

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



**The Heritage Council
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta**

with the

**Irish Uplands Forum
Fórum Cnoch na hÉireann**

Upland Study Visit Grant Scheme 2018

This document tells you relevant information about the Upland Study Visit Grant Scheme in 2018. The funding available, grant scheme criteria, what your application must show, assessment process, deadlines and recommendations for successful project delivery.

Introduction

The Uplands Partnership Management Board (a partnership between the Irish Uplands Forum and the Heritage Council) has the objective of assisting community based groups carry out projects concerned with sustainable development in the Uplands. A co-ordinator, Mary Mulvey, was appointed in 2017. Financial support is now available to upland groups to carry out facilitated study visits to improve their capacity to support sustainable development in their upland areas.

How to apply

You must apply online for our grant scheme. You can apply from 27th July 2018 through our website <https://www.heritagecouncil.ie/funding/on-line-grants-system> We only accept forms submitted online. We do not provide or accept paper forms. To consider your application, we must receive your online application along with supporting documents by: **Monday August 27th 2018 at 5pm**. Applications, or additional information will not be accepted after this time.

We will let you know whether your application is successful or not in mid September 2018.

Funding available

The Heritage Council has allocated in the region of €46,000 to this scheme in 2018. The scheme will be competitive and the average grant awarded is estimated to be in the region of €5,000.

Grant scheme criteria

Eligibility

An eligible group is based in an upland area who wishes to improve their capacity to support upland sustainable development. While altitude >150m is an obvious indicator it is accepted that upland conditions are not solely defined by altitude. Land of upland character will be principal criteria. Altitude is thus of lesser significance.

The applicant group must have a current bank/credit union account in its own name.

Who can apply?

The scheme is open to eligible groups throughout the island of Ireland:

- not-for-profit voluntary and community groups,
- heritage-related non-governmental organisations (NGOs),
- companies limited by guarantee,
- charitable trusts,
- co-operatives

Applications from other organisations or individuals will not be considered for funding.

What type of project does this scheme cover?

Funding is to support a facilitated study visit and will cover costs incurred by both the visitor and host communities including the services of a facilitator.

This visit should be to an upland area which has a locally based group working on projects concerned with one or more issues related to upland sustainable development.

Possible topics for this visit will be determined by the applicant and could be locally led agri-environmental schemes; community based partnership structures; path management and repair; managed controlled burning infrastructure (grouse management); visitor management and local authority involvement; or/and community benefits from upland tourism.

Here are some examples of potential areas/groups which a group might visit (but not exclusively) are:

- Burren, Co Clare (Place based learning, community stewardship, farming for conservation, rural entrepreneurship)
- Wicklow Uplands (community based partnership to support sustainable development, locally led agri-environment scheme, management of outdoor recreation).

- Blackstairs (cross county locally led agri-environmental scheme, Local Farming Group)
- Reeks, Co Kerry (path management, local benefits from tourism and locally led agri-environment scheme).
- Mourne Heritage Trust (managed burning, path management, local representativeness).
- Boleybrack, Co Leitrim (grouse management).
- Croagh Patrick Stakeholder Group. (local authority involvement ,visitor management to benefit community, path management.)

What must our application show?

You must show that your project will be completed by 16 November 2018:

- The visit must take place between mid September 2018 and early November 2018. A report and claim for payment must be submitted through the grants online system by November 16th 2018.

The grant scheme will cover costs incurred by both the visitor and host communities including the services of a facilitator.

You must also show that your project is:

- fully costed,
- well-organised, and
- good value.

What is not covered in the grant scheme:

- The Heritage Council will **not** cover expenditure on the following:
 - travel abroad
 - equipment
 - overheads
 - in-house costs for existing staff
- Travel rate is set at .53 per mile or .33c per km

Project specific information

Supporting material must be submitted with your application

- a) Agreement of the hosting party, you must upload a document confirming their agreement to participate and outlining the extent of their participation.
- b) The visiting community (leader/contact person should make contact with the target host area community (leader/contact person), agree the learning topics/projects and a suitable date/outline timetable. A preliminary timetable and budget should be produced based on this consultation and uploaded with the application.
(Please refer to page 8 of this document for further details on **Organisation of a study visit: Recommended stages**)
- c) A bank/credit union account in the name of the applicant group will be needed to allow for the payment of the grant. Evidence of this must be uploaded with the application.
- d) Additional information not included in this list can also be submitted if you consider it to be relevant to your project

Supporting information must be uploaded in PDF/JPEG format and be less than 10mb per document

How applications will be assessed

ALL applications are Screened to ensure eligibility & completeness as follows:

- (a) Is the application from an eligible applicant?
- (b) Is the application fully complete?
- (c) Is the relevant supporting information attached to the application?

Important: Applications that do not meet the above requirements will be rejected on these grounds and will not be assessed further.

A peer review panel of the Uplands Partnership Management Board will assess all eligible applications using the scoring system below and make recommendations for approval.

Heading	Marks
Potential impact of the award	30
Community leadership efforts to date (e.g. EIP application successful or unsuccessful)	30
Value for money	30
Strength of the application	10

Recommendations will be presented to the Heritage Council Board for final approval on 13th September 2018.

Decisions will be communicated in writing to applicants during week beginning 17th September 2018.

Reporting and funding

If your application is successful, the applicant group will be responsible for all costs related to the project ie travel, accommodation, meals, facilitators fee and field trips for the visiting team. The applicant group will also be required to recruit a facilitator who will ensure that the visit is a successful learning exercise. The applicant is responsible for submission of a detailed final report and evidence of expenditure to the Heritage Council before the deadline of 16th November 2018.

How we pay the grant

You will receive your grant after we have assessed the project work and found it to be satisfactory. That decision will be based on:

- your detailed final report
- Proof of payment (evidence that you have paid all costs incurred)

Canvassing

Canvassing by TDs, Senators or City/County Councillors on behalf of any Applicant will automatically disqualify an application.

This does not preclude applicants from seeking advice or letters of support from their local Heritage Officer or any other relevant body.

Applications are subject to Freedom of Information Acts

Remember...

We must receive your online application along with supporting documents by: **Monday 27th August 2018** at 5 pm. We wish you the best with your application.

Heritage Council contact details



Heritage Council
Áras nOidhreachta
Church Lane, Kilkenny. R95 x264
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Upland Network Coordinator: Mary Mulvey
Tel: 071-9134576, 087-6841531

Organisation of a study visit: Recommended stages

There are five main stages

1. Initiation
2. Preparation
3. Study Visit
4. Post-visit debriefing and dissemination
5. Visit Report

1 Initiation

The visiting community (leader/contact person) will first select and make contact with the target host area community (leader/contact person), agree the learning topics/projects and a suitable date/outline timetable. A preliminary timetable and budget should be produced based on this consultation and used to inform the grant application.

2 Preparation

The host team is responsible for

- Nominating a leader who will liaise with the visiting group.
- Ensuring that the visiting group has the best possible opportunity to learn and discuss lessons about the topics in which they are interested, that the visit is well-organized in logistical terms, including supporting the visiting group leader/facilitator in their tasks
- Providing appropriate location(s) for formal and informal learning
- Contacting and scheduling meetings and interviews with targeted local groups and individuals including raising local awareness about the visit.
- Providing information about local services (hotels / restaurants / transportation) which might be used by the visiting group. It is advised that all members of the visiting team use the same facilities, and that a sustainable form of transport is used such as a small mini-bus.
- Being the problem solver in case of difficulties of emergencies.

The visiting team is responsible for:

- Nominating a team leader who will liaise with the host group.
- Appointing and briefing the facilitator.
- Ensuring (with the support of the host) that the team makes the most of the learning opportunities, including deciding on formats for within-visiting-party discussion and recording/reporting the learning which took place.
- Co-ordinating and overseeing the travel of the group to the host area and within it.
- Making bookings and covering all expenses associated with the visit.
- Ensuring special dietary requirements are catered for.
- Ensuring members of the visiting group are appropriately dressed for field visits.
- Informing the host of the group breakdown in terms of participant type, previous knowledge etc.

The visiting team leader is responsible for explaining clearly to the host team what is needed, what the knowledge gaps might be, the participants' backgrounds and existing knowledge. The visiting team leader is also responsible for discipline on the trip including prompt starts in the morning, prompt recommencement after meals etc. and for courtesy during visits (use of phones, talking while the host is talking, showing obvious lack of interest etc.).

The Facilitator's job is to elicit the key learning points from each experience and session. He/she prepares questions for visiting team and host to better understand the ideas and solutions presented and how they could be transferred. The visiting team is invited to consider a set of questions such as: what do they want to find out about? What useful initiatives or innovative solutions do they want to take home? How can we use what we learned in our own work? The Facilitator will prepare and implement a way of recording the lessons learnt at the final debriefing session and any intermediate debriefing session. On return the Facilitator and Leader will be responsible for reporting on the visit in their home area.

3 Study Visit (see Appendix 1 for sample Study Visit programme)

The visit should start with a social event and a short introductory session organised by the host team. This could take place after the meal on the first evening (if travelling the night before) or after a cup of tea on the first morning.

At a minimum, this session should provide a general picture of the area, its innovation process (if any), talk about local challenges and identify the relevant actors/stakeholders and local partnership structures. Common sense should be applied – e.g. if the first morning gives an opportunity to visit a viewpoint over the region, there is no point covering the introduction to regions in detail indoors, particularly if the weather is good.

Briefing about the area/ individual farms /projects/ organization to be visited and its role within the area should take place before arriving at the farm /venue/project.

Usually it works best for the host leader to start, then the visiting team leader and then an individual from the hosting area. All should be briefed beforehand about the nature and interest of the group.

Extracting information is a collaborative exercise between the leaders and facilitator. They need to ensure by prompting and directed questioning that key facts emerge; the host leader should know the facts and the visiting leader /facilitator should know the knowledge gaps but the visit will work well if they have liaised well beforehand. Both should be concerned to ensure that the group can answer their key questions, but ultimately the responsibility for checking this and taking remedial action is with the visiting group leader and facilitator.

It is the visitors who have the knowledge gap and for them to ensure that they have filled it. In some groups, it works well for different visitors to be given the task of keeping the visit record for each farm/event etc.

Visitor Feedback Session

The visiting group will come together that same day (e.g. before or after the evening meal) to draw some conclusions and observations made during the field visits/events of that day. This is organized by the facilitator and can be done in 3 steps:

The visitors make a report of their visit in real time (perhaps circulating this responsibility through the group);

A list of items requiring clarification will be drawn up for answering while on the visit.

The visiting group leader will ensure that the results are fed into the feedback mechanisms during the visit and into a trip report after returning

The study visit should be completed with a joint visitor/host meeting. This is the principal responsibility of the Facilitator. The host co-ordinator should be present. This event should be as brief and cover the conclusions /principal observations/information gaps revealed by the visit (collected after -each event visit and summarized during the feedback session). The meeting should give an opportunity to respond and to engage in further exploration and clarification on both sides. The final summing up should be given by at least one member of the visiting delegation, probably by the host leader and possibly by another stakeholder (e.g. if the whole visit was in effect co-hosted by Irish Uplands Forum or EIP or Upland Partnership Network etc.)

4 Post visit dissemination event

A further dissemination event could be held at home after the study visit to which some local stakeholders can be invited. These could be representatives of sectoral interests, authorities, advisors, NGOs or other key actors also interested in the project/innovation/actors.

5 Visit Report

The Report from the visiting group should include information concerning the following core questions:

- a) Date, Place, Innovation and participant list;
- b) Reasons of the choice of the visit;
- c) Expectations of the participants;
- d) Narrative: who, when, where, what?;
- e) Lessons learnt: for the participants – and at the scale of the learning area;
- f) Relevance of this learning to their own area
- g) At least 5 images (described) of the visit

The report from the host team should be 1-2 pages in the form of a SWOT i.e. what worked, what did not work, what should be done differently if this visit was repeated.

These Reports should help the Visitor Team share their experience with colleagues back in their own upland partnership and may lead /help on the way they plan actions to innovation transfers. The reports will feed into a national report on the Upland Study Visit Grant Scheme by the Network Co-Ordinator.

Appendix 1 Blackstairs Farming Group Study Visit to the Burren and Mc Gillicuddy Reeks 2015

Organisation

Six months in advance of the visit contacts were established between the Blackstairs Farming Group and representatives of Burren and Reeks projects. After several telephone contacts a timetable was agreed. Within the Blackstairs information about the trip was shared between the co-ordinator of the trip and potential participants.

One month before the trip took place a one page information sheet was produced providing background information about the areas/projects to be visited and inviting participants to sign up by a certain date. Two local individuals were named as contact persons. Before the visit a budget and timetable was produced which also specified when expenses had to be paid.

Programme

Itinerary Thursday 28th May

6.45 am	Meet in Borris at Scorteen
7.00 am	Depart for Carran, Co Clare
11.00am	Arrive at BFCP Offices in Carran Presentation and Q&A Session with farmers from Boleybrack Mountain, Slieve Aughty Mountains, Dr Mary Tubridy(IUF) and Dr Brendan Dunford & Sharon Parr of the BFCP
1.00pm	Lunch at Cassidy's Pub (Soup & Sandwiches)
2.00 pm	Farm visit to Philomena Hynes farm with BFCP team and Dr James Moran of Sligo IT.
5.00pm	Farm visit ends
5.30pm	Arrive at Hylands Burren Hotel in Ballyvaughan
7.00pm	Dinner followed by discussion with BFCP team

Itinerary Friday 29th May

7.45 am	Breakfast
8.45 am	Depart Ballyvaughan for Cronin's Yard

11.45 am	Arrive at Cronin's Yard - Tour, short presentation and Q&A Session
1.00 pm	Lunch at Cronin's Yard (Soup & Sandwiches)
2.00 pm	Depart Cronin's Yard to visit Reeks Mountain Access Forum Projects
4.30 pm	Depart the Reeks for Borris
5.30 pm	Possible 1 hour stop in Killarney for food
9.30 pm	Arrive Borris