Highland LEADER Programme 2014-2020

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Programme Manager
LEADER Overview

- Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l’Économie Rurale or “links between actions for the development of the rural economy”

- An EU Fund to promote economic and community development specifically within rural areas

- Looks for new projects delivering new outcomes (‘additionality’). Won’t fund continuation projects or ‘wear and tear’

- Community led fund: decision making on local development priorities taken by local action groups (and LAPs in Highland)

- Eligibility for funding LEADER projects is determined by:
  - Scottish Government Guidelines which detail specific activities that are eligible for funding
  - Local priorities set by LAGs and LAPs
2007-2013 LEADER Programme

- 371 projects funded across the Highlands
- £15.39m – value of grants awarded (£8.64m LEADER/£6.75m Convergence)
- £30,625,084 total project expenditure
- 11 Local Area Partnerships
- 295 (79%) of projects were approved by LAPs
Highland LEADER Structure

- Strategic Local Action Group for Highland (Strategic LAG)
  - strategic overview of programme, assessment of “Highland wide” projects and reporting to Scottish Government

- Seven Local Area Partnerships for Highland (mix of public and private/community/voluntary sector representatives)
  - devolved LEADER budgets
  - responsible for local grant awards
  - promotion and development of programme
  - network with other areas in Scotland UK & Europe

- Administered by Highland Council as the Accountable Body

- Supported by LEADER Team (Programme Manager, Local Development Officers, and Administration Team)
Highland LEADER Structure

Strategic Local Action Group (LAG)

Advisory Groups
- Monitoring & Evaluation Committee
- Equalities Reference Group

Local Area Partnerships
- Caithness
- Sutherland
- Wester Ross, Lochalsh & Strathpeffer
- Lochaber
- Skye
- Inner Moray Firth North
- Inner Moray Firth South

Groups
- Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG)
- Rural Enterprise Group
- Equalities Reference Group
Highland LEADER: Programme Development

- Community consultation and evaluation of 2013 – 2007 Highland LEADER Programme to inform development of new Programme
- Strategic LAG in place
- Highland Local Development Strategy approved in principle by Scottish Government:
  - based on delivery of four key themes, five cross cutting themes and 10 outcomes
- Highland Financial Strategy approved (based on indicative allocation)
- Highland LEADER team in place
- Process for setting up LAPs agreed and currently being implemented
- Five areas now have a LAP and approved Local Area Action Plan
- Early Enquiries being recorded
- Scottish Government website open for Expressions of Interest, but Highland unable to follow up at this stage
- Awaiting Scottish Government Guidance and IT system
- Aiming for soft launch of Highland LEADER Programme April 2016
Indicative Funding Allocation

Programme Administration budget
£2,201,347

Co-operation projects between two or more Highland LAPs
£440,269

Additional to Highland LEADER allocation
Circa £1m across Highland and Moray
£3,462,427

Strategic Local Action Group (LAG)
£500,000

Strategic Projects – across all or most LAPs
£440,269

Co-operation projects between Highland and other LAGs
£1,761,076

£8.8m indicative Highland LEADER allocation

Programme Administration budget
£2,201,347

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Strategic Projects – across all or most LAPs
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Co-operation projects between Highland and other LAGs
£1,761,076

£8.8m indicative Highland LEADER allocation

Caithness
£497,080

Sutherland
£633,673

Wester Ross, Lochalsh & Strathpeffer
£506,688

Lochaber
£547,978

Skye
£313,745

Inner Moray Firth North
£550,474

Inner Moray Firth South
£412,683
The 2014-20 LEADER Programme

- Significantly reduced funding for Highland due to removal of convergence funding and minimum £2 million allocations to all Scottish LAGs – indicative allocation £8.8m

- Separate budgets with Highland allocation for Rural Enterprise, Farm Diversification and Co-operation Projects

- Need for more strategic focus and clearer evidence of outputs, with tighter eligibility criteria to be set by local areas and reflected in Local Area Action Plans (LAAPs)

- Important to consider what can be met by other funds – clarity for potential applicants at an early stage

- New application and claims process supported by a new online system

- Two stage application process following Expression of Interest
  - to avoid form filling for applicants where projects are not eligible,
  - to focus resources on supporting and advising those applicants with projects which are most likely to meet local priorities

- More structured approach to project delivery – milestones to be set and delivery evidenced before claims processed
Strategic Vision and Aim
The overall vision and aim of the Highland LDS is twofold:

• Stronger communities leading to improved quality of life for those who live in them
• Growth and diversification of the local economy

Underpinning this vision are 4 themes

Themes
• Stronger and more resilient communities
• A growing and diversified economy that promotes sustainability
• Increased and sustained local services and activities
• Enhanced cultural, natural and heritage assets
- Fairer Highland – advancing equality (addresses equality issues or benefits people in groups that are under-represented or disadvantaged)

- Innovation (a new or different approach is proposed within the area)

- Sustainability/Legacy (the project outcomes will continue beyond the life of the project)

- Carbon Clever (the project can demonstrate a positive impact on the environment)

- Skills Development (the project aims to expand the skills of those involved in implementing the project and/or on its participants)
Outcomes

• Impact of funded projects can be better demonstrated leading to increased capacity to secure future funds
• Increased community ownership/control of assets and services/activities
• People feel better supported to undertake volunteering opportunities
• Increased partnership working between groups (within and across areas, including intergenerational partnerships)
• Increased employment opportunities locally through new business start-ups and existing business diversification/ development
• Increased income from local produce through adding value
• Improvements in the visitor experience
• People have better access to local services and activities
• Improved access for residents and visitors (physical and knowledge based) to cultural, natural and heritage assets.
• Improved management/conservation/sustainability of cultural, natural and heritage assets
QUERIES/CONTACT

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