



Comhpháirtíocht Leader Phort Láirge
Waterford Leader Partnership

Decision of Evaluation Committee

Project Code:	IE31WAT104153
Project Type:	Investment and other supports
Project Promoters Name:	Blackwater Valley Opera Festival Clg
Project Name:	Blackwater Valley Opera Festival
Address:	BLUE HOUSE, Main Street, Lismore Co Waterford
Description:	This project is for supplies and services supporting the Blackwater Valley Opera Festival. The services will be for the summer opera festival of 2027. It includes venue hire at Lismore castle and Dromore Yard, piano hire, marquee hire and seating hire.
Total Project Costs	€92,175
Theme:	Theme 1: Economic Development and Job Creation
Sub-theme:	Sub-theme 1c: Rural Tourism and Recreation
Eligible Project Costs	€87,175
Funding sought by promoter:	€65,444.25
State one of the following: - First Review / Previously Deferred or Not Recommend	First review
Outline the Evaluation Committee's consideration on each of the following:-	
Deadweight:	The project will go ahead but cutbacks to the number of events and duration of festival will need to be considered. The promoter also advised the following regarding the current available bank balance: "The funds on account as at April 2026 are income generated in relation to the 2026 festival which doesn't happen until June 2026. All tickets sale income and sponsorship income have been collected at this point. Please also note that all would need to be refunded if event cancelled. On the other hand we don't make payments to suppliers until after the event has happened. The payments will not commence until June 2026. All of these funds currently on deposit are required to meet these payments." Project Officer – The project will proceed on a reduced basis and funding for other aspects will need to be reallocated as was done for the 2025 and 2026 festivals when there was no LEADER budget.
Displacement:	Wexford Opera Festival is the only other Opera festival in the region. This is based approx. 127km from Lismore and takes place in September which in fact compliments our festival as opposed to competing with it.
Innovative:	The Festival presents an ambitious opera and classical music programmes in the Blackwater Valley while supporting emerging Irish talent alongside leading international artists. Entering a new strategic phase (2026–2030), the

	Festival is deepening artistic ambition and building toward a sustainable expanded operatic model, strengthening talent pathways, audience access and regional cultural leadership through high-quality, distinctive artistic experiences.		
Reasonableness of Costs:	The promoter sought quotes for all the services. Some of the services are unique in nature such as the venues, the custom marquee and the seating. The options for these services are limited in some instances to sole service providers. The promoter did, where possible, seek other quotes and used the most economic advantageous process to select the suppliers		
In-house projects: are there other providers that can deliver the project more cost effectively?	N/A		
Recommendation of the Evaluation Committee:	The Evaluation Committee agreed to recommend funding this project for the following reasons: - 1. The project aligns with the LCDC Local Development Plan to support County Waterford's cultural tourism activities. 2. The project supports a distinctive cultural tourism event that enhances the visitors offer in West Waterford and delivers wider economic and community benefits to the area. 3. The project scored 78/100 A maximum of €61,894.00 or 71% of eligible expenditure, whichever is the lesser		
Reason for reduced funding compared with the promoter's request:	At the applicant's request, the hire of Dromore Yard was removed from the application as there was no longer a valid lease in place.		
Rationale for grant aid, having regard to the LDS:	The project fits under objective 05: Culture and Heritage Product Development of the LDS		
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.		
Economic Justification for Project:	The Festival is a flagship cultural event which creates opportunities to develop local talent, introduce existing and new audiences to the opera and promote West Waterford to visitors and audiences. The Festival provides an economic boost to the area benefitting local service providers.		
Average Score for Project and Ranking:	78/100 (1)		
% level of aid & ceiling:	A maximum of €61,894.00 or 71% of eligible expenditure, whichever is the lesser		

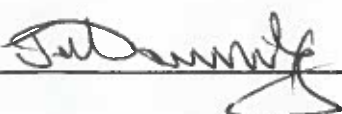
Is the project at Stage 10 on the IT System Y/N	Y		
Details of private funding:	€25,280.75 own funds		
Voluntary Labour: YES / NO (If yes provide detail)	No		
Detail exactly what WLP will be funding (List items from Project Assessment Report)	Detail	Total Cost (Expenditure)	Grant Aid recommend by the Evaluation Committee @ 71%
	Hire of Stable Yard and castle grounds	€27,916	€19,820.36

	Marquee Hire	€30,235	€21,466.85
	Piano Hire	€6,920	€4,913.20
	Seating hire	€22,104	€15,693.84
Total Funding		€87,175	€61,894.25
Was an assessment completed?: Date: <u>30th May 2026</u>	Yes		
Are detailed costings provided for the project? Were the costs for the project considered reasonable and how was this measured?	Yes, the promoter sought quotes for all the services. Some of the services are unique in nature such as the venues, the custom marquee and the seating. The options for these services are limited in some instances to sole service providers. The promoter did, where possible, seek other quotes and used the most economic advantageous process to select chosen suppliers		
Where the procurement process resulted in less than 3 quotes, the EC must show the additional steps taken to ensure the reasonableness of costs:	Due to the uniqueness of the services required, there were limited suppliers to seek quotations from		

Jobs Created	Jobs Sustained	Match Funding	Previous Grant Aid Received
1	1	€25,280.75 own funds	€61,006.50 LEADER funding 2025

Confirmation on the applicant's position re De-Minimus and double from the relevant agencies.	Date of Confirmation	Signed By
Not applicable anymore as per OR's. De minimus and double funding declarations completed by promoter as part of application form		

Amount Recommended: €61,894.25	71% of Eligible Project Funding: €87,175
---------------------------------------	---

Signed: 

Chairperson of Evaluation Committee

Date: 28 May 2026

Issues / Queries raised by Evaluation Committee	Project Officers Response

Signed: Clair Rans

Dated: 26th of May 2026

WLP Project Officer

Please insert photos below of reference purposes:

Overall Evaluation Committee Scoring Record

Project Title: BLACKWATER VALLEY OPERA FESTIVAL	Project Reference no: E31WAT1014153	Date: 25 MAY 2026	Time: 11am
---	---	-----------------------------	----------------------

Q	Assessment Criteria	Objective	Evaluation Committee comments	Weighting	Score
1	Has project development officer report indicated that any documentation / information requested has not been provided by the project promoter(s)	Ensure that the project promoter has provided all the required information / documentation requested by project development officer to progress this project.		N/A	Pass
2	Displacement	Does the project comply with displacement requirements?		N/A	Pass
3	Compatibility with Local Development Strategy (LDS)	Do the project proposals meet the criteria set out in the LAG's LDS for the relevant measure?		15	12
4	Innovation	Is the project innovative in its nature?		15	12
5	Project Promoter experience	Does the promoter have the training/skills, track record or experience to deliver?		15	12
6	Financial Viability	Do the proposed actions and associated costs appear reasonable and represent value for money, and is adequate funding available to co-fund the project?		25	18
7	Sustainability	Is the project viable and will the service continue to be delivered?		15	12
8	Requirement	Does the proposal target a specific need or address a specific gap in the market?		15	12
9	Deadweight	Would the project proceed without LEADER funding?	NO	N/A	N/A
N.B. Prior to being recommended for approval, projects must: - pass question 1 and 2 - answer no to question 9 - receive a minimum score of 65%.				100 / Total:	78
Recommendation of the Evaluation Committee:			Approved		

Signature of Committee Chair:  Date: 25/05/26

