



Comhpháirtíocht Leader Waterford Leader
Phort Láirge Partnership

Decision of Evaluation Committee

Project ID	IE31WAT100005
Project Type:	Marketing/Promotion
Project Name:	Blackwater Valley Opera Festival
Promoters Name:	Blackwater Valley Opera Festival Clg
Address:	8 Main Street, Lismore, Co Waterford
Description:	Provide description of project: The Blackwater Valley Opera Festival is the pre-eminent summer music festival in Ireland's Ancient East. This festival runs for a week during late May and early June. The heart of the festival is the opera production at Lismore Castle sculpture garden. The opera nights also offer a gastronomic experience with pop up restaurants and picnic boxes. The recitals strand of the festival brings music to the historic houses, churches and other buildings of the Blackwater Valley, including Chamber Music in these original settings offering visitors a unique experience. The festival brings both international and Irish talent onto the stage, with many young artists giving an opportunity to showcase their talent at Ireland's Most Beautiful Summer Music Festival. The festival is a musical and cultural highlight but also accessible offering the opera and recitals at various price points. The festival also focuses on education enabling younger children to understand and explore music. Master classes see the festival artists and alumni working together. Children's performances are developed in the "Storytelling Through Song" strand. Partnering with local hospitality and accommodation providers, the festival is a chance to enjoy a magical musical break, enjoy fine food, picnic on riverbanks, explore castles, discover gorgeous gardens while enjoying Irish and international music. The festival also links with sister festivals, international organisations, and international tour companies.
Theme:	Theme 1: Economic Development and Job Creation
Sub-theme:	Sub-Theme 1c: Rural Tourism and Recreation
Link to LDS	Strategic Action: 1.5 Culture and Heritage Project Development

Total Project Costs	€85,206.00
Eligible Project Costs	€81,942.00
Funding sought by promoter:	€61,456.00

State one of the following: - First Review / Previously Deferred or Not Recommend	Deferred to allow time to receive official clarity on De Minimis and the 2023 Account		
Funding recommended by Evaluation Committee:	€61,456.50		
Details of private funding:	€20,485.50		
Voluntary Labour: YES / NO (If yes provide detail)	No		
Synopsis of project:	The Blackwater Valley Opera Festival is the pre-eminent summer music festival in Ireland's Ancient East. The festival runs for a week during late May and early June. The proposed project request grant aid for: • Venue hire • Piano hire • Marquee hire • Seating hire		
Detail exactly what WLP will be funding (List items from Project Assessment Report)	Detail	Total Cost (Expenditure)	Grant Aid recommend by the Evaluation Committee @ 75%
	Venue Hire	€22,907	€17,180.25
	Venue Hire	€5,000	€ 3,750.00
	Piano Hire	€5,950	€ 4,462.50
	Marquee hire + seating	€28,085	€21,063.75
	Seating hire	€20,000	€15,000.00
	Total Funding	€81,942.00	€61,456.50
Was an assessment completed?: Date: <u>20.03.2024</u>	Yes. 20 March 2024		
Are detailed costings provided for the project? Were the costs for the project considered reasonable and how was this measured?	Yes. Yes		
Where the procurement process resulted in less than 3 quotes, the EC must show the additional steps taken to ensure the reasonableness of costs:	The items required are very specific and the options to obtain quotes are limited and, in some cases, not available.		
Innovative Element of the project:	The Blackwater Valley Opera Festival is the pre-eminent summer music festival in Ireland's Ancient East. Partnering with local hospitality and accommodation providers, the festival is a chance to enjoy a magical musical break, enjoy fine food, picnic on riverbanks, explore castles, discover gorgeous gardens while enjoying Irish and international music.		
Added Value – How will the added value of LEADER funding be demonstrated in the delivery of this project?	The LEADER funding will contribute to the success of the event which will contribute to educational, economic and tourism benefits for West Waterford.		
Consideration of Deadweight:	Deadweight does not apply. The project could only proceed on a reduced basis, without the support of LEADER funding.		
Consideration of Displacement:	Wexford Opera Festival is the only other opera festival in the Southeast. This is approximately 127km from Lismore and takes place in September which compliments the Blackwater Valley Opera Festival rather than competing with it.		

Economic justification for project:	The LEADER funding will contribute to the success of the event which will contribute to educational, economic and tourism benefits for West Waterford.
Average Score for Project:	81/100 (1)
% level of aid & ceiling:	A maximum of €61,456.50.00 or 75% of eligible expenditure, whichever is the lesser
E. C. Executive Summary/Rationale for Funding	The Evaluation Committee agreed to recommend funding this project for the following reasons:- 1. This project fits the Local Development Plan for Rural Tourism and Cultural and Heritage Product Development. 2. The festival highlights West Waterford as a cultural destination and attracts a large footfall into the area. 3. The promoters have the skills and expertise to implement the project successfully. 4. The project scored 81/100. A maximum of €61,456.50 or 75% of eligible expenditure, whichever is the lesser

Jobs Created	Jobs Sustained	Match Funding	Previous Grant Aid Received (2022-2024)
2	2		The Arts Council €493,777
			WC&CC €67,000
			Failte Ireland €20,750
		€31,611.14	LEADER €21,073.66

Confirmation on the applicant's position re De-Minimis and double from the relevant agencies.	Date of Confirmation	Signed By
The Arts Council	16 & 19.04.2024	Niall Doyle
Waterford City & County Council	02.04.2024	Margaret Organ
Failte Ireland	19.03.2024	Ivona Carr
Local Enterprise Office	19.03.2024	Brid Kirby
State Aid Unit	23.04.2024	David Coombes

Detail of Discussion: The following were the main points raised in the discussion of the project: - - Mr John Harnedy (Chair) noted that this project was deferred, awaiting further clarification on State Aid/De Minimis and the Accounts for 2023, and asked Ms Christine Rossi for an update.
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- Ms Rossi advised that she had obtained a very comprehensive response from State Aid Ireland, which is under the Department of Enterprise, that gave enough guidance to determine that the funding received is not considered State Aid / De Minimis.
- Ms Rossi advised that the promoters clarified that the ticket sales cover 25% of cost across the board. This is the trend as the norm is 26% for similar events.
- Ms Rossi advised that she shared the response with the LAG and they were happy with the clarification.
- The Evaluation Committee noted that the response will serve as a reference going forward.
- The Evaluation Committee agreed that they were happy with the 2023 accounts presented.
- The Evaluation Committee agreed that funding this project is a good use of LEADER funds and agreed to recommend funding to the LCDC.

Amount Recommended: A maximum of €61,456.50 or 75% of eligible expenditure, whichever is the lesser

75% of Eligible Project Funding: A maximum of €61,456.50 or 75% of eligible expenditure, whichever is the lesser

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Evaluation Committee

Committee Member

Date: _____

Date: _____

Issues / Queries raised by Evaluation Committee	Project Officers Response
None	

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

WLP Project Officer

Please insert photos below of reference purposes:

(for example a photo of the building to be renovated/machinery being purchased, etc)

Not applicable