



Circular No: 04-2026

From: LEADER Policy and Operations Unit

To: All LAGs, Implementing Partners and Administrative Check Bodies

Date Issued: 19 June 2026

Subject: v8 updates to the 2023-2027 LEADER Operating Rules

This circular is being issued to inform recipients of a revised version of the 2023-2027 LEADER Operating Rules, with specific reference to updated sections. These updates will come into effect from the date of this circular unless otherwise stated.

1. Section 14.6 - Phased Payments	2
2. Section 16.5 - National Procurement Guidelines - Category 1	2
3. Section 17.2 - Independent verification of the reasonableness of LAG Administration & Animation costs	3
4. Section 26.2 - Appendix 2 - Application Form	3
5. Section 26.22.3 - Appendix 22 C - Letter of Offer of Grant Aid – Addendum & Transfer of Undertakings	4
6. Section 26.26 - Appendix 26 - Register of Interests Declaration	5



1. Section 14.6 - Phased Payments

Updated text to provide for the LAG Authorised Officer to approve a change of payment to a project promoter for an approved project from one-off to phased payments.

Start of revised section

The LAG Authorised Officer may approve a change of payment to a project promoter for an approved project from one-off to phased payments. This ~~change approval~~ must be clearly recorded on the LEADER IT System document repository~~noted in the relevant LAG meeting minutes.~~

End of revised section

2. Section 16.5 - National Procurement Guidelines - Category 1

Updated National Procurement Thresholds table to reflect the adjusted thresholds that came into effect on 1 January 2026.

Start of revised section

National Procurement Thresholds		
Contract Type	Amount (excl. VAT)	Procedure
Supplies & Services	Less than €5,000	Seek verbal quotations from one or more interested and competent suppliers/service providers - these can be sought verbally but responses must be obtained in writing. (Best Practice – Seek a minimum of 3 written quotes; a record of verbal requests must be uploaded to the LEADER IT System document repository).
	€5,000 - €50,000	Seek written quotations from a minimum of 3 suppliers on the basis of responses to written specifications.
	€50,000 - EU Threshold (currently € 216,000 221,000)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders www.etenders.gov.ie – Open Procedure.
Works Related Services	Less than €50,000	Seek written quotations from at least 5 firms on the basis of responses to written specifications, or follow the eTenders process
	€50,000 – EU Threshold (currently € 221,000 216,000)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders www.etenders.gov.ie



Works	Less than €200,000	Seek written quotations from at least 5 firms on the basis of responses to written specifications, or follow the eTenders process
	€200,000 - EU Threshold (currently €5,538,000 <u>€5,404,000</u>)	Publish Contract Notice on eTenders www.etenders.gov.ie – Open or Restricted Procedure*

End of revised section

3. Section 17.2 - Independent verification of the reasonableness of LAG Administration & Animation costs

Update to the threshold for requesting an independent verification of the reasonableness of one-off costs or a contract for service that will be claimed as part of a LAG administration monthly return.

Start of revised section

It should be noted that a contract for service that has a combined value, i.e. monthly or quarterly invoices, of over €5,000 over a ~~two-year~~ 12-month period will require assessment for reasonableness of cost. For example, a one-off service ~~for cleaning an office~~ for €4,500 would not be required to undergo a Reasonableness of Cost assessment. However, a contract for service ~~two years~~ with an annual ~~quarterly~~ cost of ~~€3,000~~ €1,500 would require an assessment.

End of revised section

4. Section 26.2 - Appendix 2 - Application Form

Update to application form removing the requirement for a company to provide a signature of a 2nd Director

Start of revised section

D	COMBINED DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND APPLICATION SIGNATURE(S) I/We*, _____ confirm that I/we have read, understood and declare acceptance of the content of the three declarations outlined above in relation to:
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• SELF-INSURANCE AND/OR PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE • DATA PROTECTION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACTS • CONFIRMATION OF ACCURACY OF INFORMATION PROVIDED It is also understood that a false declaration resulting in the State Aid / De Minimis threshold of €300,000 being exceeded could later give rise to the aid being recovered with interest. The signature(s) below confirm my / our formal application and the accuracy of the information provided in this application form for grant aid under the 2023 – 2027 LEADER Programme.	
Signed (applicant / company Chairperson*)	
Name (Block capitals)	
Position / capacity	
Date	
Signed (2nd Director if a company)	
Name (Block capitals)	
Position / capacity	
Date	
*For Companies, the Chairperson and one other director should sign the application. Part or all of the information provided will be held on computer. This information will be used for the administration of applications and producing monitoring returns. LAGs may share information with each other and government departments / agencies to enable them to prevent fraudulent applications or for detecting crime and to co-ordinate processing of complementary applications.	

End of revised section

5. Section 26.22.3 - Appendix 22 C - Letter of Offer of Grant Aid – Addendum & Transfer of Undertakings

Update to addendum and transfer of undertakings letter removing the requirement for a company to provide a signature of a 2nd Director



Start of revised section

I, ~~2nd director name~~, hereby accept that ~~XXXX~~ Limited will take absolute responsibility for all obligations under the letter of offer/contract dated ~~DD/MM/YYYY~~ to ~~original promoter entity name~~, in respect of the 2023–2027 LEADER programme. This will include an undertaking by the company to satisfy the five year durability of investment and repayment of funding requirement as set out in Section 15.7 of the Operating Rules for the 2023–2027 LEADER programme.

Signature _____ Date: ____/____/____

Print Name: _____

End of revised section

6. Section 26.26 - Appendix 26 - Register of Interests Declaration

Update to text to align with wording where an interest(s) is declared.

Start of revised section

Where no Interest is being declared

I, (*insert name of individual*), hereby declare that I am aware of no ~~conflicts of~~ ~~interest~~ of any nature that would prevent me from carrying out my role.

Should the need to declare an interest in the future arise, subsequent to signing this declaration~~If any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest arise in the future~~, I will inform senior management immediately.

End of revised section

Any queries in relation to the application of this Circular should be submitted to OR2327@drcdg.gov.ie

LEADER Policy & Operations Unit