



Community Services Programme 2008 call, Strand 3 Community Enterprises employing people most distant from the labour market

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

1. CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES (2008 CALL)

The Community Services Programme is funded by the Department of Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs under the NDP. The purpose of the programme is to support voluntary and community groups to provide essential services and businesses to their communities. The provision of these services will:-

- Alleviate disadvantage in those communities
- Promote social and economic development within the communities
- Provide employment for those most distant from the labour market
- Promote the sustainable and inclusive development of the communities
- Strengthen local ownership through participation in decision-making.

Within this overall purpose, in 2008 the Department is inviting expressions of interest for Community Enterprises to employ individuals “most distant from the labour market”: Travellers, people with disabilities, recovering substance abusers and ex-prisoners. The main criteria are that:-

- The proposal must be from a community-owned and community based social enterprise.
- The proposer must demonstrate that they will not displace commercial enterprises.
- The proposer must demonstrate appropriate supports for the target employment groups and the positive impact which the employees will derive from their employment.
- The eventual business plan must address both the social and enterprise aspects of the proposal.

By way of illustration (though not an exhaustive list), examples of community enterprises currently funded or under consideration by the Programme include: craft and repair industries, local services, community shops, retail and catering, estate/ground management, community media.

Exclusions

This strand is not intended to replace or duplicate CE, JI or RSS schemes. Proposals that out-place CSP-funded workers in third party organisations may not be considered.

Not-for-profit: Applicants must be (or become) appropriately constituted as a company limited by guarantee or as an industrial and provident society (co-operative).

Employment: As a general principle 70% of CSP-funded workers in this strand must be from the following target groups:

- Persons in receipt of disability allowance, invalidity pension, blind persons pension or other disability benefit.
- Travellers in receipt of unemployment benefit or unemployment assistance or one parent family benefit.
- Stabilised and recovering drug misusers.
- Ex-prisoners.

2. CSP GRANT CALCULATION

A CSP grant is typically awarded for a three year contract and is calculated as a financial contribution towards an agreed number of workers, as follows:-

CSP contribution per full time equivalent (“FTE”) workers at the minimum wage of €8.65 an hour)	€19,033 per annum
CSP contribution to non-wage costs (e.g. overheads) per FTE worker	€4,065 per annum
CSP contribution to a manager post (no non-wage contribution made for this post)	€32,201 p.a.

- “Full-time” is required to be a 39 hour working week.
- Successful applicants may deploy their FTE allocation as full or part-time workers but will need to demonstrate that the part-time hours added up to the full 39 hours.
- CSP awards a “non-wage” element of €4065 p.a. per FTE to contribute towards overheads and other non-salary costs.
- A CSP grant is awarded as a contribution only towards wages and overheads. Applicants are encouraged to top up worker wages to an appropriate level from other income sources.
- And the applicant is required to demonstrate that the overall proposal is financially viable. The application may take a variety of income sources into account including fees, contracts and trading, other grants and significant in-kind contributions (e.g. where another agency is providing premises or support services at no cost).
- The maximum CSP grant awarded is for “a manager and 10 FTEs”; this amounts to around €260K p.a.
- CSP funding contracts are typically awarded for three years but may be renewed subject to satisfactory performance.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMETABLE

Pobal is working to this timetable but it may vary owing to external factors.	Working Timetable
Stage 1 Expression of interest	
a) Expression of interest forms and applicant guidelines published	March 2008
b) Local intermediaries (Partnership, Community Partnerships, LEADER companies, Údarás na Gaeltachta) asked to consult locally to elicit submissions.	March – 30 May 2008
c) Submission of Expression of interest form to local intermediary	By 30 May

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL THE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME HELPLINE ON 01 448 4828 OR EMAIL csp@pobal.ie

d) Board of integrated local development body (comprising Partnerships, Community Partnerships & LEADER companies) (or Údarás na Gaeltachta) to select up to two expressions of interest using local priorities and criteria, and submit these to Pobal.	By 30 June
e) Pobal will write to acknowledge receipt of your expression of interest – but only if it is one of those short-listed and submitted by the local intermediaries.	July – October 2008
f) Pobal will appraise each expression of interest form against appraisal criteria (set out below). An appraisal officer may be in touch with you during this time for clarification or further information.	November 2008
g) Pobal will make recommendation to the Department of Community Rural & Gaeltachta Affairs regarding each application	December 2008
h) The Department will notify you of the outcome of your application, inviting selected applicants to proceed to the second stage of application: the preparation of a business plan.	December 2008/January 2009
Stage 2 Business Plan	
i) Selected applicants will be invited to prepare a business plan in line with template and guidelines provided. A business plan development grant may be awarded. CSP Appraisal Support Officer will provide information and guidance. You will be required to attend a briefing session (to be held countrywide).	January 2009 – March 2009
j) Appraisal Support Team will appraise the business plan. Further information may be requested from the proposer if necessary.	From April 2009
k) Pobal will make recommendations to the Department re suitability of proposed project for funding and funding levels.	Rolling programme of recommendations from June/July 2009
l) The Department will advise applicants of the outcome of their business plan	Rolling programme from July 2009
m) The CSP team at Pobal will then contact successful applicants to explain the conditions of contract, the steps required to enter into contract, how to draw down CSP funding etc.	From September 2009

4. SUBMITTING YOUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

- Please submit your expression of interest to your local Area Partnership, Community Partnership or LEADER company (or Údarás na Gaeltachta if applicable). Pobal cannot accept direct expression of interests. If you do not know how to contact your local Partnership/LEADER company etc, please contact us on the number below and we will endeavour to direct you to the appropriate body.
- Please submit your form typed or word-processed; we regret we cannot accept handwritten, scanned or faxed forms.
- Please submit **TWO** hard copies and an **electronic version** (via email or c.d.) of your expression of interest form. This will assist us greatly in processing and appraising without delay.

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL THE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME HELPLINE ON 01 448 4828 OR EMAIL csp@pobal.ie

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL THE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMME HELPLINE ON 01 448 4828 OR EMAIL csp@pobal.ie

5. APPRAISAL CRITERIA

Expressions of interest received by Pobal will first be assessed for eligibility against the criteria set out in section 1 above. Eligible expressions of interest will then be appraised against the following criteria:-

Evidence of need for the community enterprise

Need can be demonstrated in various ways for example: local /regional/national research, local needs analysis/audit, demographic profile, target group statistics, census data, evidence that the local groups have been consulted. With regard to the enterprise elements of your plan, we will be looking to understand your market research or other business analysis. We will also be considering whether alternative sources of funding might be more appropriately sought and, in the case of existing community enterprises, whether the applicant actually has a need for further funding/ staffing.

Extent to which the proposal tackles disadvantage

This is an assessment of the community enterprise's potential to make a difference and have a lasting impact on the employees – and on the wider community it serves. In particular we want to know if there is a good understanding of the needs of the employees and possible progression routes (inside the enterprise or perhaps in the mainstream labour market). If the enterprise delivers a service or other benefit to the wider community, then this will also be taken into consideration.

The capacity of the group

In assessing a group's capacity to manage a community enterprise we look at many different aspects including the track record of applicant in a particular field and in handling public funding, evidence of management structures including the role and skills of the management committee or board; ability to employ staff responsibly. For new groups, we would also look for evidence of support agencies and other partners, role and commitment of the management committee and other volunteers.

Evidence of forethought and planning

We are looking to see that the proposal is based on a defined strategy: both with regard to the employment of people distant from the labour market and in terms of the business activity proposed. Is the plan is clear in its analysis of existing and potential employees and customers? Does it set out a coherent set of actions and have realistic targets, costing and financial projections?

Value for money

In looking at value-for-money, we will consider such factors as the potential for income generation, whether there will be sufficient funding to sustain the business and quality standards, the overall cost of the project with regard to the outputs proposed and the appropriateness of administration costs. Proposals which are seeking CSP funding to replace an existing income stream will need to explain clearly the advantages *and additional benefits* to the group, their employees and customers.

Community Services Programme Helpline
01 448 4828
csp@pobal.ie