidy Control

The Subsidy Control Act 2022 came into force on 4 January 2023, replacing previous EU State aid regulation for awarding subsidies.

The Subsidy Control Act 2022 aims to prevent unfair competition or negative effects on trade and investment between the UK and a country or territory outside the UK. Further details can be found at: [Subsidy Control Act 2022](#)

Under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Shared Island Coast-to-Coast Capital Investment Scheme 2024 will be published on the Subsidy Control Database. [GOV.UK - Subsidy Scheme](#)

Applicants will be required to comply with the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Full details relating to the Act can be found at: [Introduction to Subsidy Control, Department for the Economy NI](#)

When the value of any subsidy awarded under the scheme is £100,000 or above, we will publish the details on the UK's Subsidy Transparency Database, as required by the Act. [GOV.UK - Subsidy Awards](#).

In Northern Ireland only, to ensure compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Scheme may be amended at any time, if required. Any necessary amendments will be rectified, applied to the Scheme Guidelines and communicated with applicants when brought to our attention.

Terms and Conditions attaching to an Investment Grant Offer in Northern Ireland

This section outlines the terms and conditions that a successful applicant will have to adhere to. Successful applicants will receive a Letter of Offer, which will form the basis of the contract between Tourism Ireland and the Grantee. This will outline the terms and

conditions of the grant and will cover various elements including but not limited to the following requirements:

- Purpose
- Commencement of work
- Drawdown of grant
- Monitoring
- Project planning
- Subsidy Control
- Public Procurement
- Retention of records
- Visitor use
- Repayment/Disposal
- Marketing
- Publicity
- Freedom of Information
- Data Protection

Completion of Work

The date by which work must be completed, the conditions in relation to industry standards and meeting with statutory and local authority requirements, will be specified in the Letter of Offer.

Displacement

The potential impact of the project on existing tourism businesses in the locality will be assessed. Tourism Ireland reserves the right to exercise its discretion not to award a grant or to withdraw a grant at any stage in the process if, in the opinion of Tourism Ireland and/or upon receipt of advice from Tourism Northern Ireland, the project could significantly displace existing tourism businesses or operators.

APPENDIX 3

Legal Basis of the Scheme in Northern Ireland (continued)

Operative Period

The Operative Period of the grant-aided Project is five years. The project must operate as a visitor attraction/experience for this period, which commences from the date of the opening of the new enhanced visitor attraction/experience.

Monitoring and Updates

The Grantee will provide monthly update reports on the progress of the project during the course of the Construction Period. The Grantee will file annual financial statements with Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland and, if requested, more frequent management accounts, visitor numbers, and facility usage details, etc. The Grantee must also co-operate with monitoring checks and reviews during the Operative Period. The grantee must comply with on-going requirements of Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland during the development of the project (Delivery Phase) and during the Operative Period (Operational Phase).

Retention of Records

Grantees must comply with all conditions in relation to the retention of records, which extends also to Contractors and Sub-Contractors engaged in the development. All relevant records must be made available upon request for examination by authorised officials of Tourism Ireland, Tourism Northern Ireland and the Department for the Economy.

Visitor Use

During the Operative Period the Project must be open and operational to the public full time (five days per week, including weekend) for a minimum of five months of the year. Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland, and/or their consultants must have access to the

Project at all reasonable times, for the purposes of inspection, during the Operative Period.

Repayment/Disposal

The grant is repayable if the project ceases to be operated as agreed during the Operative Period. Tourism Ireland will require the immediate repayment of the grant if any of the conditions of the grant offer are not complied with.

Marketing

It is essential that the capital development be supported by marketing activity for the project. The Shared Island logo, message and branding must be included on all marketing collateral including any promotional media and literature, any websites that the Grantee operates and on any external signage. Brand guidelines will be issued to approved projects prior to completion. Applicants will also be required to engage with Tourism Northern Ireland's Embrace a Giant Spirit Experience Brand Team.

Public Procurement

In Northern Ireland, the Grantee must adhere to Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy guidelines. Details are available at [Introduction to the NI Public Procurement Policy document | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

Equality Statement

Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland is committed to the fulfilment of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) in both the promotion of equality and of good relations through our overall thinking and decision-making processes. Obligations under this Act will be extended to successful applicants and included in any Letter of Offer issued.

APPENDIX 3

Legal Basis of the Scheme in Northern Ireland (continued)

Freedom of Information/Data Protection/General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland are committed to being open about the way we will use information that you give us as part of your application. By submitting the declaration form to validate the application form, applicants are confirming that they understand our obligation to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

When Tourism Northern Ireland collects a Company's personal information, we take care that it is handled securely and processed in accordance with the law. For full details on how we handle the Company's information, please review our privacy statement at www.tourismNI.com/privacy.

When Tourism Ireland collects personal information, we take care that it is handled securely and processed in accordance with the law. Tourism Ireland respects the right to

privacy in relation to interactions with this service and endeavour to be transparent in our dealings as to what information we will collect and how we use this personal information.

The initial legal basis under which Tourism Ireland may process your data will be legitimate business interest. For full details on how we handle personal information, please review our privacy statement at www.tourismireland.com/privacy-policy. If financial assistance is awarded, this will be subject to a contract, and will be the legal basis under which Tourism Ireland may process your data.

Information collected as part of this capital investment Scheme may be shared to the minimum extent necessary between Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland, for the sole purpose/s of administering the Scheme.



For further information on the Scheme,
visit the relevant website:

For Ireland:

<https://www.failteireland.ie/shared-island-initiative.aspx>

or contact the Shared Island Team at:

sharedisland@failteireland.ie

For Northern Ireland:

www.tourismni.com/sharedisland